Understanding the Middle East Peace Process

Israeli Academia and the Struggle for Identity

Asima A. Ghazi-Bouillon

Routledge Studies on the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Understanding the Middle East Peace Process

Tracing the evolution of the Israeli academic debate over history, politics, and collective identity, *Understanding the Middle East Peace Process* examines the Middle East peace process since Oslo and follows the discursive struggle over Israeli collective identity.

Based on interviews with key protagonists, this book gives a detailed analysis of the interrelatedness of academic debate, societal discourse, and collective identity against the background of major political events in Israel. It charts the ascendancy and expansion of post-Zionism, outlines the emergence of neo-Zionism from the political right, and the reappropriation of Zionism in light of the new political climate of peace-making.

Ghazi-Bouillon provides a new perspective on the failure of the New Historians to revolutionize Israeli intellectual life and the failure of post-Zionism to revolutionize Israeli political life, whilst assessing neo-Zionism's potential to do both.

Asima A. Ghazi-Bouillon obtained her doctorate in History from University College London. She also holds degrees in Jewish History and the Politics of Asia and Africa from University College London and the School of Oriental and African Studies. She has lived and studied in Israel and the Palestinian territory, and has worked with the United Nations in New York.

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For my parents with gratitude and love

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1 Introducing a New Israel?

> [Successful] contemporary peace building not only changes behaviour but, more important, also transforms identities and institutional context. More than reforming play in the old game, it changes the game.[1]

Making peace, raising questions

On 9 September 1993, the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), agreed to recognize each other after 45 years of conflict. Four days later, both parties signed a document known as the 'Declaration of Principles' (DOP) which would provide the framework for a comprehensive peace process. The document was signed by Israeli Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, and PLO Executive Council Member, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), as Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat looked on. It was a day that many observers of the conflict thought would never come, and one that was celebrated enthusiastically. In fact, in 1994, Yasser Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin, and Shimon Peres were awarded the highest accolade for their attempts to make peace in the Middle East – the Nobel Peace Prize.

Amongst the many other difficulties and obstacles it encountered, highlighted, or created,[2] the Oslo peace process certainly spotlighted the complexity of the Israeli identity. Questions of Yasser Arafat's legitimacy, as chairman of the PLO, to represent the Palestinian people or nation had previously been used by Israel as a reason not to enter into direct negotiations with the PLO. Trying to assess Yitzhak Rabin's legitimacy in claiming to represent the Israeli people in this historic step towards peace, however, is equally if not even more problematic.

Unlike Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin's political legitimacy was beyond doubt. He was the prime minister of a sovereign state, elected through a democratic voting system where no citizen of the state was denied participation. The ambiguity of Rabin's status lay within the question of exactly *who* he represented as the elected head of state. Was it the Israeli *people*, the Israeli *nation*, or the *citizens* of the State of Israel? Many people commented on this very issue through their attitudes towards the peace process. On 4 November 1995, Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated

at a peace rally in Tel Aviv. In a perverse sense, through this heinous act his assassin, Yigal Amir, was expressing his own attitude towards peace and the future of Israel.[3]

Thus, the Oslo Accords raised several questions. First, what did this new peace process mean for Israel and for Israeli identity? What were the consequences of Israel's recognition of the Palestinian people's claims to the land? What changes, if any, would this recognition enact on the identity of the state and of the people? This book explores these questions by examining the evolution of the academic and societal discourse on collective identity and self-perception in Israeli society in relation to the peace process. Specifically, it considers the effects of major junctures in Israel's political history on the creation of space for the emergence of new variations and counter-challenges to the self-defining discourse of the 'nation', and maps those variations, challenges, and discursive evolutions. In particular, this work considers the phenomena of New History, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism as expressions of those challenges and counter-challenges.

By recounting the evolution of these strands of academic discourse, the book investigates in depth the interrelationship between academic discourse related to collective identity in Israel and social and political reality. It asks how historiography and the social sciences in Israel have participated in the struggle over the discourse of collective identity. It also questions the role of historiography and the social sciences in the nation-building exercise and in the shaping of collective national identity. How do academic discourse and social and political reality shape and reflect each other?

More broadly, this work examines the strands of discourse that emerged over the period of the peace process, and asks which narrative most influenced the shaping of Israeli society since the end of the peace process and the eruption of the *Intifada* in September 2000. In doing so, this work explains why post-Zionism failed to fulfil the promise it appeared to convey, and sets post-Zionism in relation to the Israeli New History, as well as to the phenomenon of neo-Zionism.

Finally, this work asks why, at a time that fundamental tenets of Israeli collective identity appeared to be challenged profoundly, Israeli identity was not ruptured and changed? What can be extrapolated from the understanding of Israeli identity and applied to collective national identities at large?

Effects of the Oslo process on Israeli society and identity

Literature that examined the implications of a potential peace on various aspects of Israeli society abounded during the years of the Oslo peace process, before the outbreak of the second *Intifada*. Much of this literature assumed a successful end to the process, and made corresponding predictions and assumptions about subsequent changes to Israeli society, politics, and identity. Three paradigms of knowledge are addressed in this section – the national security paradigm, the political paradigm, and the identity paradigm – because the literature singles out these spheres as areas where ruptures were expected to take place or interpreted as having taken place.

Ruptures to the security paradigm

Some scholars argued that the Arab-Israeli conflict was the most poignant and powerful constituting factor in the development of the Israeli state, society, and identity. In light of this, several works placed conflict at the centre of their research questions, and explored the social, economic, political, and cultural formation of Israel through this lens.[4]

According to this approach, the initiation of a peace process required a change in Israel's attitude to national security and the security paradigm that was shaped by the experiences of the *Yishuv*[5] and the early state. Writing in this vein, some argued that the Oslo peace process illustrated a change to this paradigm – it appeared that Israel had accepted that military solutions could not always counter the threat of warfare, especially with the increase in unconventional threats and the decrease in conventional threats in the region. It was argued that political solutions became a greater part of the security mindset.[6]

The effects of conflict and potential peace were also used to re-examine the role of Israel's conscription army, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). Some studies challenged the concept of the IDF acting as a homogenizing factor in Israeli social life. Some researchers argued that, in fact, the army had created and accentuated patterns of social distinction, and that, since Oslo, the army's military campaigns had been challenged in public discourse to a greater extent than ever before.[7] The increasing number of reserve soldiers who refused to serve in the occupied Palestinian territory was thus considered a feature of an eroding hegemonic identity that was strongly linked to Israel's security paradigm and the 'othering' of the enemy. According to these arguments, the security paradigm and attitudes towards the enemy changed as the Palestinians were transformed from enemies to potential partners for peace. This had a profound effect on the Israeli national identity in which the army played a central role.

Nevertheless, others contested that the peace process ruptured Israel's security paradigm or the patterns of state behaviour. For example, Israeli political scientist Gad Barzilai argued that a consensus in Israeli society over military action never existed, but that this lack of consensus was not reflected in the political discourse. According to this line of argument, Oslo was not a radical rethinking of Israel's social, political, economic, and cultural configuration – it was another link in the existing national security paradigm. Barzilai wrote:

> [The] phenomenon [of political reconciliation] is not one of political moderation. Rather, the above-mentioned propensity is a reflection of a public tendency to conceive separation between the parties to the inter-communal encounter as the best solution to the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict.[8]

Ruptures to the political paradigm

A number of works focusing on the security paradigm and, more broadly, on the nature of the Israeli polity argued that with a peaceful resolution of the conflict,

Israel would be able to further develop the characteristics of a Western nation state that had been hitherto stifled by the absence of peace: the militarization of society would decrease, as would its siege mentality; the democratization of society and state would continue, as would economic liberalization.[9]

For example, Herbert Kelman predicted that whilst the Israeli state would retain its Jewish character even after a peace settlement, the significance of identity defined by territory would increase. Thus Israel's non-Jewish citizens would attain a higher status, and the status of non-Israeli Jews would be downgraded in Israel. Peace would bring benefits, such as Israel being integrated into the region, and also an improvement of Israel's status in the West. However, Kelman argued, peace would also place increased stress on existing cleavages in Israeli society: religious and secular, *Ashkenazim* and *Mizrahim*.[10]

This approach, guided by the idea of society and state existing as a series of dichotomies, has been challenged by academics who approached the vicissitudes of the state more tentatively. According to them, the promise of a post-Zionist age was exaggerated, although with the growing non-Zionist population (the Arabs of Israel, non-Jewish Russian immigrants, and the ultra-Orthodox non-Zionist Jewish population) a threat to the hegemonic Zionist identity could not be easily dismissed. Sammy Smooha claimed, for example, that Israel's receptivity towards the Oslo peace process was not driven by a desire for reconciliation. He wrote:

> For the Israelis, [peace] is devoid of … justice, regret, and compassion toward the Palestinians … one should recognize its limitations and its moderate impact on Israeli society.[11]

In terms of the nature of the peace envisaged by both Israelis and Palestinians, Smooha argued against utopic visions of post-Zionism and the radical transformations that were predicted to change the face of Israel and the Middle East. These included Israel's transition from a militarized to a peaceful society, Israel's further integration into the region, the erosion of the Jewish-Zionist character of the state, and the full democratization of Israel that would guarantee its non-Jewish population full and equal citizenship. Instead, Smooha suggested that peace would have only a limited ability to change the structures of the state. Amnon Ratz-Krakotzkin argued that the political discourse was not substantially affected by the peace process and that this was the biggest obstacle to a real peace because it did not allow 'for a real recognition of Palestinian rights and their point of view'.[12]

The notion that Oslo should be viewed as a fundamental rupture in Israeli politics was also challenged by political scientist Ian Lustick, who argued that the peace process should be seen as the final stage in an ongoing process of Israel's 'Iron Wall' policy, as suggested by the Revisionist Zionist leader, Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky.[13] Despite this political continuity, Lustick argued that the shifts in the paradigms of knowledge in relation to Israeli society and that were expressed in the works of the New Historians and post-Zionist scholars, which are the central subject of this work, represented a challenge to the established notions of Israel as a Jewish or Zionist state. He noted:

> The debate's persistence contributes to a profound reshaping of boundaries of political culture, political discourse, and political competition in Israeli politics.[14]

Ruptures to the identity paradigm

Also arguing against the prediction of a profound overhaul of Israeli identity was Lilly Weissbrod. In an article entitled 'Israeli Identity in Transition,'[15] she argued that core collective values lie at the heart of national identities. The Oslo peace process resulted in a severance of the consensus on the core values underpinning Israeli identity without offering a clearly defined replacement. Weissbrod argued that the DOP signalled to some that Israel had moved beyond the need for the dichotomous perception of identity that had developed in a climate of conflict, and suggested a reconciliation between the hostile 'Other' and the national 'Self'. However, Weissbrod challenged the idea that those who advocated peace, both the leadership and social activists, were, on the whole, motivated by the desire to reconfigure Israel's Zionist identity.

Weissbrod suggested that Rabin, who agreed to the 'peace of the brave', was motivated by the hegemonic security discourse. Shimon Peres, advocate of peace, was motivated by a functionalist discourse regarding Israel's international interests. Left-wing party *Meretz* and civil rights groups such as Peace Now were motivated by a moral humanistic discourse, and concerned less with the Palestinians than with the adverse effects of the occupation on Israeli society. Thus, Weissbrod claimed, the peace process was presented through the usage of several discourses, none of which were stimulated by a desire to discard the common cultural values that constituted Israeli identity.

Yet, according to Weissbrod, an unintended consequence of the signing of the DOP was the undermining of Israeli identity. She argued that voluntarily relinquishing part of historical 'Israel' inherently validated Palestinian claims to the land. By acknowledging that Palestinians had a moral claim to the occupied territory, a door was opened for Palestinian moral claims to historical Palestine.

Clive Jones and Emma Murphy argued that the essentially fragmented nature of Israeli identity made its collapse due to the absence of conflict unlikely; although they agreed that peace, political discourse, and national identity are co-related and are sites of contest in determining the future character of the state.[16]

However, despite some support for the idea of a post-Zionist identity being suitable for a post-peace Israel, post-Zionism did not fulfil its promise. Thus the post-Zionist age that was predicated to rise from the ashes of the ideological crisis of Zionism caused by peace – through the weakening of Zionist symbols and challenges to the Zionist narrative – never emerged.[17] Weissbrod argued that Israeli identity required more than the humanistic universal values attached to concepts of 'peace', and that any constellation of identity that might emerge as an outcome of the peace process would, in all likelihood, still be steeped in 'Jewish' cultural values as Israel had developed a 'society-specific' identity. She wrote: 'The ongoing search for identity in Israel shows the importance people attribute to having

a unique collective identity and the impossibility of basing it on universal values alone.'[18]

In contrast, others have argued that the peace process created space for challenges to Israeli collective identity from the margins, and that these challenges would be met by an expansion of definitions of 'Israeli-ness' and 'Jewishness' to include non-Jewish groups such as the Arabs of Israel and the ultra-Orthodox *Haredim*.[19] According to this approach, peace created a distinct space in which to understand Jewish ethno-nationalism and Israeli territorial nationalism. At the same time, this approach did not necessarily argue that the ambiguity of the peace process resulted in rupture or overhaul that required reconfiguration of identity. It presented Israeli collective identity, stimulated by the changing political discourse, as part of a developmental process, where definitions of identity, and the consensus-based core values that constitute it, are being expanded and adjusted, rather than undermined.[20]

One such work is a recent study by Dov Waxman which focuses its attention on Israeli identity in the context of Israeli foreign policy and the Oslo process. Waxman contends that the Jewish component of Israeli identity was strengthened as the conflict with the Palestinians escalated after Oslo, thus making it more crucial for Israeli identity to reach out to encompass non-Jewish Israelis if it wished to avoid greater intra-Israeli conflict in the coming decades. In contrast to Waxman's thesis, which juxtaposes two sides of Israeli identity – the Jewish component and the Israeli component – this book demonstrates that the debate over Israeli identity, as reflected through Israeli academia, was far more complex than a conflict between those who favoured an 'Israeli' identity and those who favoured a 'Jewish' identity.[21]

Rather, it argues that the core of both concepts – 'Israeli' and 'Jewish' – are still strongly contested in Israel. It further shows that Israeli political choices and structures of power, as well as its hegemonic discourse and hegemonic identity, were not, in fact, deeply shaken by Oslo, and that identity is certainly more robust than some predict. Oslo illuminated opportunities for change, but without significant changes to politics, identity, and society it could not rupture the status quo. Thus, rather than stimulating a dichotomous struggle over Israeli identity, Oslo provided space for contesting narratives and discourses to emerge and that all bore on Israeli identity, which adjusted gradually by weaving new elements into the pre-existing hegemonic discourse.

Transition to a post-Zionist age?

So far this chapter has outlined how some scholars considered the peace process to have caused ruptures to identity and to the discourses of politics and security, whilst other academics took a more cautious view of its effects. Of course, all these notions overlap to a great degree. An identity based on a core value consensus of national security and a common thinking regarding the nation's past, in which the national 'Self' is defined in contrast to the hostile 'Other', cannot but be affected by a political process that apparently shakes these implacable foundations.

In keeping with this approach, Israeli philosopher Adi Ophir argued that Israeli identity was built upon a notion of victimhood as much as it was built upon the notion of security. According to Ophir, scholarship that challenged both the foundational hegemonic discourses of victimhood and security could be classified as post-Zionist.[22]

Ophir defined post-Zionism in opposition to anti-Zionism. In his view, whilst anti-Zionism was the correct term to describe the longing for a pre-Zionist age before the onset of the historical conditions created and dominated by the Zionist project, post-Zionism marks, or heralds, the end of the Zionist epoch. Thus, Ophir concluded that whilst anti-Zionism recognizes that the Zionist epoch has not come to an end and must be resisted and overcome, post-Zionism simply contends that Zionism is no longer viable.

Others considered the 'post' label problematic because it implies an identity still restricted by the boundaries of Zionism that excluded non-Jews from participating in its discourse. Accordingly, non-Jewish resistance to Zionism is defined by its anti-, rather than post-Zionist praxis.[23] In contrast Ophir concluded that post-Zionist scholarship was an anathema to Zionism because it challenged the roots of Zionist discourse on identity which is a symbiosis of memory and victimhood. He argued that the hegemonic Zionist culture and ideological discourse consistently exploited the notion of the 'Jew as victim' in both internal and external power struggles.[24] According to Ophir, this explained the growth of 'aggressive' victimhood, whereby acts and policies of violence are sustained and supported by a simultaneous and contradictory process – one where its memory is both elevated and revered, yet at the same time despised.

Ophir's definition of post-Zionist scholarship, which includes both the New Historians and the Critical Sociologists, is acutely critical because it deprives Israeli Jews of their victimhood whilst at the same time forcing them to acknowledge their victimization of others.[25] Although this work acknowledges Ophir's approach, it defines post-Zionist scholarship differently. Its definition is based on theoretical foundations that are closer to Uri Ram's understanding of post-Zionism. Ram contends that post-Zionism is a discursive strategy that attempts to strengthen Israel's civil society in opposition to growing trends of nationalism and chauvinism.[26] He further argued that forces of globalization work in tandem with forces of localization once a 'core' nationalism begins to weaken. Thus, according to Ram, in Israel the autonomy of the state and the hegemony of traditional Zionism were eroded both from above (by globalizing forces represented by multinational corporations and Israel's integration into world markets) and from 'below' (by ethnic, regional, and popular affinities).[27] Like some of the other works mentioned here, Uri Ram's analysis of a post-Zionist age did not predict the end of a core national identity in Israel, rather the proliferation of competing identities alongside it.[28]

Ram's approach was challenged by Avishai Ehrlich who, instead of ascribing significance to the forces of globalization, placed the rise of post-Zionism in the context of the local decline of socialism; hence its appeal to the Israeli liberal left who were in search of a substitute ideology.[29] However, Ehrlich's criticism of work that considers peace through the lens of globalization is somewhat harsh.

Although academics such as Ram made the case for globalizing forces opening the door for domestic changes, it would be unfair to claim that their work reduced the conflict within and changes to Israeli society to the forces of global capitalism, or that their aspirations for peace were uncritically or over-optimistically linked to the phenomenon of globalization. Indeed, Smooha's work illustrated that peace, as well as globalization, has the potential to exert both negative and positive effects on Israeli society.[30] Nevertheless, Ehrlich makes the important point that post-Zionism, as seen by Ram and others, confused two elements that should be considered as distinct: the formal peace, and the end of the conflict.[31]

New History, post-Zionism, neo-Zionism

The previous sections highlighted three central concerns of this book. First, it builds on the concept present in other works mentioned here, that peace and conflict extend and adjust identities significantly, but not fundamentally: a peace process does not necessarily undermine a national identity that has formed itself on the basis of conflict. Second, unlike others, this book separates the phenomenon of New History from that of post-Zionism, regarding them as distinct entities with varying potentials and desires to exact changes to Israeli politics, identity, and society. Third, this work turns its attention to the phenomenon of neo-Zionism and examines its place in the struggle over an adjusting identity in Israel.

Post-Zionism is closely linked to neo-Zionism, which arguably functions as post-Zionism's opposing force. Yet, whilst post-Zionism failed to realize a political agenda, neo-Zionism appears more capable of launching a strong political challenge to traditional Zionism's hegemony. The agendas of both forces have been described in dichotomous terms. Post-Zionism's battleground of choice is collective memory and the realm of the past,[32] whereas neo-Zionism concerns itself with the political realm. Both gain support from the decline of the classical Zionist ethos. However, according to Ram, whilst post-Zionism displays a globalist liberal ethos, neo-Zionism displays a localized ethno-religious ethos.[33]

This work shows that both neo- and post-Zionism are more complex and heterogeneous than previous studies have allowed. It demonstrates that neo-Zionism did not actually threaten the hegemonic discourse as such, rather it vied with its traditional gatekeepers (those associated with Labour Zionism in its political form) for control of and access to the discourse. Unlike post-Zionism, neo-Zionism did not seek to undermine the discourse, but to reinterpret it and reclaim it, thus realizing the legitimacy and power associated with this control.

By examining both neo-Zionism and post-Zionism through a power/knowledge prism, it is possible to show that certain strands of neo-Zionism are certainly as globalized as post-Zionism is thought to be, through its fusion of neo-nationalism and neo-conservatism. By exploring several strains of neo-Zionism, it is also possible to challenge the argument that neo-Zionism appeals only through its use of ethno-religious discourse. This work argues that neo-Zionism has been particularly successful in incorporating the traditional Zionist discourse of security into its discourse (and through this, appealing to key elements of Israeli national

identity). It is neo-Zionism's security discourse, rather than merely its ideological basis, that appeals to many Israelis today.

Finally, this book argues that the peace process did not constitute a rupture in the security, political, or identity paradigms. The concept of 'rupture' implies an extreme break in the status quo, which would in turn have extreme implications. Instead, this work uses the terms 'juncture' and 'disjuncture' to describe political events that other works have placed within the 'rupture' paradigm. It will argue that it is the 'moment' in which a political juncture is addressed, rather that the issue itself, which provides for a historiographical disjuncture in the life of the nation. The notion of juncture and disjuncture also implies a certain continuity in terms of contentious issues in Israeli politics, whilst allowing for the idea of an adjustable social *habitus* with which it is engaged in a dialectical relationship.

This book examines New History, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism, not through their political machinations, but primarily through their academic and intellectual endeavours. All three of these distinct approaches to scholarship contribute to a corpus of work that recognizes the politics of knowledge, and thus the political dimensions of cultural knowledge that challenge the hegemony of the ideological, discursive, and political practices of the state. In recognizing the distinctions and the overlap between Zionism, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism, it is possible to place questions of 'rupture' into context. Using notions of 'juncture' and 'disjuncture' allows for a consistent appraisal and more cautious prediction, which the concept of 'rupture' does not. This approach also supports an argument that runs through this work – that Oslo did not constitute so much a structural change in the political and discursive practices of the Israeli state as a symbolic change, and even that, on closer examination, was not deep enough to scar the tissue of Israeli identity to any great extent. It did however allow for a deepening of existing identities and created a 'moment' that allowed these competing identities to emerge.

The book has been structured chronologically and follows the evolution of the discourse in that order. It traces key political junctures (practice) that have led to historiographical (discursive) 'disjunctures' in the discourse. The four political junctures that provide the focus for the four core chapters of this work are: the 1967 War (the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip) and its consequences; the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982; the Oslo peace process from 1993 onwards; and finally, the collapse of Oslo with the failure of the Camp David II negotiations in the summer of 2000 and the subsequent eruption of the second *Intifada*. These events have been selected because they can be broadly synchronized with the articulation of adjustments and challenges to the hegemony of the Labour Zionist discourse that had long shaped the self-definition of the people and state of Israel. A subsequent epilogue sheds some light on Israeli society and identity in the post-second *Intifada* period when Israel 'disengaged' from Gaza and the northern West Bank under Prime Minister Sharon. It will consider if and how the ensuing consolidation of a new political centre in the *Kadima* party provided another political juncture and discursive disjuncture.

Although the chapters are structured in this manner, it does not imply a functional approach to practice and discourse. This work does not claim that the political

juncture simply 'caused' the particular challenge to emerge during that specific time period. In fact, it hopes to illuminate the overlap and exchange between all of these responses to the hegemonic discourse.

In its examination of political junctures and discursive disjunctures, this book specifically investigates individuals and institutional frameworks shaping discourse through education and research. These are not just defined by institutes of higher education in Israel, but also by think tanks, policy research centres, and other civil society organizations. What binds these institutions (as well as individual academics, intellectuals, and activists) together, however, is their engagement in the discourse on politics and identity in Israel. This work does not attempt or claim to provide a comprehensive and exhaustible list of individual actors, institutions, and organizations. Rather by providing specific examples to identify the three foci of this book – New History, post-Zionism and neo-Zionism – it illustrates the trends within and between them.

Sources and methodology

Methodologically, this work considers the dialectic between Israeli identity and New History, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism through an analysis of the writings of the protagonists, particularly through material where they have engaged in self-analysis and self-reflection in regard to the meaning, perceived impact, and underlying goals of their work. Because these materials are used by the protagonists to shape and add to the debate on identity, either through a re-examination of historical narratives, or through commentary on political strategies and the peace process, these writings are considered not as secondary sources, but as primary sources.

For several reasons many of these sources are found in the English language. First, this can be ascribed to the institutional structure of international academia. In practical terms this means that Israeli historians and social scientists are expected to publish work in international journals in English in order to obtain tenure and positions in Israeli universities. Thus, the most significant works of many of these academics have been published as books or journal articles in English. Second, the language of the debate is also a very reflection of the struggle for power of the various discourses that command the attention of this work.

As this work demonstrates, like hegemonic Zionism, both post-Zionism and neo-Zionism are movements that attempt to garner support outside Israel's borders – both within the Jewish community, and outside the Jewish community – in the broader communities of political decision-makers and civil society organizations. Thus it is unsurprising that many of their polemics are produced in English in order to reach this broader audience.

Despite using the works of selected academics and intellectuals as primary sources, this book will not provide a textual analysis of these sources. Several books have already been written providing such an analysis.[34] Books containing counter-historical claims and historical claims also form part of this praxis of knowledge and it is significant to note that many of those historians commenting on New

History have also produced historical works on the same topics as those examined by the New Historians. These works can be almost considered 'responses' to New History because not only were their authors engaged in the debate over New History and its validity, but also they were published *after* the works of New History.[35]

The notion of their own engagement in the debate has been consistently overlooked by those academics who have argued that New History and post-Zionist scholarship is as politically implicated as the works of traditional Zionist scholarship that they criticize. Thus Efraim Karsh's criticism of Benny Morris's work on the Palestinian refugee crisis,[36] and Emanuele Ottolenghi's review article of Laurence Silberstein's work, 'The Post-Zionist Debates',[37] are examples of politically engaged polemics marketing themselves as detached scholarly debate that uphold the factual basis of the truth. The quality of these works or whether they have a legitimate case to make are not the issues here – it is the 'marketing' of the debate that commands interest.

A common thread running through such works is the assertion that is that New History and post-Zionist scholarship is 'anti-Israeli propaganda'. Yet, to varying degrees, the authors of the post-Zionist works (though not works of New History) have not tried to hide their political engagement. Their detractors still cling to notions of impartial facts 'speaking for themselves,' whilst producing work that is ipso facto *apologia*. Moreover, whilst these other works do not merit closer inspection here, this book suggests that one method of understanding such works that focus on post-Zionist 'threats' to 'professional scholarship' is to place them in the category of neo-Zionist scholarship.

Thus, whilst much has been written to counter New History and the political claims of post-Zionism through the application of textual analysis as a methodology, this work offers a different approach. It provides a broader and comparative overview of the challenges of New History, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism in order to fill an important gap in the existing literature. Written primary source material is complemented by targeted interviews with selected representatives of the groups concerned. The interviews were a crucial factor in mapping a more personal debate: by highlighting the agents and their experiences in contributing, resisting, deconstructing, or reclaiming the hegemonic Zionist discourse.

The interviews conducted targeted a number of academics and intellectuals who represented the core groups, and the number of interviews was determined by practical limitations. Thus the final number of interviewees was not meant to be comprehensive. Rather, the interviews were representative, in order to provide a valuable overview of these different camps and to highlight the complexities within them.

These interviews facilitated an assessment of the limits and potentials of these agents to achieve political aims that are closely linked to issues of identity and peace in Israel. In utilizing them, this book provides a different understanding for the failure of New History to live up to its promise to revolutionize Israeli intellectual life, and the failure of post-Zionism to revolutionize Israeli political life, whilst providing an assessment of neo-Zionism's potential to do both.

2 Power, Knowledge, and the Nation – Shaping, Writing, Knowing

> Who controls the past … controls the future: [and] who controls the present controls the past.
>
> George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

This chapter sets out the theoretical foundations on which this book is based. It covers five main themes that are relevant to this work. The first theme is nationalism, which is addressed in order to present a model of the hegemonic form of Jewish nationalism in Israel – Zionism. The second is hegemony, which asks what strategies were utilized by Zionist leaders to establish their hegemony and to forge a 'new' Jewish nation? The third theme is a deeper discussion of a crucial facet of hegemony – a coherent national identity. This section highlights the fluidity of identity and argues that because the boundaries of identity are in effect porous, identity maintains a dialectical relationship with socio-political reality. The fourth section of this chapter explores the role of the intellectual in the nationalist project and focuses on the politicized nature of certain areas of knowledge (in this case history and the social sciences). It illustrates that national identity – the necessary cohesive in any national project – is reliant on history and the social sciences to augment its claim of the unity of the nation. It shows that identity and areas of knowledge pertaining to the 'nation' are subject to change as the nation's social, political, and economic reality changes.

Academics involved in these specialized areas of knowledge, which contribute to shaping national identity, play a central role in reflecting 'real' changes to the nation through their work, and in transposing them onto a wider level of social reality through national identity. The fifth and final section will address moments of supposed 'crisis' for the Zionist discourse and will provide the intellectual framework for understanding the 'nation'. These moments are political junctures that force re-evaluations of both the past and the present, and thus also act as historiographical disjunctures in the national narrative and discourse.

In this process of shaping a national identity, defining the nation in relation to the 'Other' is crucial. In Israel, conflicts with the surrounding Arab countries and the Palestinians within its boundaries and within the occupied Palestinian territory have exerted great influence on the development of identity. This chapter

provides the framework for understanding changes within Israeli society during the peace process (pre-Oslo, during Oslo, and post-Oslo) as *subtle adjustments* to identity rather than as existential crises. It will contribute to the broader argument made by the study: that political junctures/historical disjunctures can be regarded as events that carry seeds of potential for change, but to regard them as radical overhauls, if they are not accompanied by sufficient structural change, is erroneous. This in turn provides an explanation as to why Israel failed to move from a Zionist to a post-Zionist phase of national life after the signing of the Declaration of Principles and the Oslo Accords, contrary to the predictions of some scholarly work considered in Chapter 1.

From nation to nation-state

Various approaches can be employed in explaining the phenomena of nations and nationalism. The aim here is not to list every theory and its inevitable refutation. Rather, it is to pick out various strains of nationalist theory that are relevant to the discussion of the Israeli state and with it the Israeli nation, with the understanding that much will inevitably be overlooked during the discussion.

Put broadly, theories seeking to explain the rise of the nation-state can be divided into two schools of thought. The first – 'primordialist' – theory understands nations as 'creating' the nation-state. In other words, it points to the existence of common collective identities prior to their political expression through a nationalist movement. The second – broadly defined as the 'constructivist' approach – contends that, in fact, nationalism spawned 'nations'. The 'nation' is the framing ideological structure that allows nationalism to emerge as a mass political movement: modern in origin; constructed; controlled; and even 'imagined'.

Three fundamental differences between the two schools of thought can be considered in the following manner: first, maintaining the essence of nations as opposed to their constructed quality. Second, maintaining the antiquity of nations as opposed to their emergence in relation to modernity. Third, differing over the basis of nationalism. One argues that nationalism is based on culture; the other argues that nationalism is fuelled by political aspirations. Although these divisions are presented here in a crude manner, they make the discussion for present purposes clearer. An initial distinction between the two approaches is necessary for later discussions of changes to Israeli identity in an era defined by the peace process.

Some writers on nationalism have argued that nations formed the ancient roots of modern nationalism and have used the French term *ethnie* to describe the foundations of a nation from which a modern nationalist movement can take root. The dimensions of the *ethnie* include a collective name, a common myth of descent, and a shared historical heritage. In terms of the more overtly political nature of the expression of nationalism, nations are associated with a particular territory where they are united by features such as a distinctive shared culture. This 'shared' culture, nurtured by the conscious production of common bonds through rituals, myths, folklore, and organized religion, is vital in the promotion of the nation as an objective entity.

Crucially, a sense of solidarity is magnified by a nation's engagement in warfare to protect and defend itself against outsiders. Fundamentally, however, it is the nation or the *ethnie* and its associated features that give rise to nationalism – a political movement that rallies the masses on the strength of the defining features of the nation, often in defence of the integrity of the nation. As Anthony D. Smith wrote:

> If there was no model of past ethnicity and no pre-existent *ethnie*, there could be neither nation nor nationalism … modern conditions and trends have undoubtedly been responsible for spreading the idea and model of the nation as the sole legitimate political unit, but they needed the general inspiration of ethnicity as a model of socio-cultural organisation and particular instances of strategic *ethnie*, to bring nations and nationalism into existence. Without ethnie and ethnicism, there could be neither nations nor nationalism.[1]

Hence, although nationalism as a movement has been propagated by modernity, its foundations – the *ethnie* – can be traced to genuine ethnic affiliations of the past. The nation offers its members what amounts almost to a sense of immortality, the achievements of which provide 'personal renewal and dignity'. It also offers a sense of fraternity, suggesting, at least on an ideological level, 'the close relationship between the family, the ethnic community, and the nation'.[2]

There is, according to theorists of this school, remarkable continuity between the *ethnie* and nation, nationalism and ethnicism; therefore:

> Modern nations and nationalism have only extended and deepened the meanings and scope of older ethnic concepts and structures. Nationalism has certainly universalized these structures and ideals, but modern 'civic' nations have not in practice really transcended ethnicity or ethnic sentiments.[3]

Although the theory of the ethnic origins of nations provides an understanding of which *features* constitute a nation, it fails to address the reasons *why*, at a certain point in history, those features came into play and proved so vital in the project of defining the boundaries of a particular nation. Whilst conceding that modernity was essential for the *expansion* of nationalism, there is little reflection on the historical and human context of the nationalist movement. In other words, this perspective fails to acknowledge the role of human agency in the nationalist project.

In contrast to the 'primordialist' school of thought that views identity as a natural outgrowth of genuine earlier ethic affiliations, other theorists have recognized the importance of *defining* and artificially creating markers of common identity. They do not consider identification as a 'natural' process of recognition, including recognition of common origins, ideals, and characteristics, upon which allegiances and solidarities can be founded. Based on the belief that the task of re-evaluation requires 'not a theory of the knowing subject, but rather a theory of discursive practice',[4] these theorists claim that nationalism and national identities can be deconstructed and understood in the context of their surrounding socio-economic and political conditions.

The 'primordialist' approach to nationalism is often the model used to explain the emergence of Jewish nationalism in the nineteenth century. This perspective privileges the Zionist historical narrative and, until recently, has dominated the understanding of Jewish life in Europe.[5] The writings of Jewish intellectuals who were prominent in influencing the development of a Jewish nationalist movement indicate that they began with this very premise – that the Jews constituted an *ethnie*, and by virtue of a shared common past they deserved a shared future. However, the implicit or explicit recognition by early Zionist leaders and nationalist thinkers that the Jews had to be 're-bound' together implies that even they sensed that a national identity needed to be *constructed* (or at least *reconstructed*) to cement the foundations of a nation and a nation state.

Central to this approach is the idea that national identity is a constructed, rather than an inherited, entity, and, more importantly, that because of this it is fluid and subject to change. Nations, then, are indeed a 'product' of human agency. They are modern, constructed, and in essence 'imagined', as Benedict Anderson has argued.

> [Nations are] imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.[6]

According to Anderson, the emergence of a national consciousness corresponds with the development of a new understanding of linear time during a period referred to as 'print capitalism' – an era marked by the decline of the sacral languages and sacral monarchies, and the introduction of a new concept of time and spontaneity through the introduction of daily newspapers in a language style understood by all citizens – a 'print-language'.

In short, this is one way of understanding nations as something more than the predicated outcomes of older concepts of ethnicity. It places nations within history and allows for the perception of a nation to change from something fixed in antiquity to a concept the defining features of which, though far from arbitrary, are not fixed in time. By doing so, this approach also opens up analytical space to reveal the discourses of power that stand behind nationalism and nationalist projects. It places human agency firmly at the centre of such projects and provides an understanding of the fluid nature of national identity. If the 'primordialist' theory explains the basis for nations, it fails to explain their development and change – the primary preoccupation of this work. Further, by claiming that a nation can maintain the same structures of identification over a 2,000-year period, this approach implies that significant changes simply do not occur.

Acknowledging human agency, the 'constructivist' approach introduces the idea of an intellectual elite that both guards continuity and stimulates change in the imagined boundaries of the national 'self'. Its focus on newspapers, print-capitalism, and the secular unification of language highlights the importance of the 'written word' in the nationalist project, which is most starkly illustrated in accounts of the past and explanations for the present. This naturally draws

attention to the role of the academic and intellectual involved in the process of the production of a corpus of knowledge regarding national life and the nation. It illustrates the central role of the academic and intellectual in shaping and defining national identity. At the same time it shows the continuously changing and contested nature of this identity as academics and intellectuals struggle over their respective definitions of it through the written word.

In Israel this is made clear through the bitter exchange between 'establishment' academics and 'revisionist' academics. In addition to its relevance for the continuous process of re-imagining the nation, the 'constructivist' approach, thanks to its focus on human agency in the era of print-capitalism, also better highlights the initial emergence of Jewish nationalism in the late nineteenth century against the backdrop of the emergence of nationalist movements across Europe. Gradually developing into its final form, Jewish nationalism intellectually grew into what is known today as 'Zionism' or 'classical Zionism.'

Facets of hegemony: Understanding national culture

The previous section argued that nationalism, Jewish nationalism in particular, was the outcome of a process of (re)construction, rather than the resurrection of a pre-existent reality. It did not, however, address the issue of power with regards to this process of state- and nation-building and the relationship between the state and civil society (in this case, the relationship between the nascent Jewish state in Palestine and world Jewry who were to form the basis for Jewish civil society in Palestine).

Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, writing in the early twentieth century, insisted that the state and civil society are not separate and distinct entities. He argued that they are caught in a dialectical relationship that is determined by the social relations of production, and that ultimately the nature of the state depends on the class structure that supports it. The capitalist bourgeoisie exercises hegemony over society not only through its control over the means of production; it also achieves the acquiescence of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie in the hegemonic social order by making enough concessions so as to render its hegemony the dominant common consciousness. As a result of this analysis, Gramsci enlarged his definition of the state to involve not only the elements of government. Gramsci recognized the 'underpinnings of the political structure in civil society'. These included 'all the institutions which helped to create in people certain modes of behaviour and expectations consistent with the hegemonic social order'. In other words:

> [Where] the hegemonic class is the dominant class in a country or social formation, the state (in Gramsci's enlarged concept) maintains cohesion and identity … through the propagation of a common culture.[7]

Thus, hegemony is a form of social contract that emphasizes the consent of the ruled rather than the coercion of the ruler as a basis for authority, and hegemony

is hence embedded in the institutions of the state. The struggle for hegemony is a struggle for power as various social groups use different methods in order to gain ascendancy over each other. This work argues that although one social group may gain a position of hegemony which is then maintained through the embedded structures of the state, the struggle over the legitimacy and/or for control of hegemony is ongoing. Gramsci's theory, unlike crude forms of Marxism, holds that hegemony (or ideological ascendancy) is not permanent nor is it reducible to class struggles and economic interests alone: 'Hegemony is a relation, not of domination by means of force, but of consent by means of political and ideological leadership. It is the organisation of consent'.[8]

Hegemony can be achieved only through a transformation of popular consciousness, by causing a change in the way in which people think and feel. Thus a major preoccupation of Jewish nationalism, alongside economic and political control, was with the intellectual and moral reform of Jewish identity to achieve this new hegemony within the Jewish community through the transformation of 'Jew' into 'Israeli'.[9]

Gramsci's theory of hegemony allows for an understanding of ideology that transcends categories of objective 'truth' or 'falsity'. Ideology can be measured by its ability to bind together a bloc of diverse social elements, itself acting as the 'cement' or the agent for social unification. The hegemonic class, i.e. the leaders of the *Yishuv*,[10] succeeded in combining the interests of all Jews into its own project to create a 'national-popular collective will' – which can only be formed through a process of intellectual and moral reform.[11] There must be a:

> [Cultural-social] unity through which a multiplicity of dispersed wills with heterogeneous aims are welded together with a single aim, as the basis of an equal and common conception of the world.[12]

Two vital components of the production of this 'common conception of the world' was history and claims of a common past. It was the redefinition of the Jewish religion, as proposed by early Zionist thinkers, which made this possible. Suddenly, instead of merely being a religious identity confined to the boundaries of religious practice, being Jewish implied a common way of thinking, shared values, traditions, and customs. Although these are diffuse notions, difficult to measure or gauge, they are bound within the concept of a national identity.

These were coupled with greater resources for 'imagining' a wider Jewish community via the mechanism of print-capitalism and the simultaneous rejection of Jews from their localized 'imagined communities' in Europe. In addition to purely material conditions, an increasing recognition of 'negative' pre-existing (social) features fuelled the emergence of a separate Jewish nationalism. Though claiming that nations were modern inventions, some theorists have recognized that in order for a nation to capture the imagination of the would-be national community, it requires a basis in pre-existing features.

Traditional accounts of Jewish history and the eventual hegemony of the Zionist movement as the dominant expression of Jewish nationalism concur with this idea,

and place an emphasis on the perception of pre-existing negative features. These features were credited by seminal Zionist leaders, such as Theodor Herzl,[13] as the reason why a majority of Jews failed to assimilate into European society and adopt various European nationalisms as their favoured voice of political expression.

In general, communal differentiating features are the ones most focused on in discussions on nationalism, such as differences in religion, colour, ethnicity, and language. Yet, as the theory of 'marginal men' suggests, differentiating features could also be based on individual experiences, albeit shared by many as a unifying common experience. This theory argues that the young generation of local intelligentsia stood at the forefront of 'late-coming' nationalist movements in the Third World. Exposure to European education and principles of Enlightenment alienated them from their own societies, yet they were thwarted from obtaining positions of honour and responsibility in the colonial administrations. Elie Kedourie has argued that 'this disaffection was clothed in ideology which at once explained their predicament and restored self-esteem'.[14]

The ideology evoked by the 'marginal men' was nationalism resting 'on the assumption that every nation must have a past'.[15] This assumption, adopted from the European intellectual tradition, alerted emerging Third World nationalist leaders to the importance of rewriting of history and to the reinvention of a national past. They instrumentalized local practices and religions, arbitrarily mixing and changing them in order to mobilize the masses, and invented ethnicity for the purposes of a nationalist movement. Perhaps this approach attributes the intellectual 'marginal men' with disproportionate influence by arguing that national ideologies are the sole product of their dissatisfaction. However, this hypothesis is important because it discloses the power relations that stand behind the powerful images of a 'nation' that is actively 'made' and 'remade' by intellectuals on the basis of their 'personal' experiences and their own interpretations of their circumstances.

Arguably, Jewish intellectuals, such as Theodore Herzl, were one form of the marginal men who reacted against nationalism because of the frustration born of their personal experiences with it. Historical conditions led to a more fluid and skilled population amongst whom language was unified and disseminated so as to make the work force more efficient. An intellectual elite blossomed from increased educational opportunities. It was this elite that consciously participated in the project of 'imagining' the nation and that turned the 'imagined' community into a reality.

According to the Zionist narrative, Jewish nationalism in Europe passed through its initial stages. First, Jews explored the potential for inclusion within their territorial nationalist movements that went hand in hand with hopes for emancipation. The development of a tighter, more exclusionary nationalist identity left the Jews secluded from their societies. They experienced an overwhelming sense of rejection and frustration at their exclusion from them; an exclusion based on both imposed and accepted, often negative, differentiating features.

Jewish 'marginal men' developed a nationalist movement and ideology of their own. Traditionally, marginal men who comprised the core of a country's intellectual elite were then the driving force behind its nationalist ideology. Although Israel did not develop in the same way as the post-colonial states that the theory of

marginal men was developed in relation to, it highlights how history is rewritten by these marginalized intellectuals in order to accommodate the new, imagined collective self-identity. In the case of post-colonial states, this history obviously acts as a 'counterclaim' to the official histories written by the colonizing powers (although it can then quickly become a history legitimizing the rule of a few oppressive intellectuals). Whilst this does not translate to the Jewish case, the identification of the frustrated intellectual elite standing at the heart of the 'idea' of the nation bears striking parallels to the case of European Jewry before the establishment of the state of Israel.

Some scholars disagree with the idea that Zionism as an ideological movement was the inevitable form of national identification open to the Jews of Europe. Israeli sociologist Gershon Shafir wrote:

> In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the undermining of the traditional Jewish middleman role in the manorial economy of the Pale of the Settlement and Central Europe called into question Jewish ethnic and cultural distinctiveness.[16]

Shafir noted that before 1933 only a small minority of world Jewry chose to identify themselves using Zionism as a frame of reference. Even today, the world's largest Jewish population resides not in Israel, but in the US. In spite of this, there is little doubt that even those Jews who choose not to embrace Zionist ideology as a way of life by moving to Israel for ideological reasons have been forced to define themselves, to some degree, with reference to Zionism. And certainly with regard to the Jewish population in Israel, Zionism was and still is the hegemonic ideological component of Jewish Israeli identity.

This study highlights the challenges that have emerged to the hegemonic Zionist discourse, but argues that this discourse still defines the parameters of the debates raging over politics, identity, and history in Israel. Nevertheless, within the hegemony of Zionist discourse is space for contestation and struggle. This space is often illuminated and widened by important political junctures. In the case of Israel, these junctures have been the joint fulcrums of war and peace.

Contested spaces: Discourses on national identity

The early Zionists achieved hegemony in cultural terms because they combined popular democratic themes. They drew on the historical narratives of the Jewish people that were not divisive on matters of class etc., stressing rather their common heritage and their ontological distinction from the 'Other' – that is, their essential difference from others and their unity with each other born of this generic difference. However, identity is not simply a matter of defining oneself at a particular moment in time – it is a process of constant redefinition. It is also a matter of holding on to old definitions in the face of adversity and attacks from outside and inside the nation. Thus, the old definition of the nation is defended against new challenges.

Most conventional theories of nationalism, including the more fluid 'constructivist' approach, seek to explain the reason for the emergence of nationalism. This work argues that it was not a process that unfolded once and then remained fixed in time in its initial form. Rather, the case of Jewish nationalism illustrates that there is potential for change within both forms of nationalism and national identity and that the nature and direction of change is highly contested amongst those who crucially shape national identity and its political manifestation: intellectuals, academics, and social scientists.

Constructions of identification and identity are discursive practices, never complete but always 'in process'.

> It is not determined in the sense that it can always be 'won' or 'lost', sustained or abandoned. Though not without its determinate conditions of existence, including the material and symbolic resources required to sustain it, identification is in the end conditional, lodged in contingency. Once secured, it does not obliterate difference … Identification is, then, a process of articulation, a suturing, an over-determination or a lack, but never a proper fit.[17]

The process of nation-building, which drew together the material and cultural resources of mainly Western Jewry, and which by measure of its own goals (both a cultural and a political revival) was successful, was never a 'proper fit'. The 'imagining' of the collective national self is not a process that is ever complete. Nor is identity ever 'closed' to change as the processes that accompany defining national identity are continuous. Social anthropologist Stuart Hall argues that the concept of identity is not an essentialist one, but is both 'strategic' and 'positional' in terms of its dialectical relationship with its socio-political and economic context. Nor is it superimposed upon society – it has a 'historical' life, rather than an 'a-historical' existence.

> That is to say, directly contrary to what appears to be its settled semantic career, this concept of identity does not signal that stable core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change, the bit of the self which remains always-already 'the same', identical to itself across time.[18]

Taking a similar position, this work argues that identity in Israel, though not subject to radical overhaul, is constantly being redefined over time, in line with social and political changes in the country.

Identity plays against difference, and requires discursive work or the 'binding and marking of symbolic boundaries, the production of 'frontier-effects'.[19] In other words, it needs a discourse of 'Self' and 'Other' to distinguish the political community 'inside' from those standing outside its boundaries. One form of this discursive practice is history – the remembrance of a past that allows these memories to be accessed by those 'inside' by future generations of the same 'nation'.

Whilst there is no final consolidation, no 'end' to the definition, or the 'imagining' of it, there is an emphasis placed on the dichotomy between the 'outside' and the 'inside' of national identity. This difference is generated in discursive practice because, in fact, the 'inside' is as fragmented and shifting as the 'outside' which consolidates it. In Israel, the reality of a disjuncture in the system of identity highlighted the shifting sands between 'inside' and 'outside', and revealed a more troubled, complex process than the apparent transformation of 'Old Jew' into 'New Israeli'.

The primary concern of this study is not nationalism *per se*. However, it is necessary in order to explain how the concept of the nation and the structure supporting it – national identity – are socially constructed and thus not immutable, but changeable in time and, in line with what has been termed, by French intellectual Pierre Bourdieu, the *habitus*. The concept of the *habitus* explains that the subjective viewpoint of a person is not pre-given, but formed against a backdrop of desires, beliefs, and personal experiences. Each person has a role in contributing to the development of the world in which he or she lives.

> The theory of practice as practice insists … that the objects of knowledge are constructed, not passively recorded, and, contrary to intellectualist idealism, that the principle of this construction is the system of structuring dispositions, the *habitus*, which is constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions.[20]

This suggests that national identity is fluid in nature, as the more constructivist approaches to nationalism imply. There is a dialectic relationship between identity and the social world that nurtures it. Further, if identity is understood as a subjective choice then all aspects of that world – political, economic, religious, and cultural – contribute to its character. This interlinkage was understood by Bourdieu as implicating fields of knowledge. He wrote:

> [t]he faculties which are dominant in the political order have the function of training executive agents able to put into practice without questioning or doubting, within the limits of a given social order, the techniques and recipes of a body of knowledge which they claim neither to produce … [or to] transform.[21]

Power/knowledge and the intellectual

French philosopher Michel Foucault's theory of discursive practice is one that places power at the centre of any debate regarding knowledge. Put simply, he argued that any claim to knowledge is accompanied by a similar claim to truth.[22] And it is this claim to truth, based on a pretext of an absolute irrefutable verification, that is disingenuously powerful. Foucault wrote: '[t]ruth isn't outside power or lacking in power … truth is a thing of this world: it is produced by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power'.[23]

From such an angle, the *will* to truth and knowledge is illuminated as playing a defining role in the formulation of cognitive interests within a society, and this in turn affects the way that society defines itself. The production of knowledge of any sort does not occur in a social vacuum. In his work *Orientalism*, influenced by Foucault, Palestinian intellectual Edward Said divided 'knowledge' into two categories: pure and political knowledge. He noted:

> [c]ivil society recognizes a graduation of political importance in the various fields of knowledge. To some extent the political importance given a field comes from the possibility of its direct translation into economic terms; but to a greater extent political importance comes from the closeness of a field to ascertainable sources of power in political society.[24]

Foucault's approach views power as a ubiquitous unharnessed force circulating in society and manifesting itself in all human relations, and seizing upon every chance to increase its own capacity. However, in this case, power, or at least the *will to truth*, was claimed most successfully in Palestine by the state-builders or, in effect, the Labour Zionist movement which sought to establish its own 'regime of truth' for the citizens of the new state of Israel. This work will loosely term this the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse.

In simple terms, for the purposes of this work, the term refers to the hegemonic structure of thought that includes the dominant historical narrative, ideology, and practice of the state. Amongst other things it influences the production of self-knowledge within society, though in line with Gramsci's definition of hegemony it is also embedded deep within state structures and so affects political, economic, and wider social realms. It has shaped the way the nation sees itself *because* it has shaped the nation. In order to consolidate this unity, competing interpretations of the Jewish past and present were incorporated or silenced. The role of the intellectual, especially the historian, is crucial in this process. Historians have been identified as one of the key groups advancing national sentiment, and playing an important part in the propagation of the 'national idea', just as those who wield power in the polity provoke the idea of the state.[25] In regards to the importance of intellectuals in the development of nationalist ideology, Max Weber noted:

> [t]he significance of the 'nation' is usually anchored in its superiority, or at least the irreplacibility of the culture values that can only be preserved and developed through the cultivation of the individuality (Eigenart) of the community. It is self-evident, therefore, that the intellectuals … will be among the foremost proponents of the 'national idea'.[26]

The nationalist project is an intellectual as well as a political project and it relies on collective memory to re-enforce its claims of a shared past and a common destiny. Clearly then, intellectuals stand at the heart of the nationalist enterprise because they assist in shaping the collective self-imagination of the nation – not

merely in the emergence and initial stages of the formation of national identity, but throughout the continuous struggle for its redefinition.[27]

This indicates that national identities and the accompanying discourse on which identity is constructed are in a constant state of flux. The historian operates as part of an infinite web of social forces that he or she is both shaped by and contributes to. The development in the internal approach to Israeli history by a section of the academic community could be considered a signifier of a changing *habitus* – where the environment in which this 'history' is produced – is itself a '[Product] of history [which] produces individual and collective practices – more history – in accordance with the schemes generated by history. It ensures the active presence of experiences'.[28]

However, this work argues that within every hegemonic historic bloc is the potential to build a counter-hegemonic bloc. An existing hegemony contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction, or at least its redefinition. The concession it makes for the sake of the necessity of inclusion of the greatest number of members in its alliance weakens its own hegemonic base. This holds true in the Israeli case. The aggressive and seemingly successful policies towards state- and nation-building implemented in the early years of the state weakened the hegemonic base of the elite ruling group: the *Ashkenazim*.[29]

It is appropriate here to mention the important contribution made by Edward Said to the understanding of the relationship between knowledge and power, particularly discursive power. His work forms part of a large corpus of work that is broadly defined as 'post-colonial theory'. It is relevant here because of post-colonial theory's underlying assumptions and premises and their application to Israel. Perhaps a suitable place to begin is with the work of Frantz Fanon. A French man of colour, born in the French Antilles, he joined the Free French Army in 1943. In 1954, he resigned his post as head of a military hospital in Algiers to join the Algerian resistance (the National Liberation Front (FLN)) in their struggle for independence from French colonial rule. As a result of his actions he was expelled from Algeria and spent the rest of his life engaging in a critical theoretical and practical struggle against colonialism and the racism that, he argued, underpinned it.

In his work, *Black Skins, White Masks*,[30] Fanon claimed that colonialism was based on an assumption of the racial superiority of the white 'colonizers' over the non-white 'colonized' peoples. Colonization adopted a mantle of modernization, enlightenment, and intellectual advancement, and, by doing so, privileged the history, culture, language, and beliefs of the colonizers. This created a dissonance in the self-identification of the colonized people: by accepting the normative assertions of the colonizers they compensated for their own feelings of inferiority, and consequently alienated themselves from their own culture.[31] Fanon discussed two further issues which have been picked up by post-Zionist scholarship: the concept of 'colonial space' and the role of the *intelligentsia* in liberated nations, crucially in the area of education where it is critical to avoid reproducing the normative ideologies institutionalized by the colonizers.[32]

It is easier to place Edward Said's contribution to postcolonial theory against the background of Fanon's work. Said's mediation of the critical methods associated with French 'High Theory' into the Anglo-American academic realm in the 1970s provided one of the first examples of a sustained application of such modes of analysis in Anglophone cultural history and textual analysis. In his groundbreaking work *Orientalism*, first published in 1978, Said argued that the West's representation of the East, or the Occidental world's representation of the Orient, formed part of its structure of domination. Drawing on Foucault's theory of the power/knowledge matrix, and applying it in a broad textual criticism of English literature dealing with the 'Orient', he adapted elements of this new theory to argue that all Western systems of cultural description were deeply contaminated by the politics, considerations, positions, and strategies of power. By insisting on emphasizing the relationship between Western representation and knowledge on one hand and Western political and material power on the other, 'Orientalism' transformed earlier approaches to literature studies of the Empire and set the terms of reference in subsequent debates in the post-colonial field. Said asked:

> [h]ow can we treat the cultural, historical phenomenon of Orientalism as a kind of willed human work … without at the same time losing sight of the alliance between cultural work, political tendencies, the state and the specific realities of domination?[33]

This work contends that Zionist discourse did not command the power, resources, or longevity that Edward Said argued was the case with Orientalist discourse. However, this study recognizes the role of the power/knowledge matrix in influencing both Israeli and Palestinian lives in real terms.

Bearing Said's question in mind, this study primarily addresses the realm of history and the social sciences, which belong to what Said terms as 'political' knowledge, i.e. knowledge that has political implications and is close to sources of political power. The decision to focus on sociology and history and not other subjects is primarily one based on limited space – although subjects such as archaeology, anthropology and even natural science could be included and are worthy of separate studies.[34] British sociologist Anthony Giddens noted that:

> [h]istory as the writing of history also poses its own dilemmas and puzzles … they are not distinctive; they do not permit us to make clear-cut distinctions between history and social science. Hermeneutic problems involved in the accurate description of divergent forms of life, the interpretation of texts, the explication of action, institutions and social transformation – these are shared by all the social sciences, including history.[35]

In line with this, this work concentrates on history and social science, with the understanding that the line between these two fields of knowledge is inevitably blurred, and that they are both fields of highly political and politicized knowledge.

The intellectual *habitus*: The role of history and the social sciences

The emergence of a national sentiment is critical for any nationalist movement. It acts as cement to bond the nation together, provoking a teleological belief in a common destiny. For Jewish nationalists, common myths and memories of Jewish life were incorporated into Zionist discourse.[36] This study argues that whilst the realm of knowledge (particularly self knowledge and understanding encompassed by the social sciences in fields such as history, political sciences, sociology, anthropology, and archaeology) contributed to the success of Zionism in achieving its hegemonic status within Jewish nationalism, and it was and still is, also a site of contestation, innovation and re-evaluation. Zionist discourse played an important role in shaping the nation during the pre-state period, and necessarily continued to do so in the state-building era while Israeli national identity developed.[37] Indeed, as this work demonstrates, this process still continues today and has commanded more public attention as time passes, rather than the opposite.

The process of nation-building that centres on a common national identity needs to be bolstered by the belief in a shared past and a commonality of experience. In the Jewish case there was no common territory, no common modern language, and no uniform cultural experience. The project therefore planted its roots in the only uniform factor touching the lives of Jews across the world – the narrative of the shared Jewish 'past' as recorded in the Torah. More than a code for religious practice, the books of the Old Testament presented a model for Jewish political independence and the struggle for national survival. It was also in a form that had survived in every Jewish community, despite differences in language, customs, or adherence to religious laws. As mentioned earlier, Jewish nationalist thinkers redefined the Jewish religion, temporarily managing to convert religious practice into national sentiment. Religious devotion and obligation were interchanged for national service and loyalty to the nation. This reshaping of religious identity hinged on the narrative of a shared Jewish 'past' and the desire for a shared Jewish future as evoked by the hegemonic Zionist discourse.

Israeli scholar Shlomo Avineri described Zionism as a 'post-emancipation phenomenon', which drew on an aspect of Jewish religious tradition that had been quiescent and passive – links with the Land of Israel – and made it central and active in the regeneration of the Jewish nation. He wrote:

> Zionism was the most fundamental revolution in Jewish life. It substituted a secular self-identity of the Jews as a nation for the traditional and Orthodox self-identity in religious terms. It changed the quietistic and pious hope of the Return to Zion into an effective social force, moving millions of people to Israel.[38]

This hypothesis can be extended in order to provide a more complex understanding of the role of Jewish religious identity and history. To base a nationalist ideology on the longing for a return to Zion was not sufficient. It needed to

be accompanied by a narrative: the belief that Jews were indeed 'one' people, that they had suffered similar rejections from their 'host' societies and, further, that history demonstrated that their only option was the (re-)establishment of the Jewish kingdom – harking back to a time when the Jews had governed themselves. Though an independent state was the *end* of the political project, its *means* was the reinterpretation of religious identity through its transformation into a 'historical' identity. The success of the political project was based on other factors, such as economics and diplomacy, however, notwithstanding the power struggle and contestation from other forms of Jewish nationalism to define Jewish identity, Zionist discourse provided the ideological, narrative, and intellectual framework for the evolution. Yet, despite the success of the political project this transformation could not, because of the very nature of identity, be completed successfully. Eric Cohen has contended that:

> [the] absorption process under state auspices stopped short of that complete transformation of the newcomers into 'New Jews', as envisaged by traditional Zionist ideology. Though not fully absorbed, the immigrants were strongly encouraged to shed their old ways and traditions.[39]

Cohen contends that though seemingly successful, the notion of a 'common' past was not sufficient to prevent other divisions within Israeli identity from emerging, and that was disregarding the problem of a large Israeli-Arab minority who cannot share in recourse to a common Jewish historical experience.

The dispute over the success of redefining the older forms of identification within the Jewish community into a unified modern affiliation with the state of Israel is significant. It highlights the understanding of fragmented identities and the importance of defining the 'inside' community against the 'outside'. Central to this process is the idea of a collective past coupled with anonymity within the collective. Thus both the act of 'collective remembering' and the role of 'collective forgetfulness' in the creation of the nation are vital for forging a national identity. French philosopher Ernest Renan wrote, 'the forgetfulness and, I would even say, erring of history, are an essential factor in the creation of the nation'.[40]

In other words, common memory relies on a collective amnesia, and both work in synchrony. History is a process of both remembering and forgetting, yet they should not be considered as two separate acts. Just as a coin has two sides, history also simultaneously presents two sides to the historian. It is ultimately the historian who makes the choice between remembering and forgetting from a pool of facts, which is infinite in number.[41] However for a nation to be willed into existence, collective amnesia is needed in relation to local history and ancestry which must be replaced with a standardized centralized history. Thus, 'both memory and forgetfulness have deep social roots; neither springs from historical accident'.[42]

The power of the claim to history must not be underestimated, especially in the cases of new states where construction of the historical narrative of the nation is an act of immense power because 'to give itself a history is the most fundamental act of self-identification of a community'.[43]

To grasp, then, the significance of Zionist history – until recently occupying the relatively unchallenged position of 'Israeli history', or as it saw itself, the apex of 'Jewish history' – it is necessary to discuss the role of narrative in more detail. Clearly, the label 'Israeli history' acts as an instigator of its own validity by implying that there can be no other historical voice that could represent the Israeli people. It neither requires nor indeed wishes for the prefix 'official/traditional' to be added to its title for this would in itself legitimize the claims of alternative histories – ones that are not included by the Zionist discourse, such as that of the Palestinians, non-Zionists, and the *Mizrahi* Jews.

History serves a purpose: '[t]he motives for such a history would come from concerns external to history *per se*; that it would be a vehicle for the delivery of a specific position for persuasive purposes'.[44] 'Israeli history' – including the accounts of the events leading up to the Declaration of Independence in 1948 – is not presented as ideological history and this implies that: '[certain] histories (generally the dominant ones) are not ideological at all, do not position people, and do not deliver views of the past that come from outside "the subject"'.[45]

In other words, it presents itself as a reification of objective truth, where the history of the Jewish people and, further, of the Israeli state comprises a blend of present and past 'realities'. However, this claim to an objective 'view from nowhere' can be challenged because, as historical theorist Keith Jenkins notes: '[m]eanings given to histories of all descriptions are necessarily that; not meanings intrinsic in the past … [But] meanings given to the past from outside(rs). History is never for itself; it is always for someone'.[46]

If history is 'always for someone' then two questions must be asked in order to appreciate the value of the historian with reference to the given example of Israel. The first must be 'whose history this is, in the sense of history *for* whom rather than history *of* whom'.[47] The second question that arises directly from the first is to ask 'and *who* writes this history for … ?' In answer to the first question, Jenkins wrote:

> It seems plausible that particular social formations want their historians to deliver particular things. It also seems plausible to say that the predominantly delivered positions will be in the interests of those stronger ruling blocs within social formations.[48]

When considering the second question, the role of the intellectual becomes clear. The academic, in this case the historian, both consciously and unconsciously takes part in the nation-building project of the elite of a state by producing narratives which validate the reification of a 'nation' with a teleological historical vision, sharing a common destiny and a desire to preserve the 'inner domain' of the nationalist movement which 'bears the "essential" marks of cultural identity'.[49]

The recognition of this process in Israel emerged in critical works being produced in the 1980s. The authors of these works 'criticized the role played by the country's academic institutions in shaping Zionist self-image'. Through media exposure of their revised versions of history and historiography, they were

'regarded as a cultural phenomenon in Israel'.[50] Consequently they were labelled 'post-Zionists' by the press – a term that not all accept.

Nevertheless, the realm of knowledge – be it history, archaeology, or science – cannot be accorded the privileged status of existing and reproducing in a social vacuum. All three of these disciplines have been effectively utilized in portraying the 'Zionist interpretation of the Palestine reality'.[51] As asserted by Foucault, modern social science theory attests to the link between power and knowledge.[52] He argued that all political and social thought is enmeshed in an interplay of power/knowledge. Foucault's theory of discursive practice – that every historical period produces 'forms of knowledge, objects, subjects and practices of knowledge' – was premised on the function of 'discourse'.[53] Discourse, in the Foucauldian sense is understood as a system of representation, rather than a system of language. It emphasizes the role of social practice in constructing knowledge at a particular historical moment in time.

> [Discourse] … constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can meaningfully be talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others.[54]

Accordingly:

> [e]ach society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.[55]

The power of history lies with its self-representation – as a true story – which obfuscates the divide between history and story. Indeed, history has even been described as 'nationalism's autobiography … [which] is fundamentally flawed'.[56] To make the distinction between the two acts as a vital reminder of this. 'History' implies a comprehensivity that in reality is impossible to attain – the idea that nothing happens 'outside' of it – that is, if an event is not recorded it did not happen. A 'story' is a self-confessed selection of 'facts'. It makes no apologies for the cognitive interests and theoretical orientations of its author that determine what he or she sees as valuable for the construction of the narrative. What is important then, is not what the 'facts' are, but *which ones* are included in the narrative. Through their power over the choice and interpretation of facts, the contribution of historians to the mediation of past and present is highly significant.

This process is shaped by the forces acting upon the agent within the parameters of the social world in which he or she lives. Therefore 'it is impossible to disentangle the history of occurrences from the history of their effects; we therefore always live within "effective history"'.[57] The historian is thereby taken from

the 'objective realm' wherein he or she claims to be producing an account of past 'realities' to a 'present' that is shaped by those 'past realities'. The historians can then be examined in the light of the intricate dynamic in which they are inextricably caught.

A hegemonic discourse is both a structure of thought and a structure of power because by deciding how a topic is to be thought about, by deciding its boundaries and its limitations, is to exercise power and control over it. In the process of forging the Israeli 'nation', discourses on identity were vital and powerful in a real way. The dominant discourse that emerged from the various intra-Zionist struggles was a neat supplement to political power and translated into political leverage over disparate Jewish communities brought together to fulfil the Zionist dream.

Attempts have been made to understand the hegemonic discourse through convenient contradictions. Even Theodor Herzl insisted that the dilemma at the core of Jewish identity was between peculiarity and normality.[58] Israeli politician Yossi Beilin framed the dilemma around two contradictory poles – of choice and isolation.[59] By this he contended that these terms sum up the Zionist enterprise. The word 'choice' has Biblical connotations, with the Jews being the 'chosen people' of God, and the 'isolation' is a clear indication of Israel's modern day geopolitical setting and siege mentality. The responsibility of being a chosen people necessarily implies isolation – a demarcation from other nations. Thus, these key concepts in Zionist discourse transcended 2,000 years of history to link the political project of Zionism with the Biblical claim to the land. However, this work argues that it is history that occupies Zionist discourse and that these terms help constitute history.

Zionist discourse encompassed its own interpretation of Jewish history that needed to be powerful enough to include all Jewish communities within its teleological vision. Zionism, as defined by the Zionist movement, was both a fulfilment of history, and a reversal of history. This means that Jewish settlement of the land of Palestine was considered to be the next chapter in Jewish life, resumed after 2,000 years. God's promise to His chosen people could again become a 'living' promise, rather than a Biblical promise confined to the annals of history. It simultaneously meant a reversal and a forgetfulness of 2,000 years of 'exile' when Jews had been scattered across the earth.

Political junctures/historical disjunctures

If identity and history are vital parts of the political project, it seems logical that they are also susceptible to change at critical political junctures. This book focuses on the era of the Arab-Israeli peace process, beginning with the new stratum of scholarship that emerged most notably after Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. This military manoeuvre, otherwise known as Operation Peace for the Galilee was one such critical disjuncture in the narrative of Israeli history. Israel's incursion into Lebanon was of great theoretical significance, because it initiated a very public shift in individual consciousness and generated a debate that could not help

but touch on the raw wounds of identity. For Israel, the war with Lebanon marked an important turning point in the country's military record.

Of course the roots of Israel's search for peace can be traced back even further – many would claim that 1967 was more significant than Lebanon in this respect. However, for the purposes of this study, 1982 is of greater importance because after this date works and histories questioning the traditional Zionist narrative of the state of Israel emerged and generated great media and public interest, whereas before this date these counter-histories and analyses were confined to the margins of Israel's left wing.[60]

The group considered responsible for this growing trend in Israeli academia is by no means homogeneous; its participants occupy a number of diverse positions within the debate, and some do not even accept their inclusion in this genre. Nevertheless, their central premise appears to be the same. Whether they express it explicitly or implicitly, they claim that since Israel's inception Israel's academics and educational institutions have been firmly bound by the nationalist project's power/knowledge matrix. They work within the structures of the Zionist paradigm of knowledge and this affects their academic goals. Although developed in regard to natural science, the concept of a 'paradigm' can just as well be applied to social science where it could also be described as 'a precedent for future actions and future judgements, and not as a determinant of those actions and judgements'.[61]

Here, both the historian and the social scientist are products and producers of their *habitus*. They work within the parameters of the given paradigm – Zionism – which is both ideological and historical, and the knowledge which they themselves inherited is passed down in a modified form. The paradigm conforms, however, to the 'regime of truth', which Foucault claims that all societies possess. Barry Barnes noted that:

> [paradigms] then appear as inherited knowledge of scientists: they are accepted from the ancestors as the basis for research, developed and elaborated in the course of that research, and passed on in their developed and elaborated forms as the accepted knowledge of the next generation.[62]

Consequently the knowledge that the academics and intellectuals produced about the creation of the state, and the social and political processes that followed, was bound by the paradigm or 'regime of truth'. This study examines the recent defining period of the peace process, which triggered numerous attempts to reinvent and redefine the nation. Knowledge pertaining to the nation's past and present was not then written by 'marginal men', but by academics consciously or unconsciously bound to the hegemonic Zionist discourse.[63]

During the era under examination, an increasing number of writers using post-structuralism, postmodernist, feminist, and post-colonial theories have contributed to critiques of Zionism. Leaning on methods proposed by Foucault, focusing on discursive practices and processes of representation, these writers illuminate a side of Zionism that has been largely ignored by Israeli social science – the

hierarchy of power that operates through the discourse of Zionism. Laurence Silberstein wrote:

> [t]he neglect of these areas in the study of Zionism prevents us from grasping the processes that have contributed to the current crisis in Israeli culture, and in the Middle East in general. As long as scholars continue to conceal the power relations that are embedded in and legitimized by Zionism, they will have great difficulty breaking out of the ethnocentric, unreflective framework of interpretation. Similarly, until Israelis in general understand the effects of Zionism on others, they will not understand the urgent need to break free of the limitations it imposes on the complex situation both within Israel and in Israel's relations with other peoples and states.[64]

In his work, Silberstein traced Zionist discourse as a site of conflict and contestation. He presented a historical outline of these challenges, ranging from pre-state times until the present day 'post-Zionists' and argued in his work that 'the conflict over post-Zionism, is amongst other things, a conflict over national memory'.[65]

Silberstein has been criticized for not acknowledging that post-Zionism is also a claim to power, through the production of a corpus of work that makes a claim to truth.[66] However, whilst post-Zionism is a counter-discourse, it is not supported by the structures of practice. Unlike Zionist discourse that works alongside the practice of the state, post-Zionism is a form of resistance. As such, and as Silberstein rightly concluded, it is a 'space clearing enterprise'.[67] The counter-discourse does not hold the key advantage of the hegemonic discourse, which is supplemented by state practice. A dominant Zionist narrative exists and it is embedded in the structures and practices of the Israeli state, and further embedded in the largest international body that represents world Jewry – the World Zionist Organization (WZO).[68]

The era of the peace process, by virtue of its impact on the political and social life of the nation, represented a watershed for the Israeli nation. It is an interesting period of time to consider because the peace process apparently challenged the existing paradigms and elements that constituted the nation and therefore illustrated the contest over the redefinition of national identity and its fluid nature. This work argues that debates over the peace process and its direction in the political arena reflect the discursive struggles within the academic world between the upholders of the hegemonic discourse and their challengers from across the political spectrum. By doing so it maps the dialectical relationship between social and political reality on the one hand, and academic discourse on the other. This era of peacemaking is a fascinating example because it challenged the pre-existing definition of the 'Other' and, therefore, of the 'Self' as well.

It can be argued that there is, in fact, no such thing as a unified national identity, merely fragments of narrative that have come to form part of a national discourse. At moments of extreme pressure (i.e. political junctures), the historical narrative that underpins the nationalist project reveals its fragmented nature (i.e. historiographical disjuncture). Although this work considers the impact of several

different moments of such pressure, the fulcrum of this study is essentially the Oslo peace process – at various times fluctuating between frailty and success – which has exposed the fragmented 'inside' of Israeli identity as it struggles to define who is on the 'outside' and who it identifies itself against as the hostile 'Other'. In considering these moments of pressure it is possible to ask whether there is a significant relationship between a changing historical narrative, political discourse, and cultural identity in post-Lebanon Israel, as is reflected by academic scholarship.

This study examines the conflicting pathways suggested by Israeli historians and social scientists to attempt to reinvent national identity in line with the *habitus* during am era of peacekeeping when Palestinian rights were increasingly recognized. It focuses on the need to maintain or reconstruct a seemingly cohesive, unified 'nation' at a time when critical elements of the old 'established' national identity are potentially no longer sustainable.

Reimagination not resurrection

This chapter outlined an approach to understanding the hegemonic form of Jewish nationalism amongst, initially, Eastern European Jewry as the outcome of a continuous process of reconstruction, rather than as a resurrection of an immutable *ethnie*. The discourse that bolstered Zionism was vital for achieving hegemony amongst other competing forms of Jewish identification and loyalties. It provided a unifying narrative of the Jewish past, which served as a foundation for a unified Jewish future and offered an alternative identity to its Jewish constituency.

It further highlighted the role of power in this process. Discourse is an important source of political power because it is one of the tools that enable one group in civil society to gain ascendancy over other competing civil society groups with competing visions. The hegemony of the Zionist movement has not gone unchallenged, and the site of its discourse is one area in which this struggle takes place.

As suggested here, history is one source of political power (though not the only one, and certainly not the most important one) because in the case of Israel it provides the bridge between a 'nation' and the justification of its right to a particular land. In doing so, it lays a foundation for economic and political control. Without land the 'nation', it is argued, cannot survive – not merely historically, but also in a practical sense. It is the basis for strategic military interests, access to and control over water resources, agricultural land, and land needed for development and housing. These claims to the land and its subsequent development are based in 'history'. Thus, history – the history of Israel – its socio-economic, political, and cultural life falls under Edward Said's category of 'political' knowledge, thus augmenting the hegemonic Zionist discourse. In short, if the land and control over it are sources of power, then the history of the land is a powerful tool that unites the nation against the political enemy and protects it from historical counterclaims. What happens, then, if history turns on itself? What is left of the nation? How does it defend itself?

Bearing this in mind, it is unsurprising to find that those who are bound to this particular site of contestation through their claims to 'knowledge' are also involved in a struggle for power either in challenging or protecting the overarching political status quo. Thus intellectuals and academics can no longer be seen as 'objective' observers of the state. The work that they produce contributes to the paradigm of knowledge that is governed by the hegemonic discourse of the state. Israel is a particularly interesting example of this process because the altered socio-political and economic climate of the era of the peace process led to the emergence of several different, yet overlapping, challenges. The peace process illuminated the dialectical relationship between the discourse of the state and its political reality, thus creating the space for these contestations to emerge. This book argues that the peace process did not, however, have the power to undermine the hegemonic identity and narrative of the Jewish state because the process was not accompanied by significant structural change to the *habitus* – to the discourse, and to the political realm that constitutes it.[69]

3 Triumphs, Territories, and Troublemakers

> And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing
>
> Genesis 12:2

Zionism: The establishment of a hegemonic discourse

Israeli society and identity have overwhelmingly been shaped by the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism which is based more than anything else on a specific historical narrative that reflects the 'construction' of a collective identity. The hegemonic Labour Zionist historical narrative focuses on Jewish life in Europe and projects the eventual creation and existence of the (Jewish) State of Israel in distinctly teleological terms. This Zionist historical narrative, reflecting its own European roots, largely ignores the experience of Jews living in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.[1] It presents three stages of Jewish experiences in European society that ultimately culminate in the emergence of Zionism.

The first stage is that of the Middle Ages – a time during which Jews lived as a compact community confined to certain professions, mainly as artisans, usurers, and peddlers. Their choice of abode was restricted to certain parts of the towns they inhabited, and they were viewed with suspicion by the populations surrounding them. During times of extreme economic and social deprivation local populations would level accusations at the Jews in relation to their religious rituals and perceived hatred of Christians.[2]

The next period in Jewish history is characterized by the *Haskalah* or 'Enlightenment' movement. This opened up the European Jewish community to greater economic and social opportunities than had been previously available. Just as a process of modernization affected other segments of the populations of Europe, so it did the Jews. Nationalism, a movement characterized by its attachments to liberalism and secularism, was an attractive affiliation.

The European Enlightenment movement of the eighteenth century opened the doors of emancipation and integration for Jews, who were accepted into society on the basis that other loyalties were rejected. This process was by no means a uniform experience for all Jews throughout Europe. The experience of Western

Jewry was vastly different to that of Eastern European Jewry. Whilst many in Western Europe embraced integration at the cost of their ethnic and religious identities, Eastern Jewry was more resistant to the disintegration of their insulated communal life, considering this insulation as the best way to maintain their religious and cultural distinctiveness as well as offering communal protection from the whims of the local population. Jews were never accepted by their respective societies even after such radical action as religious conversion.[3]

Jewish intellectuals formulated different solutions to the quandary in which Jewish citizens of modern nation-states were placed. Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), today lauded as the founder of political Zionism, clearly presented his view of the Jewish condition in modern Europe in his play *The New Ghetto*. Written in 1894, it was a devastating attack on Jewish life in the ghetto, as illustrated by the main protagonist, Jacob Samuel, an assimilated Jew who threw off the yoke of Jewish culture. Herzl believed that the ghetto had prevented Jews from participating in the history or civic life of Europe. This left them superstitious, fanatical, and incapable of 'honest manual labour'. However at this point in his thinking, Herzl firmly believed that assimilation was the answer to the problem of the 'Jewish condition'.

Herzl made a dramatic U-turn in his magus opus, *The Jewish State*. Written in 1895, it was the result of Herzl's disillusionment with European nationalism after witnessing the trial of a Jewish officer in the French army, Alfred Dreyfus (1859–1935). Dreyfus was falsely accused of treason for selling French military secrets to Germany and was sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island. Herzl was shocked at the anti-Semitic shouts of the crowds and the obvious scapegoating of an innocent man because he was Jewish.[4] *The Jewish State* developed the theme of the wretched Jewish condition in Europe and the problem of anti-Semitism, but offered a very different solution. In it Herzl declared, 'distress binds us together and thus united we suddenly discover our strength. Yes, we are strong enough to form a state and indeed a model state'.[5]

Many Jewish nationalist thinkers, including Theodor Herzl, rallied around the common features distinguishing the Jews from their surrounding European populations. Strangely, they were often the same negative features that anti-Semitic rhetoric ascribed to the Jews. Herzl wrote, 'the oppression we endure does not improve us, for we are not a whit better than ordinary people'.[6]

In a complex and arguably contradictory project,[7] Herzl wished to prove that the Jews were both 'normal' and 'different'. Although they were 'different', they were no 'better' than the surrounding society. He was convinced that by having a state, Jews would have to participate in all aspects of civic life. This responsibility would make them both the 'same' and 'better' as other nations: 'People will say that I am furnishing the anti-Semite with weapons. Why so? Because I admit the truth? Because I do not maintain that there are none but excellent men amongst us?'[8]

Thus, Herzl focused on negative features to appeal to the Jewish community and these were the features that he used to identify them as a community in the first place. He wrote an article entitled '*Mauschel*', a German anti-Semitic epithet.

A *mauschel* was a crude repugnant figure incapable of finer feelings, whose life was based on personal monetary advancement. Herzl blamed the lack of unified Jewish political leadership for this cultural deterioration of the Jewish people. He wrote:

> We have inwardly gone to rack and ruin for there has been no one to train us to become real men, even if only out of imperial selfishness. On the contrary we were pushed into all the inferior occupations, we were locked up in ghettos where we caused one another's degeneration.[9]

Herzl used the title *Mauschel* to attack his anti-Zionist opponents. He saw them as despicable figures who resisted and rejected the transformation that Zionism and a state offered them. In his work on Herzl, historian Jacques Kornberg notes that he was a figure who often saw the Jew as the anti-Semite saw the Jew:

> If the European view of Jewish defects had fostered Herzl's Jewish self-contempt, Zionism was Herzl's way of resolving this self-contempt, for it would create a new Jew. But there were many Jews who stubbornly resisted self-transformation through Zionism, and Herzl's Jewish self-contempt was now concentrated on them.[10]

The European transition to the age of the nation state and modern intellectual nationalism was less tolerant and inclusive than the age of empire that had preceded it. Empire denoted difference and eclecticism – a collection of different 'peoples' from whom a uniformity of loyalty was required, not a uniformity of being. The nation state made these differences unacceptable as they threatened the common destiny of the 'nation'.

Though the Jews of Europe strove in a number of ways to identify themselves using the nationalisms of the states in which they lived, eventually men like Herzl felt that despite assimilation they would never be accepted into society – they would never be included in the broader definitions of the national identities open to them. They became, in essence, 'marginal men' who began developing their own identity in contradistinction to the exclusivity they witnessed. The foundations for their new collective identity were the frontiers of Jewish ethnicity. Judaism served as the foundation for political religion – Zionism.

Ahad Ha'am, also known as Asher Ginsberg (1856–1927), believed that Jewish cultural and spiritual life should be established before it was given a political shell.[11] He was born in the Ukraine and today is known as the founder of 'Cultural' or 'Spiritual' Zionism. He joined the *Hovevei Zion* Movement,[12] but soon became critical of its settlement activities. Ginsberg felt that Jewish regeneration should be based on cultural revival rather than territorial and political solutions. With this in mind he established the elitist *Bnei Moshe*, a sort of secret society which he proposed should focus on transforming the *Hovevei Zion* group into a movement for the Hebrew language and cultural revival. Ahad Ha'am believed that if a Jewish cultural and spiritual centre could be established in Palestine it would reinvigorate Jewish life in the diaspora.

Although today Ahad Ha'am is cited as one of Herzl's opponents, it can be argued that it was in fact he, not Herzl, who prescribed the boundaries of Zionist discourse that remain largely intact today. By deflecting the foundation of the Jewish nation away from religion and towards secular culture, he significantly contributed to the production of a 'regime of truth'. It was this regime that laid the basis for the rewriting of Jewish history – no longer a history of a religion and its worshippers, but the history of a secular nation. Freed from the ghetto walls and a slavish devotion to the law, Jews now needed to replace the religious framework of identity that had sustained them as a community since their 'exile' from the Promised Land. By severing the links between 'Jewishness' and faith, Ahad Ha'am's critique was to have far-reaching implications. He opened up the site of Jewish 'subjectivity' to conflicting and contesting representations.[13]

Ahad Ha'am's approach corresponds with a strand of German nationalism that is based on the work of Friedrich Herder. According to Herder, every German is part of the German *Kulturnation* – the 'culture nation' which – embraced 'the whole realm of human values to include anything that men might attach significance to'.[14] *Kultur* was inextricably linked to the nation in that 'the individuality, which characterized and defined a *Kultur*, was distinctively a national identity'.[15] It can be suggested that the most potent legacy of Ahad Ha'am was his understanding of the Jews as a *Kulturnation*. A Jew was no longer to be defined by his religion, nor by his state, but by his immutable secular 'Jewish' identity and shared culture.

Certainly this was an issue that drew the attention of the early Zionist leaders of the new state. They recognized the importance of a common culture in the adhesion of the community to the structure of the state. This facet of state-building – the process of nation-building – was one, according to Antonio Gramsci and as discussed in the previous chapter, the success of which depended on the establishment of hegemony. Hegemony can be achieved only through a transformation of popular consciousness, by causing a change in the way in which people think and feel, and by changing their conceptions of the world and their standards of moral conduct.

The new consciousness inspired by this reform was both directed towards the 'Self' and the 'Other'. It was based on the concept of the 'nation' – a highly political identity – when a people's belief, that is that they are members of the same community, demands or finds expression in an autonomous state of their own. In other words, as outlined previously, when the community begins to distinguish itself from others not because of a 'true' or 'false' claim, but because it *imagines* itself to be distinct through mediums that are used to create a communal bond.[16]

In the case of Israel, these commonalities were the Jewish religion, common experiences of rejection in the diaspora and, crucially, a common Jewish 'history' of their own land, and, thus, the evocation of these 'memories' expressed as a longing for a 'territory' of their own. There was a remembrance of the past and a desire to construct it in the present as a 'reality'. Identity needs common markers, such as language or religion. For Jews this was more difficult to define: they lived in different territories, spoke different languages, and even religious practice varied.

Early Jewish nationalists and Zionist leaders in Palestine were rightly interested in strategies to bind disparate Jewish communities together, not merely to encourage Jews from different parts of the world to identify themselves as one people, but to supply them with the tools to facilitate this process. Further, their nationalist vision was not the only option open for Jews. A continuation of traditional and religious bonds of affiliation in countries like Yemen, assimilation in Western countries like the US, and other concepts of Jewish 'redemption' also stood alongside the secular vision of Zionism.

It has been suggested that the shared common concept of culture among the Zionists was one of the 'most important sources of cohesion of the movement of Western Jews',[17] with the notable exception of Ahad Ha'am who, as mentioned earlier, rejected Herzl's demands for a Jewish state as a prerequisite for the initiation of a Jewish cultural revival.[18] A national culture with a distinct national identity was understood by the Zionist political elite as necessary to consolidate a sense of nationhood, i.e. through the production and control of common myths, symbols, national heroes, and, above all, national territory. The process of nationalizing the Jews was complicated because of their lack of common territory. The proponents of Zionist culture had to employ 'original, highly imaginative means' in a pragmatic enterprise of disseminating their ideology to 'constituents [who were] far removed from the "nation", or loyal to other nations'.[19]

After this brief synopsis of the Zionist historical narrative, it is important to clarify that Zionism was not the only Jewish response to the 'Jewish Question'. In fact, it can be argued that the presentation of Jewish life in Europe within the 'problem-solving' framework that culminated in and stimulated Zionism is itself a sign of the dominance of the Zionist discourse in relation to the Jewish past.[20] The fact that Zionism was not the only Jewish response to the 'Jewish question' also illustrates that the eventual hegemonic discourse was constructed and attained hegemony over time; it was not *a priori* the sole or only possible response.

Resistance to Zionism as the hegemonic expression of Jewish identity originated in Western Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. Orthodox-born Jews in Eastern Europe converted this sentiment into a politico-religious code and many chose Socialism or Bundism over Zionism as their expression of political identity. In 1885, opposition to Zionism was formally adopted by the American Reform rabbinate as the Pittsburgh Platform, and remained in place until the Holocaust. With the Pittsburgh Platform, the organization of Reform rabbis dismissed the notion of the centrality of territory as the fulcrum for Jewish life.

A clear distinction must be made here between the political party, Labour, in Israel and Labour Zionism. Labour had its origins in the two main political parties backing the Jewish Agency – *Ha-poel Ha-tzair*[21]and *Ahdut Ha-avoda*.[22] In 1930, these two parties that comprised the labour movement merged to form *Mapai*, a moderate socialist party representing approximately 80 per cent of the Jewish workers in Palestine, and headed by David Ben-Gurion.[23] *Mapai's* ranks were swelled by members who came to Israel in the second major wave of immigration from 1904–14, which was known as the 'Second *Aliyah*'. They are traditionally known as 'Israel's Founding Fathers'. Tellingly, they are also the group that

is credited with establishing Labour Zionism's hegemony, which was to remain intact for a further half century after *Mapai* established itself as the dominant party in a dominant party system.

The *Histradrut*, the General Federation of Labour, was established in 1920, and acted as an umbrella agency in the representation of all Jewish workers in Palestine, including members of the Jewish Defence Organisation[24] who were the political wing of *Ahdut Ha-avoda.* It functioned not merely as a trade union, but extended its mandate to provide health care for its members through *Kupat Holim*,[25] establish a labour exchange, and provide educational and cultural services as well. It was clear that the political party that controlled the *Histradrut* would be the dominant political party. Thus, the *Histradrut* gave the Labour movement, internal differences withstanding, economic and cultural control and contributed significantly to laying the foundations for Labour Zionism's hegemony. On top of this, international diplomatic, economic, and organizational support for the movement, in the form of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and the Jewish Agency, meant that its ideological dominance over other visions of nationalism was complete.[26] Hence, '[by] 1931, through cooperation with its allies throughout the Jewish world, *Mapai* had attained hegemony both in the *Yishuv* and in the Zionist movement'.[27]

Thus, Labour established its political and economic dominance in Palestine in what was essentially a manifestation of the ascendancy of (Labour) Zionism's (as a discourse) hegemony. Within Palestine, resistance to this hegemony emerged most significantly from the Palestinians, who rejected Zionist claims of the legitimacy of the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. Within the Zionist community Revisionist Zionists, led by Vladimir Jabotinsky, sought to vigorously challenge the Labour party's primacy in maintaining and perpetuating the hegemony of (Labour) Zionism.

The Revisionists, who seceded from the World Zionist Organization in 1933, advocated militant political action to push for the establishment of a Jewish state, whilst Labour Zionism is traditionally considered to have favoured a diplomatic solution.[28] However, both Labour and Revisionism were, despite subtle nuances and political differences, expressions of the core ideology of (Labour) Zionism. In fact, it can be argued that the main rivalry between these two groups derived its logic from a *de facto* political situation at a certain point in time, but was essentially a struggle for control of (Labour) Zionism.[29]

The intellectual heirs of this struggle for power today are, in simple terms, Labour and the *Likud* party. The differences between them today are arguably less obvious today than they were 50 years ago. Both parties subscribe to the same goals for the state, yet have adopted different strategies in order to achieve these goals. The original point of difference was how to *establish* a Jewish state: culturally, militarily, economically, and diplomatically. Now the question is how to *secure* the Jewish state, culturally, militarily, economically, and diplomatically.[30] However, the framing parameters of Zionism remain, in essence, the same for both parties.

Labour Zionism's hegemony, within Palestine and the Jewish communities worldwide, was accompanied by discursive representations of the link between

Jews and the land in Palestine that would become central to the 'new' Jewish identity in the Jewish state. As discussed previously, discourse is, amongst other things, a 'regime of truth'. It defines and produces the objects of knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can meaningfully be talked about and reasoned about.[31] The early history of the Zionist movement provides an example of the power of the discursive practices of the successful implantation of new 'nations' and their history within a given territory due to the power of the discursive practices of nationalist movements.

Zionism: The establishment of political and economic hegemony

In addition to dominating the institutions of the emerging state and being seen as synonymous with the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism, Labour managed to establish its dominance through other means. Before the state was created, the Labour Zionist movement had to come to an arrangement with the Jewish community that was already established in Palestine – the 'old *Yishuv*'. These Jews were largely *Haredi* ultra-orthodox and held the religious conviction that the re-establishment of the land of Israel by human rather than God's designs, before a time of Messianic redemption, was a violation of God's law.

Despite standing outside Zionism's ideological sphere, they were eventually co-opted into the Zionist project via a political party that represented their interests – *Agudat Yisrael*. During the period of the British Mandate,[32] the Zionist movement reached an agreement with this party. It was important that the British saw the Jewish community in Palestine as a united force with the same goals, and that they did not perceive Zionist activity as threatening the existing and well-established religious Jewish communities already in Palestine. In turn, by joining the National Council, the religious community gained access to funds for their religious and educational establishments.

Persuading *Agudat Yisrael* to join the National Council was a coup for the Zionists in more ways than one, though it was not without its longer-term consequences.[33] It lent a religious legitimacy to the strongly secular, modernizing movement and politically unified the 'old' and 'new' *Yishuv's*.[34] By distributing funds to the existing Jewish communities in Palestine, the Zionist movement effectively *bought* the rights to religious and historical symbols associated with these groups. This was key in 'selling' Zionism to world Jewry. Although Zionism was almost anti-religious in its outlook, its internal logic was to break from past traditions and the religious conformation of the diaspora; in essence, the dream of a Jewish state was incomplete without at least a nominal admission of Judaism.

Once the state had been declared in 1948, its first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, was faced with the contradictions between Zionism and Judaism. Again, this period illustrates the importance of history, memory, and forgetfulness in the discourse of Labour Zionism, and the symbiotic relationship between discourse and politics. Ben-Gurion's years at the helm of the state are usually described as a period of *mamlachtiut* or 'statism': a policy of state-led capitalism and a strong

emphasis on state institutions and state welfare provisions, managed by an ever-growing state bureaucracy.

One of the most important institutions established by Ben-Gurion was the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). The formal transformation of the *Haganah* into the IDF was one of the first steps taken by Ben-Gurion after the Declaration of Independence. The elite fighting force, the *Palmach*, was dissolved and mechanisms were introduced to ensure that it was absorbed by the new national army. Israel's delicate geopolitical setting and its uneasy, often hostile, relations with its immediate neighbours, not to mention the region as a whole, contributed significantly to the development of national culture and identity in the early years of the state, and its remains equally important today.

> Constant awareness of the external threat has helped push the military and defence establishment into a position of centrality … such a permeation of civilian spheres by defence activity and considerations poses a danger of what Harold Lasswell called a 'garrison state', or a government controlled by 'experts in violence'.[35]

Ben-Gurion served as both Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, and so was in a position to control the new national army. In doing so, he was able to pursue his goal of nationalization, which included the military sphere. General military conscription was introduced and the length of military service has been reduced and increased several times in the state's history at times of perceived military threat. It is clear, however, that military conscription for both men and women has had a fundamental effect on the shaping of the national psyche.[36] Conscription not only affects the conscripts, for many of whom the army is their first experience of 'national life' in Israel and thus shapes their primary experiences of national responsibility, but it also affects their families. Thus, the experiences and reflections of any one conscript undoubtedly influence a larger social network that exists around him or her. The main achievement of this system, apart from the defence of the national polity, has been the definition of the national 'Self' through emphasis of its ontological distinction from the 'Other'.

The 'Other' in this case is not only the non-national, or the non-Jew, but also the *hostile* non-Jew who opposed the 'establishment' and posed a threat to the continued existence of the nation. The ideologization of Labour Zionism and after that, the mythology of the Arab 'Other', gave the conflict between Israel and the Arab nations the appearance of being timeless and irreconcilable. Gershon Shafir wrote:

> Myths magnify a conflict and transpose it to a cosmic level where it takes on the characteristics of an unsolvable contest; a major component of ideological thinking is that it hides social contradictions behind a facade of harmonious social relations.[37]

There can be little doubt that the concept of 'national security' has influenced the crystallization of collective identity in Israel and has since become a major

preoccupation of Israeli collective memory, historical narratives, and academic inquiry. The historiography of Israel, indeed of Zionism, worked within the paradigm of 'national' security even before the nation had been rejuvenated in Palestine.[38] The resistance of the hostile 'Other' (in this case the Arabs) to the establishment of the state constituted a *de facto* 'threat' to the entire nation (which technically had yet to be born), according to the Zionist narrative. At this time it was the security of the Jewish communities of the diaspora that Zionism sought to address. The security paradigm took a central role in the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism – and permeated all aspects of national life, including national identity and academic scholarship. One Israeli scholar suggests that:

> Since 1949, there has existed a constant, alternately latent, and undisguised pattern of controversy of how military force is to be conveyed and deployed. Differing perceptions drive this controversy as a political phenomenon, in general, and in the context of the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in particular. Beyond modifications of style, secondary political changes, or historical events (such as the Egypto-Israeli peace agreement of 1979), no intrinsic alterations took place until the beginning of the 1990s in the ingredients of the controversy.[39]

Another articulation of this argument is presented by Uri Ben-Eliezer, according to whom Israel was constructed as a nation-in-arms, not for the purpose of defending liberal democracy and Western values, as the discourse has maintained, but in order to forge and preserve the hegemony of that very discourse. Therefore, Ben-Eliezer claims that Israel resembles France after the revolution and Prussia after its defeat at the hand of Napoleon. Ben-Eliezer argues that political participation and involvement takes place via non-liberal collectivist patterns of conscription in order to defend the 'nation'. The lines between civil and military institutions are blurred and a form of militaristic politics dominates national life. The imminence of war becomes the 'nation's' preoccupation.[40]

Ben-Eliezer's work is particularly interesting because it offers an approach to understanding the complex relationship between Israel's civilian and military spheres without playing down the significance of the military on society and identity.[41] It seems to conform to the idea that, '[in] modern war, fighting is on the level of financial war, ideological war, and strategic war, in addition to the military war'.[42]

Hence the role of the military is not underestimated merely because it does not market itself as a cohesive political force in domestic politics. Ben-Eliezer notes that it is precisely *because* it has integrated itself into national discourse that the military has no need for explicit political manoeuvring. Ben-Eliezer argues that the nation-in-arms model ascribes an important place to the state in the creation and exploitation of nationalist sentiment, and by linking the state to the need for war and then to the army as the state's instrument for waging war, it places the army in a position of no longer being considered alien and separate from society at large. Thus, Eliezer suggests that whilst nations-in-arms do not necessarily suffer from

military coups, they are not immune from militarism, a fact which makes wars a normative and legitimate solution for political problems.[43] Most importantly, the military becomes an inherent factor within the hegemonic discourse, both as a tool of preserving it and as an institution benefiting from the maintenance of the hegemonic discourse and collective identity.

Other factors affecting Israeli society also need to be considered because once the IDF had been formed by Ben-Gurion, it was used as a mechanism for the absorption of immigrants[44] and had a significant role in the development of the economy.[45] In terms of political climate, the very fact that national security has always been at the forefront of Israeli election campaigns suggests that the issue of war/peace is central to the rhetoric of most political parties in the system. Avishai Ehrlich has developed this theme. He argues that the Arab-Israeli conflict has been the primary force in shaping Israeli society. This confirms that the link between the military and the defence of the 'nation' is crucial to understanding its role in shaping identity.[46] The hegemonic Zionist discourse emphasized national security and actively contributed to the forging of a garrison state, while at the same time the existence of the garrison state contributed to the preservation of a tightly knit hegemonic collective identity and discourse.

The policies pursued by Ben-Gurion during the early years of the state reveal not just the desire to centralize state power, but to forge the new Jewish immigrants into a nation, like other nations, with a strong sense of civic responsibility. These two projects were two sides of the same coin: one was impossible to achieve without the other. Yet, it seemed that tradition and a civic state did not sit easily with each other because disentangling Jewish tradition from Jewish religion was a definitional process that is still incomplete today. Historian Alan Dowty has written:

> While *mamlachtiut* was revolutionary as policy, it also had a dialectical relationship with the Jewish past … Ben-Gurion sought to redefine tradition so as to make the two compatible.[47]

He did this by drawing on historical elements of Judaism to constitute the basis for what has since been termed Israel's 'civil religion' – a synthesis of symbols, history and collective memory.

The nature of hegemony and its inherent contradictions

Many different approaches can be taken when seeking to understand the role of the 'civil religion' shaped by Ben-Gurion. Only the two most relevant for this work will be mentioned here.

The first is the view that Israel developed several 'civil religions' which have characterized different historical periods in the state's history. By 'civil religion' it is meant that the polity has been defined by symbols and traditions that have been taken out of their religious context – i.e. association with Jewish rite and ritual – and transformed into secular symbols that represent the 'civic' essence of the

Jewish state, without necessarily a commitment to religious observance. These historical periods are defined by socialism, statism, revisionism, and religiosity.[48]

The second view is that whilst the state may have passed through these phases, there was only one civil religion at the core – Labour Zionism – and all these different phases did not in fact follow one another but simultaneously '[competed] with one another for power and the right to claim their version to be the *true* interpretation of the Zionist vision'.[49]

> Since no hegemonic ideological interpretation of Zionism has gained dominance, what if anything, constitutes the overarching symbolic framework that provides the commonality in Israeli political culture?[50]

However, this argument appears to contradict itself. Although it identifies (Labour) 'Zionism' as the core of civil religion in Israel, it simultaneously suggests that there is no hegemonic interpretation of Zionism, nor has there ever been. This view reduces Israel's 'political culture [to] a fragile web of symbolic themes … particularly vulnerable because so many within and without its borders challenge this claim'.[51]

In contrast to both these approaches this study maintains that, by and large, the core of civil religion, and *therefore* the hegemonic discourse, was and has remained Labour Zionism, although naturally struggles have erupted at times over control for it and over the way it shapes Israeli identity. Because Ben-Gurion's 'civil religion' drew on historical Jewish themes, it became a vital part of the hegemonic Zionist discourse. This made the discourse vulnerable to challenges from other Jewish groups who claimed to have equal rights to Jewish history and memory. Yet even though Zionism, as an ideology, may not have gained the support of the entire population of Israel (Israel-Arabs and non-Zionists/anti-Zionists and Communists being the most obvious groups who stood outside Zionist ideology), this does not suggest that there was no hegemonic Zionist *discourse* powerful enough to ensure that it defined the parameters of any counter-discourse that has emerged – be it from religious factions, post-Zionists, statists *et al*.

The important point here is that Labour Zionism, as a hegemonic discourse, has been pragmatic enough to include, absorb, and co-opt all these different factions, thus manifesting its true hegemony as opposed to mere dominance. In accordance with Gramsci's definition of the term, hegemony implies that a permeation of all forms of consciousness and thus inherently also shapes responses to the predominant narrative instead of merely dominating by attempting to exist in exclusivity. Most other narratives are competing not over an *alternative* to Zionism, but *over the core* of Zionism.

The dominance of the Labour party and the hegemony of Labour Zionism can together be understood as a system of power and control that constantly changed to absorb and deflect challenges. Moments of political juncture that resulted in the decline of the Labour party should not be viewed as moments of rupture in terms of the relevance and influence of Labour Zionism.

The hegemonic discourse that hinged on the idea of rupture (Jewish exodus into the diaspora and, later, the exclusion from mainstream European nationalism)

and resumption (the return to Zion as a resumption of the previous existence as a community) failed to take into account that Jewish life had actually continued both in Palestine and in the wider Middle East region. These communities did not necessarily conform to the European *Ashkenazi* experience.[52] That is why, once the state had been established, their historical narratives were rejected, subsumed, or absorbed by the hegemonic Zionist discourse. The idea of Jewish life before the Zionist redemption was a contradiction to the Zionist project. It has been suggested that the traditions of Western liberal democracy that allow for multiple conceptions of the 'moral' or 'good' life were ignored by the *Yishuv* and consequently by the early state during its state- and nation-building enterprise.

This was the cause of ethnic tension manifested in the treatment and acculturation of the *Mizrahim*. Israel's leaders did not attempt to implement an even-handed policy when deciding whose cultural traditions were important in the forging of the 'new' nation. Cultural and economic stigmatizations were part of a wider attitude towards Middle Eastern culture which was an anathema to Labour Zionism. Thus, the nation-building symbols used by the movement performed a dual task: they expressed a break with exile or *galut*, yet simultaneously expressed continuity with an ancient past.[53]

Once the state had been established, this problem became acute with the immigration of Jews from Yemen, Iraq, Morocco, and other Muslim countries. Because the institutions founded by the Labour movement in pre-state times went on to become state institutions, many of these immigrants arrived in Israel to find their traditions and customs unsavoury to the *Ashkenazi* elite who were desirous of building a homogeneous Jewish society – not one where the newest members preserved their diaspora identities through traditions and customs that rendered them separate and unique. David Ben-Gurion stated:

> We do not want Israelis to become Arabs. We are duty bound to fight against the spirit of the Levant, which corrupted individuals and societies, and preserve the authentic Jewish values as they crystallized in the Diaspora.[54]

It is interesting to note here not only Ben-Gurion's attempt to monopolize the concept of *authenticity* of values in Jewish life (carrying with it an explicit claim to *truth*), but also by referring to life in the diaspora he referred specifically to life in the diaspora of Western Jewry, thus negating an entire epoch in the historical narrative of non-Western Jewry. State leaders compensated for actual differences and contradictions by adopting certain strategies. Pressure to accept the hegemonic identity was great. Historical themes of war, isolation, and rupture were exacerbated, whilst links with the glorious past were renewed through archaeology, history, biblical study, etc.

The transformation of Jew into Israeli triggered complex cultural responses, some of which were neither anticipated nor manifested until the 1970s. One of these was that the *Mizrahim* themselves had developed a hawkish attitude towards the Arabs in so far as the Arab-Israeli conflict was concerned. This cannot be explained by the fact that many emigrated from Arab countries. Rather, the 'Israel-ization'

of these communities needs to be considered, especially since 1967 when they became conscious of the stigma attached to any similarities between themselves and the Arabs amongst whom they had lived for many generations before their lives in Israel.[55] The political consequences of this will be discussed later.

It is significant to note that, whilst the first large protest movement is remembered as the Wadi Salib Uprising in 1959,[56] even as early as 1949 demonstrations by the *Mizrahim*, protesting at the vastly unequal reception of *Ashkenazi* and *Mizrahi* immigrants, took place. The *Mizrahim* were marginalized by the Zionist state-building project and the state-building elite – their only contribution was seen as that of physical presence in the country. Moshe Sharett, Foreign Minister of Israel, stated:

> We are very anxious to bring the Jews of Morocco over … but we cannot count on the Jews of Morocco to build up the country, because they have not been educated for this … for the purpose of building up our country, I would say that the Jews of Eastern Europe are the salt of the earth.[57]

Public perception of this underprivileged, yet growing, faction of society was no better. In 1949, only one year after the Declaration of Independence, the liberal Israeli daily newspaper *Ha'aretz*, carried an article that stated:

> We are dealing with people [the *Mizrahi* immigrants] whose primitivism is at a peak, whose level of knowledge is one of virtually absolute ignorance, and worse, who have little talent of understanding anything intellectual generally, they are only slightly better than the general level of the Arabs, negroes and berbers in the same region.[58]

Zionists worldwide and the *Ashkenazi* state-builders clearly saw Zionism as an agent of modernity. However, non-Western Jewry was excluded from this task and was considered the beneficiary of modernism, rather than its benefactor. The suggestion that 'Zionism and the Jewish population in Palestine/Israel have been presented as a modernizing agent; [and that] they assist the Palestinians in progressing from backwardness to modernity'[59] could also be applied to *Ashkenazi-Mizrahi* relations, most especially in the first two decades of the Israeli state. Gabriel Piterberg even goes as far as to argue that:

> For the demarcation of the Zionist/Israeli imagined community 'the Arab' was never the Other; this status was exclusively reserved for the stereotyped Exilic Jews, of whom the Oriental Jews was a specific variant.[60]

The *Mizrahim* constructed a parallel discourse of suffering to lend their historical narrative legitimacy in the Israeli state, which has been a source of resentment between the *Mizrahim* and the *Ashkenazim*.[61] This process has been deconstructed by a new generation of critical *Mizrahi* scholars, whose significance will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5 along with other post-Zionist scholarship.

For many years the elite and their desire to build a secular, socialist state for the Jews, with a strong emphasis on agrarian life and communal living, remained synonymous with the triumphant birth of the Israeli state. However, this image has been challenged by recent scholarship. It has been contended that the gap between the Labour movement's ideology and reality that was being constructed 'on the ground' was great.[62] Only a small proportion of these immigrants were motivated by the Labour Zionist ideology of socialism. An acute struggle over the heart of Zionism emerged between different Zionist groups, primarily between the Labour movement and the Revisionist movement.[63] Further, divisions within the Labour party itself were not insignificant. It has been argued that the structure of the Zionist state and its patterns of behaviour in regard to war, peace, and its own citizenry emerged from the context of early struggles between the first waves of immigration.[64]

Challenging the discourse: The effects of the 1967 and 1973 Wars

The previous section illustrated how, during the period of 1948–67, the Labour Zionist discourse emerged and functioned through its utilization of memory, narrative, identity, ideology, and practice. The section also revealed its inherent contradictions. In addition, the consensus on the leadership of Ben-Gurion and the prioritization of state-led policy within the dominant political discourse began to reveal cracks. The intellectual elite exacerbated this process, as the work of historian Michael Keren illustrates.[65]

The 1967 War is an event that should be viewed as a cornerstone in Arab-Israeli relations. It is also arguably, alongside the Oslo Accords, the most important event in modern Israeli political history. Not only did it transform the geography of the Middle East, but it also transformed the Israeli political system in the process. Israel's territorial gains as a result of the war provided the state with a buffer zone with Egypt in the form of the Sinai. The West Bank acted as a buffer with Jordan and in the north the Golan Heights served as a buffer with Syria. The conquest of East Jerusalem and the Old City meant that Jerusalem was unified for the first time under Israeli control.

Some scholars have claimed that although the Israeli leadership was prepared for war and the conquest of enemy territory, 'the question of the political use to be made of the territories after their capture had not been given any serious consideration'.[66] The Israeli attitude towards the territories was determined by a number of factors. Amongst these was the desire for secure borders, ideological commitment to *Eretz Israel*,[67] internal stability, and a comprehensive peace settlement with Israel's Arab neighbours. The economic and strategic benefits of the territories in terms of labour, trade, and water resources should also not be underestimated when considering this issue.[68] Despite this, it has been suggested that the Israeli psyche had not accepted its role as a colonial occupier, but instead regarded the occupation as an 'unforeseen outcome of an unwanted conflagration',[69] although works that identify the Zionist movement as, in essence, a colonial settler movement from the outset would disagree.[70]

This work, however, views the war as a political juncture rather than a moment of fundamental rupture. Therefore, it can be seen as a political 'moment' which allowed challenges to Labour Zionism's political hegemony to emerge. The Labour party's response to the captured territories was disparate. The political manoeuvring resulting from discussions within the Labour party about the fate of the territories was contentious enough to affect political discourse in Israel.[71] A National Unity Government was formed to face the crisis of the Six-Day War. This marked a turning point in the fortunes of the right-wing parties in a political system that had been dominated by the left-wing Labour movement even before the Declaration of Independence in 1948. For the first time, a right wing party, *Gahal*, was included in the decision-making process.

The question of the territories was a contributing factor to the ultimate decline of Labour Zionism (as most notably manifested by the Labour party) as the hegemonic political force in Israel. Yet this is not to say that Labour Zionism, as an ideology, had lost either relevance or discursive power. The key components of Labour Zionism – settlement, pioneering, war, peace, and the very nature of the Jewish state – had, because of the 1967 War, become a new reality and a new resource open to all, including the political right. The war effectively opened up space for other intellectual, ideological, and of course, political strands of Zionism – in this case, the intellectual heirs of the Revisionist movement.

Inclusion for the first time in the government legitimized the existence of the factions previously excluded from the Israeli political arena.[72] As *Gahal's* stand was one of military activism, the same process also legitimized this positioning. Menachem Begin's party, *Herut*, shared this basic endorsement of military activism with *Gahal*.[73] It has also been suggested that *Gahal's* primary reason for remaining within the Labour-led coalition was to prevent any withdrawal from the territories, and Labour policy in turn integrated deterrence into partial military activism.[74] Due to the desire to preserve the structure of the National Unity Government, concessions were made that were to strengthen *Gahal's* overall position. In relation to the territories this meant a compromise to the right of settlement demanded by the party. The government promised to quicken the settlement programmes in urban and rural areas and stated its intention to establish military bases in all parts of the 'Land of Israel'.[75]

With such a great emphasis on military activism as part of a formula for deterrence, the Yom Kippur War of 1973 proved to be highly damaging for Labour's political hegemony. As the founding party, but also the founding fathers, Labour had hitherto been identified as being highly capable of managing Israel's defence. Its positive war record meant that it was associated with a 'golden age' in Israel's history, an era when the nation was forged from blood and sweat.

This war caught the country, military, and also the political establishment off-guard. The general public held Minister of Defence, Moshe Dayan, responsible and Israeli premier Golda Meir's refusal to dismiss him was perceived as a sign of the arrogance of a party that had held power for too long.[76]

The discourse of war and peace reflected this loss of faith. Evidently, holding the territories had not prevented the attack, and this resulted in an intensified

debate amongst those who felt that the limited militarism by Israel was not enough of a deterrent and those who felt that militarism had not solved Israel's security problems. Overall, this war severely damaged the legitimacy of the *Mapai* and contributed to the eclipse of the Labour movement's dominance of the political system.

> [The] realisation of the dream and the sense that the reality fell short of the ideal further contributed to the end of the pioneering epoch with which Labour had been identified and from which it had derived its legitimacy.[77]

Although the Labour party was defeated at the polls, many of its structural methods of control remained, such as control of the *Histradrut* and its association with the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism.

Challenging the discourse: Israel's ethnic divisions

It was not just the Labour party's political dominance that weakened as a result of the 1967 and 1973 wars and their consequences. This political decline was accompanied by strong challenges over the hegemonic discourse that had accompanied their political superiority from pre-state times and that had been consolidated by Ben-Gurion in the first years of the state. Internal divisions within the movement and the political concessions that it made in order to survive resulted in the hegemonic discourse widening its borders to absorb the challenges from the political right. The vehicles of this challenge were the *Mizrahim*, although, as Chapter 6 will reveal, stimulated by the Oslo peace process and the second *Intifada*, this right-wing challenge has developed into a complex struggle over the heart of Zionism and today its constituents are more diverse than merely disenfranchized *Mizrahim*.

Labour Zionist discourse has always underplayed the role of ethnicity and its relevance or importance to modern living in Israel. However, the strength of ethnic identities amongst Jewish immigrants was something that could not be ignored. It was 'perceived as temporary, reflecting the past, diminishing in the present, and expected to disappear in the future',[78] by the state's elite. They placed the emphasis on the religious cleavage rather than ethnicities, thus rendering the Arab-Jewish divide the most defining and unifying cohesive for the Jewish community.[79] Though the new society was porous enough to absorb these newcomers, it was on the proviso that the new immigrants shed their ethnic affiliations. The hegemonic Zionist discourse of the Labour Zionist movement was not sensitive to this issue.

> Ashkenzi Jews initiated the Zionist movement to resolve their personal and communal problems without considering Jews who lived beyond their cultural regions. They established the *Yishuv* and dominated the Israeli polity.[80]

In fact, although a homogenous national identity and nationalist discourse dominated the polity, in hindsight, policies regarding new immigrants seemed

to undermine the unification process. Immigration was the lifeblood of Israeli nation-building. In 1948, approximately 85 per cent of the immigrants were of European origin. This figure decreased by more than half in the next five years when Jews from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East flooded in, mostly for political and economic reasons. The second major wave of immigration from these countries occurred from 1955–57. These immigrants were less skilled and had lower levels of education than previous immigrants.

This obvious inequality between the two major Jewish ethnic groupings in society caused resentment and frustration. This has commonly been interpreted in terms of the structural organization of politics in Israel – in other words, *Mizrahi* frustration was directed at the dominant party in the dominant party system.[81] However, frustration at the dominant culture and definition of the collective self was also an important factor. For many Jews, the implications of the link between *Ashkenazi* Jews, the historical development of the state, and its collective memory became a point of disenchantment and friction.[82]

The *Mizrahi* community was concentrated in the lower classes and the Labour party was perceived as a middle-class party which did not promote their economic interests. Research has linked the gap in earnings to be a fundamental result of the gap in schooling between *Mizrahi* and *Ashkenazi* children. Whilst efforts to close this gap were successful to some degree, the discrepancy between earnings actually increased amongst second-generation immigrants.[83]

Before the Russian immigration waves of the 1990s, the *Mizrahim* constituted a majority in Israel, yet were under-represented in high positions of economic and political power. Their increased support for the *Likud* party in 1977 is considered a key reason for the fall of Labour. The *Likud* played on *Mizrahi* frustrations about the hegemonic party in the political system to capture the *Mizrahi* vote without significantly incorporating *Mizrahi* political demands into its own policy.[84]

> The Likud did not pursue a policy that favoured Orientals and does not possess a social policy that differs significantly from that of the Labour Party … [They] prefer the Likud camp because they see in it a means for social mobility and attainment of status.[85]

The unholy alliance between the political right and the *Mizrahim* can be better understood, then, through its *symbolic* rather than *practical* dimensions. The appeal of the *Likud* was its symbolic challenge to a hegemonic system in which the *Mizrahim* were partly included and partly excluded. In 1973 the precedent was set for the inclusion of the heirs of the Revisionist movement to be incorporated into the hegemonic political system. Yet their historical narratives of the past – their role in the birth of the state – were still excluded from the dominant discourse of Labour Zionism.

Similarly, *Mizrahi* historical narratives could not be included in the dominant discourse because they served as a reminder that Jews had remained 'at home' in the region without needing the 'national' shell of Zionism, and their presence in the region also cast doubt on the Zionist concepts of 'Homeland' and 'Return'

in Jewish life. Thus, a common discourse developed between the *Mizrahim* and the political right in Israel. It was based on the issue of 'exclusion'. For the *Likud*, this referred to their exclusion from the triumphant history of the birth of the state of Israel, for the *Mizrahim* it was both political and economic exclusion, but also a similar exclusion from triumphant nationalist narratives. Both the 'right' and the *Mizrahim* were cast in the roles of beneficiaries of Labour Zionism and its efforts, organization, and national fervour. Both were symbolically emasculated by the discourse of Labour Zionism, rather than strengthened.

Attempts have been made in the last two decades to override this emasculation process. The challenges mounted by the 'right' to claim Labour Zionist discourse for itself will be discussed in Chapter 6. Attempts have been made to reread the history of the early state during the period of Labour dominance, and to reclaim history for the Israeli right. Similarly, *Mizrahi* complaints of inequality have been publicly accepted.[86] However, the cultural and narrative problems faced by the community are still rarely talked about, whilst the suggestion of socio-economic grievances are more easily accepted. Neither the political right, nor the *Mizrahim*, constituted a threat to the dominant discourse. Rather, they wished to participate in it on an equal footing.[87]

Understanding the genesis

The aim of this chapter was not to give a comprehensive outline of Jewish history or of the genesis of Jewish nationalism into its hegemonic form of expression in Israel – Zionism. Rather than attempting to present a 'history', it outlined the Zionist narrative of Jewish historical experience in Europe. Several important points emerged – first, that the Zionist narrative of Jewish history ignored the experiences of Jewish communities outside Europe. When it did turn its attention to these communities, the narrative that emerged was one that took the same shape as that of the Jewish experience in Europe, though the validity of is approach is questionable – Jewish communities living in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East lived under different religious, social, cultural, economic, and political conditions than those in Europe.

To homogenize the experiences of all Jewish communities, however, was crucial in the process of building a homogenous 'nation' from a diverse populace, and this strengthened the key themes of the hegemonic narrative: exile, rejection, and a longing for a 'Homeland'. The second interesting point to emerge is that American Jewry was the only community that did not adopt the Zionist discourse, despite its overall support of Israel and of Zionism. Unlike the *Mizrahim* in Israel, the Jews of the United States did not wholly accept the narrative model of the Jewish experience in Europe (persecution, rejection, and eventual salvation through Zionism) as the favoured method of expressing their own history.

The *Mizrahim* underwent a complex metamorphosis in Israel: for many it involved adjusting to a society far more 'advanced' than those they had left behind. Yet the Zionist narrative of Jewish history also overlooked that Palestine, as well as the wider region, had been home to a continuous, if small, Jewish

community. This would have challenged the narrative of rapture and resumption that Zionism hinged on – the notion of a 'new' phase of Jewish life that would begin in Palestine – and the transformation of the old 'Jew' into a 'new' Israeli.

This chapter provides a dual framework for understanding this transformation process, which took place through the establishment of a hegemonic discourse that provided the ideological, cultural, and narrative support for the establishment of the Labour party's political and economic dominance. It outlined the effects of the 1967 and 1973 Wars on this position of dominance. These wars were political junctures in the life of the state, and they were also historical disjunctures which resulted in the political decline of the Labour party, whilst revealing that the broader hegemonic discourse remained intact. Nevertheless, for the first time, control of the discourse was challenged by those groups previously excluded from it and, as a result, the hegemonic discourse incorporated and absorbed these challenges. After their 1977 election victory, the broader hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse adapted to changing political circumstances and found a new home in the *Likud*.

4 The Emergence and Works of the New Historians

> For nations are historically novel entities pretending to have existed for a very long time. Inevitably the nationalist version of their history consists of anachronism, omission and contextualisation and, in extreme cases, lies.
>
> Eric Hobsbawm, *On History*[1]

The previous chapter dealt with the political juncture/historiographical disjuncture of the 1967 and 1973 wars, and their effect on Labour Zionism's political dominance and discursive hegemony. This chapter continues with this theme through an examination of the Lebanon war and the outbreak of the first Palestinian *Intifada*. During the course of the 1980s and into the 1990s, in the aftermath of the Lebanon war and further spurred by the eruption of the *Intifada*, a historical revisionist movement emerged in Israel which came to be known as 'New History'. Although its claims were not new, its public reception was. History once again appeared to rise to the challenges of social, political, and cultural change.

The Lebanon war marked an important turning point in Israel's military record. It was the first war in Israeli history that almost came to be universally accepted in society as being a war of choice. The initial reasons for the planned assault were considered legitimate – counteraction against PLO terrorist activity from within Lebanon's borders.[2] Yet ambiguity lay in the aims of the incursion masterminded by Defence Minister Ariel Sharon. Although the war was entitled Operation Peace for the Galilee,[3] thus suggesting its aims, Sharon misled the Israeli cabinet as to the aims of the war – to push both the Syrians and the Palestinians out of Lebanon, while at the same time encouraging the emergence of a Lebanese government that would be well disposed towards Israel. The Palestinians would continue to 'pursue their political aims in Jordan rather than the West Bank'.[4] Prime Minister Menachem Begin asserted that:

> It is by no means imperative that war be waged only out of want of alternative. There exists no moral precept whereby a nation must or may fight only when it has its back to the sea.[5]

This shattered the first byword of Israeli military action – the concept of *Ein Brira*, which translates from Hebrew as 'no choice'. Clearly, there was a choice,

and diplomatic initiatives had by no means been exhausted. The second myth to be destroyed was closely linked to the first – that of *Tohar ha-Neshek*, or Purity of Arms.

During the first days of the war its aim was presented as limited to the establishment of a 40-km buffer zone in southern Lebanon. But at the very time Begin was informing the Knesset of this goal, Israeli troops were 80 km inside Lebanon and, in an alliance with Lebanese Christian forces, preparing to march on the capital, Beirut.[6]

Although Israel had suffered greater casualties in previous wars, Lebanon provided no triumphant and clear-cut victory for the government to point to in order to satiate public concern over the viability of such a war. It was proving to be expensive, and although it resulted in the PLO exodus from Lebanon, it created other problems for the military.[7] Not only did the war expose the government's apparent lack of concern for Israeli loss of life, but also their disregard for the atrocities committed against the civilian population of Lebanon during the war – most notably in the *Sabra* and *Shatila* refugee camps[8] where the slaughter of Palestinian refugees was not carried out by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF),[9] but was perpetrated under IDF control.[10] The findings of the Kahan Commission, established to investigate the *Sabra* and *Shatila* massacres, led to Sharon's resignation as Minister of Defence.[11]

Israel's invasion of Lebanon proved another challenge to the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse which had previously incorporated the concepts of 'no choice' and purity of arms. The Israeli protest movement which developed during the Lebanon War was unprecedented in its size, support, and the veracity with which it attacked decisions taken by the government during a period when the country was engaged in military action. Resistance also emerged from within the military, leading to the formation of a movement named Soldiers against Silence which demanded Ariel Sharon's resignation as Minister of Defence and called for an end to the war.[12]

It also appeared to polarize the political landscape, stimulating societal support for movements such as Peace Now on the left[13] and *Gush Emunim*[14] on the right, which were identified with the major parties – Labour and the *Likud* respectively. Thus, on one hand, there seemed to be an increase in religious fundamentalism, the cornerstone of which was an unwavering attachment to the entire biblical Land of Israel. Its concerns were not confined to issues of Israel's territorial integrity and borders, but also controversially extended to matters of everyday life in Israel. Perhaps most fundamentally, the contentious issue of 'who is a Jew?' caused emotions to run high and highlighted another major divide in society between the religious and secular.[15] On the other hand, a liberal left-wing faction was seen to be gaining strength. For various reasons, incorporating both the loyal Zionist left and various degrees of anti- or post-Zionist sentiments, this faction wanted Israel to come to an agreement with the Arabs and was increasingly prepared to make territorial compromises in order to do so.

A second important stimulus affecting the evolution of societal discourse was a popular Palestinian uprising, otherwise known as the *Intifada*, which swept across the occupied Palestinian territory from 1987 onwards.[16] It was a very public

demonstration against the occupation and was the first time Israel had faced a mass mobilization of Palestinians.[17] Israel's success in weeding out the PLO from Lebanon merely increased support for the organization in the occupied Palestinian territory; attacks on Palestinians in Lebanon were interpreted by Palestinians as another attempt to destroy the whole national community and, thus, the *Intifada* was considered the latest chapter in the confrontations comprising the broader Arab-Israeli conflict.[18]

Although 20 years of occupation had increased the struggle for everyday survival in the occupied Palestinian territory, the intimacy between the Arab and Jewish nations increased. Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari expanded on this theme of increasing intimacy and the changing expectations of both Jews and Arabs. They argued that the *Intifada* shattered the idea that one of the two warring groups would emerge victorious. Instead it highlighted the fact that their futures were bound together, with no ultimate victory possible. Arguably, this interconnectedness posed a significant challenge to the Labour Zionist discourse which had emphasized the link between conventional military strength and security.

In the November 1988 elections, the *Intifada* was one of the, if not *the,* key campaign issues – political platforms focused attention on broader national issues such as 'peace security, territory and relations with the Arabs – issues that had not been so salient in recent elections'.[19] The *Likud* launched a campaign to present itself as the heir to Labour Zionism, arguing that Labour was not tough enough with its measures in the occupied Palestinian territory and opposing any notions of exchanging land for peace.[20]

It was at this time that the political influence of peace organizations began to be felt. Their small membership figures did not reflect their influence. In April 1988, *Ha'aretz* published a list of 46 groups. Myron J. Aronoff commented that 24 more emerged after the *Intifada*.[21] He suggested that one of the most influential was the Council for Peace and Security, which was formed in 1988 by ex-General Aharon Yariv, a former chief of military intelligence. The Council called on Israel to negotiate with the Palestinians through any of their representative bodies (including the PLO) willing to recognize Israel and enter into peace talks. The Council argued that continued occupation threatened Israel's security and incorporating the occupied Palestinian territory into Israel would compromise the central tenet of Zionism – a Jewish majority in a Jewish state.

It seems that these pro-peace protest movements served to counter the right-wing bid for control over the discourse. The movement Peace Now was considered part of the establishment, and as representing mainstream views. In other words, Peace Now did not reject the hegemonic Zionist discourse; rather it tried to adjust that discourse. Initially, Peace Now did not voice express support for a Palestinian state and negotiations with the PLO. However, after the *Intifada* it took a more political stand. Peace Now remained positioned within the parameters of the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse.[22]

In short, the *Intifada* appeared to polarize Israeli society and politics between those who wanted to use greater force and those who wanted to search for a political resolution. Even within Labour the leadership was polarized over the question.

Dissenters were present in *Likud* ranks also, but to a lesser extent because the party's attitude towards the Palestinians was more coherent. It held that the elimination of leaders would eliminate troublemakers. The retention of the occupied Palestinian territory became the *Likud*'s main platform – it had no real economic programme or social policy.[23]

The ramifications of the *Intifada* extended beyond the borders of Israel and Palestine. The renewed importance of the PLO and the increasing pressure on Israel from outside powers to open channels of negotiations with the PLO were perhaps the most important political consequences of the *Intifada*.[24] However, the ability of these events to undermine national solidarity in Israel was challenged by some researchers.[25] They questioned the idea of rupture and continuity upon which academic analysis of Israel's history was based. Lebanon was an unpopular war with high Israeli casualties and without discernible and substantial gains. Coupled with the impact of the first *Intifada*, it was an effective way of drawing a line between Israel's past (associated with the political dominance of the Labour Party), and the present (associated with the political rise of the *Likud* Party). However, this work suggests that this method of dividing a period of Labour political dominance from that of the *Likud* is misleading, precisely because it fails to separate Labour's waning political dominance from Labour Zionism's hegemonic discourse.[26] As previously argued, the *Likud's* political challenge did not pose a challenge to this discourse, but sought to wrest control of it from the Labour party. Inclusion in the discourse and access to it as a political resource was a crucial legitimizing tool for the party.

It would be inaccurate to propose that after the war Israeli national identity underwent a complete overhaul, and that traditional symbols, myths, and loyalties underwent radical change. Yet, embedded in events surrounding the war were real seeds of conflict. Rather than signifying the breakdown of the existing paradigms of power, knowledge, and politics, events *adjusted* the paradigms. These subtle adaptations are significant *because* of their subtlety – thus the academic world, especially the realm of history – plays such a vital role in the state- and nation-building process: it reflects both a *habitus* in a state of constant flux, but also the manifestations of the complexities of that *habitus*.

This work proposes a new understanding of the parallel drawn between political events, such as those discussed, traditionally viewed as a rupture in the political paradigm, and the emergence of New History, traditionally viewed as a rupture in the hegemonic Zionist historical narrative. Rather than approaching Israeli history as a binary of rupture and continuity, one can understand events by using the political juncture/historiographical disjuncture model. Events that seem to create a dissonance within the political, social, and cultural discourse of Israel are junctures which only *reveal* existing dissonance within the discourse and create the *space* for the discourse to be further challenged, either by attempts to deconstruct it, or to reconstruct it. This struggle against[27] and over the Zionist narrative is illustrated by the emergence and evolution of New History.

The new historiography is commonly attributed to several factors, one of which was the opening of the archives in 1978 which declassified many illuminating

documents dealing with the events of 1948 which under the 30-year rule had previously been unavailable to researchers. Further, the 'emergence of a new generation of Israeli historians' who produced work under the influence of the social changes in Israel – factors including demographic changes, the growth of fundamentalism, a political shift to the right, the shadow of the occupation,[28] and the Lebanon War – cultivated a more sceptical attitude towards the 'dominant myths of Israeli culture and the accepted truths of Israeli historiography'.[29]

The direct power of these factors to influence societal change is questionable. However, several of these features will be addressed again in the context of understanding the motivations of the New Historians and post-Zionist scholars, both in this chapter and the following one.

New Historians, old history

In the introduction to the book, *Blaming the Victims*, Edward Said and Christopher Hitchens described Palestine as a place 'weighed down with historical as well as political meanings for many generations, peoples, and traditions'. In the Foucauldian vein, the battle over the narrative of the land is perceived as crucial and is presented as one of the main reasons for the Zionist success in creating a state in 1948: their acquisition of territory went hand in hand with their victory in the 'political battle for Palestine in the international world in which ideas, representations, rhetoric, and images were at issue'.[30]

This illustrates the power of the narrative – of the tradition of knowledge. The narrative is not merely a cultural tool, but one of undeniable political significance in a world of nation states. Victory is inevitably accompanied by the subjugation of competing narratives. In the case of Israel, this is well documented through the exclusion of the Palestinians from history and, to a lesser extent, the *Mizrahim*: 'Almost from the moment that the state of Israel came into being in 1948 … the West was deluged with a whole series of narratives and images that acquired the solidity and the legitimacy of "truth"'.[31]

Israeli historians were firmly embedded in this process, and were 'busy creating their own nationalist charter and trying to prove the undying connection between Jews and the land they called their own'.[32] In the 1980s a group of historians emerged who challenged what they viewed as 'official Zionist history'. They distinguished themselves from the historians they considered to be part of the 'establishment'. In order to explain this term is used in this book it must be noted that it pertains to knowledge that sustains, perpetuates, and derives from the hegemonic Zionist discourse. In regard to the field of history, 'establishment' historians are those who are considered to produce work guided by the parameters of the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism, and whose work comprises the body of historiography of the Israeli state. In a sense, this is also the way that the New Historians used the term 'establishment'. Yet, New History did not necessarily result in new historiography as defined in the terms set out above, nor did it necessarily result in New Historians who operated outside the parameters of the discourse.

The three principal historians associated with New History – Benny Morris, Avi Shlaim, and Ilan Pappe – achieved fame through their seminal works. Benny Morris wrote *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* published in 1987.[33] Avi Shlaim wrote *Collusion across the Jordan* published in 1988,[34] and Ilan Pappe wrote *Britain and the Arab-Israel Conflict*, also published in 1988.[35] All three books were published in English, reaching an international audience and sparking debates about Israeli history outside as well as inside Israel.

Another name commonly associated with the new historian group is that of Simha Flapan, the author of *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*.[36] Flapan differed from the other three New Historians in that he did not enter academia professionally – he was a writer and peace activist who held a position in the *Mapam* party as the national secretary and the director of its Arab Affairs department.[37] Flapan died in 1987, which was the same year as his book was published. For this reason, although he is often quoted and included amongst the New Historians, he did not have the opportunity to participate in the debates that raged over the legitimacy of New History once all the books had been published.

Flapan was one of the founders and editors of the English-language monthly *New Outlook*, established in 1957. *New Outlook* was a revolutionary journal, with both Jewish and Arab contributors, committed to achieving a solution to the conflict through a process of mutual recognition of rights rather than by force. In an Israeli-Palestinian symposium organized by *New Outlook* and chaired by Flapan in 1979, he explained that the purpose of the dialogue was two-fold: to gain a better understanding of different viewpoints in the debate; and to provide a platform for the voices of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, whose fates hung in the balance but whose opinions were rarely heard by the Israeli public.[38] The symposium, as well as *New Outlook* and Flapan's attitudes, was revolutionary for 1979 – a recognition of the PLO as a legitimate voice of the Palestinians was far from being an acceptable position to take in Israel at that time.

Another author often mentioned as part of the New History genre is Tom Segev. A journalist by profession, Segev has produced several works challenging central Zionist myths – one of the most controversial being his work, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust*,[39] in which he challenges conventional wisdom regarding the relationship between the *Yishuv* and, after 1948 the state of Israel, and the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Although his works appear to fall into the category of New History, this work does not regard them as so – Segev has never defined himself as a New Historian, nor participated in the New History debate, but has considered himself a journalist rather than a historian. In addition, his works have somewhat less directly been tied to the theme of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and, thus, the Oslo peace process.

Initial motivations

The term New History was first used by the historian Benny Morris. He claims to have coined the term in order to distinguish his work, as well as that of the other historians mentioned above, from the previous annals of Israeli, or 'official

Zionist', history.[40] New History distinguished itself from the 'official' Zionist narrative, and by doing so, seemed to make a claim against the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism. Initially, however, the term New History was not accepted by all the purported New Historians. Ilan Pappe preferred the term 'revisionist history', arguing that Morris' title, which was borrowed from the New History in Europe, was misleading. In an article published in 1997, he wrote:

> The 'New History' in Europe was an interdisciplinary effort to place diplomatic and elite history in a wider social and non-elite perspective. The Israeli 'New Historians', in contrast, dealt only with elite analysis of politics and, like their mainstream predecessors, adhered to a positivist methodology.[41]

European New History was a general challenge to prevalent historiography, which focused on power politics. In Europe, the term New History is associated with a refocusing of the emphasis of conventional history on political and military figures and events and the realm of international diplomacy. It brings to the fore cultural, social, and economic history, which are now part and parcel of mainstream history. In contrast, in the beginning, Israeli New History still conformed to traditional history in European terms. Only later did Ilan Pappe delve into less conventional methodological approaches. This chapter will illustrate that Pappe's own work moved away from the positivist approach which still guides Benny Morris' work. His concept of New History fits closely with the work of the post-Zionist scholars who will be examined in Chapter 5.[42]

Avi Shlaim also described his work as 'revisionist history' in the preface of the first edition of *Collusion across the Jordan*. He understood it to mean that his 'novel and no doubt controversial interpretation of events surrounding the partition of Palestine'[43] was neither in keeping with the existing pro-Zionist and pro-Arab histories of the event. In this sense, Shlaim was unique because whilst the other works of New History are condemned or, alternatively, lauded for bringing Israeli history closer in line with Palestinian history by shattering Israeli historical myths, Shlaim's work also shatters Arab myths regarding Arab non-cooperation with the Zionist movement.

In the early phase of the emergence of New History, with the publications of these tomes, none of the New Historians sought to distance themselves from the Zionist narrative that functioned as part of hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse. Indeed Shlaim wrote, again in the preface of the first edition of *Collusion*: 'I have not come forward to redress the balance in favour of the Arabs and thus substitute one kind of partisanship for another, nor do I particularly relish the slaughtering of sacred cows'.[44]

Those who saw New History as a positive development in Israeli historiography felt that these historians were trying to understand the past 'without a desire to lie or conceal the past'.[45] In the beginning then, New History was not defined by those who were associated, and associated themselves, with it as an ideological position. None of the three central New Historians came to their research topics in order to shatter the defining myths of the state. Although all three of their

New History books were published between 1987 and 1988, a few years after the Lebanon war, they began working on their topics during the period of the war itself, if not before.

Morris' work was inspired when he went to the archives at the *Palmach* headquarters in order to research a work on the history of the *Palmach*.[46] He was working as a journalist at the time, and had no academic expertise on the Middle East. In fact his specialty, far from being centred on Jewish-Arab relations, was Anglo-German relations. Whilst working in the archives, Morris was told he would have only three months' further access to the papers; he believed the reason to be because he was an 'outsider'.[47] Realizing that it would be impossible to write the military history he wished to without archival access or interviews with the *Palmach* veterans, Morris turned his attention to something else that had attracted his attention:

> I had noticed during the three months I had to look at them [the archives], all sorts of things to do with refugees – expulsion orders, descriptions of refugees leaving villages and so on, and that caught my eye.[48]

He was surprised by the documents that he came across regarding the Arab refugees and that triggered an experience he had the same year when he was working as a journalist in Lebanon covering the war for the *Jerusalem Post*. He went to several refugee camps and talked to refugees who told him what had happened in the Galilee in 1948 and how they came to be where they were in 1982.[49] For Morris then, the issue of the refugees was not one that stemmed from a political ideology, though he classified himself, then, as now, as a Zionist.[50] He realized that on the historical plane, the story within the documents he had seen was a sensation.

> I understood that what I'd seen – expulsion orders and things like that, and also places where Arabs had been told to leave by fellow Arabs – that this was a historical bombshell, I suppose. I understood that from the first.[51]

What Morris recognized to be 'sensational' was in essence a blow to the historical narrative of Labour Zionism which did not accept any responsibility for the flight of Palestinian civilians from their villages and the consequent refugee problem.

Avi Shlaim, like Morris, was not a historian by trade, nor did he study in Israel at university level. He was trained as a political scientist and from 1981–82 spent his sabbatical year from the University of Reading in the Israeli archives in order to research a book he was working on and that focused on the management of national security in Israel. At this time, Israeli archives had declassified a number of documents under the 30-year rule.[52] These newly released documents dealt with the period up to 1951 and proved illuminating for those studying Palestine under the British Mandate and the 1948 war. Shlaim was critical of Israel's position in the conflict and felt that Israeli domestic political concerns were the reason for his attitude. However, he claims that he did not approach his archival

research with any particular ideological motivation. He explained that he had collected material on a broad range of issues, but what struck him most were the secret meetings between King Abdullah and the Zionist leaders. He had known that these meetings had taken place, but had not been aware that they had all been recorded, including details such as Abdullah's acceptance of money from the Jewish Agency. It was this point that sparked his interest and it was also the reason he wrote the book that became *Collusion across the Jordan*.[53]

Unlike Morris, Shlaim was not surprised by the material he found – the fact that there had been meetings between Golda Meir and King Abdullah was no secret. He was surprised, however, by the scale and level of detail found in the archival material documenting these meetings. What initially was intended to be an essay or short book soon turned into a substantial volume – partially due to the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951, which led to the release of all the documents relating to his dealings with the Zionists. Shlaim hoped that his work would provide him with: '[The] opportunity … to submit the claims of all the protagonists in the Palestine dispute to serious historical scrutiny and discard those notions which, however deeply cherished, cannot stand up to such scrutiny'.[54] Like Morris, Shlaim did not approach his research with a view to challenging the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism; yet the substance of his work again addressed issues at the heart of the conflict – in this case, the intransigence of the Arabs to make peace with Israel.

Ilan Pappe went to Oxford in order to write his PhD under the supervision of Avi Shlaim and Alan Bullock. He reflected that, at that time, he was greatly removed from the ideological position he holds today in the post-Second *Intifada* period. He stated:

> I started by choosing the subject and I think the subject, more than anything else, led me to the ideological positions which I am holding today. But it is quite possible that there was a starting point before. I could have come from a different place and maybe the subject would not have affected me in such a way.[55]

Pappe revealed that he was shocked by what he found in the archives. The very idea of the expulsion of the Arabs was one that was foreign to him since the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism traditionally insisted that the Palestinians left of their own volition. He states: 'I really grew up on the myth that the Arabs left voluntarily and the Jews did everything they could to convince them to stay'.[56]

He was further taken aback when his research contradicted a second tenet of the Zionist discourse – that of idea of parity on the battlefield. His interpretation of the material he found rendered the imagery of David versus Goliath as little more than a fable. Pappe felt that it was not so much the story itself that shook him, but the fact that he was unaware of it, despite being more interested in history than the average young Israeli.[57]

At the time he was writing his thesis, Pappe thought there was little that was revolutionary about his work. His supervisor, Shlaim, informed him that his

work marked the beginning of a view of 1948 that was completely different from that advanced in conventional Zionist discourse.[58] It was with the publication of Shlaim's own book, combined with the publication of Morris' work, that he felt that there had been a breakthrough: '[It was when] we were lumped together, that I realized that it was something more fundamental'.[59]

Ilan Pappe described himself as being on the left margins of Zionism during this time – he was a member of the socialist party *Mapam* – although this position has clearly developed over the past 20 years. He favoured dialogue with the Arabs which prompted him to define himself as being 'on the left'. Yet he noted:

> I thought there was nothing bad in the idea of giving the West Bank to the Jordanians. There was no need for a Palestinian state, and my whole activity was within the Zionist frame of mind: namely that it's great that we are willing to talk to the Arabs after all they have done to us.[60]

During this period Avi Shlaim was critical of Israel; yet he too still considered himself a Zionist, much the same as Morris and Pappe. Shlaim had initially studied abroad in order to prepare for life in the Israeli diplomatic corps which was where his ambition lay. Although, as noted above, Shlaim claimed in his book that he had no desire to slaughter sacred cows, he also admits that he realized the implications of his work. In this sense, the fact that three books were published in the same two-year time frame meant that they had a greater impact – especially if they were classified together:

> If I am honest, I enjoyed the fact that I was being iconoclastic, that I was slaughtering sacred cows. I enjoyed being provocative and shocking people and so I exaggerated the difference between myself and earlier historians by lumping them together as the Zionist or pro-Zionist historians and attacking them, and emphasizing the originality of what I was writing. Yes, I was aware that what I was writing was controversial.[61]

Pappe seems to have been the least convinced by the title of 'New Historian' although he felt it made sense to make the convenient distinction between those who challenged the Israeli historical narrative shaped by Labour Zionism's hegemony and those who perpetuated and defended it during the early years when the books were just published. Thus, the act of defining themselves as the New Historians can be understood as a combination of symbolism and the instrumentality of using such a broad distinction to shock and rally the realm of history in Israel during the period before Oslo.

In light of the historians' own reflections on the phenomena, several themes regarding the emergence of New History surface. The first, and it seems most important, reason was the declassification of the archives on which all three drew extensively in order to produce their works. The second factor commonly attributed to the rise of New History was the change in the political climate in Israel after the Lebanon war. Shlaim writes:

> Until then, Zionist leaders had been careful to cultivate the image of peace-lovers who would stand up and fight only if war were forced upon them … [This created] political space for a critical re-examination of the country's earlier history.[62]

The important point here is that this change was not engaged in a 'cause and effect' relationship with the writing of history in Israel, nor was there a process of rupture and resumption. Often, by referring to Lebanon as a 'watershed,' it is made to appear as if historians became more critical in its wake, and some took it upon themselves to research and produce 'new' histories of old myths.[63]

This is misleading because these historians were not as concerned with Lebanon as with the availability of new documents from the archives and the idea that they were doing something new and challenging within existing historiography. As shown above, all of the seminal works belonging to the New History genre were being written either during or before the Lebanon war. The change in political climate meant that the critical re-examination mentioned by Shlaim caught the public's attention – it was given *space* to come to the fore of Israeli historiography.

How much *change* is change – the *new* gatekeepers

The debate as to the validity of the claims of the New Historians caught a wider public imagination soon after the books were published. Heated disputes ensued between them and their opponents in newspapers, magazines, and academic journals. Criticism of the new revisionist history and historiography emerged from two main groups – those who thought that it was undermining Zionist claims to the state, and those who felt that the conclusions of the New Historians did not go far enough in condemning the Zionist leaders and ideology for their destruction of Palestinian life and seizure of Palestinian land.

This section focuses on those who felt the revised historical works were a deliberate attack on the state. They categorized New History as post-Zionism, and this blurring of the distinction between the two areas of knowledge served both those who supported New History and those who opposed it thus making it appear both more ominous and a more promising force of change than it proved to be. The veracity of the debate was unsurprising in an academic world which had hitherto been closely tied to the state and served to maintain the hegemonic Zionist discourse. Yet the highly personal nature of the debate was astonishing. According to their critics, New Historians were not only criticizing the historical narrative, but the nature of the engagement was an attack on the academics that helped to construct this erroneous narrative:

> Essentially their [the New Historians'] argument can be condensed into one major idea: the State of Israel was born in sin but that the fact was kept unknown because Israeli academia had been mobilized to defend the distorted Zionist narrative.[64]

Several explanations can be offered to explain the emergence and unprecedented reception of the New Historians. One is that they emerged through a process of generational change within Israeli academia, which lead to a power struggle between the old and new generations. Yoav Gelber, a historian in the Department of Land of Israel Studies at Haifa University and chairman of the university's School of History disagrees with this suggestion. He pointed out that Shlaim, Morris, and he are all of similar ages, with only Pappe being younger by about ten years. Yet he stood in radical opposition to the New Historians' view of Israel's past.[65] Ilan Pappe agreed with Gelber's dismissal of this theory. He argued that:

> [It] has to do with Zionism and anti-Zionism. It took time for me to be able to translate my work that it would be a fundamental criticism of Zionism not just of Israel's behaviour in 1948, and it took time for Benny Morris to realise that all what he was doing was criticizing a certain aspect whilst he was perfectly happy with the ideology behind it.[66]

The apparent separation of the hegemonic discourse from one of its supporting pillars – the historical narrative – appears to have resulted in a cognitive dissonance, as alluded to by Ilan Pappe in his reference to Benny Morris.

Israeli historian Anita Shapira[67] argues that the New Historians offered nothing new, neither in the way they approached historical materials, nor in the kind of the materials they used. She classes them as conservative political historians.[68] However, for the New Historians, the accusation of being methodologically uninventive falls far from the mark. Shlaim admitted that in regard to methodology, New History was not new – it used very traditional historical methods. For him, the innovation lay in the content of New History rather than its approach.[69] Morris equally classified himself, without hesitation, as a positivist historian. He stated that he recorded events in accordance with the documentary evidence, and without any political motivation at all. Although he admitted that there may have been subconscious motivations behind his work, he declared that he was, and still is, unaware of them.[70]

Shlaim classified himself as less of a positivist than Morris because he, unlike Morris, also used oral history whilst being aware of the pitfalls related to its uses. He believed that oral history was a useful and beneficial source material when used alongside written material. In this sense, both Morris and Shlaim have not developed much in terms of their methodological approaches. Ilan Pappe however, underwent a radical transformation in this area. In his first book he clearly used a traditional positivist approach. This was to change as Pappe himself became more radical in comparison with the other New Historians. His later works were heavily influenced by post-modernism, as will be discussed later.

It is also interesting to note that initially New Historians were also able to draw on aspects of post-modern and critical theory – not to explain their approach to their material, but to strengthen the argument regarding new and old history, and to highlight its weakness. They implicated Israeli history within the framework of a hegemonic discourse that needed to be altered. This corresponds to the

explanation given by Yoav Gelber for New History's emergence during the 1980s. He linked it to the education abroad of Israelis, who then returned to Israel with new theoretical trends such as post-colonialist theory, postmodernism, and critical theory, and a critical view of the country.[71] The combination of criticism of Israel's political behaviour and these theoretical trends affected scholarship in Israel, particularly the social sciences.

Before New History the existing annals of historical research in Israel that reflected and perpetuated the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism were, according to Avi Shlaim, 'proper' history. He asserted that most of the voluminous literature on the war was written not by professional historians but by participants: by politicians, soldiers, official historians, and by a large host of sympathetic chroniclers – journalists, biographers, and hagiographers. Because of this, history was short on the political analysis of war and long on chronicles of military operations, especially the heroic feats of Israeli fighters. Shlaim argued that this literature wrongly maintained that Israel's conduct during the war was governed by higher moral standards than that of her enemies.[72]

In other words, the history produced was largely used to serve the nationalist cause in Israel. Israeli historians were thus embroiled in a process that was far from the professional objective and positivist approach most historians felt that they were taking. History was not, and still is not, written in a vacuum. Even those Israeli historians who took issue with the accusations of the New Historians were forced to acknowledge the validity of this claim, albeit with strong reservations and no real shift in their concepts of personal objectivity.

For example, Anita Shapira is amongst those scholars labelled by the New Historians as part of the establishment. She admitted that all historians are influenced by events, perceptions, developments, and the *Zeitgeist* in which they live, and may, whether knowingly or unknowingly (usually unknowingly), be influenced by their educational backgrounds, world views, and subconscious loyalties. However, she maintained that, unlike the New Historians, there is no end point from which she begins her adventure of historical writing and research.[73] In fact, the accusation of subjectivity and political partisanship has proved popular with both sides. It stands at heart of the bitter recriminations between 'old' and 'new' historians, precisely because it is an extremely powerful and emotive issue.

An exchange between Shabtai Teveth and Benny Morris is illustrative of this point.[74] Teveth was a senior research associate at the Moshe Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel Aviv University and an establishment figure. This is clearly reflected in his body of published works, amongst them a two-volume biography of Ben Gurion,[75] and a biography of Moshe Dayan.[76] His objections to the works of Benny Morris and Avi Shlaim were published in a mainstream English-language Jewish journal called *Commentary*, which is sponsored by the American Jewish Committee.[77] The debate was thus carried to a wider audience than it had originally reached when the article was published as a series in *Ha'aretz,* and invited the participation of the English-speaking Jewish community.

Teveth cast aspersions on the academic viability of Morris and Shlaim. He did this by informing the audience that Shlaim was an immigrant from Iraq – surely

an irrelevancy in an academic debate – who then moved to Oxford to pursue his academic career. In raising these points he subtly called into question Shlaim's commitment to the State of Israel, which was a point that he made explicit later on. Morris was described as an 'Israeli journalist who has a doctorate from Cambridge but whose academic qualifications are less than complete – his Arabic does not meet research requirements', and Teveth voiced his amazement that *The Birth*,[78] 'was probably the most influential work to have come out of the revisionist trend so far'.[79] Simha Flapan[80] was portrayed as a Marxist who 'before his death in 1987 served as the director of the Arab department of the left-wing *Mapam* party'. Teveth accused them all of being 'inclined to the side of the Palestinians … [and harbouring the desire] to de-legitimize Zionism'.[81]

These were, then, the two accusations most often levelled at the New Historians – first, that they were *pro-Palestinian per se* and, second, that they were *anti-Zionist*, and thus *anti-Israeli*. Anita Shapira stated:

> During the debate on New History, the fact that was very prominent was that they came out from the present and tried to present the past in a certain way, to serve political aims in the present. Which is maybe legitimate but this is not the way that I would perceive academic research – indoctrination, yes, but not academic research.[82]

Yoav Gelber made a similar assessment of the New Historians when he remarked that, 'history is only ideology now'.[83] As shown earlier, this was an erroneous assessment of the motivations of the New Historians, all three of whom, by their own admission, began their forays into New History as Zionists, albeit critical Zionists. Benny Morris believed that the accusation of his ideological motivation emerged from the left-wing Zionist establishment in order to delegitimize his work as political, pro-PLO, and anti-Zionist.[84]

Interestingly, the bitter debate between the New Historians and their opponents introduced an ethical or moralistic line of argumentation, which then laid the foundations for a proper critical theory of Israeli history as espoused by post-Zionist scholarship. This will be examined in depth in the next chapter. However, Morris, Shlaim, and the early Ilan Pappe all rejected the normative dimension of their work whilst their opponents accused them of having a normative agenda. It is precisely this issue that became the preoccupation and justification of the much more radical post-Zionist scholarship. In this sense the conservative, orthodox Zionist historians created the space in the historical narrative for a critical theory, which was explicitly normative in its approach.

In regard to the historiographical debate, differing interpretations of the role of the historian in society stood at the heart of accusations of political and ideological partisanship. These varying interpretations did not fall, as one would expect from the assumptions of the 'establishment' historians, neatly between the old and New Historians. Benny Morris, the most conservative of the New Historians, always agreed wholeheartedly with Shapira's assertion that it is not the historian's role to judge history.

Morris argued that because moral perspectives change over time it impossible to make moral judgments about actions in the past – in this case, about Israel's actions during the war of 1948. In other words, he did not reject the hegemonic Zionist discourse, but altered and adapted it as a consequence of his research. He developed a response to the implications of his work, which was curiously close to the traditional response of the political right. Instead of playing down Israel's responsibility for certain thorny issues (such as the refugee problem), he contextualized events, in essence providing an *apologia* for actions that the discourse had previously ignored.

This was one of the main differences between the New Historians that was overlooked in the hype that surrounded the phenomena. Benny Morris was always of the opinion that history was not a place for political judgement, nor did he write it in order to influence political processes: he wrote without regard to the hegemonic discourse and what his findings would mean for people's sense of identity, confidence or lack thereof, belief in themselves, or the righteousness of their cause. Morris argued that if the present is not disregarded in the course of this intellectual process, history is distorted.

In contrast, Avi Shlaim viewed the historian's role as being an active one and one which carries a certain weight of responsibility *because* history functions as part of the hegemonic discourse. It is a tool used by politicians for state-building purposes. He stated: 'the historian's role is completely different because he is a scholar. The historian is independent; the historian has no stake in state building.'[85] According to Shlaim, historians must stand outside society and reflect critically on it. He believed that his role was to operate as an independent scholar and as a critic of Israeli society.

Ilan Pappe, the most theoretically innovative of the New Historians, clearly illustrated the post-modern influences in his approach when he explained his view of the role of the historian. This view has changed considerably over the years. Today, he argues that the historian's role is essentially to connect the past to the present. According to Pappe, historians '[should] bring to the attention of … society the variety of possibilities of looking at the past. And warn them against a one-dimensional view of the past and about the manipulation of the past'.[86]

Aside from accusations of pro-Palestinian and anti-Zionist sentiments, Teveth's accusations of academic incompetence and unprofessionalism of the New Historians was, perhaps, the most revealing. He wrote:

> What, in the end, is one to make of the farrago of distortions, omissions, tendentious readings, and outright falsifications offered by the 'new' revisionist historians? That they fail in their intention to 'undermine, if not thoroughly demolish' the 'old history' is patently the case; history, thank goodness, is made of sterner and more intractable stuff than even their wholesale efforts of free interpretation can dissimulate.[87]

This recalls the discussion concerning the power/knowledge matrix and those who act as gatekeepers in society. Teveth revealed his own position quite clearly:

'old history' is the only 'true' or 'correct' version. All counter-histories are invalid. The point here is not to show who is right and who is wrong. Accusations of unprofessionalism have been hurled from each side, and this work does not claim to provide the answers as to which side has falsified documents, misinterpreted data, and produced erroneous bodies of work. What is interesting, however, is that this often vehemently acrimonious debate has ensued over a topic as innocuous as a historical narrative. It is a vital part of the hegemonic discourse that holds a deep-rooted significance for the evolution of national identity and reflects contemporary political developments as well as shifts in national culture.

Another Israeli academic contributed to the critique of the New Historians. Efraim Karsh is an Israeli political scientist based in the Mediterranean Studies Department at Kings College London. Until the emergence of the New Historians, Karsh had not written on Israel. His research focus was more geared towards strategic studies and the relationship between Arab states and the USSR.[88] In 1997, however, Karsh published a book designed specifically to reply to the charges of New History, and building on an article that he published on the same subject in the journal *Israel Affairs*.[89] The main points of his criticism are those mentioned previously by establishment historians such as Teveth. Karsh asserted that Morris' work was superficially eclectic in its choice of materials, but, more seriously, that he had systematically falsified evidence on a vast scale.[90]

In the first chapter of his book, Karsh identified Edward Said and his theory of Orientalism as the reason why works produced on the Middle East were:

> [judged] not on their intrinsic merit but in terms of the perceived national and/or ideological identity of the respective scholars, and their conformity to the fashionable fad; boldness of critical thinking has been on the wane as writers have anxiously sought to avoid stigmatisation as 'Orientalists', that vague and elusive term used by Said and his followers to deride intellectual opponents as 'imperialistically minded'.[91]

It is interesting to note that here Karsh used the very argument of power/knowledge employed by Said, but in this context he claimed that this methodological approach was a personal vendetta employed by Said to show that 'Israel were the bad guys'.[92] Karsh effectively claimed that a sort of 'reverse Orientalism' existed in the field of knowledge regarding Israel/Palestine. However, to argue this was to misunderstand the main claim of Orientalism– that discourse is underpinned by structures of power and control. Arguably, opponents of Zionism (for example, the Palestinians) simply do not command the resources of the Israeli state and Zionist discourse.

He also denounced the judgement of work using 'perceived national and/or ideological orientation', a strategy that was clearly employed by Teveth in his critical appraisal of Shlaim, Morris, and Flapan. In response, sociologist Paul Kelemen[93] declared that:

> Karsh's demonology [of Said and the New Historians] would not be worth commenting on if it did not serve the ideological function of disconnecting

> the emergence of the 'New History' from developments flowing directly from the politics of the Israeli state.[94]

Thus, Karsh, though not initially directly involved through his own research interests, became a major player in the internationalized debate regarding the validity of New History and the issues it raised. In terms of the power/knowledge matrix, Karsh was an influential gatekeeper of the Zionist discourse because of his position as editor of *Israel Affairs* – one of the few English-language journals dedicated to the study of Israel and related subjects.[95] Karsh's influence illustrated the emergent struggle between the 'gatekeepers' in academia – those who influenced the organs that disseminated knowledge – and the hegemonic discourse itself, which eventually included the adjusted narrative of New History. By its eventual acceptance of New History the discourse proved its ability to adapt without necessarily being undermined or 'ruptured'. Benny Morris was a startling example of this development.

Avi Shlaim stood by his initial categorization of placing 'old' or 'Zionist' historians together in one group. He recognized that old history was an extensive body of literature with differences between individual historians. This, according to Shlaim, is the reason that they resented his categorization of them as one group. He nonetheless defended his categorization:

> If you stand back and look at the whole corpus of Zionist history, then a clear pattern emerges and some central premises are shared by all of them.[96] I don't share these premises and preconceptions, and therefore I think it's fair to say that there is a Zionist narrative about this conflict and I am not part of it.[97]

However, another criticism made by these 'old' historians was that a counter-Zionist narrative had always existed:[98]

> There is another myth that all these things were not known before and not written before. You need to go through the shelves and you will realize that the great revolution in Israeli history took place in the 1970s and late 1960s, not in the 1980s, because according to Israeli law, Israeli archives can only be opened after 30 years.[99]

In his book, *Israel, Politics, Myths and Identity Crises*, Akiva Orr commented on his personal experience of being one of those marginalized voices in society prior to the emergence of the New Historians. Together, he and fellow Israeli Moshe Machover wrote a book to substantiate the charges that Israel had colluded with France and Great Britain in the 1956 Suez Campaign and, further, that Ben Gurion had entered into a covert agreement with Abdullah over the annexation of the territory granted to the Palestinians in the United Nations partition resolution of November 1947. This is also the subject of Avi Shlaim's book, *Collusion across the Jordan*. However, the reception of Orr and Machover's academic effort was vastly different to that of Shlaim's. He observed that when the book came out in

1961, no one, not even the Communist Party, accepted that the conflict with the Palestinians was the source of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Yet in 1990, after three years of *Intifada*, few contested this view: 'Where were all the Israeli academic experts on the Arab world? Why couldn't they see in 1961, that the Palestinians did not disappear from history?'[100]

Orr's observation highlights that the relationship between power and knowledge is salient in academic circles. Intellectuals who do not function within the parameters of the hegemonic discourse may suffer professional consequences.

> At the time I still believed that if only people knew the genuine facts they would change their minds. It took me a few more years to conclude that facts do not possess their own needs and an innate significance and that people interpret them according to their own needs, and according to their own anxieties.[101]

Orr's analysis of the reticence of Israeli scholars to question the historical narrative that supported the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism reveals the influence of conscious and unconscious factors in the social world in which academics and 'experts' operate. On one hand the social world of the producers of knowledge is very obviously governed by material concerns: issues such as funding, research grants, reputation, and acceptance all weigh heavily on the academic or expert. However, the influence of a hegemonic discourse that is embedded in social life or the *habitus* proves equally resilient when examining the evolution of historical narrative.

Orr's revised conception of 'facts' is similar to that of Thomas Kuhn, who challenged the objective and independent status conferred upon facts and data.[102] It can also be used to show that the narrative space, so closely guarded before, had been widened, though not overturned, by Lebanon and the *Intifada.*

The New Historians received a mixed response from their fellow academics, yet they managed to change the narrative discourse on issues such as refugees and Israel's relationship with the Arab world in a manner that their predecessors had not. It is hard to judge to what extent this was due to the social climate and what part was due to support for the arguments presented by the New Historians, which were based on the new archival documents.

Daniel Bar-Tal, professor of psychology at Tel Aviv University and editor of the *Palestine-Israel Journal*, argued that the historians were not 'new', but the context in which they asked questions and in which those questions were received was. He claimed that New History was part of a process of societal development. Bar-Tal argued that in the 1960s and 1970s Israel was a relatively homogeneous society and scientists were part of that society, sharing its particular belief system. Bar-Tal identified the change as beginning in 1979 when the Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat, came to Israel. It proved to be political juncture that created a dissonance within the political realm.

> It came to a climax when Israeli society was polarized. The schisms were really fifty-fifty. The elections of 1981, 1984, 1992, 1996 were not determined

> on the basis of a few votes – one segment of society had a different type of belief than the other. This allowed research questions to be asked that had not been asked before.[103]

Unlike Bar-Tal, however, this work argues that political schisms to do not constitute schisms to the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism. Well before Sadat's visit to Jerusalem the discourse had been separated from the fate of the Labour party and party politics. Therefore a nation split along political lines did not raise any serious questions about the future of Zionism or the future of Israeli identity. As explained previously, both Labour and the *Likud* wished to claim the legitimacy of Labour Zionism's discourse.

When those classified as 'establishment' historians used the argument of unoriginality as one basis for delegitimizing the significance of the New Historians, it supplemented the main thrust of the argument presented by the New Historians – that Israel's historical discourse was tightly guarded by its historians and, though some of the evidence was new, the narrative had been submerged and ignored. Benny Morris felt that the:

> [new] historians broadened the field – they opened the field, liberalized the field. The rest of the historians, even if they had written traditional propaganda, couldn't continue to do it in that way because they would have been laughed out of court.[104]

Political scientist Steven Heydemann contended that the historical arguments made by new history had previously been contested due to a lack of documentary evidence, which the opening of the archives in 1978 rectified. Although there is a fundamental query here, as to *what* counts as evidence and *who* decides this, Heydemanns' contention was correct in that:

> Revisionism's challenge to the orthodox view of Israel's founding must clearly be located within a broader process of social and intellectual change … the struggle between those who seek the demystification of Israel's founding and those who seek to preserve its mythic character is closely linked to contemporary political and ideological debates over crucial issues of Israeli policy.[105]

Pappe asserted that the debate generated by New History managed to trickle down and affect wider public discourse. He noted that although the initial reaction to New History was very hostile the ideas percolated and were absorbed into the intellectual mainstream, particularly the claim that Israel expelled Palestinians in 1948. Pappe stated: 'No one can deny it anymore – you can't argue with the evidence.'[106] Thus, arguably, the hegemonic discourse co-opted New History and incorporated it into mainstream historical 'truth'.

What is clear, however, is that the debate was neither new nor did the revised historical narratives manage to displace the narratives of Labour Zionism, though

they elicited new responses to dealing with newly accepted 'truths'. Nevertheless, the emergence of an altered historiography must not be understood in oversimplified terms.[107] It did not indicate a disjuncture in what is a continuous process of adjustment to collective identity and the hegemonic discourse. It merely signalled the self-adjusting and self-reflective nature of identity.

Careers

There is no doubt that the emergence of New History wrought a painful change to Israeli historiography. The mutual recriminations between the so-called 'old' and self-named 'new' historians dragged the debate through an ideological minefield. This opened the space for theoretical approaches such as critical theory and postmodernism to be applied to Israeli academia in general and to question the relationship between power and knowledge in particular. This, though used selectively by the New Historians to explain the need for their work (to correct a historical narrative driven by a nationalist agenda), was a preoccupation of post-Zionist scholarship and will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter. However, the clash between the old and the new narratives also illuminated the 'gatekeeping' mechanisms within academia.

None of the New Historians initially published their works in Hebrew. This was not a deliberate decision – Pappe, Shlaim, and Morris had been trained outside Israel, and thus it was a natural process to write in English. However, for more than a decade and a half only Benny Morris was successful in having his work translated. Morris believed that this contributed to the acceptance of New History into the historiographical discourse. He held an advantage over Shlaim and Pappe – only one of Pappe's books had been published in Hebrew and Shlaim's book, *The Iron Wall*, was only recently published in Hebrew. Morris notes that once his books were available in Hebrew they had to be included in the Israeli curriculum.[108]

Reviews in international journals were generally positive for all three books. Shlaim observed that his book received more publicity and attention than he had expected and claimed that it was received well on both sides of the Atlantic[109] despite the charges made by prominent Israeli historians such as Shabtai Teveth who argued that the work was motivated by a political agenda and, further, was a shoddy piece of academic research. Another accusation levelled at the New Historians was that the implicit criticism of Israel in their work, and their explicit criticism of Israel in the media, was a profiteering exercise – pandering to anti-Semitic sentiments of the diaspora meant that the New Historians' work was received to international acclaim, and they themselves were invited to conferences in order to represent the voice of the 'critical Israeli'.

Avi Shlaim, unlike Benny Morris and Ilan Pappe, chose not to return to Israel in order to pursue his academic career. He moved from Reading University to St Antony's College, Oxford, where he was made a fellow and where he was appointed the Alastair Buchan Reader in International Relations. In this sense he experienced the most comfortable journey to academic promotion.

Morris and Pappe's believed that their careers suffered quite extensive damage in the short-term. Morris continued to work as a journalist even after the publication of *The Birth* by Cambridge University Press in 1988. He believed the book to be partly responsible for his dismissal in 1991 from the Israeli English-language daily newspaper, the *Jerusalem Post*, for which he had worked since 1978. In 1990 he published his second volume on Israeli history, entitled, *1948 and After*.[110] Between 1991 and 1997 he was unable to find an academic post, despite publishing another two works. He was unemployed – receiving some money from grants and foundations, but with no job.

> I don't think, I *know* it was because I was writing radical history that was unacceptable to the historiographical establishment. They didn't make anything explicit because they never invited me to interviews so I didn't know what their reasons were, but as it worked out there was never a job in any of the departments in any of the universities.[111]

He finally obtained a position as an associate professor at Ben Gurion University in 1997. He was offered tenure in the Middle East Studies Department there only after a long, drawn out process lasting several years that saw his attempts to gain tenure within the history department at Ben Gurion University, fail:

> [Even] after I was given a place in the university I was still being harried by the right-wingers who didn't want me to stay at the university – who wanted to try and get rid of me. So even in the medium term, what I wrote didn't exactly pave my way in Israeli academia.[112]

Ilan Pappe found that initially he succeeded relatively quickly to secure a post in Israel's Haifa University and progressed fairly quickly to the most important stage for an Israeli academic's career: securing tenure. Pappe explained that he received tenure in 1992, before he expressed his radical views on Oslo. The Oslo Accords represented a watershed for Pappe because he was instinctively opposed to them. This forced him to reflect on his opposition. Pappe believed that the chances of him being awarded tenure after this period would have been very low, not because of his position on Oslo but because of his developing critical stance towards Israel and Zionism. Oslo brought things to a head in terms of Pappe's ideological and political positions. He noted, '[that's] when I understood the connection between how I see history and how I see the peace process'.[113]

According to Pappe then, his own position vis-à-vis Zionism was not coherent, even to himself, before Oslo. This assisted him to advance professionally at Haifa where he is a senior lecturer of Political Science. He is also the academic director of the Research Institute for Peace at *Givat Haviva*. There seems to be a dividing line in Pappe's career, between his early work, *Britain and the Arab-Israel Conflict*, and the books which he edited and authored later.[114] This affected not only the way the books were received, but it also impacted on the possibility of having these books translated into Hebrew.

> The basic consensus was that this work was not acceptable on every possible level: academic, ethical, morally, ideological, and this is why none of my English books are translated into Hebrew. I am still trying to translate them but I can't … most of my books are dealing with 1948 and I don't think they will ever be translated.[115]

Pappe believed he was kept on the margins of the Israeli academic community once he began to articulate his criticism of Zionism and its ideological and historical foundations. At the beginning of his career his articles were accepted for publication by Israeli academic journals. He was even invited by the Ministry of Education to be a member of the advisory committee for rewriting history textbooks; yet he recalled:

> I was part of that team that was trying to rethink the teaching of history in Israel. I was active particularly in the committees that dealt with Arab education in Israel. I was never invited to talk about the general education of the Jews.[116]

Pappe's radicalization, or, in his terms, 'realisation' had a severe impact on his professional development.

Becoming part of the establishment

It is difficult to measure in an empirical fashion the influence of the New History debate on societal discourse. However, it can be claimed with some confidence that the New Historians managed to alter the way many Israelis approached thorny issues such as Palestinian refugees:

> [People] understand that there is a complex picture of expulsions – Arabs calling on them to leave and people leaving from fright, but is a much more complicated picture than that some radio broadcaster from the Arab side had asked them to leave.[117]

Israeli historian Israel Bar Tal – an authority on Zionism and the *Yishuv* – admitted that the New Historians did effect a change in the path of historical research on Israel. In this sense he agreed that it made sense to draw some sort of line under traditional historical scholarship. Yet he argued that every generation of historians was vulnerable to the criticisms levelled by the New Historians in terms of which research questions were asked and which were ignored. He stated:

> People devoted their lives to study particular research questions and who wants to acknowledge that they asked different types of questions than are asked today. I don't blame them – it's not about blame, it's the sociology of knowledge when we study how knowledge develops. We see how knowledge develops in particular contexts.[118]

According to Bar Tal, the context was one governed by censorship and tremendous pressure for conformity. It was a climate of self-regulation – not imposed through outside pressure – but from within. He claimed that this stemmed from a national consciousness that hinged on vulnerability and survival. In the midst of this existential struggle, people were less likely to engage in critical self-reflection. In other words, these historians worked within the parameters of the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism.

Bar Tal, however, failed to link the relationship between power and historical enquiry which Pappe developed as a theme in his later work. Bal Tar ignored the dialectic between ideology and 'context' which is oft-cited by traditional historians to defend themselves against charges made by the New Historians who accused them of being ideologically committed to Zionism and thus unwilling to challenge its central 'myths' or ideological and historical foundations. Pappe, on the other hand, turned on its head the defence of 'historical context' as a method for judging historical events. He declared:

> The moment you deal with context and justification you deal with political things and that was my claim from the very beginning: That this debate is about ideology, it is not a debate about the facts. And some ideologies will hide some facts, others will highlight them, others will distort them. But you have to start with the ideology – you have to start with Zionism not with the facts.[119]

The traditional Zionist narrative adapted to incorporate the new research and the reception of the New Historians; thus it was not undermined completely. In fact, many of the 'establishment' historians noted with some degree of irony that New History had been co-opted into the hegemonic historiographical discourse in the same way that Morris and Pappe were eventually integrated into the academic establishment. Yoav Gelber asserted that 'the New Historians are not *the* establishment – they have become *part* of the establishment'.[120]

Fears were expressed by traditional Zionist historians that not only Zionism, but history as a discipline, was being threatened by the New Historians and the 'new' ideological partisanship they were allegedly injecting into academia. Anita Shapira believed that the New Historians exerted great influence in some universities. Contrary to their claims, she argued that that the New Historians were far from being martyrs for their cause – in fact they were co-opted into the system and rose to positions of power. This worried her because unlike the 'old' historians, whom she classes as 'liberals', 'the New Historians do not hold "liberal" ideals dear'. Thus, Shapira claimed, when a talented scholar came along, the 'old' historians did not check his or her political views. Shapira felt that this was not true of the current situation.[121]

In other words, Shapira feared that the new gatekeepers of Israeli academia – those who were in positions to decide which research topics were funded and which were not – were not as liberal as the old gatekeepers. New History no longer sat on the margins of historical inquiry as it did at the time of Akiva Orr. Through their inclusion within the Israeli university system, the two New Historians who

remained in Israel managed to institutionalize the phenomenon that today is no longer regarded as either quite as revolutionary or quite as threatening.

In contrast, Ilan Pappe downplayed the ability of New History to alter the paradigm of knowledge or to wield significant gatekeeping powers, arguing that the changes wrung by New History may have been insignificant to the bigger political picture. Pappe, of course, openly subscribed to the idea that history was a powerful tool for nation-building and just as it was utilized by the Zionists, so it should be wielded by the anti-Zionists in the battle for the establishment of a Palestinian state, although he himself believes in a one-state solution. Exposing the 'truth' about an issue such as the refugees did not cause the major schism within Israel that he wished for. It did not have the consequences that he and other similarly minded Palestinian and Israeli scholars anticipated. He noted:

> You may be allowed to win the struggle over the past and representation because the 'powers that be' don't really care – they would give you this privilege because in every other meaningful way they control your life – I am the only historian in Palestine who writes the history of Palestine from an anti-Zionist point of view. That's a failure.[122]

New History and new politics: From Oslo to the second *Intifada*

This section highlights the fact that the differences between the New Historians were, in fact, greater than their commonalties, and argues that they did not represent a real challenge to the hegemonic Zionist discourse. Although there was no direct link between the impact of New History and the Oslo Accords, arguably New History opened up the discursive space for a historic reconciliation between the Israelis and the Palestinians. However, as mentioned earlier, the Oslo Accords were deliberately designed not to address issues of historical contention until a later stage. Thus the implications of New History were largely irrelevant in the debate in Israel about the compromises that Oslo required.

The emergence of New History and the acknowledgement of some of Israel's historical skeletons could have been considered a sign of a maturing society able to face its past. However, it does appear that acknowledging this past has made a difference on a structural level. Although a new view of Israel's past has entered public consciousness, this view has been normalized and justified in its historical context. Benny Morris argued that though there is a link between political realities and historical writing, it is a parallel rather than a causal link. He stated:

> These things [Oslo and New History] happened at the same time but they didn't cause each other. There are people who argue that the new historiography affected the government, affected the ministers and it was one of the factors bringing people towards Oslo – people like Karsh say that. I think it's wrong.[123]

It can also be argued that acknowledgement of the other side's plight heightened paranoia amongst Israelis rather than increasing their empathy and making them

more sympathetic and open to Palestinian claims. Yoav Gelber asserted: 'I don't believe that there can be any resolution in this conflict because for the Palestinians, it is a matter of justice. They don't want a state – they want justice'.[124]

Of course, Gelber referred to justice in historical terms. Benny Morris was quick to understand the importance of the potential relationship between historical narratives and political concessions. He acknowledged the connection between the narrative of 1948 and Palestinian demands for Israeli and world recognition of the Palestinian right of return, and the Israeli denial of this right. Morris argued that accepting the narrative of an active Israeli expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 meant recognizing that Israel's responsibility for the solution must be greater and therefore it must be more accepting of the right of return. If, on the other hand, the Palestinians left because the Arabs called them, Israel had less moral responsibility for the fate of the refugees. In other words, there is a connection made (although not necessarily correctly) between the amount of responsibility ascribed to Israel for 1948 and the issue of compromise in relation to the right of return and the current agenda regarding the refugee issue: 'In that sense what I wrote softened the Israeli stand vis-à-vis the Palestinians and vis-à-vis the right of return in general. And it happened more or less simultaneously'.[125]

What Morris was implicitly referring to was greater Israeli sympathy for Palestinian demands for justice in resolving the conflict. According to Gelber: '[Until] this changes [the Palestinian demands for justice] there can be no real peace. And I don't believe it will change'.[126]

Because the Oslo process did not raise questions of justice on a more profound level, such as justice for the refugees and the problems inherent in the Zionist project, it was better received by the Zionist left. Benny Morris was very much a part of this camp. In his view, his historical work was not a deliberate attempt to undermine Zionism – nor did he feel that his work on topics such as the Palestinian refugee problem had any real impact on *realpolitik* or Israeli perceptions of the claims of the Palestinians. Morris stated that most Israelis believe that they have a right to a Jewish state, and that Israel's oppressive policies developed as a response to Arab terrorism and Arab aggression.[127]

Ilan Pappe noted that Morris' work focused on the detail of history at the expense of viewing the 'whole' Zionist enterprise. The Zionist project envisaged an ideal Jewish state bereft of Arabs, thus Morris' conclusion regarding the roots of the Palestinian refugee problem, that 'the Palestinian refugee problem was born of war, not by design, Jewish or Arab',[128] was weak in relation to the evidence he himself presented. This evidence is regarded by Pappe, as well as Palestinians, as bolstering claims of the systematic expulsion of Palestinians from their lands. For Pappe, this is an example of ideology affecting scholarship – although Morris was not motivated by a particular ideological position, his conclusions revealed the struggle between 'facts' and the hegemonic discourse:

> As a Zionist, he [Benny Morris] cannot just say that there was systematic expulsion. He has to say there was a context, that there was an explanation, even a justification. What was this project all about? What did this project

> mean for the indigenous population of Palestine? And then you can start arguing whether this project to uproot the population of Palestine succeeded or not, and by which means? But I find all these questions marginal, compared to the basic questions of Zionism.[129]

In terms of his own work, Pappe felt that his realization that ideology is inherent in historical narratives was both liberating and challenging:

> The point of writing books is to question this assumption and see whether we can challenge it. And I think it takes time before you can see this full picture, and it took me time. That's why, in the beginning, you can't find much difference between the New Historians.[130]

Ilan Pappe pinpointed his moment of 'clarity' as the Oslo Accords. Unlike most other academic and intellectuals, Pappe was one of the few voices of dissent. He explained that he became more political and began to challenge the notion that it is possible to write objective books on the history of the conflict and the history of Palestine. According to Pappe, he 'freed' himself through this realization.[131]

Pappe recalled how he became increasingly overtly politically active as his ideological position moved away from Zionism. In 1994 he joined *Hadash*, the ex-Communist party of Israel, which was the only anti-Zionist party with both Jewish and Arab members. Pappe became a leading member of the party and was even a candidate for parliament on two occasions, though he insisted that he refused to serve in the Knesset.[132] He was initially optimistic about Oslo; however by 1994 he had developed a clear position against it. He argued that Oslo succeeded in forming the international global perception of the conflict into an issue of the West Bank and Gaza and nothing else. Thus compromise was limited to the occupied Palestinian territory and other issues were subsumed. For Pappe, this was unacceptable: first, because the occupied Palestinian territory only represented 20 per cent of historical Palestine and, secondly, he argued that:

> You cannot commit a crime like 1948 and then continue the crime of occupation and not connect the two, and not acknowledge it and be accountable for it and say to the Palestinians that bygones are bygones. It doesn't work.[133]

For Pappe, Oslo was a Zionist coup – a supreme trick of history. He claimed that it inadvertently changed the historical narrative of the conflict. History now began in 1967 – thus the problems that had to be addressed through compromise and negotiation were questions regarding issues raised from the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Fundamental questions of justice for the Palestinians, such as the 1948 refugees, were placed on the political back burner. It was no coincidence that final status issues, such as refugees and the status of Jerusalem, were, until Camp David II, kept as low profile as possible. Questions of historical claims and justice were more difficult to resolve than questions of political realities, such as the governance of the occupied Palestinian territory and

ensuring Israel's security once Israel withdrew. Pappe asserted that there was an inherent contradiction here, and this is why, according to Pappe, Oslo ultimately failed:

> The problem was not the Arabs, the Muslims or the Palestinians. The problems were the historical circumstances that bred Zionism, the way Zionism turned into a state project. [I hope that] this society will understand that you cannot come to someone's house, expel him and then claim that everything is fine … [Israel] lives in a state of denial and it is a State of denial.[134]

Pappe's open political views and anti-Zionist stance caused outrage within academic circles. One of his bitterest critics within Haifa University was Yoav Gelber, who has been mentioned previously. It is interesting to note that whilst they come from opposite ends of the ideological spectrum – Pappe an anti-Zionist and Gelber a staunch Zionist – they both understood that Oslo, as a process of historical reconciliation, was doomed to fail even though it may have had potential as a political solution:

> What Israelis regard as indispensable concessions for the sake of reconciliation, the Palestinians consider their own by right, not something freely conceded by their partners or deserving of reciprocity.[135]

Gelber accused Pappe of being unscholarly and unacademic. He objected to Pappe using his position in the university as a political platform, and his 'adoption' of the Palestinian narrative. According to Gelber, despite their disagreement over political issues, academic cooperation had been possible whilst Pappe acknowledged that both sides had a valid narrative. In fact, Gelber claimed that he was one of the people who recommended Pappe for tenure. However, since the second *Intifada* and the radicalization of Pappe's position, Gelber terminated all contact with Pappe, feeling that he had delegitimized the Israeli narrative and accepted the Palestinian narrative uncritically.[136]

It is clear that Pappe stepped outside the acceptable boundaries and parameters of the hegemonic discourse. His challenge was not over the core or control of the discourse but constituted a counter-discourse. Of all the New Historians, Pappe's political engagement is the most radical. His counter-narrative could not be absorbed or incorporated by the hegemonic discourse because it fundamentally undermined this discourse. Pappe can be considered then, an anti-Zionist or a non-Zionist.

Gelber illustrated a clear understanding of the sensitive nature of the historical claims made by the Palestinians, and was angered by Pappe's acknowledgement of those claims. He wrote:

> By claiming that testimonies of Arab refugees should be accepted just as those of Jewish Holocaust survivors, Pappe attempts to create a comparative paradigm that puts the Holocaust and the *Nakbah* on the same level. Pappe

> implies thereby that the Palestinians deserve compensation for the *Nakbah* – politically and financially – as the Jews were compensated for the Holocaust. This comparison is particularly irritating and spreads a strong odour of Holocaust denial.[137]

Pappe himself acknowledged that his views are rarely given publicity in Israel – he has failed to publish newspaper articles, journal articles, or books in Hebrew. His criticism held particular significance for the international debate surrounding Zionism and Israel, within both Jewish and non-Jewish circles. He was frequently invited to talk at venues in the US and the UK, and noted that the more he was ostracized in Israel, the more his international reputation grew.[138]

Gelber claimed that Pappe's criticism of Israel served to increase anti-Semitism internationally. Ideology, according to Gelber, should be kept out of academia. However Pappe contended:

> I started with one ideology – that's absolutely true – with the Zionist ideology. I started my trip into the past as a Zionist and I became a vehement anti-Zionist because of the things I found. I challenged my basic ideology at a great personal price.[139]

Pappe argues that all historians write from an ideological point of view, and have arrived at their conclusions before they have conducted their empirical research. This is reflected in their research topic, their research materials, and their selectivity. According to him, it is a matter of honesty and integrity to admit this and to be able to show how the ideology guides the work.[140] The theme of subjectivity and normative scholarship will be explored further in the next chapter.

Through his writings, his interview, and his postings on Ilan Pappe on the *History News Network*, it is clear that Yoav Gelber was also guided by personal beliefs.[141] He himself authored two books on the same topics as those examined by the New Historians since 1996. In 1997 he published *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations*,[142] and in 2001 he published a tome entitled, *Palestine, 1948: War, Escape and the Emergence of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*.[143] These two books were too close in subject matter to that dealt with by New History for this to be the mere coincidence Gelber claimed it was. He also, on one occasion, ran for the Israeli right-wing party *Tzomet*[144] in opposition to Oslo and made it through the primary rounds. It is fascinating, however, that Gelber still insisted he 'played by the rules of the game', and was able to separate ideology from academia.[145]

This seems to confirm Pappe's suggestion that:

> Those who claim that ideology has no impact on them are totally captivated by that ideology because they really believe that they have liberated themselves. I believe that this is an anachronism, a strange formula. Especially people in Israel and the Anglo-Jewish world: the more they are committed to Zionism, the more they claim neutrality and objectivity.[146]

According to Pappe, the argument was not about the facts – it was an argument about the moral implications of the facts:

> Who argues about the facts? There were 500 villages and they are gone. This can be shown and everybody knows it. The question is how? How did they disappear, and far more important than how, is, what are the implications?[147]

Avi Shlaim's ideological position also changed over the course of Oslo, although his methodological approach did not. He agreed with Edward Said, who, in his work *Peace and its Discontents*,[148] outlined the failure of Oslo to address the root of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – the problems that began in 1948. However, Shlaim differed from Ilan Pappe, who claimed that Israel's existence was illegitimate because of the injustices perpetrated against the Palestinians. Shlaim states:

> My position is that the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 involved a monumental injustice to the Palestinians, but you cannot put the clock back: you cannot reverse that. Israel cannot be expected to legislate itself out of existence in order to undo the injustice. So my solution to the problem of 1948 is partition.[149]

For this reason Shlaim was initially very optimistic about the Oslo process. Whilst recognizing its weaknesses, he felt that it was the most realistic political solution to an insolvable historical injustice. Unlike Pappe and Gelber, Shlaim truly believed in the 'spirit' of Oslo and its symbolization of historic reconciliation. Contrary to Pappe and Gelber, Shlaim suggested that the *Likud* party, rather than its inherent structural weakness and its inability to redress historical claims and injustices, was responsible for its failure. He believed that the *Likud* never accepted Oslo and that once in power the party reneged on Israel's side of the deal. Israel's treatment of the Palestinians since Ariel Sharon came to power, according to Shlaim, was brutal and unconscionable.[150]

Rather like those who saw the decline of Labour and the rise of the *Likud* as being responsible for Israel's actions in the Lebanon War, Shlaim used an ideological line to divide Israel's actions. This is despite the fact that even after the signing of the Oslo Accords, settlement construction continued to increase at a great rate.[151] Like Pappe though, Shlaim became more openly radical after the outbreak of the Second *Intifada*, for which he held Israel responsible. Today he describes himself as a 'post-Zionist' – not because he thinks Israel is an illegitimate project, but because he believes Zionism has fulfilled its purpose in creating a state for the Jews, and society must move beyond the ideological paradigm of Zionism. Shlaim's position is not the same as that of Ilan Pappe who feels that the Zionist project was an illegitimate act of colonization, which renders him in ideological terms, an anti-Zionist rather than a post-Zionist.

Benny Morris created the greatest stir with his shift in political position after the outbreak of the second *Intifada*. In a series of articles in *Ha'aretz* and the

Guardian, Morris expressed views that shocked both his supporters and detractors. His articles dealt with issues such as the reasons for the second *Intifada* (Palestinian intransigence and fundamental hatred of Jews), the future of the Jewish state (Ben Gurion's short-sightedness in not transferring all of the Arabs when he had the chance has left Israel facing a demographic time bomb), and the 'Clash of Civilizations' theory (that the biggest threat to Western civilization is 'Islam'). He wrote:

> I regard [the current *Intifada*] as a Palestinian rebellion against the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and as a political-terroristic assault on Israel's existence (and also an off-shoot of fundamental Islam's ongoing assault against the West).[152]

He repeated these themes in various op-eds and interviews since the beginning of the *Intifada*. According to Morris, this did not indicate any change of political conviction on his part – he still subscribed to a 'basic left' view which favoured the two-state solution. However, the cautious optimism which he felt after Oslo evaporated after the outbreak of the second *Intifada* – he viewed the violence as an almost personal betrayal, as did many from the Israeli left:

> In the 1990s, I was cautiously optimistic about the Palestinians willingness to accept the two-state solution. Now, I am very pessimistic. I think they [the Palestinians] are ultimately after a one state solution – with a Palestinian Muslim majority.[153]

Eyal Naveh, a professor of history at Tel Aviv University, understood Morris' views in the context of the 'apocalyptic' atmosphere that hung heavy in Israel during the first few years after the eruption of the second *Intifada*: 'Benny Morris … is not a New Historian anymore … He starts to use enormous generalisations, which he didn't use as a historian'.[154]

Benny Morris responded to public criticism regarding his views from his former New Historian colleagues in an article that he published in the conservative American magazine, *New Republic*, in March 2004 under the guise of a book review of Ilan Pappe's book, *A History of Modern Palestine*.

Morris was critical of Pappe's work, his methodology, and his hypothesis. Academic evaluation aside, Morris used this book review as a chance to re-evaluate the idea that the New Historians were ever a coherent group. His conclusion that they were not concurs with the arguments presented in this chapter. Yet, in the public's mind, the New Historians were firmly and erroneously associated with post-Zionism and radical politics. This was due partly to their own marketing strategy – it was easier to make an impact when working together as a group. Several New Historians were deemed newsworthy and were credited with formulating a historical revisionist trend – New History. One New Historian, however, was easily overlooked. Furthermore, it was easier for the establishment historians whom they challenged to counter-attack them as a group. Thus they were all

painted in the same light when, in fact, the differences between them on a personal political level were significant and grew sharply after the second *Intifada.*

Benny Morris always claimed to be a Zionist. He viewed his work as an objective pursuit for truth in the light of new documentary evidence, and his position remains the same today. In this sense Benny Morris was the least 'new' of the New Historians. Most of the accusations and criticisms levelled at the New Historians seemed to fall far from the mark when applied to him. In 1998, Morris contributed an article to the liberal American-Jewish journal, *Tikkun*, entitled *A Personal Assessment of the Zionist Experience*.[155] In it, he reflected on Zionism's legacy during the Netanyahu era – it was easy to criticize Israel when viewed through the prism of Netanyahu's premiership – his reneging on the spirit of Oslo, the scandals attached to his personal affairs, and the corruption of his financial affairs. Aside from this, Morris claimed to have avoided debates regarding historiography and post-Zionism – a label that was all too frequently and erroneously attached to him. He admitted that the *Intifada* strengthened the nation's attachment to the collective, and that he possibly underwent this process on a personal level as well.[156]

Morris also came under attack for his views regarding Palestinians, Islam, and particularly Palestinians living in Israel whom he describes as a 'ticking time bomb'. He noted:

> I am ostracized a bit by the left. I notice it even at the university. People – all sorts of left-wingers – don't say hello to me. It's a bit unpleasant but it's fine … the *Intifada* drove people to the extremes. I don't think it took me to the extreme but it certainly moved me in some way to the right … in my approach to the Palestinians. People like Shlaim and Pappe have drifted simply into the Palestinian camp.[157]

Anita Shapira stated that there are 'two Benny Morris'[158] – one who writes with his 'left' and one who thinks with his 'right'. Pappe asserted that Benny Morris encountered hostility from fellow left-wing academics, not because of his views, but because of his public articulation of them. According to Pappe, the left-wing liberal stratum of society did not approve of an Israeli professor stating that ethnic cleansing was justifiable, because this position was considered more appropriate for the right wing:

> Ideologically they are totally in agreement with Benny Morris … They want Benny Morris to be a good and a legitimate scholar because at the end of the day, Benny Morris says the most important thing for Zionists – 'we have the right for our survival in Palestine as a Jewish nation and as a Jewish state', and I say, 'No, you don't'.[159]

Interestingly, Avi Shlaim, unlike Pappe, saw Morris' defection as part of a structural change in Israeli society where most people shifted to the political right, including Labour, Peace Now, and *Meretz.* He believed that these groups all placed blame for the failure of Oslo with the Palestinians. In opposition to this

trend, Shlaim felt that he and Ilan Pappe moved further to the left and placed most of the blame for the collapse of the Oslo peace process on Israel.[160] In contrast to Shlaim, Pappe felt that Morris' new attitude was the natural outcome of his ideology – one that, as corroborated by Morris himself, had not changed.

Pappe asserted that the symbolic elements of both Oslo and changes in the attitudes of most Israelis towards the 'enemy' were over-conflated. In order to illustrate this point, he recounts the events of an extremely symbolic conference in 1998, hosted by the Institute of Palestine Studies. It was the first official meeting between Israeli and Palestinian academics. This conference grew out of a project co-founded by Pappe, called the Israel-Palestinian Academic Dialogue (PALISAD), and which still exists. It is a dialogue between ten Israeli historians and ten Palestinian historians in a project geared towards writing a joint narrative, and which meets once a month in Ramallah. Edward Said heard of it and he convinced the French newspaper *Le Monde Diplomatique* to invite the group to Paris. Said also wanted a number of mainstream Israeli historians and academics, such as Benny Morris, Elie Sambar, Itamar Rabinovitch, and Zeev Sternhell as well as Edy Kaufman from the Truman Institute of Jerusalem, to participate. Pappe recalled that the participants were excited by the event and that Kaufman in particular saw it as a historic opportunity for an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue on history, particularly on the history of 1948.

Though the conference was hailed as a benchmark of cooperation and a symbolic gesture of dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, the reality of the situation was a stark contrast of lingering prejudices and unchanged views.[161]

Pappe believed that, in essence, the differences between right- and left-wing Zionism paled into insignificance. Whilst the positions of right- and left-wing Zionism may differ from one and other, ideologically, Zionism, for its 'pure' pioneer core, was tainted was tainted as a whole. In contrast, like Morris in his *Tikkun* article, many left-wing Israelis maintained that certain undesirable aspects of Zionism had emerged through the rise of the 'right-wing', the growth of the political strength of the *Likud*, and the collapse of the era of Labour Zionism. Pappe, on the other hand, located the problem firmly within the legacy of Labour Zionism – one that includes a legacy of denial.

Shlaim admitted that the coherency of the New Historians was compromised by revelations of Morris' political views, but felt that New History had not been buried:

> The New Historians were never a group of people: New History is a perspective that requires you to take the claims of the two sides of the conflict, subject them to critical examination in light of all the available archival material, and then draw conclusions.[162]

Subtle challenges

Zeev Sternhell is often associated with this group of so-called New Historians, though he rejected this label and insisted that he was 'first and foremost a historian

of ideas'. He specialized in European fascist and nationalist movements and also wrote on Labour Zionism. It was the book he published in 1998, *The Founding Myths of Israel: Nationalism, Socialism and the Founding of the Jewish State*,[163] that earned him a reputation as a New Historian, albeit a minor New Historian. His methodology was not new – he was a conservative historian, yet his analysis was, in a sense, revolutionary. He viewed Zionism through the prism of European national movements – essentially as a form of National Socialism.

It was his belief that the establishment historians lacked a comparative perspective when examining the formation of Jewish nationalism and its crystallization into its hegemonic form, Labour Zionism, yet he was uncomfortable with labelling the establishment historians as 'old.' Instead he termed them 'traditional' because they were unwilling to view Zionist leaders and the Zionist project in terms outside their own chosen definition. When Sternhell examined the works of A. D. Gordon, one of the most influential and prominent intellectual figures of the second *Aliya*, he understood them as classic pieces of national socialist thought: 'The conformist historians, they don't see this – when they read Gordon, they don't read half a dozen nationalists East European or West Europeans speaking in the same terms, using the same categories, without knowing each other'.[164]

Arguably, works like Sternhell's are, in actual fact, more threatening for the historical establishment than those of the New Historians. His conclusions are deeply significant because viewing the Zionist movement in the context of European nationalist movements exposes questions that do not fit easily into the traditional heroic view of the Zionist pioneers. He asked:

> How was it possible that the socialist party *Mapai* was against direct taxation in Palestine – they opposed it? Did you ever see a socialist party opposing this? How did it come that we had no universal social services and welfare state? [Why was] secondary education so expensive under *Mapai* both before and after the creation of the state? All these questions have answers – it's not because we couldn't answer the questions but because we didn't want to.[165]

Sternhell claimed he was not a New Historian because he did not write about 1948 and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Yet, by uncovering structural weaknesses in the way the Labour Zionist movement was understood in the past, he raised unsettling questions regarding social welfare and social justice within the Jewish community. He noted that when he began his work he did not expect to find conflictions with the traditional image of Labour Zionism, and this shocked him.

Although many Israelis reconciled themselves to the idea that Labour Zionism did not live up to its socialist credentials, the suggestion that this was not because of practical constraints but because of existing structures of power that were supported by a hegemonic discourse is harder to accept. The reason, as Sternhell pointed out, is that it undermined the lofty ideals that coat hegemonic Zionist ideology and placed it within the realm of European nationalisms. This was threatening because Zionism was created in response to the darker side accompanying such nationalisms – national exclusivity, homogeneity, and intolerance for the 'Other'.

Moshe Zimmerman, Professor of German History at the Hebrew University, learnt the danger of making such comparisons at great personal cost. He allegedly compared the settler youth to the Hitler youth in the course of a newspaper interview, and was consequently taken to court by the settler movement in Israel. Unwilling to comment on the case, Zimmerman was nonetheless visibly upset when questioned about the incident, and claimed his remarks had been taken out of context. More importantly though, he said that he felt betrayed by the Hebrew University and most of his fellow academics there – who not only failed to support him but also seemed to blacklist him. Zimmerman, like Sternhell, views Zionism through the lens of European nationalism and, in opposition to much of the corpus of scholarship on the subject, disagrees that the Holocaust was Zionism's *raison d'etre*, or its main shaping force. He asserted that:

> [Zionism] behaved the way the other nationalisms in Europe behaved too. It developed into a romantic even racist nationalism. And anti-Semitism gave it a special impetus. But Zionism became a movement before the Holocaust and was not dependant in its development on the Holocaust. As the Holocaust happened it had its own repercussions on Zionism. But the very simplistic combination – that the Holocaust led to Zionism or the declaration of the State of Israel – is something we do not accept because we are much more differentiated in our approach to Zionism as a brand of European nationalism.[166]

Many of Zionism's more problematic aspects – practical, such as the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and ideological, such as ethnic exclusivity and its consequences for a nation state – do not stem from the rise of the *Likud*, or the greater political participation of the *Mizrahim*, as is commonly asserted. The problem, according to Zimmerman, lay in the essence of Zionism itself – because it was a form of romantic European nationalism. According to Zimmerman, this should have served as a warning because the consequences of the uglier aspects of nationalism in Europe were devastating for the Jews. It was his conviction that Zionism was not immune from these traits, nor was it morally exempted by the Holocaust from fostering neo-fascist ideologies similar to those that accompanied European nationalism. This message, however, proved to be too extreme for his fellow academics who distanced themselves from him following the court case. Zimmerman fought the case and eventually won, at the cost of thousands of dollars from his own pocket and many years of his life.

Zimmerman's case is an insightful example of why history in Israel is not considered merely an academic matter, but rather a powerful emotive sphere. Both he and Sternhell challenged the structure of the hegemonic discourse, not through a new methodology, such as Pappe, but through a simple structural comparison of Zionism and European nationalisms. They were not embroiled in an ideological debate, nor did they claim that there was no such thing as objective scholarship. Rather, by sticking to the 'rules of the game' they managed to launch a significant challenge to the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse and historiography.

The true potential of New History

This chapter provided a brief survey of the major political events to influence changes to Israeli society and identity during the 1980s, and during which time the New Historians emerged. They seemed to adjust conceptions of Israel's past in line with its new political reality – in line with its *habitus*. They were attacked or lauded as a unified coherent group of myth-breakers. Leaning politically towards the left, Benny Morris, Avi Shlaim, and Ilan Pappe became symbols of Israel's maturity as a nation – able to admit its past mistakes as it moves on towards a peaceful future.

It showed that these conceptions were incorrect. The ideological unity of the New Historians was conflated, both by supporters and detractors, though it was convenient for the New Historians to subscribe to this unity publicly. They did this by subscribing to the very notion of the New Historians and the significance they attributed to the rise of the New History that they championed. In fact, it seemed that the New Historians themselves were aware of the shaky foundations of their group from the start. Morris always claimed to be a Zionist, and Shlaim and Pappe began their careers as Zionists, albeit critical Zionists. All three historians clearly underwent a process of ideological development. Criticisms that the New Historians were ideologically anti-Zionists were also erroneous. All three began their journeys ideologically oriented towards Zionism. This cannot then be used to understand their motivations in choosing their fields of research or their hypotheses.

The motivations, as perceived by the historians themselves, were outlined, as well as their changes in perspective, through the lens of Israel's political developments. This demonstrates that there is a tendency to conflate the power that some attributed to New History in undermining Israeli identity, and the power that the past exerts on the future, is conflated. Israel is not unique in being a new nation where history is an emotive topic, yet it is a good example of where the past can have political consequences on contemporary political processes. Historical research that shows Israel's responsibility for, for example, the Palestinian refugee problem as being increased or diminished gives credence to various political and moral claims today. However, the work of the New Historians has not yet reached the stage, and perhaps never will, where it can have a lasting effect and change political structures of power.

Thus, New History was not symbolic of a wider rupture in Israeli society and identity. Its main significance in terms of the hegemonic Zionist discourse was not that it undermined the Zionist historical narrative – rather that it created a space to expose the discourse to greater and more radical challenges, as will be discussed in the proceeding chapters, and it revealed the capability of the discourse to adjust in line with a changing political reality.

On the other hand, works of historians who were not considered to be 'major' New Historians may prove to have a greater ability to challenge the hegemonic narrative of Labour Zionism. These works, by placing Zionism within the context of European nationalist movements, raise unsettling questions regarding the aims and foundations of Zionism and their relevance to the ideological and political

issues of the day. These historians could not be dismissed as ideologues or a vanguard of 'new' historians who have come to challenge the stranglehold of the establishment, as is frequently the case with Morris, Shlaim, and Pappe. It is not their approach nor their materials that are different, but their framework of analysis that opposes a romantic notion of socialist Zionism and its leaders. It is this that ultimately could prove a substantial threat to the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse.

5 The Promise of Post-Zionism

> The problem is not changing people's consciousness – or what's in their heads – but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth.
>
> Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*

In an article published in March 1999, entitled *Can Israel Survive Post-Zionism?* Meyrav Wurmser, executive director of MEMRI,[1] wrote:

> The attack by intellectuals on Israeli nationalism and Jewish particularism poses more than a passing threat to the State of Israel. Israel is now facing a crisis of identity and values that strikes at the basic components and elements of the Israeli identity: Judaism and nationalism.[2]

Others were quick to dismiss the possibility of new ideological currents holding sway over the majority of Israeli Jews. Amongst them was Aharon Megged, winner of the Israel Prize for Literature in 1993, and a supporter of the Israeli political left. He declared in an interview:

> Post Zionism [is now emerging as the prevailing trend]. These trends have a strong voice in the media. But as a matter of fact, they have neither a strong hold on the people or on reality.[3]

However, the idea – whether true or not – that the changes in Israeli foreign and domestic policy that allowed for Oslo were accompanied by a significant reconfiguration of the 'nation' and its identity stimulated a debate both in Israel and abroad. This work argues that the depth of this process of reconfiguration was conflated. Oslo, as a political juncture, provided the space for critical voices to participate in the debate over the nation's future. This does not imply that voices of challenge and resistance did not exist before Oslo – merely that they had been confined to the margins of society and were limited in their ability to affect political pressure or change. Chapter 4 of this book evinced the incoherency and inconsistency of New History as an 'emancipatory movement', and made the collapse of the New Historians intelligible.

Resistance to the Zionist discourse emerged from two camps. The first included historical works emanating from the Palestinians. Limitations of space make it impossible to incorporate Palestinian challenges to the discourse; they would require a separate study (and they are not part of the self-defining discourse, but of a discourse defining the 'Other'). Thus, their attempts to explain the *Nakbah* or the 'Catastrophe' – the outcome of the defeat of the Arab forces, the subsequent declaration of Israeli statehood and, most importantly, the beginning of the Palestinian refugee existence – will be mentioned only in passing here.

Traditionally, these works argued that forces external to Palestinian society hampered Palestinian attempts to resist Zionist colonization. In opposition to the dominant Zionist narrative of the creation of the state and the Jewish battle for independence in their 'homeland', these works maintained that the Arab armies were no match for the well-organized, well-funded, and well-armed Jewish fighters. Another reason cited for the failure of the Arab forces was the complicity of the British and favour of the US and USSR for the Jewish entity, as well as the collusion between Israel and Transjordan.[4]

The highly sensitive issue of the roots of the Palestinian exodus and refugee crisis is one of great political significance. Palestinian historians long claimed, even before the New Historians, that Palestinian refugees did not leave their towns and villages voluntarily – they were forced out through the use of psychological and physical warfare, and then prevented from returning home.[5] As Chapter 4 illustrates, these viewpoints came to be accepted by the New Historians who, whilst appearing to undermine the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse, actually adjusted it without rejecting it completely (aside from Pappe), and worked within the acceptable parameters of the discourse. Eventually some of the claims made by the New Historians percolated into the corpus of Israeli historiography and were no longer regarded as revolutionary or scandalous.

Post-Zionist scholars represent the second camp of resistance to the Zionist discourse and paradigm of knowledge concerning the nation. This corpus of work was theoretically innovative, and drew on strains of critical theory, post-colonial theory, and postmodernism to explain the interactions between, first, the Zionist movement and the indigenous Palestinian population, and then the Israeli state and its interactions with both the Palestinians and segments of its own Jewish and non-Jewish population.

As previously demonstrated, during the late 1980s and early 1990s the New Historians did not represent a coherent political position except by virtue of the media attention they received as the bulwark for the new 'post-Zionist' phenomenon in Israel. However, if one scratches the surface of this label, convenient though it initially was for both historians and the media, it is revealed that at that time, the work of the New Historians could not have been classed as 'post'-anything – either Zionism, modernism, or positivism. They were, in great part, conventional historiographical works that challenged elements of the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse, such as Israel's relations with the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular. Yet they were firmly embedded in the positivist tradition of scholarship and, for the most part, successfully adjusted the parameters

of the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse without rejecting these parameters entirely.

In fact, a stratum of 'post-Zionist' scholarship did emerge in Israel, and gained momentum in the 1990s. This chapter examines its theoretical underpinnings, highlighting the gulf between academics contributing to post-Zionist scholarship and the New Historians. It also shows how these voices, resisting the hegemonic discourse, contributed to the emergence of a counter-revolution – neo-Zionism, which is the focus of Chapter 6.

Confronting history and shaping discourse: Oslo

The Madrid Peace Conference was held from 30 October – 1 November 1991. Palestinian representatives, as members of a joint delegation with Jordan, attended talks between Jordan, Syria, Israel, and Lebanon. Direct bilateral talks began among Israel and Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the participants from the occupied Palestinian territory. Multilateral negotiations began on arms control, security, water, refugees, the environment, and economic development. This constituted an important first step on the road to direct negotiations between Israel and Palestinian representatives independent of multilateral peace negotiations between Israel and the other Arab states.

Following this, on 9 September 1993, came arguably the most important step in the peace process – mutual recognition. Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) agreed to recognize each other after 45 years of conflict, thus building on a pact on Palestinian self-rule in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and Jericho. PLO leader Yasser Arafat signed a letter recognizing Israel's right to exist and renouncing violence. In exchange, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin gave Arafat a letter stating that Israel recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and was willing to commence negotiations with the PLO within the framework of a Middle East peace process. The signing of the Declaration of Principles (DOP) – or the Oslo Accords – came a few days later on 13 September 1993.[6] It was this mutual recognition that provided the process with the necessary symbolism that was powerful enough to mask the weaknesses of the Accords.

The Oslo Accords contained a set of mutually agreed-upon general principles regarding a five-year interim period of Palestinian self-rule. So-called 'permanent status issues' were deferred to later negotiations that were to begin no later than the third year of the interim period. The permanent status negotiations were intended to lead to an agreement that would be implemented to take effect at the end of the interim period. Under the Declaration of Principles, the permanent status should have taken effect five years after the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, namely in May 1999.

The main features of the Oslo Accords were the following: first, the transfer of powers to the Palestinians so that in principle Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would be responsible for their own affairs. Second, the Oslo Accords would not include issues to be decided through 'final status' talks – issues such

as refugees, the status of Jerusalem, settlements, and borders. Neither party was conceding any rights over these issues by agreeing to the DOP during the interim period. Finally, Israel retained sole responsibility for security of international borders, foreign affairs, defence of Israelis and Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, and freedom of movement on roads.

These arrangements were to be implemented in several phases. The first was the Gaza-Jericho redeployment agreement, signed in Cairo on 4 May 1994. For the rest of the West Bank, five spheres of control were to be transferred to Palestinian representatives immediately after the Gaza-Jericho redeployment – education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism. Further agreements regarding the election of a Palestinian Authority and its powers were to be negotiated. Concurrent with the elections, Israeli forces were to be redeployed to specified locations outside populated areas. The Palestinian Authority was to have a strong police force at its disposal in order to guarantee public order and internal security.

Whilst it is not within the scope of this book to address all the details, problems and shortcomings of Oslo, the book does contend that Oslo failed to address the historical nature of the conflict. It was an attempt to solve the problem of the occupation without fundamentally questioning the existing hegemonic Zionist discourse, including historiographical and political paradigms. In other words, though steps were taken to install the Palestinian Authority, and joint cooperation ventures were initiated, Israeli policy towards, for example, settlement-building did not really change.[7] The process fell short of fundamentally affecting Israeli policy, society, and identity. It only focused on Israeli policies within the territories occupied in 1967. Issues such as refugees, borders, and Jerusalem were delayed until the stage when final status talks would begin.

Seen thus, in real terms Oslo was not the monumental compromise it first appeared to be. It was far more effective in promoting a new spirit of peace and optimism in symbolic terms than it was in terms of practical reality. Many studies conducted have shown that under Oslo, the quality of life for Palestinians dramatically decreased as the socio-economic situation worsened. The newly founded Palestinian power structures were too easily susceptible to corruption, and Palestinian freedoms, such as the freedom of movement, were even more severely encroached upon.[8] Again, Oslo did not address those issues central to the conflict – only those issues related to the government of the occupied Palestinian territory. It did not address the inherently historical core of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

When viewed in this light, the significance of both Oslo and the Lebanon war was over-inflated in terms of their strength to disrupt the political paradigm in Israel. This book suggests that these events can best be understood as simultaneously both political junctures and historiographical disjunctures. While they can be considered seminal moments in the history of the Israeli state, they did not undermine the discourse and political, social, and discursive structures that supported the state. Oslo's significance was that it allowed groups who challenged or competed over Zionist discourse to *capitalize* on the space revealed by the

invasion of Lebanon and the outbreak of the first *Intifada*, and respond to the works of the New Historians (either through their deconstruction or through their reconstruction).

Theoretical foundations of true 'post-Zionism'

Post-Zionist scholars comprise a less coherent group than the New Historians. They belong to various disciplines, although the majority of them fall within the boundaries of the social sciences. However, just as the New Historians were united by their positivist approach (except for Pappe's later works), the post-Zionists were united by the critical-theoretical (post-positivist) foundations of their works. The fact that this group was not coherent in itself is an inherent feature of post-positivism, which, in its application, can range from deconstructive postmodernism to normative theory or Critical Theory.

In order to understand why there is a clear distinction between the New Historians and post-Zionist scholarship as vehicles for social and political change it is necessary to explain the difference between positivist and post-positivist approaches, and the significance of this within Israeli academia.

Positivism, long the epitome of academic ideals, aspired to explain the social world 'as is' in objective and positive terms. In contrast, post-positivism has its roots in the thinking of early modern social scientists, such as Wilhelm Dilthey and Max Weber, who argued that the social scientist was not immune to influences from the world he or she was both describing and living in. Thus post-positivists contend that all social science is inherently normative as social scientists cannot isolate themselves from the world that they seek to describe and explain: objective description is at the very least influenced by subjective perception and judgement. Instead of considering this a disadvantage, post-positivists explicitly embrace subjectivity and argue that only an honest and normative engagement with the world around them allows for a critical and reflective assessment. In many ways, post-positivism often embraces change and improvement whereas positivism rejects such engagement and limits itself (and by typical extension, all academic enquiry) to 'objectively explaining the world as is'. Again, post-positivism, or critical theory, seeks to understand contemporary society by understanding its social and historical development, and by thus doing, identifying ways to overcome the structures of domination and power within society in order to bring about change and to achieve social justice. Critical theory is openly and unashamedly prescriptive, and as Max Horkheimer, one of the proponents of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, explains, its role is not merely to present an expression of a concrete historical situation – it also acts as a force within the situation, 'to stimulate change'.[9]

Academia, thus, becomes an arena for advocating and initiating change of the status quo, and for stimulating emancipation. Robert Cox, who applies critical theory to traditional approaches to international relations, writes:

> Critical theory is a theory of history in the sense of being concerned not just with the past but with a continuing process of historical change. Problem-solving

> theory is non-historical or a-historical, since it, in effect, posits a continuing present (the permanence of institutions and power relations which constitute its parameters).[10]

As previous discussions illustrate, the historians involved in the New History debate insisted that history should be an examination of the past, free of present-day prejudices; so although analysis can be made in 'hindsight', moral judgements should not. Many notable Israeli historians mentioned in the previous chapter, including Benny Morris, cited 'objective' academic writing as a credential of their own legitimacy and considered a lack of 'objectivity' or overt 'political orientation' a strong delegitimizing factor. Avi Shlaim argued that it is indeed the historian's role to judge history, but did not go as far as to say that it is within history's portfolio to change the present. Ilan Pappe's metamorphosis from positivist to post-positivist historian was also outlined, but his contribution to the post-Zionist corpus of work will be discussed in this chapter in greater detail.

Israeli post-Zionism

In an in-depth article in *Ha'aretz*, which examined the post-Zionist phenomenon, journalist Neri Livneh wrote in September 2001:

> Post-Zionism is a political attitude that recognizes the legitimacy of Zionism as a national movement of Jews, but specifies a certain date, a kind of watershed from which point on Zionism concluded its historical role or lost its legitimacy because of injustices it did to others.[11]

It was this definition that took root in the media and influenced public perceptions of what post-Zionism actually is. Today, it is problematic to talk of only one form of Zionism, although as this book argues, it is possible to identify a hegemonic form of Zionism. Labour Zionism achieved political dominance and discursive hegemony through a combination of historical, economic, and political processes. This is not to say that competing visions of Zionism did not exist, just that they were confined to the margins of society. Zionist academics worked within the discourse that identified with the primacy of the Jewish state. Criticism was levelled at state policies, but was expressed within the parameters of the hegemonic discourse, thus serving to adjust rather than undermine it.

Post-Zionism, as defined by this book, rests on different foundations. Post-Zionism does not need to be unified by anything other than a post-positivist approach to social, cultural, political, and economic structures of power. Post-Zionist academics may not all define themselves as post-Zionist, but arguably their works, based on critical theoretical approaches, comprise a body of work that is generically post-Zionist, i.e. it questions existing structures and paradigms of knowledge within Israeli academia in regards to Israeli society. The theoretical approaches used by post-Zionist scholars are the glue that unites them. This factor was largely ignored by the media in the post-Zionist debate. Any academic who

was publicly critical of policies of the state of Israel was labelled post-Zionist, which in itself became a delegitimizing term.

This also explains why the New Historians were erroneously considered the bastion of the post-Zionist movement. For both its detractors and supporters, post-Zionism was associated with Oslo and a period of potential peace. In other words, it was largely associated with the fate of the occupied Palestinian territory and the future identity of the state of Israel. This assessment was shared by human and civil rights activists who wished the Israeli state to change from the Jewish state into a state for all of its citizens, and by those who opposed the continued occupation of the Palestinian territories. Post-Zionism seemed to be a vehicle for public protest rather than an intellectual movement that challenged or deconstructed Zionism's very roots. During a debate where he argued for the motion 'Zionism is the real enemy of the Jews', Avi Shlaim stated: 'I have never questioned the legitimacy of the Zionist movement or of the state of Israel within its pre-June 1967 borders. What I reject, and reject totally, is the Zionist colonial project beyond the 1967 border.'[12]

In media terms then, Shlaim represented post-Zionism, but in the terms defined by this book, Shlaim's criticisms fell firmly within the Zionist tradition. Whilst history has not fulfilled its post-Zionist promise, the field of sociology and the broader social sciences have produced works of a 'true' post-Zionist nature. These will be examined in the next section of this chapter. New History did not in itself, either by intention or consequence, undermine Israeli identity by questioning the historical foundations of Israeli society.

New History, for various reasons explained in the previous chapter, reflected and shaped the change in societal attitude towards Israel's military commitments, whether in Lebanon or in dealing with the occupied Palestinian territory. New History's significant contribution was that it opened up *space* within the hegemonic discourse for a critical approach. Before New History, the critical discourse emerging within Israeli social science remained on the margins. Now, critical approaches, especially in sociology, have managed to challenge the hegemonic discourse within their own discipline with more success than the New Historians, but have been less successful in gaining media attention or attracting public support and, thus, actually affecting the wider societal discourse.

Critical sociology on the margins

In 1988, Adi Ophir, along with another colleague, formed a political resistance group named 21, protesting 21 years of Israeli occupation. He is a professor based at the Faculty of Humanities, the Cohen Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas, Tel Aviv University. After being arrested on several occasions, Ophir and his friend displaced their protest activity into the realm of academia. They were sponsored by the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem which is concerned with social conflict.

Ophir organized a seminar group that looked at critical texts and eventually found a mouthpiece through the creation of a new journal entitled, *Theory and*

Criticism – Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of Israeli Culture and Society, which was born as a result of the seminar which was entitled Theory and Criticism. According to Ophir, establishment academia did not recognize the journal, initially because of the language it employed. Terms such as 'discourse' were rejected because of the theoretical approach they implied. It was only later that the articles published in the journal were criticized for the politics underpinning them. Ophir's contribution to protesting Israeli occupation was channelled through both language and theory:

> We tried to create a new theoretical language in Hebrew. We weren't interested in social and economic questions – but in questions of memory and representation. We ignored the real power relations in society such as the distribution of administration of land, which is a strong mechanism of control.[13]

In retrospect, this constituted the journal's biggest weakness; however, later, questions of power and domination through structures of control became its main area of inquiry. It attracted students returning from studies in the US and Europe.

Ophir felt, and still feels, that the crucial element in work of a critical nature written on Israeli society is that it is directed at an Israeli audience. For this reason he wrote only in Hebrew and tried to encourage other critical academics to do the same. However, he felt that the 'Americanization' of academia had frustrated the efforts of critical thinkers to influence political discourse in Israel. Although portions of the language of critical discourse and certain representations of reality using critical discourse were adopted, he argued that for the most part they crept into the mainstream without the implications of their infiltration being felt or recognized.

Ophir believed that the political and historical processes since Oslo had been so disastrous that the new historical consciousness counterbalanced the visibility of critical discourse and any effect it may have had. This new historical consciousness was embodied in Benny Morris' handling of history:

> This is a response to a new consciousness of the past. We now recognize the crimes but the mainstream has adopted the inevitability of the crimes and the continuing inevitability of the conflict – this goes on to justify new crimes.[14]

The present book frames this new 'historical consciousness' as part of the neo-Zionist discourse which will be the topic of the next chapter. Ophir believed that the phenomenon of New History, as embodied by the New Historians, unveiled the cognitive dissonance within society that history had previously concealed. He argued that the result of accepting the inevitability and accompanying horrors of policies such as military occupation fostered racism within society which had not been present during the 1950s and 1960s.[15] The emergence of New History reflected the tensions within the Zionist project.

Within the various reactions to this dissonance, this book is preoccupied with three of the various reactions to this discourse: that of people who recognize, that of those who justify, and thus legitimize the cause of what Ophir feels is

the increasingly racist nature of society (these are the neo-Zionists); and that of those who question or reject Israeli expansionism or the non-democratic nature of the Jewish state without questioning the legitimacy of the state (such as the New Historians and others); and those who question and criticize the underlying structures of power, domination, and historical discourse of the state (those who can broadly be classified as post-Zionists). Of course, there is substantial overlap between all three positions, but one particular point of interest is that, as opposed to the second response, the first and third responses appear to be the most extreme, and yet they are responses to unveiled historical consciousness that begins with 1948, and not 1967. This may have contributed to the rejection of the Oslo process by those espousing these positions, as they considered it to be an untenable and unrealistic historical compromise.

Whilst a vanguard of critical thought developed within Israeli academia, it was not without resistance from the establishment. In 1992, Michael Shalev published a book on Labour and the political economy of Israel.[16] Today he is the Senior Lecturer in Sociology and Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has since published numerous articles on political economy and the effects of globalization in Israel.[17] Shalev began to develop a critical view of Israel during the course of his research in the early 1980s. He attempted to develop a different picture of Israeli society based on new assumptions by introducing the political economy approach to studies on Israel.[18] Shalev considered it a valuable approach because it tackles issues that most Israelis ignore, such as why the Jewish labour movement was exclusivist and what difference that made to its credentials as a social democratic labour movement. In the early 1980s unemployment was rising in Israel, and Shalev, like most other left-leaning Labour supporters, imagined it was because of the ruling *Likud*. However, during his research into unemployment he discovered that the biggest episodes of unemployment had occurred during the height of Labour power.[19]

Shalev's work and critical approach resulted in a clash with one of the titans of the Israeli sociological establishment – Professor Moshe Lissak of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It was representative of a wider clash between the new school of Israeli sociologists emerging within the discipline whose works incorporated critical methodologies imported from the US and Europe and the 'old' school sociologists. The divide was labelled a clash between the 'critical' and the 'establishment' sociologists by many of the academics falling within the critical school. Much like the debate over 'new' and 'old' history, these labels carried both theoretical and ideological implications. In fact, in the case of history, the label carried less real theoretical and therefore less radical ideological significance than it did in the case of sociology.

Lissak and Shalev engaged in a fierce debate regarding the differences between critical and establishment sociology on the pages of *Israel Studies* in 1996. Lissak responded to the criticisms and implications of Critical Sociology. These bore a striking resemblance to the charges made by the New Historians in regards to their own discipline of history: that Israel's sociological establishment was implicated in the Zionist state project, and worked within, if not for, the Zionist

paradigm instead of questioning it. For this reason, argued Shalev, functionalism found favour as a methodological approach and remained so until challenged by critical approaches in the 1980s and 1990s. Functionalism had come under increasing attack from critical theorists because it was concerned, like other positivist approaches, with the maintenance of existing structures of power and thus the status quo. Shalev wrote:

> Functionalism privileges questions having to do with order rather than disorder. In focusing on consensus and integration, it has camouflaged marginality, inequality, and repression. The functionalist's view of history has had the effect of elevating the self-serving discourse of the founding fathers to the status of scientific truth.[20]

Lissak denied the charges that the country's first and most influential sociological school based at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, with the internationally renowned Professor Shmuel Eisenstadt at the helm, was implicated in the Zionist state-building project. He pointed out that the work done in the 1950s and 1960s by this small group of sociologists was not only critical, but also radical. The main focus of their research was immigration, and their findings and recommendations found flaws with the melting-pot theory that had governed Israel's immigration assimilation programmes.[21]

However, according to Critical Sociologists, such as Shalev, Lissak's defence merely implicated him further: the focus on immigration served to inform the authorities on the absorption projects that were counter- or non-productive and develop more effective assimilation strategies. Immigration was a problematic concept for Critical Sociologists who questioned the structures of Zionist settlement. For sociologists like Lissak, immigration was an unquestioned factor that, if managed properly, could contribute positively to Israel, and their work reflected this concern. And it is this premise that bound their work to the existing structures of power and knowledge that the Critical Sociologists sought to challenge.

It is clear that Lissak associated Critical Sociology with a pro-Palestinian perspective. Although on one hand he denied that sociological inquiry conducted in the first three decades of the state was tied to the establishment, he also stated:

> For me, the concept of nation building is not a curse or a stigma – for them [the Critical Sociologists], it is. Only the Palestinians are allowed to have a nation-building project – Jews are not – maybe Jews are not a nation at all.[22]

Hence Lissak expressed anger at what he perceived to be a 'double-standard' in regard to the examination of Jewish and Palestinian nationalism by Critical Sociologists. Michael Shalev expressed the basis for the rupture between establishment sociology and Critical Sociology thus:

> Critical scholarship has consistently called into question assertions and assumptions that have been central to the legitimacy of Zionism and the

> authority of the Israeli elites. Traditional scholarship concentrates on intentions rather than actions … [It pays] little attention to how material and other contextual forces shape both action and ideals, and it treats the *Yishuv* [and later Israel] largely as a self-contained unit.[23]

Critical Sociology sought to redress the imbalance of the existing studies of the Zionist settlement of Palestine, and the hegemony of the Zionist movement that went on to shape the character of the Israeli state. The social and power structures that emerged through Zionist settlement had been considered in isolation from the other crucial factors that Critical Sociologists felt had been ignored by previous sociological inquiries. These factors included the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the relations between the settlers and the local Palestinian population.

Israel through the lens of colonial theory

Particularly offensive to establishment sociologists such as Lissak was the use of the 'colonial model' in examining and understanding the Zionist movement in Palestine. Lissak considered work using that model as legitimizing Palestinian nationalism. Palestinian scholars have long seen Zionism as a colonial project in the same vein as black South Africans saw the Boers; perhaps the best known work of this kind in the West is that of Edward Said.[24]

Said's hypothesis has been criticized both within the field of postcolonial studies[25] and beyond, however this book is not concerned with presenting either a defence or a deconstruction of Orientalism. It is interested in highlighting how this field of study, its premises, and the work of Said in particular, have elicited responses, both positive and negative, within Israeli academia.[26]

Edward Said used his model of Orientalism to understand the Zionist settlement of Palestine and the structures of power that governed the relations between the Jews, Palestinians, and the British in Palestine. In the same vein, Uri Ram, one of the leading sociologists in the post-Zionist movement, argued that Israeli society exhibited a colonial-settler type character. He argued, using Frederick Jackson Turner's 'frontier thesis',[27] that from its very inception Israel was a colonial-settler state. However, he charted the changing face of sociological research from the period after the Six-Day War, where Israel's colonial nature was publicly revealed through the acquisition of the territories, and this in turn had an effect on the population:

> Issues that had been [previously] submerged under layers of Israeli official historiography and sociography came to the consciousness of a wider Israeli public: Namely, the nature of the appropriation of the territories, the relationships with the Palestinian inhabitants of these territories, and the implication these issues might have on Israeli society itself.[28]

Ram's work, published in book form in 1995,[29] was not received well by the Israeli sociological establishment, which accused him of injecting ideological considerations into sociological discourse. Ram responded:

> I was exposing the ideological discourse of Israeli sociology, so the hostile reactions I receive have these two dimensions. One is ideological because of the political radical post-Zionist perspective, and the other is from the scientific and positivist perspective. At least until a few years ago, these perspectives were dominant in academia.[30]

There is great opposition to analysing Zionism through the framework suggested by Said. According to post-Zionists and those scholars who draw on it, this is because it raises some uncomfortable questions about the Zionist movement and structures of control that dominate the Israeli state. A double sensitivity, which stemmed from his identity as a Palestinian refugee, existed regarding Said's influence on the field. He was a vocal advocate of his people's rights; thus his work was wrought with particular significance in the Israel-Palestinian context.

Post-Zionism, colonial theory, and the Palestinians

By beginning with the premise that Zionism was a form of colonialism even if it did not constitute 'pure' colonialism, postcolonial theory cut away at the moral justification that the Zionist movement claimed for itself when it became the hegemonic expression of Jewish identity throughout the world. As Michael Shalev remarked, post-positivist (and within this category, postcolonial) approaches did not use 'good intentions' as justifications for actions and their consequences.

Critical work produced by Israeli scholars examined the consequences of the white European-Zionist settler movement's interactions with the native population in Palestine. By doing so, this work challenged the theory that Zionism constituted colonization without colonialism[31] and also examined the way in which its structures of power affected non-white Jewish immigrants who were absorbed by this host community once the state had been established. In other words, postcolonial theory was not only a useful tool when examining Jewish-Arab and Israeli-Palestinian relations, but also when studying the relations between Western and non-Western Jews in Israel.[32] The adoption of postcolonial theory as an approach, as exemplified by Moshe Lissak's attitude to studies based on it, is associated with the adoption of the Palestinian narrative.

Postcolonial theory, by its very nature, provided an intellectual framework through which Palestinian claims regarding their historical conflict with the Zionist movement could be voiced. Just as it has been used by scholars from third-world countries to understand both the domination and development of their native societies, it has been used by Palestinian scholars to support the moral claims of the Palestinians to Palestine.[33] This makes it especially problematic for Israeli academics who wish to adopt it as a methodological approach without the stigmatization of being regarded as blindly pro-Palestinian. This is particularly difficult given that one of the proponents of postcolonial theory, Edward Said, was Palestinian and used his own theoretical framework to support a broad body of scholarship directly related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is significant to note that those who object to Israeli scholars using Said's model claim that it is not that their work supports Palestinian claims to Palestine or that it mirrors claims made in the work of Palestinian scholars, but that it does so *blindly*; the work is then dismissed academically because it is deemed as an ideological project. Ella Shohat, a professor in the Departments of Art and Public Policy and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of New York, stated that:

> Reading Zionism through the prism of colonialism has been taboo in the Israeli academe. Given this context, one would think that the scholarly embrace of 'the postcolonial' would foreground the discussion of Zionism's relation to colonialism, as articulated for example in Said's 'The Question of Palestine'. But instead, one sometimes finds a kind of upside-down *camera obscura* discourse, even when in political terms these same writers oppose the occupation.[34]

Shohat, who describes herself as an 'Arab-Jew', uses postcolonial theory to understand the de-Arabization process of Jews who immigrated to Israel from Arab countries. She argues that the voice of the 'Arab-Jew' was subjugated by the hegemonic discourse of European Jewry as manifested through the Zionist movement. By using a postcolonial approach she illuminates a startling parallel between the experiences of Arab-Jews and the Palestinians. According to Shohat, if the loss of voice, history, and land are all part of the colonial experience, then the Jews of Middle Eastern descent are clearly part of this colonized community.[35]

Professor Oren Yiftachel's research has focused on issues of 'space', one of the features of Fanon's work and a preoccupation of postcolonial studies. He is now head of the Department of Geography at Ben Gurion University. In 1998, he co-edited a volume examining issues of space and inequality in Israel that reflected his own research interests.[36] He noted:

> I write about the kernel of this conflict, and how the kernel of Palestinians and Jewish identities is explicitly territorial. So it's almost ironic that most of the work here focuses on narrative and memory, on perception and political speeches, where studying the actual material practices of space could tell us much more.[37]

Thus, Yiftachel's work concentrated on the practices of space in Israel. He used a frontier model to help him form a theoretical approach to Israel's development towns as an 'internal' frontier. Yiftachel argued that the settlement of Israel's frontiers caused a regressive and uneven division of space in the name of 'national interest'.[38] This contributed to Israel's development as an 'ethnocracy', rather than a democracy, which he denotes as non-democratic rule for and by a dominant ethnic group.

This hypothesis challenged the idea fundamental to the concept of the Jewish state: that all Jews were equal. In fact, it argued that non-white, non-European Jewish immigrants were structurally discriminated against, and the use of space,

here in the form of development towns, merely reconstituted and reproduced this discrimination.

In 2003, Yiftachel was involved in a book that was censored by the Association of Israeli Architects. Entitled *A Civilian Occupation* it was a cross-disciplinary effort to highlight the role of Israeli architecture in the Middle East conflict.[39] Combining the work of architects, journalists, photographers, and academics, the book aimed to highlight the 'building' aspect of the Zionist project, from pre-state times to the present, both in terms of Israeli territory and the occupied Palestinian territory. The book argued that architecture was central to the realization of the Zionist dream to build a Jewish national home in Palestine.[40]

Israeli sociologist Gershon Shafir produced one of the seminal works using the colonial model in regard to the economic roots of Zionist settlement. In his book, *Land, Labour and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, first published in 1996, he argued that Israel is a society dominated by myths and ideology. In its first 30 years it was influenced by the ideologization of Zionism. After that, the mythology of the Arab 'Other' gave the conflict the appearance of being timeless and irreconcilable. Shafir wrote:

> Myths magnify a conflict and transpose it to a cosmic level where it takes on the characteristics of an unsolvable contest, a major component of ideological thinking is that it hides social contradictions behind a facade of harmonious social relations.[41]

Shafir's thesis sought to expose myths of two competing and contradictory ideologies of the Labour Zionist movement: first, that Labour Zionism was in fact beneficial for the local Arab population because it was a modernizing force; and, second, that Labour Zionism had no negative impact on the local Arab population. Clearly influenced by postcolonial perspectives, Shafir identified the modernizing aspect of Zionism's character as being firmly embedded in the colonial tradition: 'The goals of Jewish colonization – conquest of the labour and conquest of the land – and the colonizing institutions that supported them, such as the *Histadrut* and the Jewish National Fund, were exclusivist'.[42]

Shafir noted that Moshe Lissak was amongst the Israeli sociologists to perpetuate the myth that Zionist colonization had no effect on the indigenous population of Palestine. Along with his colleague Dan Horowitz, Lissak developed the theory of 'dual societies' and 'dual economies' in Palestine; according to this idea, the Arab and Jewish societies and economies remained separate and did not affect each other significantly.[43] Because their work defended Zionist myths by invoking claims of scientific truth and knowledge, Lissak and Horowitz were considered by Critical Sociologists to be implicated in the colonial structure of domination. Lissak defended himself, noting that such an approach to Zionism was based on historical ignorance regarding the circumstances stimulating Jewish immigration to Palestine. He argued that most of the Critical Sociologists who drew on the colonial model saw Zionism as a:

> [False] idea, a by-product of European – especially British and French – colonialism in the late nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, before the First World War … [So] the idea of Zionism especially the establishing of the state, is a forced act or project, imposed on the Arabs.[44]

It is clear that the idea of the imposition or forced submission of a native population by a settler population (whatever its moral claims to settlement might be) falls uncomfortably within the framework of the colonial model. This explains why the two approaches to settlement developed: both of them eschewed the idea of forced acceptance until circumstances led to war, at which point the rules of engagement changed. Shafir, however, made a link between this discourse of denial, coloured by the Zionist paradigm of knowledge which shaped both historical consciousness and intellectual inquiry, and the historical processes. He wrote:

> At the very least [it] hindered the conflict's resolution, and more likely contributed to its escalation and transformation into a full-scale military confrontation. This in turn became fertile ground for the birth of mythologies of the Arab-Israeli conflict.[45]

Whilst Shafir highlighted the influence of academic discourse on the historical process, Uri Ram highlighted the dialectical relationship between them. In his book, *The Changing Agenda of Israeli Sociology*, he argued that the expansion, decentralization, and diversification of the sociological community in Israel were reflected in national identity. He asserted that:

> The transformation of the sociological discourse itself … reflects, and in turn articulates, the ongoing modification of a social identity grounded in Zionist nationalism and the advancement of new identity claims by groups and movements which, to different degrees, were either excluded from the core identity or appended to its margins.[46]

Ram claimed that whilst Israeli sociology sought a new agenda to replace the 'nation-building' agenda that had dominated it through the first decades of the state, Israeli society was simultaneously searching for a new identity. Writing at a time when the Oslo process had been instituted, and taking into account the effects of the broader process of globalization, Ram argued that Zionism, which proved itself successful in the nation-building stage of historical development, was no longer ideologically central to most Israelis and could not long withstand the competing claims of marginal groups in society. Israel was about to make peace with the Palestinians, and this required a process of introspection, self-reflection, and ultimately a remapping of the national self. The emergence of not only the changes in sociology, but also the debates over historical revisionism, could be interpreted as a symptom of this.

This book, however, disagrees with Ram's assessment. It has already argued that the Oslo Accords did not significantly alter the structures of power in Israel,

and even if there had been a successful end to the peace process, the ability of such an outcome to undermine national identity would have been limited. Identity is fluid and subject to a dialectical relationship with the *habitus* – or the social, political, economic, and cultural conditions of society. There are few situations where national identities have been totally fractured and ruptured, and Israel is not one of these cases. The peace conceived by Oslo (ultimately a two-state solution) would not have generated the power to cause such a rupture (perhaps, however, such a breakdown would result from a one-state solution, if ever instituted). Thus the remapping of identity as a result of Oslo was not as fundamental as predicted, nor did it come to fruition, as the peace process failed. Nevertheless, Oslo provided the space for challenges to the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse to emerge and, with the second *Intifada*, to attempt to reclaim, reshape, or reject the history and identity of Israel.

One challenge was launched by academics and intellectuals, such as Oren Yiftachel, through the medium of post-Zionist scholarship. However, despite his critical approach, Yiftachel did not identify himself as a 'true' post-Zionist, as the term was defined earlier in this chapter. He stated:

> I have difficulties with post-Zionism as a concept and post-Zionism as even a critique. Because in my critique I would like to be critical of Zionism and not try to move forward as the post prefix. It ought to be socialist, ought to be democratic, rather than post. Defining oneself as a 'not something' like the post, is a weak position. That's why writing on ethnocracy is trying to see what there *is*, not what there *is not*.[47]

This is a common criticism made of not only post-Zionism, but also of postmodernism with which it is associated. It is this trend that Moshe Lissak finds objectionable in terms of academic scholarship.[48] To claim, however, that post-Zionist work is based purely upon postmodernist assumptions would be inaccurate. Uri Ram, who claims to be a post-Zionist, does not unequivocally embrace postmodernism as a theoretical approach. He believes that academics who rely too heavily on postmodernism tend to focus on the micro – focusing on only margins, to the detriment of the macro-view of society as a whole. But he argued that when criticism of this approach was voiced from establishment sociological circles, from men like Lissak and Eisenstadt, it was because their perspective was equally blurred by a nationalist perspective that relied heavily on structural-functionalism.[49]

Ram suggested that postmodernist elements were useful when used as a prism through which to understand broader issues as well. According to this approach, postmodernism does not constitute and define post-Zionist scholarship; it comprises an element of it.

Changing the discourse: Methodological and ideological struggles

In the media debate generated by post-Zionism, Critical Sociologists did not attract as much attention or evoke the strength of reaction as did the New Historians.

Yet, within their own discipline they were remarkably successful in adjusting sociological discourse from the paradigm of knowledge established by S. N. Eisenstadt, a world-renowned sociologist, who established the first Israeli department of sociology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

This process became pronounced in the 1990s, before which sociologists faced the same difficulties that still exist within the field of historical enquiry. Uri Ram claimed that during the first years of his academic career in Israel he paid a high price for his critical approach. He pursued his higher degree studies in the US and this disconnection from Israeli academia and its accompanying discourse made him open to the post-positivist approaches that have influenced sociological enquiry in the West.

Ram noted that for a variety of reasons the field in Israel became more open to these approaches in recent years. He ascribed this to a generational change that reflected broader changes across the country – symbols of the 'old' generation, figures such as Shmuel Eisenstadt and Moshe Lissak, retired and this opened up a previously well-guarded 'space' for challenging paradigms of knowledge. Eisenstadt believed that this change reflected an ideological change that began as a process of rebellion by other centres of knowledge, universities like Tel Aviv, Haifa, and finally, Ben Gurion University, against the hegemony of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.[50] Ram stated: 'It is true that I and many other colleagues have succeeded in transforming the sociological discourse – one wouldn't recognize the discipline today. In this way, we have become established in our discursive power.'[51]

Ram presented his own case – he is now head of the Department of Sociology at Ben Gurion University – to illustrate how he and like-minded colleagues have 'become' part of the 'establishment' they once challenged. In 2004, he was Chairman of the Israel Sociological Association's annual meeting that was held at Ben Gurion University. He organized the agenda in accordance with his own perspective, which illustrated the increased level of debate in the field. Ram insisted, however, that Critical Sociologists had only limited 'gate-keeping' capacities: they did not wield enough influence over the 'official bureaucracy', and thus had limited influence over the decisions over where and how money was distributed for research.[52]

Ram's experience is a far cry from that of Israeli sociologist Shlomo Swirski. Swirski stayed in Israel to complete his doctoral thesis. His research focus, on oriental Jewry in Israel, was both topical and controversial when it was published as a book in Hebrew in 1981.[53] In it he argued that the *Likud* was a strong political option for the *Mizrahim*. His premise was that *Mizrahi* grievances were legitimate and that the *Likud* had taken this on board. Even more controversially, he claimed that the Palestinians were 'legitimate' both in terms of their grievances, but also, strikingly, for the time, as a political and national entity.[54]

Swirski believed that he was edged out of academia – he was not given tenure at Haifa University, because he challenged the sociological establishment. In other words, he challenged the work of Eisenstadt:

> I came out confronting him directly on most of his premises. And not just starting with the theoretical premises – a neo-Marxist critique of structural-

> functionalism and then also the political implications of structural functionalism in terms of political, economic and social policy in this country.[55]

Eisenstadt and his former students held the important positions of power in the sociology departments in Israel at the time. Swirski's work made him deeply unpopular and this is why he believed that he was denied tenure.[56] A few months after Swirski's book, *The Oriental Majority*, was published, the *Likud*, led by Menachem Begin, won their second national election. This event resulted in much soul-searching by the political left as it asked why the *Likud* had managed to secure the *Mizrahi* vote. Swirski's work proved relevant to political and societal discourse at that time. However, Swirski claimed that in the 1980s he was told that his book would not be included in any reading lists at the Hebrew University, or as assigned readings, despite the importance and relevance of his hypothesis.

Moshe Lissak, a close friend and colleague of Eisenstadt, seemed to corroborate Swirski's complaint. He stated that 25 years previously he had been the only person to write a positive review of Swirski's book – much to the astonishment of some as Swirski was also very critical of his own work (which was closely linked to that of Eisenstadt). However, Lissak accepted that Swirski's data findings not only concurred with his own, but gave real insight into the issue of social mobility in Israel. Lissak was adamant that he did not argue with 'facts', merely with 'interpretation'. Therefore, any approach that questioned the very concept of facts and placed knowledge itself into the subjective realm was problematic for him.[57]

Whilst Swirski was at Haifa University, he and several colleagues established a journal that was published between 1978 and 1982–83 and entitled *Critical Notebooks*. Ten issues were published in all, and Swirski believes that these were very influential at the time because the journal's mandate was to examine issues of equality and social justice and it regarded sociology as an engaged and subjective science. Like Adi Ophir, Swirski and his colleagues made a point of publishing in Hebrew, but in accessible, non-academic Hebrew language. Unlike *Theory and Criticism*, the aim of this journal was not to introduce a different 'language' or 'jargon' to the discourse. On the contrary, this journal aimed to simplify the 'jargon' of social science and make it easily accessible to high-school students.

Swirski claimed that this approach worked because many of the students exposed to the journal in school went on to study abroad, returning in the 1990s with different methodological approaches and finding the stranglehold of structural functionalism eroding due to the generational changeover. Swirski argued that there was a parallel between academic and political debate, which was illustrated more clearly during the 1990s and with the peace process:

> [There was] the distinction at that time in some Western countries between established sociology, especially the structural-functional school of sociology, and the variety of new alternative sociological schools like neo-Marxism. In this country, like in others, it was not just an intellectual debate, it was a political confrontation.[58]

The political confrontation to which Swirski referred, came to a head with the three moments of political juncture/historiographical disjuncture mentioned previously: the invasion of Lebanon, the first *Intifada*, and the signing of the Declaration of Principles. The culmination of these moments was a greater intimacy with the 'Other' and a need for a reimagination of the national 'Self'. The national mood, as well as the generational changes that occurred within the field of sociology, created space within the discourse, at least for a time, for the articulation of a 'post-Zionist' identity.

However, developments in sociology did not cause a furore in the same way as revisionist history. Although media-designated post-Zionism became an issue of public debate, the implications of 'true' post-Zionism merely provided a footnote to the media sensation. There are several reasons for this. The first is the institutional role of history: history is the discipline in which the *foundations* of national identities are elaborated (as opposed to the *resulting* identities, which are explored in sociology), and this was certainly the case in Israel where Jewish history commanded its own university departments, separate from history. This reinforced disciplinary gatekeeping mechanisms. Uri Ram contended: '[It is a] closed arena of people who want to specialize in this and are connected to it emotionally and ideologically in general. It has become a preserve of the nation and the establishment in the universities'.[59]

Furthermore, history as a discipline maintained closer links to popular culture than sociology – even those who were not professional historians or students of history took an interest in it because of the critical role it played in shaping national identity. Chapter 2 elaborated the link between power, knowledge, and history, illustrating how national identity, the necessary cohesive in any national project, is reliant on history to augment its claim of the unity of the nation. The case of Israel and studies of the history of the Israeli state demonstrates that there is a dialectical relationship between the 'history' produced by historians and continuous process of the reimagination of national identity. The more radical conclusions offered by Critical Sociology have less 'real' effect on this process.

Ram explained that there was no separate field within sociology pertaining to Israel or Jewish studies. Thus, sociologists refer more to the sociological establishment outside Israel, unlike the historians working on Israeli history, whose reference points on the whole gravitate towards the discipline in Israel. Ram noted that as a sociologist he was required to publish in American journals, whilst historians writing about Israel could publish in Israeli journals in Hebrew. This, he argued, allowed sociology to develop more in terms of its critical approach than did history, because the influence of broader theoretical developments abroad was much stronger.[60] This meant that sociologists were subject to fewer intellectual restrictions in terms of examining Israel through non-positivist lenses. And, as this chapter has illustrated, their research, in substantive terms, culminated in a devastating deconstruction, not only of the national 'myths' New History claimed to challenge, but also of the paradigm of knowledge within which these 'myths' were perpetuated.

Despite this, the influence of Critical Sociology in the reimagination of national identity has remained marginal, perhaps because of its unapologetic criticism of

the very foundations of Zionist settlement in Palestine. Even Oren Yiftachel, who rejected the label of post-Zionism, advocated the revocation of the Law of Return except for those Jews and Palestinians who are in need of asylum.[61]

Corroborating Ram's contention, Yiftachel's political views and academic work meant that he found it virtually impossible to be published, not only in Hebrew journals, but also in academic journals outside Israel, because articles dealing with Israel are sent to Israeli 'experts'. Geography, like all social sciences, is a form of knowledge that has its ideological scaffolding, which is political in itself. He explained:

> It has traditionally been quite conservative because it has functioned as a tool of colonialism, the geographical science. It is closely linked to the state – many geography professors have positions with the state; in that respect it is much more conservative than history or sociology.[62]

Oren Yiftachel completed his Masters degree in Australia, where he became aware of the politicized nature of knowledge, and the power that particular forms of discourse and practice acquire through their moral positions and through their connection to the hegemony. He subsequently returned to Israel to pursue doctoral studies in the late 1980s armed with new analytical tools that allowed him to link spatial relations to identity, ethnicity, politics, and power. Yiftachel wished to examine the Judaization of the Galilee and he quickly realized that the topic was unpopular when nobody would agree to supervise him. Yiftachel has also courted some unwelcome media attention as he is part of the 'post-Zionist' movement.[63]

Despite criticism of his work, Yiftachel insisted that he was not a postmodernist who rejected the concept of 'truth'. He believes in the role and value of good quality research and teaching and the whole pedagogy of universities. But he admits that any exploration of the 'truth', where the hegemonic discourse denotes this 'truth' as being perversive, subversive, and threatening, constitutes in itself a political statement. He also attempts to translate his academic knowledge into non-academic circles through his involvement with several non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Some of these are Israeli-Palestinian groups; one is the NGO established by Ilan Pappe, which encourages academic cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.[64] Yiftachel is involved with the Forum for Co-existence in the Negev and several NGOs involved with social equality, public housing, and development towns (such as ADVA,[65] where Yiftachel is a member of the board and has contributed several papers concerned with the issue of inequality in housing). For many of Yiftachel's academic colleagues, his political involvement renders him 'un-academic' and, similar to the accusations levelled at Ram, he is accused of tainting the field of geographical science with ideology.

Post-Zionism and Israeli *realpolitik*

During the early 1990s, post-Zionism, as defined by *Ha'aretz*, was viewed sympathetically by many people. As explained, post-Zionism did not necessarily mean

a rejection of the legitimacy of the Jewish state, but was translated into several themes: the promotion of secular democracy, increased emphasis on civil rights, and ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories through a negotiated peace process. The balance of support for post-Zionism was interlinked with the political realm. During the period between the signing of the Oslo Accords and the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995, the national mood was one of invigorated optimism. As political and economic discourse opened up, so did societal discourse regarding the historical roots of the conflict and new hopes for interaction between Palestinians and Israelis in the future. Arguably, one reason for this was because peace appeared to be a *potential* prospect, and in this context the blacker chapters in Israel's history were perhaps easier to face in the context of resolution.

As a political force, however, post-Zionism had very limited influence. Unlike neo-Zionism, which will be the focus of the next chapter, post-Zionism was not a politically unified movement, and this affected its ability to exert political pressure. Whilst no politician would openly identify with it, many from the left identified with some aspects of it to differing degrees. For example, Naomi Chazan, a member of the Knesset (MK**)** representing the political party *Yahad*[66] (formerly *Meretz*), claimed that she had anticipated a peace process in 1992 and believed that if she wished to be involved in it she would have to cross over into politics. She had been politically active in the peace movement since her student days. A turning point for her and for the core of her political agenda was 1967 – Chazan advocated a two-state solution with the 1967 borders and with Jerusalem acting as the capital for both Israel and Palestine, all overseen by the international community; this was a radical position before Oslo.[67]

Another such example is Shlomo Ben-Ami[68] who during the fifteenth Knesset saw his career pinnacle as Labour Prime Minister Ehud Barak appointed him, first, Minister of Internal Security, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ben-Ami, though expressing his motivations as being concerned, first, with internal issues of Israeli society, also used the peace process as a context for framing his visions of Israeli society. In an interview conducted in 2001, after the outbreak of the second *Intifada*, he stated: 'The right is still concentrating on the territorial dimensions of Zionism but Zionism needs to be revised … What can be called the 'colonial' phase has come to an end.'[69]

It is highly significant that at this point he adopted the discourse of post-Zionism – using the word 'colonialism' in the context of Israel, especially as he did so after the outbreak of the second *Intifada* which halted the trend national of soul-searching and led Israelis to rally behind a banner of national unity instead.

However in general, after the second *Intifada*, post-Zionist discourse became less acceptable – as illustrated by the dialectical relationship between politicians and their electorate. On the surface, in terms of its acceptance into societal discourse, post-Zionism suffered a heavy blow from the collapse of the peace process, which culminated in the outbreak of the second *Intifada*. Israel witnessed a significant shift to the political right as Ehud Barak was pushed out of power by

Ariel Sharon. This shift was further embodied in the formation of the National Unity Government, encompassing the *Likud* and Labour, which prevailed over the cleavages that had been exposed by peace. Post-Zionists, such as Uri Ram and Adi Ophir, argued however that the Israeli left, though symbolically appearing to be committed to peace, structurally undermined it with its own policies. Ophir noted: 'The main bulk of the Israeli peace movement … was never committed to a full withdrawal; after Rabin's assassination, they even stopped talking about the necessary evacuation of places like Kiryat Arba'.[70]

Oren Yiftachel was amongst those who were sceptical about the ability of the Oslo process to achieve real peace. He claimed that Oslo did not make any significant inroads 'because it was never really peace'. In October 1993, along with several other intellectuals, he placed an advertisement in *Ha'aretz* warning against premature celebrations after the announcement that the Nobel Peace Prize would be awarded to Yasser Arafat, Shimon Peres, and Yitzhak Rabin. Yiftachel characterized Oslo as unbalanced. He felt that it fell short of significant concessions and therefore did not require significant historiographical adjustments.

> It was an imposition of Israel on the Palestinians. The Palestinians were giving almost all they could give – which was recognition of Israel – and not getting much in return – just a vague promise of withdrawal, and maybe a mention of a state. But it did not appear to be peace, and therefore there was no discourse in that respect that could penetrate into perceptions of homeland, identity, and history of 'who are we and who are they?'[71]

Yiftachel argues that though a peace process 'appeared' to have been initiated, economic and political structures of Israeli control over the occupied Palestinian territory did not change significantly. There was no complete withdrawal; there was not enough economic development and growth in the territory apart from an initial mini-boom; and not enough political control was handed over to the Palestinians. Whilst Oslo had the potential to achieve a settlement between Israelis and Palestinians, it failed. Yiftachel argued that had these economic and political structures of control been dismantled, elements of post-Zionist discourse would have penetrated the hegemonic discourse to a greater extent instead of remaining in a marginalized position.[72]

Ilan Pappe, on the other hand, was initially very optimistic about the prospects that Oslo had for achieving a real, just, and lasting peace. However, on deeper reflection, he came to the conclusion that it was an 'Israeli peace plan', which played the 'biggest historical trick' of all on the Palestinians and the rest of the observing world:

> The essence of the process was an Israeli peace plan which said that 1948 is not relevant for the conflict and only 1967 is. And all my historical work is aimed at showing that 1948 is the most important thing that happened, and suddenly I realized the connection. Before there was a peace process you couldn't really see it. I needed Oslo for that.[73]

According to Pappe, history was a powerful tool used by Israelis to shape the discourse of peace and integrate it into their own existing hegemonic discourse. Whilst Yiftachel pointed to Oslo's failure to make structural economic and political changes, Pappe emphasized its failure to fundamentally alter or even challenge the hegemonic discourse. By avoiding the thorny issue of 1948, Oslo marketed itself as 'the end of history' with 1967 acting as 'the beginning'. Pappe questioned whether perhaps the post-Zionist movement was premature. He also came to accept the criticism that post-Zionism was an intellectual movement confined to the readers and the pages of *Ha'aretz*:

> [It] was a very sad story of failure. It didn't at all affect the Israeli political system; in fact, the political system reacted by becoming more Zionist, more fundamentalist and more brutal in its attitude towards the 'Other', both inside and outside. We caused it to be even worse in many ways. At a political level, it was a total failure; its long-term success at the academic level remains to be seen.[74]

Of course, this book argues against Pappe's conclusion precisely because it rejected the understanding of the term used in *Ha'aretz* and the media more generally, and it proposes an expanded definition of post-Zionism beyond the media phenomenon. It has argued that post-Zionist scholarship is defined by its critical theoretical perspective, and acknowledged that this feature has limited its power as a political force.

Because he does not assess post-Zionism as a movement, but rather as an age, Pappe appears to see post-Zionism's failure to transform state and society in Israel as a bitter disappointment. Yet, this expectation of transformation lends itself to viewing Israeli history as a series of ruptures and resumptions, which is a perspective this work also contests. This book argues that viewing post-Zionism as a movement that emerged at a certain political juncture/historiographical disjuncture allows its relative success or failure to be assessed in a more coherent manner. It also provides a method with which to view political junctures as a series of 'moments' that create space for challenges over and against the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse, rather than conflating their significance and viewing them as apocalyptic events that threaten to undermine the fabric of state and society.

Another example of history that is erroneously considered post-Zionist scholarship is the work of Teddy Katz, a Masters student in the Department of Middle Eastern History at Haifa University. He wrote his dissertation, entitled *The Exodus of the Arabs from Villages at the Foot of Southern Mount Carmel*, on the 1948 destruction of an Arab village, Tantura. Based on interviews with veterans of the Alexandroni Brigade and former inhabitants of the village, Katz claimed that 200 of the village's residents were massacred by the soldiers after having surrendered.

Katz's thesis was picked up by Israeli journalist Amir Gilat, who published an article on the massacre in Israeli daily newspaper *Ma'ariv*.[75] A furore ensued both within the academic world and outside of it. Veterans of the Alexandroni Brigade

sued Katz for libel, demanding damages of one million shekels. Katz tried to argue that the case should not be fought in a law court because it was a scholarly debate that belonged to the academic realm and should, therefore, be dealt with by the university. The university, however, distanced itself from Katz, and the case went to court. On the second night of the trial, Katz signed a retraction.[76] This was particularly significant because whilst Katz was initially awarded a high mark for the thesis (97), an academic committee at Haifa University reviewed his work and ordered the suspension of his thesis, giving him six months to submit a revised version.

The Katz case illustrates two points: first, that history is a highly politicized and sensitive field in Israel and, second, it raises the question: who decides what is 'truth' and what counts as 'scholarly debate'? Various historians offered their opinions on Katz' work in the *Ma'ariv* article. Those who criticized it argued that it was sloppy, inaccurate, and ideologically motivated. It relied too heavily on oral testimony, and thus was methodologically flawed. Those who defended it argued that whilst in some places the research was sloppy or inaccurate, Katz's overall hypothesis was not.[77]

What is remarkable about this debate is that a Masters thesis was able to generate not only so much controversy, but also a lawsuit. Realistically, not many students at this level are expected to produce work of sufficient quality to stand up to rigorous examination and cross-examination in a court of law. Yet, in the case of Katz, this is exactly what happened. He was also forced to defend his ideological motivations. Katz states that at the time he considered himself a Zionist, although he is no longer sure that this is the case.[78]

Pappe regarded the Katz affair as being part of the struggle over *Nakbah* memory – *Nakbah* being the Arabic word for catastrophe and the term used by Palestinians to describe the events of 1948, and Israel's 'War of Independence'. Pappe explained that this was the first thesis written about 1948 from a 'non-Zionist' perspective, exposing a massacre known to the Palestinians but unknown to the Israelis. According to him, its implications were monumental:

> Had it been accepted, it would have placed a stamp of truth on a war crime in 1948, because Israelis view academia as a shrine of truth. So it couldn't be allowed. He was totally de-legitimized and eventually disqualified because of that struggle. It's one thing to be a chemist and write about 1948 in your free time – it's quite a different thing if you are a teacher or student of history who writes of these things in a professional capacity, and whilst doing so, challenge the existing discourse.[79]

However, Teddy Katz, despite his use of oral history, did not move, in regards to his methodology, far beyond positivism. His work pushed the parameters of the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse, but it did not explicitly reject it. His counter-narrative evoked powerful emotion amongst those old solders involved in the incidents, but more threatening, perhaps, was not that Katz revealed a black episode in the history of Labour Zionism, but the implications of this episode for

the prevailing discourse of the country's past. Despite this fact, this work does not include Teddy Katz's thesis amongst post-Zionist scholarship, but would categorize it as a work of New History.

Although Ilan Pappe's ideological metamorphosis was detailed in the previous chapter, his methodological metamorphosis was only briefly touched upon. His ideological position in regards to Zionism classifies him as an anti- rather than post-Zionist because he rejects the foundations of hegemonic Labour Zionism and every aspect of its discourse and narrative. Nevertheless, his later work would fall into the category of post-Zionist scholarship, as defined by this book, as opposed to his work as a New Historian, which ultimately remained within the parameters of the discourse. His later utilization of postmodern and critical approaches to history in an attempt to 'emancipate' it from the hegemonic historical discourse certainly favours his inclusion in the post-Zionist movement.

This shift was reflected in his work, *The History of Modern Palestine*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2004.[80] In it he approached history as narrative, decrying the idea that there was an ultimate historical truth. Pappe asserted that facts were the outcome of discursive battles, and that knowledge, historical knowledge in particular, was not an objective field but was shaped by the power relations that govern it, and was expressed through the gatekeeping mechanisms in academia.

Gatekeeping and the future of post-Zionism

The previous chapter raised the issue of gatekeeping – a concept that problematizes knowledge by asking *who* decides what counts as 'fact' and *how* this is institutionalized? The careers of the New Historians and post-Zionist intellectuals have illustrated several gatekeeping mechanisms. Locally (i.e. within Israel), these include admittance into the system through teaching posts (the ultimate expression of this is through receiving tenure), control over funding and research, and publishing in Hebrew-language journals. Again, the careers of New History and post-Zionist scholars also expose the localized nature of this control.

Of course an alternative reason that these academics fail to navigate the system more successfully may be because their work is not of a sufficiently high standard to merit their promotion or publication. However, their comparative success in advancing within academia on an international level (securing posts, funding or being published abroad), would suggest otherwise. Many academics refused publication in Israeli journals have been accepted for publication in international journals. Although this is not without its own issues (problems of international gatekeeping), for many Israeli post-Zionist scholars international journals and English-language publications remain their only option for publication.

Ilan Pappe's methodological approach has led to his delegitimization within Israeli academia. The historians who criticized him find it difficult to separate his ideological beliefs (sympathy for the claims made by the Palestinian narrative of dispossession through a form of colonial domination) and his methodological approach (history as discourse). His work made him the target of much criticism, the most vociferous of which has emerged from Benny Morris. Ironically, Morris'

criticism mirrored criticism directed at the work of the New Historians, including Morris' own work, by some of its strongest critics, such as Efraim Karsh. In his article entitled *Politics by Other Means*[81] Morris elaborated on the political gulf between himself and Pappe, as well as on the methodological gulf, exposed and widened since the onset of the second *Intifada*. But by discussing Pappe's flawed political vision (his preference for a one-state solution) through his work, Morris also emphasized his own political bias.

His article articulated the highly emotive and personalized nature of this debate and appeared to be an attempt to set limits for acceptable academic behaviour. Abandoning or questioning positivist approaches to historical inquiry is considered by Morris as unacceptable academic behaviour.[82] These 'political ends' have, in Pappe's case, meant that criticism was not only academic – it also took on a practical form. In an email plea circulated on the internet in 2002, Pappe claimed that Haifa University was trying to remove him from his position because of his political convictions.[83]

In 2003, Pappe again published on the internet, this time sending a letter to the History News Network complaining about the university's treatment of him, and claiming that the university had cancelled a conference that he had planned on the issue of the historiography of 1948.[84] Connecting his own predicament to a decrease in tolerance within the academic community which was reflecting a general societal trend and to a bleak political situation, Pappe presented himself as the embodiment of a post-positivist reality. He argued that his own case and the Teddy Katz affair revealed how academia was deeply ideological and implicated in maintaining the hegemony of the Zionist discourse.[85] It must be noted that the university refuted Pappe's claims of ideological persecution and presented other reasons for dissatisfaction with Pappe. In a statement it released, Haifa University denied that the reason for Pappe's uncertain future within the university was because of his ideological and political beliefs, and cited unauthorized absences to be amongst the complaints levelled against him.

On the whole, Pappe was bleak about the prospects of post-Zionism within academia as well as within the political realm. He stated: 'I am the only historian in Palestine who writes the history of Palestine from an anti-Zionist point of view. That's a failure'.[86] Uri Ram was more positive about the future of post-Zionism. He argued that just because post-Zionist discourse was absent from politics it was not absent from the deeper levels of social structure to which politics is connected. He explained:

> The initial causes of post-Zionism did not disappear and the potential is still there. For instance, the economic transformation of Israel – the neo-liberal state, the individualization, the constitutional development – all these elements did not disappear. They take place simultaneously with the dark side of Israeli politics.[87]

In his work, Ram explored the development of two strains of Zionist identity that were constituted through society's response to the prospect of a 'good-natured'

peace and then the dissipation of this prospect into a 'cold' or 'forced' peace at best.

The first response was post-Zionism. As illustrated in this chapter, as a social movement post-Zionism was associated with many things – civil rights, democratization, equality for minorities in society, and the end of occupation. But it was also, in a less political sense, seen simply as a statement of fact: post-Zionism was believed to herald an era where Zionist ideology was less relevant – Zionist ideology being an ideology founded on concepts of settlement, the return of all Jews to Palestine, political independence for the Jews, a national state for the Jews, and an emphasis on socialism rather than private ownership. Many of these aspects of ideology have become redundant in today's Israel. S. N. Eisenstadt mentioned the two changes to Israeli society that he believed were the most radical: the reduced importance of the Kibbutz movement and the increasing acceptance of diaspora life.[88]

The second response is what Ram termed 'neo-Zionism', which is a phenomenon that is the focus of the next chapter. This dual development of identity and its supporting ideological structures exposes the dissonance within Israeli society and, as Ram argues, exposes dissonance within academia as well. He notes:

> On one hand, it [society] becomes more post-modern, more open, more pluralist. On the other hand it becomes more racist, more chauvinist and more nationalist. These two developments [evolve] in parallel and simultaneously and fight each other.[89]

This chapter examined the corpus of work that it refers to as post-Zionist scholarship. Defining post-Zionism through its methodological underpinnings is a way to demonstrate the differences between post-Zionism as an intellectual movement and post-Zionism as defined by the media. Post-Zionist scholars aspire to change Israel, whether by exerting discursive power or practically, through lobbying, protesting, or strengthening civil society through NGO participation, whilst, as illustrated, the New Historians did not. The crucial difference between them – often lost in the media debate – was that post-Zionism questioned the foundations of the Israeli state and society, linking political and social problems of current times to the structures of the state established even before independence was declared. Post-Zionists, as defined by the media, accepted the status quo and worked within the accepted parameters of the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse to change it without dismantling it completely; this meant that those critical of Israeli occupation, for example, were often erroneously labelled post-Zionists when they considered themselves to be firm, yet critical, Zionists.

This difference was reflected in scholarship as well. New History, considered by advocates and critics alike as the cornerstone for the post-Zionist age, worked within the given paradigms of knowledge established in Israeli academia. It asked questions – often difficult questions – which required and inspired a re-examination of the national 'Self' based on national 'myths'. However, New History did not signal a new identity for the nation. Methodologically, the New Historians, except

for Ilan Pappe, whose later work was dismissed as 'un-academic', all fell within the positivist tradition. The aim of their work was to ask questions, but the answers they proffered were not based on a deconstructive or critical approach. Gershon Shafir described the difference between the two groups thus: 'While the New Historians concern themselves with what they self-consciously call the 'myths' of Israeli society, Critical Sociology focuses on its ideological substructure'.[90]

The weakness of New History can accordingly be attributed to the dialectic between approach and ideology in the case of the New Historians. This point is most clear in the conclusions of New History – criticised both by post-Zionists and Palestinian scholars as being weak in light of the 'evidence' they draw on. Palestinian historian Nur Masalha wrote:

> The rewriting of the 1948 events by revisionist Israeli historians has been received with mixed feelings among Palestinian historians. On one hand, it was a relief to find out that after years of being branded as mere propaganda, the main Palestinian claims were proven as founded in reality on the basis of professional historical research. On the other hand, there was something disturbing and annoying about these claims becoming valid only after Israeli Jews made them, as if Palestinian historians were suspected of non-professionalism.[91]

Without engaging in a lengthy discussion as to the nature of the Palestinian claims, of their reception in the academic world, or of the very nature of truth itself, it is important to note that they, as much as traditional Israeli narratives and the revised Israeli narratives, must be regarded in terms of the power/knowledge matrix. Palestinian narratives, too, are not produced in a social vacuum and make corresponding claims to truth and knowledge. The significance of New History was that though it did not challenge the Zionist paradigm of knowledge itself, or reject the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse, it opened up *space* within the discourse for more radical scholarship to emerge.

All the protagonists in the debate make a claim to truth, apart from post-Zionists who take the position that there is no objective 'truth'.[92] In terms of history, this somewhat untenable position is difficult to reconcile with the production of tractable narratives. This, perhaps, is why post-Zionist scholarship has been far less influential in adjusting the hegemonic Zionist discourse. Post-Zionism's relevance to societal discourse seemed to hinge on the fate of the peace process. At its height of favour, it was seen as heralding a new age during which Israeli identity would need to readjust itself in order to make sense of the new political reality that was expected to accompany peace. Those who lamented this 'assault' on Zionism argued that post-Zionism posed a dangerous threat to Israeli social unity, and prophesised that a national identity crisis would ensue and weaken the nation from within.[93]

In fact, a decade after the Oslo Accords, post-Zionism is still a movement very much on the margins, even more so in a 'post'-second *Intifada* political climate. It was not able to take advantage of the feelings of hope accompanying Oslo, and of

Israel being a nation on the cusp of regional and international acceptance, and of it being secured from threats to its very existence. As with any ideology or counter-ideology, its success or failure was embedded in the socio-political and economic structures of society.

Has the promise of post-Zionism evaporated? As a broad movement working to strengthen civil society, it continues to operate. As an intellectual movement hoping to influence, shape, and even radically overhaul societal discourse on issues of identity, it is, at this time, highly unpopular. Yet, one of its biggest proponents, Uri Ram, argues that it is still relevant and holds the seeds of future societal change. He states:

> Post-Zionism analysed structural changes in Israeli society. I don't believe that these structural changes can be abolished overnight. The underlying trends are there. The mood has changed and today neo-Zionism is dominant but this doesn't mean that there is no post-Zionist potential … today post-Zionism isn't seeing its best days. But as a potential it does have some existence under the surface.[94]

While this may be the case, Israeli academia and society have seen the growth, or resurgence, of classical Zionist discourse in a neo-Zionist form, and often related to the political decline of the Oslo process and the eruption of the second *Intifada*. Such neo-Zionism has reoccupied much of the discursive space opened up in the early and mid-1990s by New History and the promise of post-Zionism.

6 Neo-Zionist Responses – Seizing History, Shaping Policy

> The invention of culture (must be perceived as) a dialectic through which meaning is and must be continually re-invented.
>
> Roy Wagner, *The Invention of Culture*

Confronting history and creating discourse – Camp David

The previous chapter examined one of the two developmental pathways taken by the hegemonic Zionist identity in Israel, focusing on its expression through the power/knowledge matrix. In other words, it asked how issues pertaining to identity were explored through the social sciences. That particular effort to influence societal discourse was termed 'post-Zionism' and considered both in terms of its political definition and its intellectual definition. This chapter will continue with the theme of discourse on Israeli identity and its relationship with the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse. It will focus on the second fork in the discursive road: the phenomenon Uri Ram termed 'neo-Zionism'. It will establish the link between political and academic discourse against the background of the political juncture and historiographical disjuncture of the failure of Camp David and the outbreak of the second *Intifada*, just as the previous chapter discussed the rise of post-Zionism in the space created by the Oslo peace process.

This chapter provides examples to illustrate the diversity of the neo-Zionist bloc, and it will also provide examples of how knowledge is utilized in its most overtly political form – through policy-making and political advocacy – to further the political aspirations of the neo-Zionist agenda. Knowledge produced in this sphere is aimed at directly influencing political decision-makers, both at home and abroad. As this chapter demonstrates through a number of select examples, neo-Zionism is theoretically and ideologically diverse as a movement, yet its political aspirations are more coherent than those of post-Zionism.

When outlining the success of neo-Zionism in the post-second *Intifada* period it is necessary to examine how the failure of the Camp David negotiations of July 2000 and the subsequent outbreak of the second *Intifada* changed or affected the discourse of Labour Zionism, and how this political juncture/historiographical disjuncture provided neo-Zionism with greater space to operate in and greater support than it had gained previously.

The conditions of Oslo set out the devolution of Israeli control over areas of the West Bank and Gaza. Three Israeli deployments during a transitional period of five years were to be followed by 'final status talks', delaying the settlement of highly contentious issues such as the resettlement of refugees, the status of Jerusalem, and the questions of territory, borders, and settlements until such a time as a higher level of trust and cooperation had been fostered between the two parties. Numerous interim agreements followed, but the peace process stalled and suffered under the impact of continued settlement expansion, prolonged closures imposed on the occupied Palestinian territory, and Palestinian suicide-bombings. With the Camp David summit, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak sought to move to final status agreements by pushing through a number of unresolved issues. The summit failed and a mere eight weeks later, following opposition leader Ariel Sharon's controversial visit to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif in late September 2000, the second *Intifada* erupted.

The culmination of these events effectively buried hopes of peace in Israel. A new narrative emerged to explain the events and what was seen by some as the overall collapse of the peace process. It focused on Palestinian rejection of Prime Minister Barak's 'generous' offer at Camp David. The argument ran along the following lines: Barak sacrificed everything to put an offer on the table at Camp David that went far beyond any previous offer by or even strategy of an Israeli Prime Minister. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's rejection of the offer proved Arafat's intransigence and ultimate unwillingness to make peace. In short, the failure of Camp David showed that Israel had 'no partner' for peace. In a second stage, the 'no partner' theory became part of Israel's mainstream discourse. Once the *Intifada* erupted, Israeli officials, the media, and willing historians began to argue that Arafat had unleashed the seemingly popular uprising in addition to orchestrating the emerging waves of terror in order to force Israel back to the negotiating table, but this time with an even better offer.[1]

Robert Malley, President Clinton's former Special Assistant for Arab-Israeli Affairs, and Hussein Agha, a long-standing Palestinian advocate, challenged this narrative in a debate that was largely conducted on the pages of the *New York Review of Books* in 2001. According to Malley and Agha, this narrative was dangerously simplistic, and ignored the strategic nuances of the negotiations, and the struggle for power and prestige of the protagonists, amongst other factors.[2]

Malley and Hussein dwelt on the power of perceptions or the hegemonic narrative of Camp David, and asked how this narrative gained hegemony outside Israel and why it was validated by the 'honest broker' – the US. Malley and Agha provided a nuanced account of the proceedings, revealing the complexities of the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating positions, the constraints of the US in its role as the broker, and the foibles of human relationships during the negotiating process.

Significantly, this was the first challenge to the dominant Israeli/US narrative to emerge from political players involved in the negotiating process, and it was written almost a *year* after the events. This highlights the pervasiveness and strength of the narrative. It is also significant to note that it emerged from outside the circle of key players such as Bill Clinton and Dennis Ross. Arguably then, it

emerged from people who had nothing to *gain* – or certainly nothing to *protect* – on a personal level by defending the hegemonic narrative of Camp David II (i.e. they would not lose face by admitting that the failure of the summit did not lie exclusively at Arafat's door).

The article elicited an angry response from these key players. Ehud Barak (with the help of New Historian Benny Morris) wrote a response to Malley and Agha and also to journalist Deborah Sontag, who had also published an article challenging the hegemonic narrative; Sontag's article was entitled 'Quest for Middle East Peace: How and Why It Failed' and was published in the *New York Times* in June 2002.[3] According to Barak/Morris, Clinton had responded angrily to Sontag's revisionist portrayal of what had happened in a telephone conversation with Barak.[4]

The Barak/Morris article showed Clinton hanging on to the accepted parameters of the narrative of Camp David. It was also illuminating because it illustrated the role of this narrative in the general discourse regarding peace and the Palestinians *within* Israel after the second *Intifada*. Whilst it can be argued that the narrative was part of a wider, international discourse on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it also demonstrates how this narrative augmented the discourse within Israel, exposing complementary positions to Palestinian rejectionism. For example, Barak claimed that the *Intifada* was pre-planned and pre-prepared, and likened it to a 'grand plan'.[5] Barak and Morris, along with many others, traced such 'rejectionism' to inherent characteristics of Arab and Muslim culture, such as violence and duplicity,[6] which they claimed lay at the heart of 'Islamic culture'.[7]

Such arguments appeared to be accepted by Israeli society – perhaps illustrated through the hardened political position of the government vis-à-vis the Palestinians – and culminated in the election of Ariel Sharon in 2001. Ehud Barak garnered just over 37 per cent of the vote as compared to *Likud* leader Ariel Sharon's overwhelming majority of approximately 62 per cent of the vote – the largest ever landslide in Israeli electoral history.[8]

Many of Labour's traditional voters were convinced by the discourse that asserted that Palestinians still dreamt of historic Palestine and that Arab cultural defects made it impossible to trust them and made Israel's survival in the region more tenuous.[9] Indeed, as mentioned above, such perceptions were articulated by Benny Morris very openly in interviews published both within Israel and abroad.[10] Morris' assessment of Islamic culture and civilization was similar to the stance of the hypothesis offered by Samuel Huntington in his work, *The Clash of Civilisations*.[11] It was a theory that gained resonance after 11 September 2001 and became one of the preoccupations of security-oriented neo-Zionism, which will be discussed later.

Ehud Barak, who saw himself as going much further than Israel's leaders during the Oslo period, inadvertently contributed to neo-Zionist discourse which became part of Israel's mainstream conscience. Backed by Bill Clinton and Dennis Ross, Barak's version of the failure of Camp David became a part of the hegemonic discourse in Israel. This discourse was fed by the rejuvenation of existing discourse, which was challenged by the Oslo process but never abandoned by

Israel's political right. It contended that Palestinians would never abandon their claims to historic Palestine and viewed Oslo merely as a first step towards achieving this aim rather than an end point to the conflict. Camp David and the second *Intifada* resulted in an amalgamation between the discourse of the political left and the political right. This cocktail had a powerful effect on Israeli identity, influencing and shaping it long after Barak's government fell and was replaced by Ariel Sharon's premiership in 2001, and even later, when the premises of Barak's discourse were challenged.[12]

Against the background of this historiographical juncture/political disjuncture, neo-Zionism, in various forms, can be better understood within the context of Israeli society after the failure of Camp David, the eruption of the second *Intifada*, and the subsequent narrative that emerged to explain it. This chapter will provide examples of various forms of neo-Zionism, explaining its growing attraction for Israelis seeking an explanation for the absence of peace, for those who are concerned with the protection of Israel as a Jewish state, and for those who wish to influence and shape Israeli identity.

National-religious neo-Zionism: A battle over the roots of Zionism

Sociologist Uri Ram argued that identity in Israel in a post-second *Intifada* period – with the major socio-political ruptures and challenges of the Oslo years, Camp David, and the eruption of the second *Intifada* – can be characterized by two emerging and conflicting alternatives: neo-Zionism and post-Zionism. However, this work argues that the dialogue between the discourses of the left and right strengthened the claims and support for neo-Zionism and weakened those of post-Zionism. This development was mirrored in actual political developments as witnessed in the decline of the radical left/peace camp, and in the national unity governments under Sharon and Peres in which Labour all but gave up any role as a political alternative.

Neo-Zionism, as defined by in this book, however, was not a new phenomenon. Its roots lay in the aftermath of the 1967 (or Six-Day) War and the Israeli conquest of Jerusalem, if not earlier. Its origins rested on a reinterpretation of Zionism with an emphasis on Judaism as a religion, in contrast to the hegemonic 'secular' Labour Zionist discourse that emphasized Judaism as a cultural tradition. However, this reinterpretation combined Zionism's emphasis on the territorial basis of the redemption of the Jewish people with the *Halakhah* (Jewish law) and expectations of Messianic redemption. Uri Ram explains:

> Judaism, rather than being identified as a specific culture, is turned into a nationalist-territorial religion, that is, a political religion whose first principles are land and nation.[13]

This was expressed most powerfully by the movement of religious settlers, *Gush Emunim*, literally translated from Hebrew as Bloc of the Faithful, established in

1974. A hybrid of nationalism and religion, its goal was to claim the entire 'Land of Israel' (*Eretz Yisra'el*) rather than live within the boundaries of the State of Israel. While religious settlers usually invoked religious scriptures in order to justify their claim to the entire 'Greater Land of Israel' stretching from the Mediterranean to the river Jordan, secular settlers justified themselves as the direct heirs of the original Zionist pioneers. Thus, settlers from the agricultural Kibbutzim and *Moshavim* in the Jordan Valley emphasized that their settlements had been established by government initiative in a largely unpopulated area of great strategic importance.

In contrast, others saw the *raison d'être* of the settlements in the Holocaust and in the necessity to secure the continuously threatened existence of the Jewish state. This, in the view of secular nationalist settlers, could only be achieved through territorial advancement – the construction and expansion of settlements in full agreement with the national-religious camp – in what they considered the historical heartland and cradle of Judaism. As one national-religious resident of *Nokdim* noted about this settlement:

> The population here is an 'ingathering of exiles' – it's like living in one of the books of the prophets. As in the prophecy of the end of days, where the prophets promised that one day the people of Israel would be gathered from the four corners of the earth and would once again live in the Land of Israel.[14]

Among the movements actively advancing the cause of the settlements, *Gush Emunim* was the most influential faction, even though only 20 per cent of all settlers belonged to the *Gush*. The core of the movement was formed by national-religious *Yeshiva* and *Hesder Yeshiva* graduates, but part of this core group was also the 'hilltop youth', who were a new generation of national-religious radicals.[15]

A second group of *Gush* settlers were secular fundamentalists or ultra-nationalist revisionists; a faction were orthodox Jews migrating from the United States who were often less zealous but still actively supported the settlement enterprise. Ideologically, a wide range of views coexisted within *Gush Emunim*, though the movement lost much of its influence after the 1980s. Nevertheless, the national-religious settlers of the *Gush* still dominate most organizations and the council representing settler interests in public.[16] The vast majority of non-ideological settlers are not organized; thus, the YESHA Council of settlement mayors tends to represent the minority views of national-religious and secular nationalist *Gush* settlers as the wider consensus among settlers.

The same applies to the large number of highly vocal and influential organizations and movements that claimed to represent settler interests. Amongst these are, for example: *Zo Artzenu*; *B'Tzedek*; Women for Israel's Tomorrow; Professors for a Strong Israel; and the Ariel Centre for Policy Research. In addition, ideological settlers stand behind the influential right-wing radio station *Arutz* 7, which broadcasts a mix of religious and ultra-nationalist sentiment. Further organizations are also vocally represented on the Internet; a number of settlements have their own

websites, and national-religious settlers make use of instant communication and the Internet to spread their message, lobby for support, and attract new settlers.

Whilst the national-religious settler movement is the political expression of what this work defines as 'neo-Zionism', its ideological sub-structure is far broader than it would first appear. The groups mentioned above share a certain political discourse in relation to the future of the occupied Palestinian territory, but they form only part of a dialectical relationship that exists between neo-Zionist ideologies and seemingly coherent political aspirations. Neo-Zionism, in fact, incorporates a greater constituency than religious-nationalist settler groups. The interesting facet of this movement is that each ideological group within it, be it religious or secular, reinterprets and revises Zionist history in order to present itself as Zionism's true heir and thus cement its claim, credibility, and legitimacy.

For example, it has been argued that *Gush Emunim* adopted the colonial settler discourse of Labour Zionism and augmented their own national-religious discourse.[17] However, *Gush Emunim* and other settler movements like it are not the only groups placed by this work within the neo-Zionist fold who claim Zionist history as their own. Whilst it is a claim that many Labour Zionists would reject, neo-Zionism exposed tension within the original hegemonic discourse of (Labour) Zionism itself and built on it. Zionism's main task may have been fulfilled – the establishment of a state for the Jews; however its boundaries, both in terms of territory, and in terms of identity, have not. Thus, the boundaries of interpretation of historical action and historical legacy are also porous and open to reinterpretation – a sphere where neo-Zionism as an intellectual movement gained a foothold.

Just as the relevancy of post-Zionism as a viable intellectual alternative to Zionism hinged on the success of Oslo and the readjustment not only of the historical discourse but also the discourse on identity, so did the relevancy of neo-Zionism. Curiously, despite these two discourses operating at opposite ends of the political spectrum, there was a significant overlap in their historical consciousness, which was not immediately noticeable at the extreme fringes of both movements.

However, this work argues that the historical cores of both movements are fundamentally similar (to each other); both post- and neo-Zionists contend that the political problems Israel faces today began in 1948.[18] According to the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse as reflected in the construction of the Oslo Accords, Israeli utopia was shaken only in 1967 with the Israeli conquest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as East Jerusalem. In other words, for both post- and neo-Zionists, the core of the problem lay in the foundation and nature of the State of Israel itself, while the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse asserted that it lay in the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

The second pillar of neo-Zionist discourse appeared to be inherited from the Zionist revisionists, articulated by Zeev Jabotinsky. The main point of contention between Jabotinsky and the figurehead of Labour Zionism, David Ben Gurion, was a different approach to claiming a state for the Jews. Ben Gurion was a pragmatist whose priority was to establish a state for the Jews in Palestine, and who was willing to compromise on the borders of this state; Jabotinsky was a romanticist, who

wished this state to encompass all of historic Palestine, and who believed that the armed struggle should not stop until this aim had been achieved. However, whilst it seemed that neo-Zionism had internalized Jabotinsky's 'Iron Wall' theory,[19] it has been suggested that the Iron Wall approach was part of Labour's political policy and discourse from the early years of statehood – Jabotinsky's theory was not radically different from the *realpolitik* pursued by Ben Gurion. Nevertheless, neither Jabotinsky nor neo-Zionist discourse tries to deny the dark side of military conflict with the 'Other', unlike the discourse that emerged from Labour Zionism's pioneering roots.

Labour Zionist discourse at first ignored the conflict and the existence of the Palestinians as a political and national entity completely, and then, after 1967, adapted to the conflict but located its roots and also its solution in some form of 'land for peace' agreement. This did not however alter the striking resemblance between Jabotinsky's theory and Ben Gurion's policies vis-à-vis the Arab states. Whereas post-Zionist scholarship, using critical theory approaches, attempted to emancipate academia by revealing how this policy and its historical outcomes created a lacuna between Zionism's commitment to secular, democratic, and socialist values, neo-Zionist scholarship subverted Labour Zionist discourse by challenging the legitimacy of its commitment to these ideals in the first place.

Yitzhak Klein is a good example of national-religious neo-Zionist intellectualism. He was a lecturer in Political Science and International Affairs at the International School of Management in Jerusalem, and a candidate of the rightist, subversive *Manhigut Yehudit*[20] faction for the powerful *Likud* Central Committee in Ma'aleh Adumim.[21] An American-born, religiously observant Jew, he deliberately moved from academia into politics in order to influence the discourse on Israel's identity. He adopted several strategies by which he hoped to influence the discourse in society on peace and, by thus doing so, indirectly influence the discourse on identity in Israel.

The first strategy he employed was to introduce his subjectivity into his academic work, much like post-Zionist scholars. Whilst his original academic focus had been Russia, this gradually shifted to Israeli military policy. Klein viewed his academic work as one way to influence the future of the Jewish people and, thus, the State of Israel. For him, the survival of the Jewish people was of paramount importance – and the State of Israel was instrumental in ensuring their survival. For this reason, he felt that contributing to the discourse on peace/war was crucial. Klein assessed that the outcome of a peace process would have a profound effect on the future identity of the State of Israel and thus of the Jewish people of Israel.

Illuminating the fluid boundaries the hegemonic Labour Zionism discourse, post-Zionism and neo-Zionism, Klein also used the realm of academia to engage in political discourse and thus the academic work he produced was policy- and outcome-oriented. This approach culminated in an academic sense in an essay he published entitled *Israel's War with the Palestinians* in 2001. It was written in the light of the outbreak of the second *Intifada*, and argued that Israel's military response to the *Intifada* lacked political objectives.[22]

Even before the formation of Rabin's government, Klein came to the conclusion that territorial compromises would have to be made, but not through negotiations with the PLO which he described as 'a terrorist organization whose aim is to destroy the State of Israel'[23] (and thereby the Jewish people – his stated fundamental concern). Although he acknowledged that Rabin had a mandate to negotiate, he did not accept that he had a mandate to push Oslo through the Knesset at a vote of 61 to 59.[24] Israeli politics, according to Klein, had lost its moral and ethical fibre after Oslo and especially after Camp David. He viewed Rabin's actions as comparable to those of Chamberlain's at Munich.[25] Klein, like other neo-Zionists commenting on the Oslo debate, was adept at using history as the basis for his political aspirations.

The trajectory that is drawn from neo-Zionists in the present day to the Zionist pioneers has already been mentioned. However, neo-Zionist discourse also draws heavily, as Labour Zionist discourse came to do, on the history of the Holocaust. This is a topic too vast to be covered by this book; however, the moral imperative of claiming the Holocaust as a justification for a political mandate is an immensely powerful and symbolic act. The Holocaust came to play a central role in Israeli identity – it provided a framework of understanding, a common symbolic, if not actual, experience that includes not only Israelis but also world Jewry as a whole.[26]

Labour Zionist discourse had incorporated the Holocaust into its conception of the Israeli state and Israeli identity. In the era after Oslo, neo-Zionism challenged this monopoly within Israel.[27] Drawing comparisons between Hitler and Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and between the PLO and the Nazi party, neo-Zionist organizations launched an assault on Labour Zionism as the true keepers of Israel's Holocaust memory and on the peace process as an inherently dangerous appeasement policy.

Despite this, until the second *Intifada*, neo-Zionism did not gain a constituency beyond its own political borders – it did not make great headway in a society that was optimistic about the chance of peace (at least as long as society was optimistic). Klein argued that this peace discourse in society – that of the left – was hegemonic and over-powering, and delegitimized any dissent. Since the second *Intifada* however, Klein noted that there has been a tremendous shift from the left to the right both within society in general and also within academia.

The other strategy Klein employed in order to influence discourse was intimately connected to his conception of influence permeating through public debate. With this in mind, he became a member of a right-wing organization called Professors for a Strong Israel. Klein believed it to be a 'worthwhile' organization because, he claimed, it gave a public voice to those academics on the right who were intellectually dispossessed. Its existence as an organization illustrated that not all academics acceded to the liberal academic left-wing vision for society, which is often associated with the intellectual and academic community of Israel. However, he argued that its usefulness stemmed more from its symbolic power to challenge the idea that all academics in Israel are left-leaning than from its ability as

an organization to influence either right- or left-wing governments – here, Klein argued, left-wing academics still held a greater sway.

Aside from this, Klein also worked for the Shalem Center, a right-wing think tank run by Yoram Hazony. He left for personal reasons; however a contributing factor was his feeling that the Center's aim – to revive classical Zionism – was proving ineffective in its attempts to shape Israeli identity. Whilst the Center focuses on influencing society through cultural ideas, Klein insisted that influencing policy is more effective when it comes to contributing to the debate over the political future of the State of Israel and thus its nature and the identity of its citizens. Klein argued that influencing politics is the best way to achieve this central objective – the preservation of the Jewish people. He wrote:

> The post-Zionist debate has revealed the inadequacies of Zionism, and they're real. It leaves the Jewish community resident in the Land of Israel groping for a new conception of itself and a new justification. From my perspective, no such justification is possible in modern or post-modern terms – modernism implies post-modernism, which implies the failure of all modernist projects, Zionism included.[28]

For Klein, the only justification for the existence of Israel is an acceptance of the absolute privilege of the Jewish narrative. In other words, the historical narrative of the Jewish people's sovereignty over the Land of Israel as laid out in the Torah. Klein argues that, without this, Zionism is truly unable to defend itself from the tensions exposed by post-Zionist discourse, such as the occupation, colonial settlement, or a commitment to secular liberal values such as socialism and democracy. Although he insists that the religious Zionist movement had not originally intended to compete with the traditional Zionist elites of the Labour movement, this role became increasingly unavoidable because the old elites had no answers in the face of post-Zionist critique. This 'collapse' of Zionism left a power vacuum in the control over Zionism's central myths. When the religious Zionist movement began to compete, with renewed confidence, for this control in the face of traditional Zionism's crisis in confidence, it transformed into what here is termed 'neo-Zionism'.

Cultural neo-Zionism and the battle over identity

The religious-nationalist strain of neo-Zionism does not represent the neo-Zionist movement in its entirety. In the past decade, particularly after Oslo and then the second *Intifada*, it attracted growing support from an apparently surprising source – the heirs of the previously dominant Labour Zionist movement. One example of this growing faction is Yoram Hazony, a political theorist and director of the Shalem Center. He was child of Israeli parents who moved to the US, and he was raised with the ideal of Zionism's labour roots, with Ben Gurion at the helm of Jewish salvation. He immigrated to Israel in 1986 and became increasingly disenchanted with what he considered to be a 'post-Zionist' culture. Hazony

asserted that although most Israelis do not identify with post-Zionism and hardly any political or cultural leaders are willing to openly associate themselves with the movement, it wielded disproportionate power over the public dialogue on issues such as the future of the 'state' and 'nation' due to its stronghold on the Israeli intellectual establishment and the media. He wrote:

> In my view, it is these establishment cultural figures, even more than the circles of self-professed post-Zionists, who are today paving the way to the ruin of everything Herzl and other leading Zionists sought to achieve. Indeed, they are pushing us toward the dismantling of Israel's character as the Jewish state.[29]

Hazony found the intellectual establishment in Israel culpable for this state of affairs. He argues that the intellectual establishment is the fruit of the seeds planted by the mainly German-Jewish intellectuals who immigrated to Palestine and who formed the core of intellectual activity within the corridors of the Hebrew University.[30] He attempted to isolate the 'problem' of post-Zionism, which he saw as an irreverent attitude to the Israeli state, its history, and its Jewish culture, to a small and elite section of society, albeit the most influential one.

What Hazony found disturbing was the apparent post-Zionist sub-structure of society – one that criticized the achievements and character of the Jewish state in hindsight. According to Hazony, this criticism did not stem necessarily from humanistic concern for the Palestinians, but was the result of a crisis of confidence – a crisis of identity. In a book published at the peak of Oslo, just before Camp David II, he wrote: 'It is impossible to escape the conclusion that Israel's public culture is undergoing a shift away from the ideas and norms that characterised it as a Jewish state'.[31]

In this work entitled, *The Jewish State: The Struggle For Israel's Soul*, Hazony blamed the Israeli established cultural and intellectual elite of German origin for having allowed decay to set in.[32] He noted that this effort was not directed, on the most part, at Israel's physical existence, but rather at its 'legal, political and moral status as the state of the Jewish people'. Hazony's project was, in effect, to outline resistance to the concept of the Jewish state by Jewish intellectuals from pre-state times, and he argued that current post-Zionist scholars (with whom he included the New Historians) were merely an outgrowth of the intellectual legacy and ideological hegemony of German Jewish, so-defined anti-Zionist, intellectuals in the Israeli realm of knowledge and ideas.

Hazony's work was published in English in the US, where it received a certain amount of media attention. The book had a market – Hazony's message of crisis and subversion of Israel's 'Jewish soul' resonated within American Jewish communities. In Israel it received most coverage in the *Jerusalem Post*, Israel's English-language daily, which framed the argument in the context of two issues: history textbooks and the post-Zionist debate.

Hazony managed to reframe the post-Zionist debate. In the face of intellectual trends accompanying globalization, he localized the post-Zionist debate, removing it from a framework of global citizenship, global economies, global identities,

and global theories of postmodernism and post-colonialism. He removed it from questions of peace with Israel's neighbours, relations with the Palestinians, and even questions of Israel's non-Jewish minorities – all preoccupations of post-Zionist scholarship. For Hazony, post-Zionism is a exclusively Jewish affair. His isolationist approach to understanding Israeli culture, society, and identity is reflected in the crux of his argument: the Jewish state stands alone as the salvation for a unique people – the Jewish people. He wrote:

> The Jewish empowerment entailed in creating a Jewish state was not merely a matter of guaranteeing external, physical security of the Jews. Ultimately, its aim is to provide an internal security of the soul, which is the indispensable pre-condition for the emergence of a noble, uniquely Jewish character and civilisation.[33]

In this approach, he took his direction and inspiration from Theodor Herzl, the architect of political Zionism. It is curious to note, however, that whilst Herzl wished to make the Jews a nation 'like any other' through the Zionist project, and it is Herzl to whom Hazony defers, Hazony had different ideas about the *raison d'être* of the Jewish state.

Herzl viewed the dilemma of Jewry revolving around two diametrically opposed poles: the desire to be different from other nations and the desire to be similar. It can be proposed that his preoccupation with political Zionism was an expression of a desire for the Jews to be ultimately the same as other nations. Herzl was not a religious man, and had little passion it seems, for the 'Jewish soul' as defined by Hazony. Herzl, after all, was a pragmatist who proposed the establishment of the Jewish state in Uganda, far from the soil of the Holy Land. Arguably, it is Ahad Ha'am who should serve as Hazony's inspiration – a man whose preoccupation with the renaissance and renewal of the Jewish soul outweighed his fervour for its political body.

Yet by identifying himself as belonging to a vision that stretches back to Herzl, Hazony managed to invigorate the debates surrounding national identity and cultural traditions, as well as making, albeit obliquely, a strong political statement. Despite his traditional Zionist roots, Hazony, as a new immigrant, felt betrayed by the intellectual elite in whose hands the nation's soul rested. He reclaimed and revised the Labour tradition in light of contemporary politics and discourse. By juxtaposing the Zionist intellectual elite and his hypothesis of their betrayal, he effectively obliterated the political division between the *Likud* and Labour, Israel's major political parties. Instead, he used a structure of time and discourse to differentiate between those who were loyal to Israel and those who were not. The 'old-timers' of politics: men and women like Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon, Shimon Peres, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin, all saw themselves (some of them still do) as guardians of the Jewish state, but none used the power of ideas in forging a nation in the manner of Ben Gurion. Crucially, according to Hazony's argument, none have challenged the hegemony of the tradition of German intellectualism as much as Ben Gurion did.

Hazony argued that the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was a bastion of Western-German scholarship. According to him, it was dominated by German intellectuals who opposed Ben Gurion, who took issue with the Zionist movement and who often quarrelled with Ben Gurion's vision for the country. Yet it was challenged for many years by only one source. This source was the *Yeshiva* (religious school) of Rabbi Kook, founded in Palestine in 1924 by Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook.

The legacy of Kook's heirs and the *Yeshiva* movement resulted in the blending of a nationalist-religious ideology that overcame a dilemma facing religious Jews in relation to the establishment of the Jewish state. The establishment of the state was for many years considered a political act that was supposed to take place after the arrival of the Jewish Messiah, when all Jews would be gathered again in the Land of Israel. Without the Messiah, religious Jews faced a delicate problem of loyalty. Kook expounded a claim that the Messiah would only arrive after the physical augmentation of the state, thus laying the ideological foundations for national-religious Zionism and the *Gush Emunim* settler movement. Hazony wrote:

> Only once the material basis for the Jewish state had been built would it be possible for the Jews to concern themselves with ideas and with God. It was this theory – that materialism was a necessary way station on the road to redemption … that became the sanctification of Labour-Zionist materialism.[34]

Through his work, Hazony sidestepped many issues crucial in the debate on identity in Israel. Whilst he identified the stratum of society that he considered to undermine the 'Jewishness' of the state, his lack of discussion as to what constitutes 'Jewishness' is telling, especially as this question faces the state of Israel at every turn and is reflected in a substantial religious-secular cleavage in society. Does 'Jewishness' constitute religious observance? Does it merely mean an accident of birth and parentage? Does it refer mainly to the Ashkenazi cultural tradition and how does it incorporate the less well-documented and influential *Mizrahi* cultural traditions? What of the divisions within Judaism itself – the differences between Reform and Orthodox Judaism and their legal status under Israeli law on questions of marriage amongst other things?

Hazony weaved a narrative of Labour Zionism – conceived by Herzl and championed by Ben Gurion – as a thread of unified Jewish history, unbroken despite diaspora life and adversity. It was a glorious statement of nationalism, yet, almost 55 years after the establishment of the state its relevancy was questionable because it did not address, let alone provide substantive answers to, many of the dilemmas facing Israeli Jews.

Despite its inherent limitations, Hazony's work forms part of neo-Zionist scholarship. Unlike the critiques of society that emerged from religious circles, it was clear that Hazony wished to reach a wider audience. It is unsurprising to note that whilst he spoke in the name of the nation, Hazony's work made him deeply unpopular with many intellectuals and academics who considered themselves

loyal Zionists. His arguments struck at the heart of Labour Zionism's dominance of the Israeli polity and academy. Yet, crucially, they did not appear to undermine or challenge the discourse of Labour Zionism, which incorporated Jewish history and Jewish redemption in the Land of Israel. Rather, Hazony seemed to be reclaiming the discourse for its 'true' heirs.

Earlier, Yitzhak Klein presented the case for understanding Zionism and its claims through a religious narrative, arguing that attempting to view it through the prism of Western concepts such as democracy and equal citizenship could leave it exposed to a post-Zionist critique. However, this was not the only response to post-Zionist claims as Hazony illustrated. Hazony used a historical-national narrative to respond to post-Zionism, deconstructing Zionism's traditional intellectual elite and thus opening up space for a neo-Zionist elite to inherit their mantle. Whilst Klein favoured religious history, Hazony privileged nationalist history. This type of approach made it possible for neo-Zionism to broaden its coalition to include those who view themselves as ardent Jewish nationalists and the successors of the Zionist pioneers and who base their claims to the land, not necessarily on the religious narrative favoured by Klein and the national-religious sentiment, but on the Zionist historical narrative that cements the Jewish claim to the land and nationhood.

The Shalem Center was established in Jerusalem by Yoram Hazony in 1994. It was a reflection of Hazony's preoccupation with identity and its power to affect the political realm. Hazony seemed to be instigating a bottom-up strategy in order to counter the political decisions of the 'left', i.e. the compromises required by Oslo. He argued that whilst the details of the conflict had preoccupied Israeli discourse for decades, questions of the 'Jewish soul' had been neglected. As mentioned above, Hazony considers history and identity vital elements of this 'soul'.

Analysis of the Shalem Center provides an example of a research institute that seeks to win credibility for right-wing intellectualism and stands almost as a counter to the research agendas of left-leaning research centres such as the Rabin Institute and the Peres Center for Peace.[35] The aim of the Shalem Center is to revive 'classical Zionism'. Any attempt to 'revive' is accompanied by a claim to knowledge; thus the Center appears to claim the roots of Zionism for itself and provides another way for the mantle of Zionism to pass from the left to the right. In doing so, it implicitly legitimizes the political aspirations of contemporary Israel's right wing. The Shalem Center illustrates again, not a neo-Zionist challenge to the discourse itself, but a challenge over control and access to the discourse.

Hazony used this research institute to legitimize the voice of Israel's political right abroad, most notably in the US where the Center offers numerous academic scholarships and grants to students who wish to contribute to the corpus of knowledge on Israel, Jewish history, and the Jewish people. Indeed, the Center's main financial backer is Ron Lauder, heir of cosmetic giant Estee Lauder.[36] The Shalem Center therefore widened the debate on Israel's political future to include diaspora Jews. By appealing to the Jewish 'soul' and emphasizing the increasing erosion of Jewish identity in Israel, the Center instigated a broader debate on Jewish culture and its relationship with Israel, the homeland of the Jewish people.

With Hazony at the helm, the Shalem Center tried to distance itself from traditional right-wing discourse as articulated by Klein.[37] Whilst commenting on the state of Jewish culture and identity, the Center is obviously influenced by an implicit political agenda, as are many left-wing think tanks. Because of this obvious challenge to the left wing's dominance of politics, the academic integrity of the work commissioned and published by the Center has been carefully protected. This has been done by commissioning work by academics who are not necessarily right wing in political orientation and work that operates within the accepted academic discourse. The Center has been at the forefront of some well-publicized translation work, where major Western political works have been translated into Hebrew. For this it has been recognized as a legitimate research institute, whereas without these projects the Center could have been dismissed by left-wing critics as a right-wing propaganda machine.

Some of the scholars connected to the institute are not considered politically right-wing. One example is historian Michael Oren, a senior fellow at the institute, who published a book on the Six-Day War that was well received internationally and in Israel.[38] Oren described himself as a conservative, rather than a postmodern or ideological historian. He took issue with the approach of historians like Avi Shlaim, who believe that it is a historian's role to judge as well as narrate history. Oren insisted that in an attempt to overcome the bond of his own subjectivities, he employed a rigorous historical method – relying on a maximum number of sources and checking them for their accuracy. In other words, he functioned as a positivist – a historian who took an 'accurate' and rigorous approach to history, as opposed to those engaged in critical-theoretical approaches which provide the foundations of post-Zionism.

Oren felt that working for the Shalem Center did not result in a negative reception of his work – certainly not in the US. However, according to Oren, in Israel, where the Shalem Center is known as a right-wing research institute, any work produced tends to be regarded with suspicion by the 'left'. Yet Oren insisted that by no means are all the academics associated with the Center of 'right-wing' inclination.[39]

The Shalem Center managed to attract a diverse constituency both in Israel and abroad because it espoused a fundamental defence of Zionism. However, by claiming this accolade for itself in the midst of a 'sea of post-Zionism', the Center managed to offend those left-wing academics who belong to the traditional intellectual elite and still, despite Hazony's hypothesis, insist that they are loyal Zionists.

The textbook debate: The battle over history

The conflict between left-wing loyal Zionists and right-wing neo-Zionists was played out most prominently perhaps in the debate over history textbooks that emerged in the late 1990s. At this time the hegemonic discourse had adapted to the political *habitus* that reflected the attempts of the Oslo process to bring a satisfactory resolution to the conflict. Once again, Labour Zionism as a political force

took control of the political landscape in order to attain Israel's security through the peace-making process.

Labour's peace discourse was reflected in the changes proposed for the Education Ministry's school curriculum developed during the Oslo years. The government declared 1994 to be the Year of Peace and this was elaborated in school classrooms. Teachers were given extra training and materials to prepare them to incorporate the peace process into lessons across the range of subjects. Daniel Bar-Tal, a professor of psychology at Tel Aviv University, and co-editor of the *Israel/Palestine Journal*, contributed to the debate surrounding identities, education, and conflict resolution in Israel.[40] As well as writing papers on the topic, in 1994 he was appointed to head a Committee of Peace within the Ministry of Education. Its mandate was to adapt the education system to the predicted new Israeli social reality: peace.

As the committee's head, Bar-Tal instructed each department within the ministry to prepare a strategy or vision statement on how they envisioned education in ten years' time and what changes they would make, under the assumption that there would be peace. However, Bar-Tal lamented that there was not enough time to implement these changes because of Rabin's assassination and the change of government in 1996. He stated: 'Now, it is 10 years later and there's no peace. By 1996, after the murder of Rabin, everything disintegrated.'[41]

Labour's peace discourse adapted substantially after the second *Intifada*. Whilst the political result of the uprising was the collapse of the peace camp and Israeli peace initiatives, its ideological result was that the hegemonic discourse shifted away from 'peace' as a method to achieve security and back to 'might'. This was reflected in the election of Ariel Sharon and the *Likud*, after Ehud Barak failed to clinch 'peace' at Camp David II and the outbreak of the second *Intifada*. This political juncture/historiographical disjuncture created the space for neo-Zionist challenges to control of the discourse. Post-Zionism seemed to be defunct in a society that appeared to be resolved to conflict. In this political and social context, the debate generated by Hazony and the Shalem Center in the matter of school textbooks quickly became an issue of national identity.

Eyal Naveh, a professor from Tel Aviv University who has written both twelfth and ninth grade history textbooks for children, initiated the debate in 1999 after he wrote a ninth grade textbook entitled *The Twentieth Century – On the Threshold of Tomorrow*. The book, which offended the sensibilities of the Israeli right-wing, was commissioned during the period of Barak's government. It came to the attention of the new *Likud* Minister of Education, Limor Livnat. Naveh wrote:

> The teaching of history, in conveying a certain content, certain messages, reflects the processes of building the collective memory that is the basis of a society's normative concept of identity and its future vision of itself. Indeed, the view in the education system is that history lessons not only supply information and tools for analysing the human experience, but also inculcate values and shape the collective memory of the pupils by providing them with an inspirational link to their heritage.[42]

Although Naveh does not consider himself a post-Zionist, or a post-positivist, he stated that he wrote the textbook based on two assumptions: that Jewish history should not and cannot be considered in isolation from world history; and that the narrative of history is not definite – it is open to questions (the latter however indicates a post-positivist position). He understood that this approach would be considered innovative in Israel and was prepared for criticism from fellow academics and educators, but he did not realize that it would contribute to the politics of identity which would attract the attention of neo-Zionist organizations. Naveh believed that the political climate of Israel, disillusioned by the failure of the peace process to deliver a resolution to the conflict, contributed to the inflation of the textbook debate, moving it from an academic to a highly charged political setting.[43]

Naveh's was not the only textbook to come under fire from neo-Zionist critics. Two other ninth grade textbooks came under scrutiny also – *Passage to the Past*, written by Kezia Tabibyan, and *A World of Changes*, written by Danny Ya'akobi. Both of these books included the Palestinian perspective of important historical events such as the 1948 war and the creation of the refugee problem, as well as reflecting other concerns of post-Zionist scholarship, such as the relationship between the Ashkenazi elite and the *Mizrahi* immigrants to Israel. Moshe Zimmerman was a member of the Israel curriculum centre that developed curricula and wrote schoolbooks in 1975. Twenty years later, he became the head of the curriculum committee for junior high schools. Zimmerman, a world-renown expert of German and German-Jewish history, argued that a critical dialogue with perceived myths could aid the process of internal reconciliation in Israeli society. He stated in an article in the *New York Times*:

> A constant and critical dialogue with our past is a constant and never-ending formation of our identity. It will help cultivate a responsible student, totally aware to the incomplete and precarious nature of his existence as an individual and as a member of a certain collective … [this] will ease the pain of dealing with broken dreams, unfulfilled beliefs and shattered ideals – the essence of internal reconciliation towards changing circumstances and the unfortunate and inevitable outcome of the dynamics of an ever-changing identity that every society is undergoing.[44]

This article was picked up by the Israeli press and cultivated a media storm. The neo-Zionist organization Women in Green ran an advertisement in *Ha'aretz*, Israel's 'liberal' daily newspaper, which condemned Naveh's book. It was undersigned by a broad spectrum of political figures from the *Likud*, the National Union Party, and the National Religious Party, as well as other neo-Zionist organizations.[45]

Those at the Shalem Center realized that the debate over history had a real effect on the debate over identity, which was why the Center was so vociferous in challenging what they termed as 'post-Zionist' textbooks being used in Israeli classrooms. The Center launched a media campaign to protest against the teaching of 'subversive history' to children, which targeted all of these textbooks. As

a result of the Center's protests, a Knesset Education Committee was appointed by the Ministry of Education in November 2000 to examine Naveh's textbook. This committee, consisting of academics of various political persuasions, voted unanimously to order the withdrawal of the book until a number of distortions had been corrected. Naveh noted:

> In a well-funded, well-timed campaign, Shalem Center researchers demonstrated for the benefit of public figures, academics, professors, and teachers that this textbook on twentieth-century history was rife with errors, devalued the national heritage, and presented a distorted picture of Jewish and Zionist history that included a negative, unbalanced perspective on the achievements and struggles of the state of Israel.[46]

The Shalem Center published a research report entitled *The Quiet Revolution in the Teaching of Zionist History*,[47] dealing in principle with Danny Ya'akobi's book, *A World of Change*.[48] The report found that the new ninth grade textbooks had significantly reduced their coverage of the 'classic Zionist narrative' dealing with Zionism, the Holocaust, and the State of Israel. The report also claimed that the old textbooks devoted roughly two-thirds of the text to these issues, whereas Danny Ya'akobi's book had reduced this percentage to one-third.

Ya'akobi's book made serious omissions according to the report, as it dealt insufficiently with topics such as the Warsaw Ghetto and illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine. It also lacked photographs of key figures and moments in Israeli history, such as of Ben Gurion, the ceremony of the Declaration of Independence, the 'liberation' of Jerusalem in the 1967 War and of Jewish fighters in the war of Independence – all staples of the old textbooks and key moments of national pride. Overall, the Shalem Center seemed to be successful in taking the debate to a political and societal level, and framing it in terms of the preservation of the Zionist national identity of Israel.

Israel Bartal was also implicated in the accusations made by the Shalem Center against the post-Zionist infiltration of the school curriculum in Israel. Bartal, a Professor in the Jewish History Department at the Hebrew University and chairman of the Education Ministry's high school curriculum committee, was 'sent' on a lecture tour across the US to refute the charges made by Yoram Hazony and the Center, according to the *Jerusalem Post*. In a response in Hebrew and English on the Education Ministry's website, Bartal characterized Hazony's article as part of a 'broad anti-Israel propaganda campaign … of a strength and scope hitherto not encountered by supporters of Israel in America'.[49]

Bartal linked what he believed to be Hazony's (and therefore the Shalem Center's) 'left-wing intellectual elite conspiracy' theory, which Hazony expounded in his book *The Jewish State*, to Hazony's alienation from the Israeli cultural map. Bartal viewed him as a foreigner – a neo-conservative Jewish American who evoked an international media furore over a domestic issue. He attributed Hazony's success to a well-funded and well-oiled international media campaign geared towards exciting the sympathies and concern of conservative American Jewry.[50]

Bartal argued that it was Hazony's ignorance about Israel that made it easy to refute his claims that the left-wing traditional Zionist elite were the vanguard of post-Zionism in Israel from pre-state times until the present day. Bartal himself claimed to be an 'ultra-Zionist' and recalled of Hazony:

> What he missed totally was the complexity of the real thing – the academic thing, the historic thing – that Zionism is not unified. There is nothing unified called 'Zionism'. You can be a socialist, a sworn Zionist and a reform Jew, like myself.[51]

Bartal was uncomfortable with Hazony's claims of the hegemony of Labour Zionism within society and academia, and countered these claims by pointing to the diversity of Zionism. However, it can be suggested that Hazony, by attempting to separate the discourse from its mouthpiece (Labour Zionism's intellectual elites), raised some uncomfortable questions for the discourse itself, which is why he elicited such a strong response.

In his book, Hazony questioned the Zionist credentials of leading figures in the academic establishment, which was an establishment that came to be closely linked with the state-building project and with the hegemonic discourse that sustained the political project of Zionism once the state had been created. The political disjuncture/historiographical disjuncture of Oslo and its failure had revealed space for critics, such as Hazony from the right, who felt that they had been marginalized from the intellectual processes of the state. Hazony uncovered the real tension that had existed at the heart of Zionism – that Palestine was not a land without a people – and wrote on the intellectual responses that emerged from that tension. He illustrated that there were those who stood outside the accepted parameters of their time, and had challenged the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism, although they later became associated with it.

Bartal threatened to sue Hazony in an American court for libel for labelling him a post-Zionist. Bartal is a world expert on Zionism and claimed that it was an act of professional libel to taint an academic who makes a living from teaching Zionism with an anti-Zionist slur.[52] After his threat, Bartal claimed that Hazony stopped making personal attacks on his Zionist status in public. It is interesting to observe that Bartal appeared to subscribe to the idea that teaching Zionism necessitated identifying as a Zionist, as opposed to identifying himself as a critical scholar, as would be the usual practice (there is no standard requirement that in order to teach a religion or ideology the teacher must also be a practitioner of that religion or ideology). This may indicate a method by which loyalty to Zionism is reinforced and control over the discourse is reasserted.

It is of little surprise that the Shalem Center encountered heavy opposition and hostility as a result of the textbook scandal. In combination with Hazony's well-publicized hypothesis, the Center and Hazony's efforts were viewed as an attempt to hijack the hegemony of the Israeli Labour academic elite and infect Labour Zionist discourse with a right-wing ideology. It is also interesting to note

that Bartal associated anti-Zionism with post-Zionism in much the same way as Hazony and other neo-Zionists such as Limor Livnat.

Moshe Zimmerman revealed that subversive teaching need not be reflected only in statistics such as were presented by the Shalem Center in this particular case. He claimed that far more radical textbooks slipped through the censor's fingers without any intervention or public outcry. Zimmerman explained that Ya'akobi made the mistake of altering and omitting the 'obvious' – pictures of Ben Gurion and Holocaust survivors fall into this category. This made him vulnerable to attack from organizations like the Shalem Center. However, changes to the structure of history being taught to children are much more difficult to criticize because the underlying claims of the approach are harder to distinguish. Zimmerman stated that in the textbooks he published in the 1980s he tried to show, by relying on immigration figures, that Zionism was a failure from its inception.

In his books, Zimmerman showed that immigration to Palestine had to compete with immigration to the US, and that the statistics show that only 2–3 per cent of Jews leaving Europe chose Palestine and Zionism between 1880 and 1914, even though the Zionist movement had been created in 1897. Zimmerman believed that this information, included in a tabulated form or a chart, allowed for the prospect of a more critical historical approach to Zionism. Because it presented 'facts and figures' it slipped through without any counter-criticism.

The curriculum developed by Zimmerman and his colleagues questioned the claims rooted in Zionism's foundations – that it was a unique national movement and the only solution for world Jewry. In contrast to that assertion, this curriculum developed an innovative approach to twentieth century Jewish history – in that it placed, as Eyal Naveh aspired to do, Jewish history in the context of world history. Thus, Zionism was no longer viewed as a unique national movement but as an outgrowth of European nationalism displaying the traits of other romantic European nationalisms – such as strains of racism. Another 'myth' that Zimmerman hoped to undermine through an oblique approach in his textbooks was the relationship between Zionism and the Holocaust. He argued that Zionism was a political movement before the Holocaust and was not dependant on it for its survival.

Zimmerman hoped to show students through the chart dealing with Jewish immigration that Zionism remained only one of the *two* solutions to the so-called 'Jewish problem'. One solution was emancipation for the Jews through their assimilation into society – it came to an end in Europe with the extermination of the Jews, but went on in the US. The other solution was self-emancipation or nationalism, which materialized in Israel. After the Holocaust, emancipation appeared less attractive, yet Zimmerman pointed out that American Jewry, the largest Jewish community in the world today, were adherents of this option. This, in a sense, countered the interpretation of the experience of the Holocaust in Israel and in textbooks as the guideline for the Zionist approach to history and the Zionist approach to politics – it undermined the claim that if emancipation led to extermination, then a counterbalance – Jewish nationalism or Zionism – was needed. This counterbalance was embodied in the state of Israel.

Secular neo-Zionism: The battle over policy

Professors for a Strong Israel, an academic organization of which Yitzhak Klein is a member, was established in the late 1980s and is an excellent example of neo-Zionist secular nationalism. It challenged Labour's traditionally hegemonic position within Israeli intellectual life by bringing attention to the many academics and intellectuals who were affiliated with the political 'right' in Israel. In the context of this debate, terms such as 'left' and 'right' are specific to Israel and can be specified even further. For Ron Breiman, Chairman of the organization, and the members of Professors for a Strong Israel (PFSI), the terms 'left' and 'right' encapsulated an attitude towards the territory occupied by Israel in 1967 – that this territory was, and must remain, a part of Israel. The organization was established by a group of chemistry professors at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Now its members number in the hundreds, most belonging to the disciplines of natural science, but including both non-religious and religious academics, as well as both those who live within Israel and those who live beyond the Green Line in settlements.

Breiman explained the limitations of the organization to affect cultural discourse in Israel. He noted that as most of the members belong to the natural sciences they were not invited to take part in media discussions on political issues and, thus, their opinions were constantly constrained, whilst the traditional left-wing intellectual elite, dominating the humanities, were also in a position to dominate discourse.

He argued that the humanities are dominated by this elite; therefore to express a right-wing ideology amounted to professional suicide. He explained that for this reason, most of the organization's members are older, as once an academic achieves tenure it becomes easier to articulate his or her political convictions without fearing negative consequences professionally. In the exact sciences, Breiman argued, recommendations are crucial for promotions, but these can be obtained outside Israel, whilst for the humanities – fields such as Jewish Studies – these recommendations come from within Israel and, thus, in order to obtain them it is necessary to be part of the Labour or left-wing establishment.[53] This also supports the claim made in a previous chapter that post-Zionist academics also publish in English, not only because they need the support, which they lack in Israel and which they can only find abroad.

Breiman illustrates the breadth of neo-Zionism. He argues that in the Israeli case, the defence of national ideology and the defence of religious ideology overlap and ultimately have the same goal in relation to the occupied Palestinian territory. He is not a religious man, but defines himself as a nationalist.[54]

Like Hazony, Breiman traced his loyalty back to Herzl and the early Zionist pioneers who settled the land. He made powerful use of history, and this again illustrated the importance and relevance of historical narratives to the Israeli-Palestinians conflict. For Breiman, the turning point was, like in the case of post-Zionists such as Ilan Pappe and Uri Ram, Oslo. It was at that time that he joined PFSI. In his view, betrayal of the land was tantamount to the betrayal of Jewish

history and the Jews as a nation. He considered himself to be more of a 'liberal' than the architects and supporters of Oslo, and argued: 'Once you denounce the right of Jews to live in Judea and Samaria you are not Zionist anymore and you are not liberal anymore – this is pure racism and I can't accept it.'[55]

Curiously, he deferred to the very liberal ideals rejected so strongly by the national-religious ideology, and as espoused by Yitzhak Klein. Of course, Klein and Breiman have completely different conceptions of what constitutes 'liberalism' – Klein rejected liberalism because he associated it with the decline of religiosity at the expense of 'Western values'; Breiman adopted liberalism because he saw himself as part of the 'Western' tradition. Again, this illustrates the diversity of opinion that exists under the neo-Zionist umbrella, as defined by this work. Yet, Klein, Breiman, and Hazony have a united political goal with respect to the peace process and the relinquishment of land.

The Ariel Centre for Policy Research (ACPR) is, along with the Jaffee Center and the Interdisciplinary Center Herzaliya, one of the most prominent think tanks in Israel. It was established in 1997 as a non-profit and non-partisan organization. Its mandate is to encourage and stimulate debate, both domestically and internationally, on security policy, with special reference to the policies that are the outcome of the Oslo peace process.

Despite defining itself as a 'non-partisan' organization, ACPR sits comfortably within the boundaries of neo-Zionism. Its members and supporters come from both the political left and the right. Though the justifications for its political aspirations are different than those of, for example, the Shalem Center, or the settler movement, it again is a striking example of the homogenous political programme of an ideologically diverse neo-Zionist movement. ACPR differs from the Shalem Center because it is concerned with the 'body' rather than the 'soul' of Israel. In other words, it prescribes methods for ensuring Israel's future by evoking the security paradigm, unlike Hazony who sought to secure the state through the continued 'Jewishness' and 'Zionism' of its Jewish citizens. Engaging a different discourse than the other neo-Zionist groups, ACPR argued on its website that: 'A peace which will force Israel to its pre-1967 borders, i.e. losing those territorial assets critically needed for the very existence of the Jewish State, will not be but a recipe for war.'[56]

With this is mind, the ACPR's aim was to design various strategies for policy-makers and the public and, by doing so, contribute to and challenge the existing discourse of peace that had emerged because of Oslo. ACPR argued that the basis for the Oslo peace process – land for peace – involved what it regarded as a paradox: 'A minuscule democracy is being forced to provide its totalitarian enemies – scores of times its size – the only thing it lacks: territory.'[57]

The assumptions made by the organization's approach differed from those of other neo-Zionist movements. Distancing itself from explicitly ideological motivations, ACPR presented a different case for Israel retaining the occupied Palestinian territory. This makes it an excellent example of the overlap between neo-Zionist responses to peace and the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse because it evaluates the Israeli-Palestinian conflict beginning in 1967, not 1948.

Without evoking images of romantic nationalism, Jewish identity, or religion, ACPR interlinked Israel's security concerns with those of the global community of nation states, through the mutual concern of all states engaged in a 'war against terror' and through the perusal of a neo-conservative agenda.

Neo-conservatism grew from the disenchantment of a group of mostly Jewish liberal intellectuals with what they perceived to be the American left wing's reluctance to adequately fund defence spending during the 1960s and 1970s.[58] Many of these intellectuals worked for the Democrat Senator Henry Jackson, who was known as a committed anti-Communist. By the 1980s, many neo-cons were swayed by American President Ronald Reagan's approach to aggressive foreign policy and increased defence spending, and neo-conservatism became synonymous with republicanism. Though neo-conservatism was defined by its approach to foreign policy, many neo-cons remained committed liberals in terms of US domestic policy.

Neo-conservatism was broadly based on several key concepts relating to American foreign policy. First there was the belief that the US should use its power and military forces if necessary to promote 'American values' throughout the rest of the world. This, it was argued, would serve to ultimately protect American interests abroad and American security at home. Thus the second foundation of neo-conservative thought was a commitment to defence spending which allowed the US to confront potential threats with force and prepared the US to take pre-emptive military action if the situation required it. Thirdly, neo-conservatism opposed the interference of multilateral organizations such as the United Nations if they appeared to hamper the achievements of its key goals.

In terms of the Middle East – a crucial region because of the massive oil reserves it harbours – neo-conservatives were staunch in their implacable support of Israel which they saw as a strategic ally, both in a military sense and because of the democratic nature of the state that espoused the same values that neo-conservatives held dear. The spread of democracy, as opposed to the threatening theocracies or authoritarian regimes, was a key aim of neo-conservatism.[59]

ACPR can be described as the Israeli counterpart for neo-conservative American think tanks, such as the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), the Center for Security Policy (CSP), and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA). Its research concerns focus on issues that include anti-Semitism (both Western and Islamic), Islamic terror, the threat of Islam in the context of the 'Clash of Civilizations' theory developed by Samuel Huntington, military expenditure in the Middle East, as well as issues such as the 'phenomenon of Jewish self-hatred', post-Zionist trends in Israel, and Israel's allies and its enemies. Again, as in the school textbook debate, many of these issues reflected what Israel Bartal described as 'neo-conservative' American Jewish concerns, as well as neo-conservative non-Jewish American concerns. This is in contrast to the mandate of the Shalem Center which broadened the debate explicitly in regards to Jewish and Israeli identity to include diaspora Jewry as well, but which virtually ignored the Gentile world.

On an international level, the think tank was firmly aligned with American fears, especially after the events of 11 September 2001. Yet, after the outbreak of

the second *Intifada* and the 'failure' of Oslo its approach took on a new relevancy within Israel also, and it created an explicit link between the broader, global war on terror, and Israel's parallel war on Palestinian terror.

It is interesting to note that the groundswell of support for certain neo-Zionist trends after the second *Intifada* in some ways resembles the roots of American neo-conservatism in that it emerged from the left of the political spectrum, but ultimately became an expression of the foreign policies of the political right. Despite this, many remain committed liberals in regards to domestic policy issues (this liberality does not necessarily extend to the rights and status of the non-Jewish minority in Israel, but is concerned with greater civil rights for Jewish minorities such as women, homosexuals, Sephardim, and the commitment to the separation of state and church).

Again, by questioning Labour Zionism's strategy to achieve peace (through the figurehead of Yitzhak Rabin), ACPR is an example of neo-Zionism contesting the political path taken by Labour Zionism. It used a building block of the hegemonic Labour discourse – security – to achieve this and presented itself as Labour Zionism's successor and heir. The building blocks of Labour Zionism rested on settlement and defence of its territory. The compromises underlying the peace process seemed to abandon both those precepts. And the second *Intifada* shattered the faith of many Israelis that such compromises would yield results. ACPR's approach was attractive to non-ideologically inspired Israelis because it presented itself as non-ideological and based on rational premises to which most Jewish Israelis could relate. However the membership of its advisory committee (which includes former *Likud* Minister of Foreign Affairs and Defence, Professor Moshe Arens, and the former *Likud* Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir),[60] reveal it to be firmly embroiled in the ideological debate as well.

The neo-Zionist challenge

This chapter demonstrated the complexity of an intellectual movement that this work termed 'neo-Zionism'. From its religious-nationalist roots, neo-Zionism is a phenomenon that has been expressed through various political and academic organizations, a cross-section of which have been presented. Neo-Zionism can be defined as a variety of organizations which work along various ideological lines in order to achieve a similar political goal.

The chapter examined a number of neo-Zionist bodies and individuals who struggle, ultimately for the salvation of what each of them considers the true spirit of Zionism. The examples given are limited in number, yet each has served to illustrate the neo-Zionist struggle to shape Israeli identity, society, and policy through academic and intellectual works and institutions. This picture should be considered in juxtaposition with the left-wing hegemonic Zionist and post-Zionist efforts to achieve the same goals through the use of power/knowledge. On the whole, however, neo-Zionists operate outside the official academic institutions of Israel because most agree that these institutions are dominated by the 'Labour left', which makes dissent within the hegemonic system difficult. It is interesting

to note that this is also a complaint voiced by many post-Zionist scholars, yet they, on the whole, choose to remain within the academic system.

Yitzhak Klein was an example of the religious right. His academic work was based on a critical approach – it was an attempt to produce knowledge that was emancipatory in nature. He provided an interesting case study because he functioned within all the neo-Zionist planes postulated by this chapter. He worked as an academic at Beer Sheva University; he worked for the Shalem Center and produced papers for the Ariel Centre. He was also a member of Professors for a Strong Israel. Finally, realizing the limited ability of these organizations to exact the changes he believed are necessary for Israel's survival, both internally (as expressed through identity) and externally (as expressed though conflict), he turned to radical political strategies. He joined a faction, which aimed to take over the *Likud* party from within. Klein demonstrated the extensive boundaries of neo-Zionism. He used a religious discourse to express his vision of Israeli society and identity, and extended this to explain Israel's right to the occupied Palestinian territory.

Yoram Hazony is a more oblique example of neo-Zionism than Klein. He was also religious, and a committed Zionist. Yet, through his work and the work of the research institute he founded – the Shalem Center – he made religion a moot point. Not because he ignored it; on the contrary, he aimed to place 'Jewishness' at the centre of the debate regarding Israeli society and its future (both physical and spiritual). Unlike Klein, however, he did not employ a religious discourse to do this. He used a nationalist discourse to cement Jewish claims to the land and the occupied Palestinian territory, which created a link with the original civic religion of hegemonic Labour Zionism.

Hazony has, through an extensive media campaign both for his book and the Shalem Center's fight against the 'post-Zionization' of school history textbooks, made Israeli identity his core concern. This identity should be, according to Hazony and the Shalem Center, rooted in Jewish tradition. Yet, tradition is as an ambiguous concept as the Jewishness that Hazony lamented the loss of. Is it an attachment to the earth on which the Israeli state has been established; is it Herzl's Zionist dream? Is it the survival or the abjuration of Jewish life in the diaspora? By sidelining these issues and focusing on a homogenous concept of the 'Jewish soul' Hazony's approach proved popular outside Israel, mostly with American Jewry. It did not require strict religious observance or commitment from its supporters, merely a commitment to the 'Jewish people'.

Ron Breiman, chairman of the right-wing organization Professors for a Strong Israel, was an advocate of the secular right, though many members of the organization are of religious inclination. The majority of the organization's members, for various suggested reasons, are natural scientists. This made it more difficult for them to participate in the political discourse in Israel regarding the peace process and the future of the occupied Palestinian territory than it is for social or political scientists of Zionist or post-Zionist inclinations. They were not concerned with issues of culture or religion and in this sense they displayed a pluralistic approach. It can be argued that for men like Breiman, Zionism began and ended with the

land. Being Jewish, or the manifestation of Jewish identity, was a commitment to this land, and the right to dwell anywhere therein.

The Ariel Centre is an organization committed to shaping policy. Although it published several papers on domestic Israeli issues such as the post-Zionist threat, it functions very much as a model of neo-conservative American think tanks. It is less concerned with internal Jewish issues than with neo-conservative global issues. It is not limited to American Jewry as the Shalem Center, but it also encompasses non-Jewish Americans.

It can be suggested that these are merely examples of right-wing Zionism operating in Israel and abroad. However, understanding the ideological basis for their political perspectives reveals a fascinating point. Neo-Zionism incorporates right-wing politics in Israel, yet this is just its political expression. In terms of its foundations, neo-Zionism is more diverse and contradictory than the apparently anti-foundationalist postmodern trend of post-Zionism. Previously, this work argued that post-Zionism, as an intellectual movement, was incoherent, yet shared a common critical methodological approach, even though its political aspirations, or the extent of those political aspirations, are diverse. On closer inspection it appears that the different variations of neo-Zionism do not share a common ideological and methodological approach, yet their political aspirations are homogenous. Although there is substantial overlap between the three neo-Zionist perspectives examined here, their discourses differ and even stand in opposition to one another at certain points.

For example, Klein's expression of neo-Zionism rejects what he considers to be false Western concepts such as citizenship and democracy, even ownership in the case of Israel. He acknowledges that understood in these terms, Zionist aspirations will always be vulnerable to critique and even condemnation. Thus he privileged the absolute authority of a religious discourse: of God. Hazony, whilst skirting issues of religious narratives, privileged the nationalist historical narrative. By doing so, he rendered issues such as citizenship, democracy, and civil rights a moot point, unlike Klein who acknowledged them as a problem but then rejected the entire discourse within which they operate. Both Klein and Hazony localized their perceptions of the conflict against the intellectual trend of viewing conflicts from an international perspective and global concepts. Breiman, on the other hand, evoked concepts such as 'liberal values' and 'civil rights' in order to augment his arguments for Jewish rights to the occupied Palestinian territory. He worked within the confines of Western liberal discourse, albeit turning it on its head.[61]

The Ariel Centre reaches out on an international level, using a neo-conservative discourse which overlaps with the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse. Its constituency is not only internally Jewish, but appeals to a wider neo-conservative American audience. This is reflected in its research concerns – anti-Semitism, terrorism and military capabilities, and Islam (and the Islamic world). These three areas of research overlap substantially. Although ACPR has published several papers on issues of identity, such as post-Zionism, the bulk of its work is concentrated on countering threats to national and international security and

defence – again the discourse of neo-conservatism. Its attachment to the occupied Palestinian territory is cradled in the language of this discourse.

After the outbreak of the second *Intifada*, neo-Zionism gained support within Israel. The Ariel Centre's approach and the discourse it employs may prove especially appealing to those Israelis who are not swayed by ideological and/or religious arguments, in particular as, since the attacks of 11 September 2001, this discourse has appealed to a vast number of American citizens and has become a legitimate expression of national interest. Thus, the Ariel Centre is perhaps the most potent form of neo-Zionism, requiring no ideological presuppositions, yet able to support ideology-based political aspirations. Neo-Zionism as expressed through the security discourse employed by the Ariel Centre has attracted adherents from both the right (its natural constituency) and from the political left in Israel after it suffered a blow from the collapse of the peace process. Benny Morris is a striking example of the appeal of turning to neo-Zionist discourse to make sense of Israeli political reality.

Conclusion

> History will be kind to me for I intend to write it
>
> Sir Winston Churchill (1874–1965)

This book investigated a debate that has been part of Israeli social discourse since the emergence of the New Historians in the late 1980s and early 1990s – the period before and after the choice made by Israelis and Palestinians to embark on a peace process that symbolically began with the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993. The debate raised a central question of identity: had Israel reached a point when the hegemonic Labour Zionist identity was no longer relevant, or indeed, necessary? This was reflected in the emergence of new understandings of, and approaches to, Israel's past, which had the potential to exert an influence on Israel's political choices for the future. New History became a watchword for a country on the cusp of a post-Zionist era.

At that time, both the peace process and the New History that emerged alongside it were seen as powerful symbols of change for Israeli society. This work set out to trace the evolution of the discourse on Israeli self-perception, history, and identity in the era of the peace process. It sought to test the popular belief that peace required a change in a fundamental tool in nation-building – a reassessment and rearticulation of the national 'Self'. In other words, it tested the supposition that both the peace process and New History made fundamental statements about the future configuration of Israeli national identity. On a more abstract level, this study considered the role of historical narrative, and used the peace process to question the significance of history and the role of those who write and record it, in modern day political processes.

The main conclusion of this work is that questions of history and identity lie symbolically at the heart of the peace process, inspiring political participation at both grass-root and elite levels. This work credits these questions with the potential to affect political outcomes, and vice versa. The peace process itself appears to have developed a dialectical relationship with history and identity. It created a cognitive dissonance in regards to their boundaries, defining the beginning and end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with the 1967 War and consequent occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This inspired responses by post-Zionism and forms of neo-Zionism.

Within the shifting sands of identity, the process of national identification through national history is vital. Of course, political, economic, social, and cultural factors play a part; however, by highlighting the idea that a claim to knowledge, especially knowledge of the 'nation', is an act of power in the context of a nation-building project, this work argued that history and the social sciences are highly contested spaces where knowledge and power are fiercely fought over. It further maintained that those who contribute to the corpus of knowledge regarding the 'nation' contribute consciously or unconsciously to the constant process of re-defining the nation in line with the *habitus*.

The book presented a theoretical approach to understanding the evolution of Jewish nationalism into its hegemonic form – Labour Zionism. It understands this formation to be the outcome of a process of social construction rather than as the re-emergence of a pre-existent *ethnie*. Modern nationalist movements required adhesives to bind together their potential nations. In the Jewish case, this was problematic for several reasons. First and most pressing was the territorial dispersion of the various Jewish communities throughout the world. Second, and as a result of this, there were extreme differences in the cultural, ethnic, and religious configurations of these communities. Even once the Zionist movement had established itself politically and territorially in Palestine, these issues of difference and homogenization were central to the nation-building project.

For this reason, as was the case in many other new nations, the construction of a national identity through the use of myth and narrative was of primary importance amongst the political and cultural processes preceding and following the establishment of the State of Israel. Historical narratives connected with this process gravitated around points of extreme tension between Israel and its Arab neighbours and extreme bonding between Israel's intra-Jewish communities – emphasizing a commonality of past and present experience and a vested interest in a common future.

Over the past 25 years, these key historical narratives became virtual battlefields in terms of competing interpretations concerned with Israeli foreign policy and the processes of war and peace. They reflected the symbiotic relationship between the 'national Self' and the 'hostile Other' and the *weight* of history in the world of politics.[1] According to New Historian, Avi Shlaim:

> History plays a crucial role in state formation, in legitimizing the origins of the state and its political system, in the Middle East as elsewhere. Governments in the region enjoy many direct and indirect powers over the writing of history.[2]

Indeed, in keeping with this line of scholarship, this study used the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, from 1991 until the outbreak of the second (Al-Aqsa) *Intifada* in September 2000, as a context through which to focus on issues of nation, identity, and discourse. Each of these are part of the intricate web comprising the process of reconciliation and balancing the inherent tension between the 'national Self' and the 'hostile Other'. The concessions that would accompany a

'successful' reconciliation acceptable to both Israelis and Palestinians embodied the fears and hopes of both left- and right-wing commentators in their anticipation of a post-peace process Israel.

Rather than providing a textual analysis, this work approached all those involved in this debate, to some degree, as politically engaged individuals. Further, the protagonists – academics and intellectuals – all made claims to knowledge and truth. Influenced by Foucault, this work argued that claims of truth/knowledge are bound to a power/knowledge matrix. The realm of knowledge – in this case, knowledge of a nation's 'past' that has direct political relevance in the nation's present – should be understood in the context of power.

Power was a theme also considered in this work. First it was considered in the context of nation-building and the hegemony of the Zionist movement, both in terms of the political and economic structures in Palestine (the *practice* of the state-in-the-making), but also in terms of national discourse concerned with the interlinking, supporting structures of ideology, historical narrative, and the constitution of knowledge. This work approached the state as the expression of hegemony of the Labour Zionist movement. As is the case with a Gramscian understanding of hegemony, within every hegemonic bloc is the seed of resistance, and this book considered New History, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism as expressions of *resistance to* or *challenge over the control of* Labour Zionist hegemony – both politically and discursively.

It argued that although there may not be a continuous and obvious change in national identity, vitally there is the *potential* for such change at significant political junctures. These junctures act as *disjunctures* in the nationalist narrative when key elements of national identity come under threat. One such example is the issue of settlements in a final peace agreement with the Palestinians. It is not the issue of the settlements itself that is the disjuncture, but the moment in the nation's history when the issue is addressed. Although many politicians and analysts argue that settlements are in fact one of the easiest issues to compromise on, it is their significance to the nationalist project that was the basis for the state that could cause the need for reinterpretation of the national entity. Settlements are an essential basis of Zionism, so whenever the issue has been postponed or addressed (as under Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak) it has created a moment of disjuncture.

The peace process stimulated debates over how to redefine the nation appropriately. Beginning with the Madrid Peace Conference and consolidated with the signing of the Oslo Accords, the existence of the Palestinian people, as a *nation,* was being formally recognized by the state. For many Israelis this was a period of significant discontinuity and whilst some welcomed it others reacted against it. Academic scholarship reflected this as right-wing academics mounted an attack on the Labour Zionist academic establishment's control of the hegemonic discourse, while others from the far left challenged the Labour Zionist academic establishment because it did not go far enough in its recognition.

The peace process was a critical juncture or *disjuncture* because it raised questions of identity. And whilst grappling with those questions, historians and social scientists were suddenly pushed into the limelight, receiving media attention and

finding themselves at the discursive heart of public debate. As attention focused on their disciplines, the struggles between them emerged and took on significance beyond their actual meanings as academic debates.

This work does not suggest that the radical overhaul of national identity is a common phenomenon within modern nation states. Examples where this seems to be the case, such as South Africa and Yugoslavia, are usually subject to fundamental disjuncture where the mismatch between state structure and population is extreme. Although Israel is not facing such a disjuncture in the near future, arguably, without the establishment of a truly independent Palestine that can satisfy the national aspirations of both the Palestinians within that territory, and also assuage the romantic nationalist yearnings of Palestinian Israelis (Israeli-Arabs) within Israel proper, a radical disjuncture could prove to be a future possibility.

Another source of potential conflict has surfaced amongst the Jewish population of Israel. This study provided a brief outline of the historical narrative of Jewish nationalism and Zionism alongside a theoretical outline for understanding its growth and configuration. Building on the notion of 'imagined' communities and constructed culture this work sought to address the points of friction within the Zionist national narrative which illustrated that nation's are 'built' and not 'resurrected', as the narrative and some theorists of nationalism would suggest. Thus it focused on strategies of cohesion used in facets of nation-building such as ideology, but it also introduced points of disjuncture such as the 1967 and 1973 wars.

These wars had many political and social repercussions – too many to mention in great detail in the limited space available. However, because this work is concerned with changes in discourse, narrative, and identity, one particular effect was made central – the effect on the hegemony of Labour Zionism – politically and in terms of its discourse, which encompassed the hegemonic historical narrative of the state and of the nation. Crucially, these wars provided political junctures, but also historiographical disjunctures, revealing marginalized challenges to the discourse and also translating into very real political challenges to the Labour party's political dominance through the voting strategies of the *Mizrahim*. It was, however, argued that the disenfranchisement of the *Mizrahim* did not largely constitute a rejection of the Zionist discourse. Rather, it was an expression of their desire for greater inclusion in the dominant political bloc, and the desire to share in the hegemonic discourse.

The book went on to chart three responses to the changing socio-political climate in Israel following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon until the present day. First, it examined the phenomenon of New History. As the name suggests, this movement was concerned with a revision of Israel's past. Illuminated by the experiences of the New Historians, history is revealed to be a powerful and emotive tool, politically engaged in the discourse on and of the nation. The history of the Israeli state, and by extension, of the Israeli nation, was part of a political project. It has been argued that as the state and nation matures, an increasingly critical eye can be turned on the myths of its past. Indeed, the New Historians gained media attention, both in Israel and abroad, because they emerged after the Lebanon War and before Oslo. This was a time when critical voices were emerging regarding

Israel's political present. It is unsurprising that voices critical of Israel's past also gained strength, and were heard.

The case of Israel illustrates the critical role of history at political junctures in a nation's life. The Oslo process was an attempt to reconcile a historical conflict that had lingered on for over half a century and a historiographical conflict that had become increasingly powerful over the preceding decade. Its symbolic value was great. The New Historians found themselves embroiled in a highly charged political debate because the nature of their work – broadly covering Israel's culpability in creating, continuing, or exacerbating the conflict with both the Palestinians and the Arabs – gained renewed political significance in the context of the question of a just and fair resolution. The idea that the time had come for a New History for a new (or mature) nation was met with both positive and negative reactions. Like Oslo itself, it raised questions of the identity of the nation. As this work argued, the combination of the seemingly 'new' practice and discourse of peace coupled with a 'new' critical examination of Israeli history was erroneously mistaken as the harbinger for a post-Zionist age – signalling that the Israeli state, 'nation', and its hegemonic identity were on the brink of a new era and a radical overhaul.

Much like the Oslo process that shied away from addressing the fundamental issues of the conflict – Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, and borders – postponing them until final status negotiations, and therefore carrying within itself the seeds of its own failure, New History also shied away from addressing the underlying fundamental issues of identity in an explicit and open manner. Thus it failed to create a real rupture in regard to Israeli identity, but did provide a *moment* of *disjuncture*.

This book presented a combination of personal perspectives of the protagonists of the New History debate in Israel in conjunction with an overarching analysis that built the idea of symbolic, rather than structural change, and conflated predictions regarding the power of both New History and of the peace process itself. Although this work does not argue that these two phenomena were in any way linked in a causal sense, it does note that each had the potential to provide the other with space to flourish.

The Lebanon war was the first war in Israel's history that appeared to the public as a war of choice rather than an act of defence. The unpopularity of the war and the relatively high number of Israeli casualties resulted in the emergence of a public discourse that stressed the need for political rather than military solutions to Israel's existence in what was perceived as a hostile geopolitical environment. The New Historians were part of this public discourse.

This in no way implies that the New Historians did not begin their journeys into Israel's historical narratives as Zionists. Indeed, surprisingly, all of them by their own admission were committed Zionists during the 1980s. Interestingly, this is where one form of the debate both begins and ends – what constitutes a loyal Zionist? As Chapter 6 demonstrated, the answer to this question is by no means uncontested.

A personal insight into the aims, motivations and metamorphoses of the New Historians was provided against the backdrop of an increasingly critical societal

discourse regarding Israel's central mantra – security and defence. Taking those personal perspectives into consideration was particularly important because of the sheer volume written on New History and the New Historians. Both their detractors and defenders have been quick to define, explain, and judge them. Much of the misinformation or lack of information has been recompensed in this study which has charted their development as historians, as well as citizens, from the beginnings of their academic careers until the second *Intifada*, often in their own words and according to their reflections on themselves and their respective roles.

This work did not aim to provide a textual analysis of their historical works. Again, it focused on their contribution to the critical discourse that emerged after Lebanon. They, as historians, contributed to a reassessment of Israel's past. This was lauded by some and criticized by others. Nevertheless, this work argued that the impact of the New Historians was conflated. Perhaps their real success lay in the fact that they not only widened the space for a more differentiated discourse of Israel's past and brought it to the attention of the media, but that their work and approaches raised questions about Israel's future, which were mirrored and reiterated by the questions raised by the peace process at the same time.

Thus, this book argued that there is a case to be made to view New History and post-Zionism as two very separate and distinct movements. Often, debates erroneously consider New History and post-Zionism as the same entity, to the chagrin of most of the New Historians and the few academics that define themselves as post-Zionists. This work argued that post-Zionism is best understood not as a movement, but rather a critical-theoretical approach that was unified only by its methodology and not by a coherent political agenda.

This is not to say that many of the academics considered by this work to fall into the post-Zionist genre do not share similar ideals and visions of Israel's political future, including a radically inclusive identity. However, it does mean that as a group, post-Zionists do not comprise a political force *per se*. They have had little high-level political influence and little public support. They have been most successful in grass-roots activism highlighting the needs of the disenfranchised communities within Israel.

Despite its limited political influence, this work demonstrated that post-Zionism, as a movement, is both highly academic and highly political, albeit on a non-elite level. It has flourished largely outside the realm of history – which is still governed by theoretical conservatism and adheres to the idea of a historian standing 'outside' history. The social sciences, on the other hand, have more willingly embraced the idea of 'engaged' scholarship, and many of Israel's academics who can be considered as post-Zionist advocates recognize the link between power and knowledge. It is unsurprising that those who study the 'mythology of Zionism' and the society that has flourished around it – the social scientists – exemplify the post-Zionist ethos. The spheres of economics, politics, sociology, geography, and even archaeology have produced work exposing the links between these subjects and the structural power of the state.

This work also challenged the proposition that the political discourse of peace, desirous of recognizing the albeit limited rights of the Palestinian people, could be

considered a sign of a deeper reconfiguration of Israeli identity and Israeli society. It argued that the discourse of peace was largely symbolic, and in terms of the hegemonic discourse regarding the ideological claims, historical rights, and the culpability of Israel in different aspects of the Arab-Israeli/Palestinian-Israeli conflicts, no real structural change occurred.[3] This is reflected in the nature of the Oslo peace process, which essentially approached the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians as the outcome of the changed landscape of the 1967 War when Israel occupied formerly Jordanian and Egyptian-controlled areas, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The peace process and its accompanying discourse have pointedly avoided the historical roots of the conflict culminating with the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 in Palestine, and the creation of a refugee problem which is yet to be resolved. Arguably the peace process actually supplemented the hegemonic Zionist discourse by leaving contentious or historical issues such as refugees and Jewish settlements until final status talks. It did this by effectively accepting that the history of the conflict began in 1967, rather than 1948, and supplying a political framework accepted by the international community to support this notion.

This study demonstrated that although post-Zionism as a movement is not politically unified – i.e. those producing critical-theoretical works are not necessarily united by the same political goal – its adherents fall into a broad category that is politically committed to greater social justice. This includes the desire for greater democratization of the state to make it inclusive of all its citizens rather than just its Jewish citizens, more rights for minorities, the rights of women, and the end of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Although not all those included in the post-Zionist category necessarily adhere to a position of the illegality of the Jewish state, or of the end or illegality of Zionism, their works are engaged in a political struggle to change the status quo of the Israeli state. Their critical-theoretical underpinnings necessarily result in knowledge that is both inherently practical and normatively preoccupied with emancipation. They are also engaged in a global trend, both theoretically and politically, of striving to strengthen civil society.

Post-Zionists and neo-Zionists claim that the hegemonic Zionist discourse has confined them to the margins of debates over Israel's future as a state. It can be suggested that post-Zionism, as defined by this work, has flourished largely outside the discipline of history. This is because history (and archaeology) has a greater relevance to present day politics as they provide the claims of 'truth' for the nation and are thus more tightly bound to the power/knowledge matrix. Historical issues still carry a political weight in an era where historical compromises are considered a pre-requisite to peace. Unsurprisingly, this is reflected in the historical realm's gatekeeping capacities.

The personal experiences of the New Historians reveal that producing claims that counter the traditional view of the past bears professional implications. Social science, on the whole, has faired better, as reflected in the experiences of those academics that contribute to the corpus of post-Zionist scholarship. They have been able to successfully import 'foreign' theoretical innovations such as Critical Theory, without their work being automatically delegitimized, which is more

the case for historians who stray from the positivist path. Whilst post-Zionist social scientists receive marginal attention in Israel, they appeal to a broader international audience – that of global civil society.

Neo-Zionists have not relied on institutional academia or on theoretical innovation to further their resistance to the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse. They have flourished in private institutions of knowledge such as think tanks and through private organizations. Like post-Zionists, they also wage much of their struggle outside the borders of Israel, appealing to the wider Jewish, or the wider neo-conservative, community. In comparison, the New Historians and New History work within the Zionist paradigm of knowledge, not in order to overturn it, deconstruct it, or reinvent it, but merely to readjust it in line with the changing socio-political climate.

One of the protagonists of the school textbook debate, Daniel Bar-Tal, a psychologist specializing in matters relating to collective memory and conflict resolution, captured the crucial notion of adjustment which characterizes the continuous evolution of identity and the struggle over identity. He wrote:

> There is a widely accepted agreement that reconciliation, as part of a peace making process, requires a new common outlook of the past … Acknowledgement of the past implies at least recognition that there are two equally valid narratives, which describe the course of the conflict. Reconciliation does not require a complete change of societal beliefs of collective memories, but their modification.[4]

This passage explains why history textbooks as a source of collective memory are considered so crucial in the battle between post-Zionism and neo-Zionism. As Bar-Tal noted, a modified historical narrative, and the acknowledgment of the validity of the narrative of the 'Other', accompany a peace making process.[5] For Israel, this process was premised on territorial compromise. For the core of neo-Zionist groups, a compromise over land is unacceptable – whether for ideological reasons based on religion or nationalism (or both), or for practical reasons such as maintaining the security and defence of the Israeli state. The second *Intifada* strengthened this position with the reconfirmation of the 'there is no partner for peace' discourse. Yet the words written by Bar-Tal also reiterate a central theoretical claim made by this work – that in most cases national identity is subject to slow and subtle evolution rather than radical overhaul.

On a theoretical level the findings of this study confirm that common collective identity is subject to constant flux and redefinition. However, this redefinition, most likely to occur after a political junctures/historiographical disjuncture, does not necessarily constitute a complete deconstruction of national identity. Indeed, it appears that such claims or expectations of radical disjuncture are used as tools by those engaged in the debate, to emphasize the lines of confrontation and further their own relevance to it.

The Oslo process created a disjuncture that resulted in subtle adjustments to identity rather than the predicted existential crisis. Political junctures/historiographical

disjunctures carry the seeds for potential change within them, but, if unaccompanied by structural adjustments, these will not translate into radical overhaul. Identity is a matter of constant redefinition – a process that is never complete and never closes identity off from further change because the social and political *habitus* are also in constant flux.

This study illustrated that an important facet of national identity is its ability to hold onto old definitions in the face of attacks from both within and outside the nation's defined boundaries. Neo-Zionism is a potent illustration of this – more successful in its appeal than post-Zionism because it reached within existing definitions of Israeli identity and sought to reconstruct them in light of the challenges posed by the Oslo peace process, whereas post-Zionism attempted to deconstruct these definitions completely.

In an article in *The Journal of Palestine Studies* published in 2005,[6] Joel Beinin argued that the exclusion of Arab sources and voices from Israeli revisionist history resulted in New History's failure to break free from the parameters of the hegemonic Zionist historical narrative. This study, however, offered a different reason for this failure by providing deeper personal analysis of the protagonists in the New History, post-Zionist, and neo-Zionist debate. It illustrated that the overlap between neo-Zionism on the political right and Labour Zionism on the political left is greater than previously imagined and, finally, it contended that the attraction of neo-Zionism in light of the second *Intifada* and the failure of Oslo should not be underestimated.

Neo-Zionism was traditionally defined in terms of ethno-religious ideology. This work sought to broaden this definition by revealing neo-Zionism's strong neo-conservative tendencies, and hence explain its increasing attraction in a post-Oslo Israel, to a mainstream, non-ideologically motivated audience. This work argued that mainstream society is bound more strongly to traditional, or hegemonic Labour, Zionism's security paradigm legacy, and to an identity formed on the cusp of the distinction between the hostile 'Other' and the national 'Self' than to certain strains of neo-Zionism's ethno-religious ideology and the desire to deepen expressions of Jewish identity.

Struggles over identity and discourse in post-second *Intifada* Israel

This work sought to contribute to the existing debate regarding identity in Israel. It has done so by separating two intellectual movements that have been erroneously linked together – New History and post-Zionism. By approaching the New Historians through a personalized perspective, their motivations, aims, and political views have been demystified. New History no longer appears to be an emancipatory movement, a post- or anti-Zionist movement, or a coherent or unified movement.

The emergence of the New Historians can be considered in part as a convergence of interests and events. It is not merely, as suggests the explanation most commonly offered, the result of opening archives or a generational changeover

within Israeli academia. The New Historians did not begin their academic journeys as political radicals out to debunk the national myths of Israel. This work has shown that New History began as a truly individual experience or, rather, the convergence of the experiences of individuals. It became something whose sum was greater than its parts. It became associated with a movement of potential and radical change. The interesting point to note is that this in turn affected the protagonists. This book has shown that their paths were by no means fixed on one political orbit, and that they have all shown radical growth and change as the political reality around them changed and as their understandings of the historical and political past changed during the course of their research.

The consideration of New History as a bloc phenomenon worked in the favour of the New Historians in the beginning because as a group they gained media attention and even political attention. Yet this was misleading because their symbolic representation of a different future was conflated. That is not to say that history's role in present day politics is conflated. Indeed, it can be argued that history's relevance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is no less important. Merely, it is to argue that the significance attached to the emergence of New History in regard to predicating a shift in identity was largely symbolic rather than structural.

When New History is understood as a precursor to post-Zionism rather than a harbinger of a post-Zionist age, the political deadlock of the past few years is placed within a more understandable context. Neither familiar patterns of identity nor politics changed with Oslo. The increasing appeal of neo-Zionism is also rendered explicable. This work, by presenting a number of neo-Zionist examples, illustrated the movement's diversity, both ideologically and in terms of its target audience. Neo-Zionism is not a 'movement' confined to the religious right in Israel. It is described, under duress, in this study as a movement because it is better explained as an amalgamation of political interests supported by differing ideologies. Its constituency lies both within Israel and outside Israel's borders. It tries to appeal to both Jews and non-Jews in its attempt to achieve the political goals that unify it as a movement.

Understanding neo-Zionism thus explains its popularity amongst different groups of the population. Benny Morris' current political position falls within the broad confines of neo-Zionism, although he would describe himself as a secular Labour Zionist. Yet, his fears and concerns play into, and can be allayed by, forms of neo-Zionism and, thus, this book argues that the lines between the hegemonic discourse of Labour Zionism and forms of neo-Zionism are increasingly blurred in a post-second *Intifada* Israel.

Epilogue: Israel's 'third way'?

In the introduction to this study several trends in the literature relating to the configuration of identity and nationalism in Israel were mentioned. In short, these trends either predicted no change to the 'core' of Israeli identity and its foundations,[7] or argued that the peace process had not changed society, politics, or culture sufficiently to cause significant change. This work acknowledged, on

the one hand, that structural change to Israel's political patterns were yet to occur, but, on the other hand, also acknowledged that political circumstances had not remained stagnant in the period between when the Declaration of Principles was signed and when the second *Intifada* erupted.

However, rather than arguing that society as a whole shifted to the 'right' of the political spectrum, this work found that political circumstances actually deepened the link between the Labour Zionist left and the right. It highlighted the commonalities between Labour Zionism and neo-Zionism, and the contradictions between Labour Zionism and post-Zionism. In all, it predicted a possible 'third way' – which indicates a convergence of neo-Zionist and Labour Zionist interests, related not only to territory and military strategy, but to the future of identity in Israel as well.

Because this work covered New History, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism, constraints of space made it impossible to explore the potentials of neo-Zionism as deeply as it deserves. With this caveat in mind a postscript may be added to cover, in some brevity, the developments in Israeli society, politics, and identity in the years since the beginning of the *Intifada* and Ariel Sharon's accession to the premiership. Sharon was initially concerned with restoring Israeli security and securing a military defeat against the Palestinian uprising. However, the longer the *Intifada* continued and the more distant the political juncture of Oslo and its accompanying discourse grew, the more the traditional Labour Zionist discourse was reinforced.

A consolidation of erstwhile Labour Zionism and neo-Zionism emerged, emphasising Israeli security, and, increasingly, as an essential synthesis of the various strands of discourse and identity politics that asserted the need to maintain the demographic principle of a Jewish majority in the territory controlled by Israel. The Palestinians as the 'Other' were no longer considered an immediate existential threat, but as a latent existential threat to Israeli society and identity.

An answer to the Israeli quagmire was provided by the doyen of Israeli security and national identity. As the ultimate representative of the emergence of a consolidated discourse meshing traditional Labour Zionism and post-Zionism, Ariel Sharon proposed a strategy of separation and of disengagement. One element of this policy, which was embraced and supported by those in the centre, those on the right (except the far-right, which still continued to dream its vision of national-religious domination in all of *Eretz Yisrael* and grew increasingly isolated – as also reflected in electoral results), and many of those on the left (except the ever-decreasing, both in size and political importance, far-left) was the now-literal construction of the Iron Wall which would separate Israel from the Palestinians.

This Iron Wall would separate Israel and a belt of desired territory, and would encompass a significant proportion of 'mainstream' settlers and settlements ('major population centres' as they came to be known, in contrast to ideological settlements deep in the West Bank, or their newest and most radical outgrowth, the 'outposts'). The Israeli wall in the West Bank was perhaps the most visible and literal sign of the merger of traditional Labour Zionism and neo-Zionism. In the early years of the state, the right and left of the political spectrum in Israel had

differed only in terms of strategies not on end goals, as this book has proposed. Now, Israel's renewed support of an Iron Wall strategy emerged from the left (from amongst advocates such as Haim Ramon[8]) but was embraced by the new centre and the right after the second *Intifada*.

Those on the left who favoured the wall used various elements that had been consolidated by traditional Labour Zionist discourse to contend that physical separation from the Palestinians would provide a panacea for Israeli security, and demographic and humanistic concerns. The wall would end Israeli territorial aspirations over most of the West Bank and would signal Israel's *de facto* renunciation of a significant number of settlements (which lay beyond the wall and were thus earmarked for evacuation, sooner or later).

The second major element of this policy was a plan developed by Ariel Sharon and which drew significant criticism from the far-left as well as the far-right. At the same time, and more than any other practical initiative to bolster the unity of Israeli identity, it represented a perfect consolidation of traditional Labour Zionism with neo-Zionist elements in a way that even managed to satisfy those post-Zionists who were primarily concerned with ending Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories and people. The peace process had indeed become a largely symbolic, but in fact meaningless, enterprise. Israeli identity gravitated inwards, again rallying itself around antagonism towards the hostile 'Other', with intense debates taking place *within* the predominant identity.

Disengagement, which Ariel Sharon first proposed in late 2003, was initially not accepted during a referendum voted on by the *Likud* party rank and file in May 2004. After minor refinement, disengagement was pushed through despite an unwilling party and an unwilling coalition, thus laying the ground for a major convergence of political interests. Arguably in this case Sharon read the Israeli public more astutely than any other politician; Sharon meshed the restoration of the traditional Labour Zionist discursive with a consolidation of the emergence and victory of neo-Zionist doctrine. In other words, he satiated the appetite of a public from all political leanings which was tired of the Palestinians and wanted the problem to literally disappear – not through all out war which would see Israeli society paying a heavy cost, nor through peace with the Palestinians, whom Israeli society no longer trusted. Sharon was an astute strategist and recognized that the political strategy of disengagement combined with the merged discourse of traditional Labour Zionism and security conscious neo-Zionism, which he himself helped to shape, now appealed to large segments of Israeli society. Israel would remain security-conscious, strong, expansionist, Jewish, and would continue to define itself in opposition to the Palestinians.

In the summer of 2005, Sharon's Disengagement Plan was implemented in practice, leading to an intense debate over the future of Israeli society and the bonds of Israeli identity. Israeli Jews were battling against Israeli Jews as settlers fought with Israeli policemen, and the settlers likened their forced removals from selected outposts to Nazi tactics during the Holocaust. Israeli society was not so much concerned with its redefinition in the face of peace with the Palestinians as with the question of the limits of pluralism within the Jewish polity. To what

degree could settler civil disobedience be tolerated, and to what lengths should Israeli law enforcement go in order to evict them? The new hegemonic discourse, which occluded the concerns of both the traditional left (security and limited territorial compromise to protect the integrity of Israel) and the traditional right (security and maximum territorial gain to protect the integrity of Israel) could not be imposed on those resisting it. There were those on the far left who argued that disengagement was not a long-term solution and that only a real peace process and territorial compromise with the Palestinians would work. On the far right, representatives of the neo-Zionist national-religious strain – the Hilltop youth – physically and violently resisted the government to the extent that there were major fears that Sharon would suffer a fate similar to that of Yitzhak Rabin.

The political juncture of Disengagement, much like its predecessors, suggested a major historical rupture and subsequent radical rupture of Israeli identity and politics. It is too soon to assess whether Disengagement caused a historiographical disjuncture – it is beyond the scope of this book to consider the intellectual and academic reactions to the event. However, it reinforces the theory developed in this book, that seeming 'political ruptures' should be analytically approached as political junctures. In this case, the political juncture created the space for both a more radical discourse from the far-left and far-right, but also exposed the overlap between the boundaries of the Zionist left and right under the umbrella of hegemonic Labour Zionism. In other words, by the middle of the decade, the hegemonic discourse and predominant strand of collective Israeli self-definition of Labour Zionism incorporated some elements of neo-Zionism that had posed a meaningful challenge to it in the early 2000s.

The most potent expression of the new (but in many ways, old) hegemony was the recalibration of the Israeli political landscape. Labour, which had been challenged for control of the hegemonic discourse by, most notably, neo-Zionism, had become an anachronism. The *Likud* moved increasingly in the direction of the more radical side of neo-Zionism. A new hegemonic party emerged in *Kadima*,[9] a party founded by Ariel Sharon on the basis of Disengagement which comprised a centrist consolidation of left and right. The most pragmatic politicians from the *Likud*, as well as the more progressive (in the sense of willing to adapt in discourse and identity, not in the old leftist sense of progressive) Labour party representatives, joined Sharon, who then suffered a major stroke in December 2005.

The degree to which his new party represented the hegemonic tendency in Israeli society, discourse, and identity could be seen in the elections held in the aftermath of his incapacitation. Even without its leader, the party won an overwhelming victory with the vision of a continuation of the disengagement principle, or 'convergence' (*hitkansut*), as it was termed by prime ministerial candidate Ehud Olmert.

The new party continued on the path set by the Zionist/neo-Zionist merger. Prime Minister Olmert enjoyed cordial and close ties with the United States. *Kadima's* success in controlling not only the hegemonic discourse, but also its accompanying structures of power, buoyed and strengthened neo-Zionism's proximity to the global (but particularly, American) phenomenon of neo-conservatism.[10]

Exactly as this book initially predicted in its Chapter 6, neo-Zionism indeed manifested its enormous potential to grow into a real and guiding force in Israeli politics and culture. Neo-Zionism had the resources and ideological diversity/political unity to attract broader support than just the religious right. At the same time, while its potential for success lay in combining the interests of religious and secular Jews, cultural and non-cultural Jews, and Israeli and diaspora Jews, as well as Jews and non-Jews, its practical success came through its capture of the hegemonic foundations of Labour Zionism. As neo-Zionism and Labour Zionism moved towards each other, a third force was born that was so powerful that it reshaped not just Israeli discourse and society, but also the political landscape.

As was predictable, however, the merger of neo-Zionism with traditional Labour Zionism turned out to be a significant obstacle to the establishment of a Palestinian state, and to the broadening of Israeli identity to include its non-Jewish citizens. Thus, the political juncture/historical disjuncture in Israel's history caused by the Oslo process may well have provided the space for a deepened, strengthened, and more complex counter-identity to emerge from the right, as well as from the left, to challenge Labour Zionism's discursive and practical hegemony. With the end of the Oslo process, the new *Intifada*, and disengagement, the limits of discursive and self-definitional adjustment of Israeli society also became clear; the hegemonic discourse that prevailed and consolidated itself was one that could not allow for peace and coexistence beyond a coexistence that still favoured Israel's Jewish majority and its imposition of territorial concessions on Palestinian society.

Thus, this study is vindicated by its closing argument that the potential of the neo-Zionist challenge far exceeded that of the post-Zionism. Its appeal to the Israeli public was significantly broader and more familiar in terms of its overlap with hegemonic Labour Zionist security discourse. This reinforces the contention of this work that collective identity, specifically in Israel, adjusted more slowly and gradually than most observers had predicted in the period from the late 1980s to the early 2000s.

At the same time, it is now too early to tell what implications yet another undoubtedly major political juncture/historiographical disjuncture will have: the Second Lebanon War of 2006. The war caught Israeli politicians and Israeli society by surprise, and had the potential to shake both Israeli collective identity and the Israeli polity far more than any other discursive juncture since, perhaps, the first Lebanon War. In its wake, a major investigation began, with the creation of the so-called Winograd Committee.

The Second Lebanon War could well have heralded the end of the new neo-Zionist ascendance evident through the success of *Kadima*. At the time that this book goes to print, it is too early to tell decisively whether any adjustment of Israeli collective identity will ultimately favour the left and thus stimulate a revival of post-Zionism, or whether it will favour the right, thus resulting in neo-Zionism further capturing the Israeli political centre. Currently, it would seem that the Second Lebanon War consolidated the shift to the right and strengthened neo-Zionism rather than weakening it. Unlike during and after the First Lebanon War,

Israeli society overwhelmingly supported the principle of defeating *Hizbullah* in Lebanon during the Second War. Massive Lebanese civilian casualties did not stimulate the same degree of introspection within Israel as had the first War. What is clear, however, is that Israel's hegemonic identity and discourse will almost certainly continue to adjust itself without losing any of its fundamental principles and elements. Israeli identity, whilst exposed to major challenges and questions, thus remains not in crisis, as many had claimed in the late 1980s and early 1990s and again in the 2000s, but continues to thrive and develop, strongly grounded in elements of Labour Zionism and neo-Zionism. The essential pillars of Israeli identity remain – ahead of all other considerations – Jewishness (the boundaries of which remain undefined), security, and the hegemonic Labour Zionist conception of the Jewish State.

List of Interviews

Interviewees are listed in the same order in which their interviews are referred to in the text.

Avi Shlaim, Professor of International Relations, St Antony's College, Oxford, Oxford, 20 March 2004.

Teddy Katz, Israel, telephone interview, 15 March 2004.

Nava Segen, Director of the Israeli Curriculum Centre, Ministry of Education and Culture, Jerusalem, 11 March 2004.

Ilan Pappe, Senior Lecturer of Political Science at Haifa University and the Academic Director of the Research Institute for Peace at Givat Haviva, Haifa, 9 March 2004.

Yoav Gelber, Associate Professor, Land of Israel Studies, Haifa University, Haifa, 29 February 2004.

Yitzhak Klein, Lecturer in Political Science and International Affairs at the International School of Management, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 28 January 2004.

Shlomo Sharan, Professor Emeritus in Educational and Organizational Psychology at the School of Education (retired), Tel Aviv University, telephone interview, 26 February 2004.

Ze'ev Sternhell, Leon Blum Professor of Political Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.

Ron Breiman, Chairman of Professors for a Strong Israel, Tel Aviv, 17 February 2004.

Benny Morris, Professor of History, Ben Gurion University, Jerusalem 17 February 2004.

Moshe Lissak, Professor of Sociology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.

Moshe Zimmerman, Professor of German History, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.

Michael Oren, Senior Fellow at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem, Jerusalem 16 February 2004.

Israel Bar-Tal, Professor in Department of the History of the Jewish People, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 16 March 2004.

Anita Shapira, Professor of History, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, 14 March 2004.

Uri Ram, Head of Department of Sociology, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.

Gerald Steinberg, Associate Professor, Department of Political Studies & Director of the Interdisciplinary Program on Conflict Management and Negotiation, Bar Ilan University, Jerusalem, 11 February 2004.

Oren Yiftachel, Head of Department of Geography, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Tel Aviv, 10 March 2004.

S. N. Eisenstadt, Head and Founder of Department of Sociology (retired), Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 9 February 2004.

Michael Heyd, Professor of Jewish History, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 9 February 2004.

Shlomo Swirski, Director for Budget Analysis, ADVA Centre, Tel Aviv, 5 February 2004.

Eyal Naveh, Professor in Department of History, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, 4 February 2004.

Daniel Bar-Tal, Professor of Psychology at Tel Aviv University and co-editor of the *Palestine-Israel Journal*, Tel Aviv, 2 February 2004.

Adi Ophir, Professor in Faculty of Humanities, Cohen Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas, Tel Aviv, 1 February 2004.

Michael Shalev, Senior Lecturer in Sociology and Political Science, Hebrew University, Tel Aviv, 27 January 2004.

Yohanan Manor (Dr), Vice-Chairman for the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP), Jerusalem, 4 July 2001.

Edy Kaufman (Dr), Research Associate; Director, Truman Institute, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 4 July 2001.

Gershon Baskin (Dr), Israeli Director of IPCRI (Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information), Jerusalem, 3 July 2001.

Yair Hirschfeld (Dr), Founder of the Economic Co-operation Foundation (ECF), telephone interview, 2 July 2001.

Shlomo Ben-Ami, Professor of Spanish History, MK Labour, Jerusalem, 2 July 2001.

Naomi Chazan, MK Yachad, Professor of Political Science, Jerusalem, 26 June 2001.

Notes

1 Introducing a New Israel?

1 Doyle, M. W., 'War-Making and Peace-Making: The United Nations' Post-Cold War Record', in Crocker, C., Hampson, F. O. and Aall, P. (eds) *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001, p. 544.

2 These difficulties included economic and socio-political dimensions as well as questions of closures and settlements. On the former, see Bouillon, M. E., *The Peace Business: Money and Power in the Palestine-Israel Conflict*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2004; on the socio-political conditions created in the occupied Palestinian territory, see Parker, C., *Resignation or Revolt? Socio-Political Development and the Challenges of Peace in Palestine,* London: I.B. Tauris, 1999; see the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) monthly humanitarian monitoring reports, available at http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/opt; and UN reports on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; the Foundation for Middle East Peace's bi-monthly Settlement Reports at www.fmep.org; on the effects of closure, see, for example, Farsakh, L., 'Under Siege: Closure, Separation and the Palestinian Economy', *Middle East Report*, Winter 2000, no. 217.

3 See Peri, Y. (ed.), *The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin*, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2000; Karpin, M. and Friedman, I., *Murder in the Name of God: The Plot to Kill Yitzhak Rabin*, London: Granta Books, 1999; Sprinzak, E., *Brother Against Brother: Violence and Extremism in Israeli Politics from Altalena to Rabin Assassination*, New York: Free Press, 1999.

4 See Ehrlich, A., 'Israel: Conflict, War and Social Change', in Creighton C. and Shaw, M. (eds) *The Sociology of War and Peace*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1987; Shafir, G., *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996.

5 Pre-state Zionist community in Israel before 1948.

6 Bar-Joseph, U., 'Towards a Paradigm Shift in Israel's National Security Conception', in Karsh, E. (ed.) *Israel: The First Hundred Years, Volume II – From War to Peace*, London: Frank Cass, 2000.

7 See Cohen, S. A., 'Military Service in Israel: No Longer a Cohesive Force?' *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, 1997, vol. 39, nos. 1–2, pp. 5–23; Linn, R., 'Patterns of Crisis Among Israeli Reserve Soldiers', *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, 1997, vol. 39, nos. 1–2, pp. 24–45.

8 Barzilai, G., 'Territory, State and Power: The 1992 Election', in Karsh, E. and Mahler, G. (eds) *Israel at the Crossroads,* London: British Academic Press, 1994, pp. 137–49.

9 See Peres, S., *The New Middle East*, New York: Holt, 1993; Pasternak, R. and Tzidkiahu, S. (eds) *A New Era or Loss of Way: Israelis Speak of Peace* [Hebrew], Tel Aviv: Eitab Press, 1994; Gertz, N. and Neuberger, B. (eds) *War and Peace* [Hebrew], Tel Aviv: Open University Press, 1996, Shafir, G. and Peled, Y., *The New Israel: Peacemaking and Liberalisation*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000.

10 Kelman, H. C., 'Israel in Transition from Zionism to Post-Zionism', *Annals of the American Academy of Political & Social Science (Annals AAPSS),* January 1998, no. 555, 46–61.

11 Smooha, S., 'The Implications of the Transition to Peace for Israeli Society', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (Annals AAPSS)*, January 1998, vol. 555, pp. 26–45, p. 31.

12 Ratz-Krakotzkin, A., 'A Peace without Arabs: The Discourse of Peace and the Limits of Israeli Consciousness', in Giacaman, G. (ed.) *After Oslo; New Realities, Old Problems*, London: Pluto Press, 1998, p. 75.

13 In brief, Jabotinsky argued that the 'Iron Wall' strategy would transform Arab rejection of Israel and Zionism into a basic acceptance of Zionism's minimum requirement (a Jewish state in Palestine). Lustick notes that the stages of the strategy are as follows: construction of the iron wall, defence of the wall, opponents of the wall suffer costly defeat and this shifts power to moderate parties willing to negotiate, defenders of the wall perceive this power shift and consequently shift their own policies towards negotiation and compromise, negotiations lead to a settlement based on collective rights. However, he argues that though Israel eventually reached the fifth stage, it failed to calculate the increased Zionist expectations due to Israel's military successes. Thus a resolution based on a minimum requirement for the state was no longer acceptable, and the hope of a resolution based on negotiation and collective rights became untenable. See Lustick, I., 'To Build and To Be Built By: Israel and the Hidden logic of the Iron Wall', *Israel Studies*, 2000, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 196–223. Also see Shlaim, A., *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, London: Penguin Press, 2001.

14 Lustick, 'To Build and To Be Built By', p. 197.

15 Weissbrod, L., 'Israeli Identity in Transition', *Israel Affairs*, Spring/Summer 1997, nos. 3–4, pp. 47–65.

16 See Jones, C. and Murphy, E., *Israel: Challenges to Identity, Democracy and the State*, London: Routledge, 2002.

17 See Cohen, E., 'Israel as a Post-Zionist Society', *Israel Affairs*, Spring 1995, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 203–14; Elazar, D. J. and Sandler, S., 'The Battle Over Jewishness and Zionism in the Post Modern Era', *Israel Affairs*, Autumn 1997, vol. 4, no. 1; Michels, J., 'National Vision and the Negotiation of Narratives: The Oslo Agreement', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Autumn 1994, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 28–39. Ghada Karmi argues that the failure of the peace process results from its inability to institute cultural reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. The reason for the failure of cultural reconciliation is the claim to the land which is embedded in both cultures. See Karmi, G., 'Reconciliation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict', *Mediterranean Politics*, Autumn 1999, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 104–14.

18 Weissbrod, 'Israeli Identity in Transition', p. 62.

19 *Haredi* (literally 'one who trembles in awe of God') Judaism is the most theologically conservative form of the religion. *Haredi* Jews originally rejected Zionism, but managed to secure concessions from Ben Gurion in the pre-state period and began participating in the political process after 1977.

20 See Aronoff, M. J. and Atlas, P. M., 'The Peace Process and Competing Challenges to the Dominant Zionist Discourse', in Peleg, I. (ed.) *The Middle East Peace Process: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1998.

21 Waxman, D., *The Pursuit of Peace and the Crisis of Israeli Identity: Defending/Defining the Nation*, New York: Palgrave, 2006.

22 Ophir, A., 'The Identity of the Victims and the Victims of Identity: A Critique of Zionist Ideology for a Post-Zionist Age', in Silberstein L. J. (ed.) *Mapping Jewish Identities*, New York: New York University Press, 2000.
23 Ratz-Krakotzkin, A., 'Historical Consciousness and Historical Responsibility', in Weitz, Y. (ed.) *Between Vision and Revision: One Hundred Years of Zionist Historiography* [Hebrew], Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar, 1997; 'Exile in the Midst of Sovereignty: A Critique of 'Shelilat HaGalut' in Israeli Culture I' [Hebrew], *Theory and Criticism*, Fall 1993, no. 4, pp. 23–55; 'Exile in the Midst of Sovereignty: A Critique of 'Shelilat HaGalut' in Israeli Culture II' [Hebrew], *Theory and Criticism*, Fall 1994, no. 5, pp. 113–32; Silberstein, L. J. (ed.) *Post Zionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture*, New York: Routledge, 1999; Ehrlich, A., 'Zionism, Anti-Zionism, Post-Zionism', in Nimni, E. (ed.) *The Challenge of Post-Zionism: Alternatives to Israeli Fundamentalist Politics*, London: Zed Books, 2003, pp. 63–97.
24 Ophir, 'The Identity of the Victims', in Silberstein (ed.), *Mapping Jewish Identities*, p. 182.
25 Ibid. Ophir writes: 'The new historians thus exemplify a basic truth about *being* a victim. Unlike *becoming* a victim, which may be a result of contingent, ephemeral forces, being a victim means taking, holding to, or being stuck in a victim position, which is always also an effect of a certain cultural field. The position of victim is a cultural construct. It is produced, distributed, acquired, purchased, and sometimes even offered for free.' On the concept of the 'Jew as eternal victim' and its instrumentality in the constitution of Israeli Jewish identity, see also Rose, J., *The Myths of Zionism*, London: Pluto Press, 2004, and Pappe, I., 'Fear, Victimhood, Self and Other', *MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, May 2001, vol. 1, pp. 4–14.
26 Ram, U., 'Between Neo-Zionism and Post Zionism', [Hebrew], *Gesher*, Winter 1996, no. 132.
27 Ram, U., 'From Nation State to Nation – State', in Nimni (ed.) *The Challenge of Post-Zionism*, p. 23.
28 Ibid., p 24.
29 Ehrlich, 'Zionism, Anti-Zionism, Post-Zionism', in Nimni (ed.) *The Challenge of Post-Zionism*, p. 92.
30 Smooha, 'The Implications of the Transition'.
31 Ehrlich, 'Zionism, Anti-Zionism, Post Zionism,' in Nimni (ed.), *The Challenge of Post-Zionism*, p. 82.
32 Pappe, I., 'The Square Circle: The Struggle for Survival of Traditional Zionism', in Nimni (ed.), *The Challenge of Post-Zionism,* p. 44.
33 Ram, 'From Nation State to Nation', in Nimni (ed.), *The Challenge of Post-Zionism*, p. 27.
34 Karsh, E., *Fabricating Israeli History: The New Historians*, London: Frank Cass, 2000; Shapira, A. and Penslar, D. J. (eds) *Israeli Historical Revisionism: From Left to Right,* London: Frank Cass, 2001; Silberstein, L., *The Post-Zionist Debates*.
35 For example, see Gelber, Y., *Palestine 1948: War, Escape and the Emergence of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2001; Gelber, Y., *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations, 1921–48,* London: Frank Cass, 1997; Heller, J., *The Birth of Israel, 1945–1949; Ben Gurion and His Critics*, Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000; Shapira, A., *Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881–1948*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992; Silberstein, L. J., *New Perspectives on Israeli History: The Early Years of the State*, New York: New York University Press, 1991. Two special journal issues were dedicated to various aspects of the historiographical debate and the role of academics and social scientists, with many of the historians who will be the focus of Chapter 4 of this book, contributing papers. See *Israel Studies Special Issue: Memory and Identity in Israel: New Directions,* Summer 2002, vol. 7, no. 2, and *Journal of Israeli History, Politics, Society and Culture*, Summer/Autumn 2001, vol. 20, nos. 2–3.

36 Karsh, *Fabricating Israeli History*.
37 Ottolenghi, E., 'Paradise Lost: A Review of Laurence Silberstein's "The Post-Zionist Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israel Culture"', *Israel Studies*, Summer 2003, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 139–50.

2 Power, Knowledge, and the Nation

1 Smith, A. D., *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 214.
2 Smith, A. D., *National Identity*, London: Penguin, 1991, p. 162.
3 Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, p. 216.
4 Foucault, M., *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London: Tavistock Publications, 1970, p. xiv.
5 A seminal historical work adhering to this narrative charting the development of 'classical' Zionism is Vital, D., *A People Apart: The Jews in Europe, 1789–1939*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. He hinges his study on the twin foundations of the Zionist narrative – exile and suffering. This approach has been refuted by other historical accounts of Jewish life, including the work of Baron, S. *et al*., *The Economic History of The Jews*, Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1975; Solo Baron's comprehensive survey of Jewish life – *A Social and Religious History of the Jews, Vols.1–18*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1952; Biale, D., *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History*, New York: Schoken Books, 1986; Zerubavel, Y., *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of the Israeli National Tradition*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995; Almog, S., *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness*, Friedman, Ina (trans.), New York: St Martins Press, 1987.
6 Anderson, B., *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1991, p. 6.
7 Cox, R. W., 'Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method', in Gill, S. (ed.) *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 51.
8 Simon, R., *Gramsci's Political Thought: an Introduction*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1991, p. 22.
9 For the purpose of this book, 1897, which saw the first World Zionist Congress convened in Basle, Switzerland by Theodor Herzl, will be used to define the first significant act of the Zionist Movement. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, Zionist thinkers of prominence had already laid the ideological foundations of the political Zionist movement as spearheaded by Herzl. For a discussion on Zionism's transformation of Jewish identity see Lotan, Y., 'Commentary: Israel at 50 – Zionism's Cultural Revolution', *Race & Class: A Journal for Black and Third World Liberation*, July/September 1998, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 71–77.
10 The term *Yishuv* literally means 'settlement' and refers to the Jewish immigrant population in Palestine between 1917 and 1948 until the establishment of the State of Israel and its declaration of independence.
11 Although Gramsci's concept of hegemony is based on 'classes' in Marxist terms (in other words, economic terms), the Weberian notion of a social class is being used here. However, Gershon Shafir does indeed consider the Zionist hegemonic class in economic terms in his book: Shafir, G., *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996.
12 Antonio Gramsci, cited from Simon, R., *Gramsci's Political Thought*, p. 349.
13 See Chapter 3 for a discussion of Herzl's position.
14 Kedourie, E., *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971, p. 27.
15 Ibid., p. 93.

16 See Shafir, *Land, Labor and the Origins*, p. 7. Today there are several critical texts that examine the Zionist movement through an economic-based theoretical framework. Although this is not the approach of this work to understanding Israeli identity, it provides an alternative understanding that deserves consideration. Also see Shalev, M., *Labour and the Political Economy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992; Nitzan, J. and Bichler, S., *The Global Political Economy of Israel*, London: Pluto Press, 2002, especially Chapter 3, 'The History of Israel's Power Structure'.
17 Hall, S., 'Who Needs Identity?' in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds) *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London: Sage, 1996, pp. 2–3. For a fascinating anthropological account of modern Israeli society, see Dominguez, V. R., *People as Subject, People as Object: Selfhood and People-hood in Contemporary Israel*, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.
18 Hall, 'Who Needs Identity?', p. 3.
19 Ibid.
20 Bourdieu, P., *The Logic of Practice*, Richard Nice (trans.), Cambridge: Polity, 1990, p. 52.
21 Bourdieu, P., *Homo Academicus*, Peter Collier (trans.), Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988, p. 63.
22 For a short discussion of Foucault's theory of power/knowledge and its role in implementing societal control and discipline see Philip, M., 'Michel Foucault', in Skinner, Q. (ed.) *Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985; also see Rabionow, P. (ed.), *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, London: Penguin Books, 1991.
23 Foucault, M., 'Truth and Power', in Cahoone, L. (ed.) *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology*, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996, p. 379.
24 Said, E. W., *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London: Penguin Books, 1995, p. 10. In this fascinating but methodologically flawed work Said asks, 'What other sorts of intellectual, aesthetic, scholarly, and cultural energies went into the making of an imperialist tradition … how did philology, lexicography, history, biology political and economic theory, novel-writing, and lyric poetry come to the service of Orientalism', in order to establish that an Orientalist discourse existed over many centuries, influencing conceptions of the Orient in the Western world. More importantly, Said argued that this conception had an immense impact on the real and lived life of the Orient. This work acknowledges the importance of Said's theoretical approach, but does not seek to make the same sweeping claims as 'Orientalism' in regard to Zionist discourse.
25 Mills, C. W. and Gerth, H. H. (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, London: Routledge, 1997, p. 176. Also see Shils, E., 'The Intellectuals in the Political Developments of New States', *World Politics*, April 1960, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 329–68.
26 Cited from Beetham, D., *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*, Cambridge: Polity, 1992, p. 126.
27 This is not to suggest that it was the power of historical narrative alone that resulted in arguably one of the most successful nationalist projects of state-building of the twentieth century. Other contributing factors will be further discussed in Chapter 3.
28 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 54.
29 *Ashkenazim* refers to the Jews of European origin: the founders of Zionism and the hegemonic ethnic group in Israel. Politically their hegemony came to be challenged by the *Sephardim* – a general term commonly used to refer to Jews who immigrated to Israel from Arab countries, mainly Morocco and Iraq. It is often used interchangeably with the term *Mizrahim*, a term that refers to Jews who immigrated from Asia and Africa. They were initially recruited as a proletariat, yet later became politically dominant thus demonstrating that the concept of hegemony implies a potential for change. Yet, to date, the *Mizrahim* have not, as a group, challenged the hegemony of the Zionist discourse.

30 See Fanon, F., *Black Skins, White Masks*, Markmann, C. (trans.), St. Albans: Paladin Press, 1970.
31 Interestingly, this response can be linked to the theory of the emergence of 'marginal men' mentioned previously.
32 In 'The Wretched of the Earth' Fanon elaborated on the subjugation of the culture of the colonized, drawing on a theme especially relevant for this thesis: that of history. Fanon prescribed the 'claiming back' of history as being pivotal in the struggle against colonialism. He wrote: 'Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people and distorts, disfigures and destroys it.' Fanon, F., 'The Wretched of the Earth', in Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. and Tiffin, H. (eds) *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, London: Routledge, 1995, p. 154.
33 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 15.
34 On the use of archaeology in the political conflict, see Glock, A., 'Cultural Bias in the Archaeology of Palestine', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 1995, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 48–59; Diaz-Andreu, M., 'Nationalism and Archaeology', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2001, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 429–40; Silberman, N. A., 'If I Forgot Three, O Jerusalem: Archaeology, Religious Commemoration and Nationalism In a Disputed City, 1801–2001', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2001, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 487–504.
35 Giddens, A., *The Constitution of Modern Life: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984, Introduction, p. xxviii.
36 For a comprehensive discussion of the role of Zionist myth-making in contributing to the national consciousness, see Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*.
37 It is important to note at this point that this is a feature in all new nation states, and Israel is by no means unique in its employment of 'history' as a legitimizing tool.
38 Avineri, S., *The Making of Modern Zionism – the Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1981, p. 13.
39 Cohen, E., 'Israel as a Post-Zionist Society', in Wistrich, R. and Ohana, D. (eds) *The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myths, Memory and Trauma*, London: Frank Cass, 1995, p. 206.
40 Ernest Renan, cited in Gellner, E., *Culture, Identity and Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 6.
41 The type of collective forgetting that Renan proposes in regards to the French nation was also crucial to the development of American national identity and the transition from the Old to the New World. 'Any excessive emphasis on linguistic lineages threatened to blur precisely that "memory of independence" which was so essential to retain.' Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 197.
42 Gellner, *Culture, Identity and Politics*, p. 17.
43 Kaviraj, S., 'The Imaginary Institution of India', in Chatterjee, P. and Pandey, G. (eds) *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 16.
44 Jenkins, K., *Rethinking History*, London: Routledge, 1991, p. 17.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Kaviraj, 'The Imaginary Institution of India', in Chatterjee and Pandey, *Subaltern Studies VII*, p. 4.
48 Jenkins, *Rethinking History*, p. 17.
49 Chatterjee, P., *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 6.
50 Pappe, I., 'Post-Zionist Critique on Israel and the Palestinians – Part I: The Academic Debate', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 1997, vol. 26, no. 2, p. 29.
51 Ibid.

52 The aim of this section is not to document the truth of this claim nor to describe it in exhaustive detail, but to use it as a theoretical basis for the examination of the production of knowledge about and representation of the 'self' in the state of Israel. Indeed the utility of such a methodological tool cannot be overstated when examining the historical narratives produced by members of new states where the process of state and nation-building, and more significantly for the purposes of this work, national identity formation, is at a crucial stage of crystallization.
53 Hall, S., 'The Work of Representation', in Hall, S. (ed.) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices,* London: Sage, 2001, p. 46.
54 Ibid., p. 44.
55 Foucault, 'Truth and Power', in Cahoone (ed.) *From Modernism to Postmodernism*, p. 379.
56 Chatterjee, *The Nation*, p. 6.
57 Kaviraj, 'The Imaginary Institution of India', in Chatterjee and Pandey (eds) *Subaltern Studies VII*, p. 18.
58 See Herzl, T., *The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question*, d'Avigdor, Sylvie (trans) London: Central Office of the Zionist Organisation, 1936.
59 Beilin, Y., *Israel: A Concise Political History*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1992, p. 143.
60 The impact of the Lebanon War on Zionist discourse will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, as will the 1977 election victory of the Likud party. This was also a significant juncture in Israeli history – not so much for peace, but because it the first successful challenge to *Ashkenazi* political hegemony.
61 Barnes, B., 'Thomas Kuhn', in Skinner, Q. (ed.) *The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 88. Kuhn himself writes, 'a paradigm is rarely an object for replication. Instead, like an accepted judicial decision in the common law, it is an object for further articulation and specification under new and more stringent conditions.' Kuhn, T. S., *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1970, p. 23.
62 Barnes, 'Thomas Kuhn', in Skinner (ed.) *The Return of Grand Theory*, p.89.
63 For further reading on the role of the intellectual and the academic in the political projects of the state, see Verdery, K., *National Ideology Under Socialism*, Berkeley, CA: Berkeley University Press, 1991; Konrad, G. and Szelenyi, I., *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, New York: Harcout Brice Jovanovich Press, 1979.
64 Silberstein, L. J., *The Postzionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture*, New York: Routledge, 1999, p. 7.
65 Ibid., p. 16.
66 See Ottolenghi, E., 'Paradise Lost: A review of Laurence Silberstein's "The Post Zionist Debates – Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture"', *Israel Studies*, Summer 2003, vol. 8, no. 2, p. 149. Ottolonghi argues that the existence of post-Zionism is proof that there is no 'dominant Zionist narrative, but rather many identities and ways to read, interpret and construct both the Jewish and Israeli past, which co-exist'.
67 Silberstein, *The Postzionism Debates*, p. 14.
68 The WZO was founded on 3 September 1897 when it was known as the Zionist Organization. It acted as the umbrella organization for the Zionist movement and its mandate was to build the infrastructure to support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. It changed its name in 1960 to the World Zionist Organization. Its membership was open to all Jews, from every country and every background and ideology. Each member secured the right to vote for delegates to the congress through the purchase of a 'Zionist shekel'. The financial aspect of the organization was managed by the Jewish Colonial Trust, established in 1899, and its programme of land acquisition in Palestine was managed by the Jewish National Fund which was founded in 1901. In 1971 the relationship between the Jewish Agency (JA) and the WZO was redefined in order to make their operations more efficient and to strengthen their ties to the Jewish state.

3 Triumphs, Territories, and Troublemakers

1 It is interesting to note however, that today most of these communities have accepted the European paradigm of Zionist history as a model for their own historical experiences. Academics who have challenged the legitimacy of applying this model to the *Mizrahi* experience argue that the acceptance of the community stems from a desire to participate in the historical narrative of the state on an equal footing with the Ashkenazim, rather than from an accurate reflection of their historical circumstances in their countries of origin. See Chapter 5 for the use of post-colonial theory in understanding the *Mizrahi* experience in Israel. Another group of Jews that the hegemonic Zionist narrative does not include is American Jewry. They differ from the *Mizrahim* in Israel because they have not themselves adopted this model as a framework for understanding their historical experience as American Jews.

2 A prejudice stemming from the Gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion on the Cross at the insistence of the Jewish leaders of the time. The most common of these was the 'Blood Libel' – the belief that Jews used the blood of Christian children in their religious sacrifices.

3 Though Western and Eastern European Jewry initially reacted differently to the Enlightenment, modernity, and the nascent nationalist paradigm, it can be argued that Jewish nationalism emerged in context to unique material and social conditions. It is significant that Eastern Jewry lacked even the opportunities for social advancement enjoyed by their Western counterparts. Living in stringent economic conditions, the first waves of ideologically motivated immigration to Palestine came from the confines of Eastern Europe. This confirms the view that, initially, the material conditions unique to the historical period of post-industrialization played an important role in giving nationalism the form it took. The nationalist movement was an outgrowth of the needs of a modern society – one with a fluid, mobile, and constantly changing mode of production. Industrial growth required widespread fluidity and patterned homogeneity of the work force, as well as individual mobility combined with cultural standardization. See Gellner, E., *Thought and Change*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1964. A blend of motivational elements highlighted by the conventional theories of nationalism – ethnic affiliations, economic stagnation, the germination of a national 'idea' from a new class of frustrated intellectual elites – formed the basis for the political Jewish presence in Palestine.

4 For a full account of the 'Dreyfus Affair' see Chapman, G., *The Dreyfus Trials*, London: Batsford, 1972; and Cahm, E., *The Dreyfus Affair in French Society and Politics*, London: Longman, 1996.

5 Herzl, T., *The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question*, d'Avigdor, Sylvie (trans.), London: Central Office of the Zionist Organisation, 1936, p. 27.

6 Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p. 26

7 Joseph Adler argues that Herzl's political project is rarely acknowledged for its contribution to European political and socio-economic thought. He sought to redress this balance in his work: Adler, J., *The Herzl Paradox: Political, Social and Economic Theories of a Realist*, New York: Hadrian Press, 1962. For more on Herzl's vision of political Zionism, see Cohen, I., *Theodor Herzl: Founder of Political Zionism*, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959.

8 Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p. 77.

9 Patai, R. (ed.), *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl, Vol. II*, Zohn, Harry (trans.), New York: Herzl Press, 1960, p. 19.

10 Kornberg, J., *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993, p. 9.

11 For further reading on the Zionist thinkers, see Fraenkel, J., *Dubnow, Herzl and Ahad Ha'Am*, London: Ararat, 1963; Zipperstein, S., *Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha'Am and the*

Origins of Zionism, London: Halban, 1993; Schulman, M., *Moses Hess: Prophet of Zionism*, New York: Yoseloff, 1963; Vital, D., *The Origins of Zionism*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.

12 Literally meaning 'lovers of Zion,' this movement advocated the revival of Jewish life in the Promised Land. Its members worked towards the physical development of the land, founding the first ideologically motivated Jewish agricultural settlements in Palestine. By the time the First Zionist Congress met in 1897, they had already begun to transform the face of the land.

13 See Silberstein, L. J., *Post-Zionism Debates: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture*, New York: Routledge, 1999, p. 33, especially Chapter 1, 'Mapping Zionism/Zionist Mapping'.

14 Beetham, D., *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*, Cambridge: Polity, 1992, p. 125. Weber's approach, based firmly on Herder's, affirms this point, as is illustrated in his concept of *Kultur*.

15 Ibid.

16 Anderson, B., *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1991, p. 6. Crucially, Anderson gauges the freedom of a nation through its expression in the form of a state.

17 Berkowitz, M., *Zionist Culture and Western European Jewry Before the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 40.

18 Rather he believed that the foundation of Jewish political sovereignty could not precede the Jewish cultural revival. 'One was a Staat Zionist and thus father of "Political" Zionism, the other was a *Kultur* Zionist and the founder of spiritual (or cultural) Zionism.' Cohen, M., *Zion and the State – Nation, Class and the Shaping of Modern Israel*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987, p. 67.

19 Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture*, p.189. Also see Sandler, S., 'Territoriality and Nation-State Formation: the Yishuv and the making of the State of Israel', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1997, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 667–88. One of the primary ways to begin to bridge these differences was to assign the Jewish nation, in its modern form, with a modern language. As Max Weber claimed: 'Today, community of language is the normal basis for the state.' Max Weber believed language to be the nation's most important, though not its sole defining feature. Weber, M., *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Tubingen: JCB Mohr, 1958, p. 242. As Anderson suggests, the popularizing of the sacral language is vital in nation-building as it disseminates popular culture to the masses. David Beetham disagrees with Weber on this point, citing the case of the common language of the Irish and the English as one example where a shared language did not prevent a struggle for national independence. Beetham, *Max Weber*, pp. 123–24. Historian Michael Berkowitz notes that one of the most successfully disseminated forms of the new culture was the revival of the Hebrew language despite opposition from the Orthodox Jews and the proponents of Yiddish culture. In less than two decades it gained acceptance as the principal language of the Zionist movement. The central role of Modern Hebrew reflects the influence of the German nationalist movement on the Jewish cultural revivalists. Shlomo Avineri states: 'It transformed a language relegated to mere religious usage into a modern, secular mode of intercourse of a nation-state.' Avineri, S., *The Making of Modern Zionism – the Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1981, p. 13. In 1913, stimulated by a conflict over language, Hebrew language schools were developed. The Hebrew Teachers' Union, founded in 1903, viewed its role as national and ideological. Hebrew gained ascendancy over other languages such as Yiddish, except in the non-Zionist ultra-Orthodox communities. Cohen, *Zion and the State*, p. 235. Herzl, despite his early dismissal of the importance of Hebrew, gradually came to see the symbols adopted by the cultural Zionists as a 'real and vital force, the instrument of self-expression of thousands of ardent Jews'. Previously he had held that 'the nation will be recognised by its faith, not its language'. Cited in Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture*, p. 51.

20 See Rose, J., *The Myths of Zionism*, London: Pluto Press, 2004.
21 Literally meaning the Young Worker.
22 Literally meaning the Workers Union.
23 He later went on to become Israel's first Prime Minister.
24 Otherwise known as the *Haganah*.
25 The Health Fund.
26 For a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between Labour Zionism and economic control in Palestine, see Shafir, G., *Land, Labor and The Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914*, Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1996; for the relationship between ideology, economy, and social discourse once the state had been established, see Frenkel, M., Shenhav, Y. and Herzog, H., 'The Ideological Wellspring of Zionist Capitalism: The Impact of Private Capital and Industry on the Shaping of the Dominant Zionist Ideology', and Khenin, D., 'From "Eretz Yisrael Haovedet" to "Yisrael Hashnia": The Social Discourse and Social Policy of Mapai in the 1950s', both in Shafir, G. and Yoav, P. (eds) *The New Israel: Peacemaking and Liberalisation*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000.
27 Goldstein, Y. N., 'Labour and Likud: Roots of their Ideological-Political Struggle for Hegemony over Zionism, 1925–35', in *Israel Affairs*, Autumn/Winter 2002, vol. 8, no. 182, p. 80.
28 This is one of the 'myths' that has been challenged in the works of the New Historians: specifically the work of Avi Shlaim. See Chapter 4 for more information.
29 Goldstein, 'Labour and Likud' in *Israel Affairs*.
30 See the introduction to Avi Shlaim's work: Shlaim, A., *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, London: Penguin Press, 2001.
31 Hall, S., 'The Work of Representation', in Hall, S. (ed.) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London: Sage, 2001, p. 44.
32 Established by the League of Nations in 1922, until the evacuation of British forces and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948.
33 The co-optation of the religious communities was not without a price. It set a precedent for political partisanship, which continues today. Religious parties wield disproportionate power over the Israeli political system because of their shrew policy of political bargaining and alliance-making and -breaking. The nature of the political system – the system of proportional representation – means that alliances are the key to gaining a parliamentary majority.
34 See Almog, S., Reinharz, J. and Shapira, A. (eds), *Zionism and Religion, The Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series*, *no. 30*, Hanover, NH: New Hampshire University Press of New England, for Brandeis University Press, in association with the Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1998.
35 Horowitz, D. And Lissak, M., *Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press; 1989, p. 15.
36 For men, this experience does not end until the age of 55 because they must serve up to 30 days a year until that age. Thus national identity undergoes reiteration and renewal every year.
37 Shafir, G., *Land, Labor and the Origins*, p. x.
38 The proposal that Israel's security paradigm was more significantly shaped by the experiences of the *Yishuv* and the early state seems highly likely. See Bar-Jospeh, U., 'Towards a Paradigm Shift in Israel's National Security Conception', in Karsh, E. (ed.) *Israel: The First Hundred Years, Vol. II: From War to Peace?*, London: Frank Cass, 2000.
39 Barzilai, G., *Wars, Internal Conflict and Political Order: A Jewish Democracy in the Middle East*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1996, p. 19. This argument contends that whilst society was always divided over national security issues, this division was not translated into the political discourse that masked the wide gap

between 'the infrastructure of a dispute and the externals of political behaviour and consensus'. This conforms to the ideological developments of the two main political contenders in the system today – the *Likud* and Labour parties. There is little difference in their security goals for the state, and though Labour was seen as the party of concessions in the 1990s with the initiation of the Oslo process, the *Likud* had already paved the way with the Camp David Accords of 1979 where Israel made peace with its first Arab neighbour, Egypt, by returning the Sinai. Barzilai makes a strong case for understanding Israel's security discourse as one of change hiding fundamental continuities.

40 Edy Kaufman comes to a similar conclusion. He argues that groups that are traditionally considered the 'watchdogs' of democratic ideals, such as the media, judiciary, and intellectuals, have been curtailed in a 'Cold War' atmosphere that has plagued Israel since inception. He suggests that although democratic ideas have been maintained in some ways, they have been accompanied by the increasing radicalization of society and an increasingly militarized political discourse. Kaufman, E., 'War, Occupation, and the Effects on Israeli Society', in Kaufman, E., Abed, S. B. and Rothstein, R. L. (eds) *Democracy, Peace and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1993.

41 Contrary to this view, Moshe Lissak claims that unlike Turkey, for example, the military in Israel was confined to a defined sphere by Ben-Gurion, and that it did not try to extend its influence into the political sphere via traditional methods of domination of the polity, such as coups. He contends that though security comprises the core of Israel's 'civil religion', other factors such as immigration, the economy, and changes to political culture have exerted a greater effect on civil society. Lissak argues that militarization has not permeated all spheres of civilian life to the same degree. Nor can the military elite be considered a unified group with clear targets. Ex-military men can be found across the political spectrum, so no generalizations can be made about their political orientations. See Lissak, M., 'The Unique Approach to Military-Societal Relations in Israel and its Impact on Foreign and Security Policy', in Sofer, S. (ed.) *Peacemaking in a Divided Society*, London: Frank Cass, 2001.

42 Cook, T. F., 'The Japanese Reserve Experience: From Nation-in-Arms to Baseline Defence', in Zurcher, L. A. and Harries-Jenkins, G., *Supplementary Military Forces*, London: Sage, 1978, p. 265.

43 Ben-Eliezer, U., 'A Nation-In-Arms: State, Nation, and Militarism in Israel's First Years', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April 1995, vol. 37, issue 2, pp. 264–85, p. 268.

44 From the state's inception, the army was seen as an integrating tool both by the elite and by the establishment's sociologists. Ben-Eliezer notes how the army was designated to build nationalist sentiment by taking on a quasi-civilian role in the squalid camps in which immigrants were housed. The army supplied medical care, schooling, language instruction, and even babysitting. This resulted in an image of an army sympathetic to the *Mizrahim* who were the main inhabitants of these camps. In this way, although the establishment may have alienated these immigrants, the army gave them an overarching framework of identity and national affinity: 'This intimacy attested not only to an ethnic sympathy but, more broadly, to the immigrants mobilisation to the security missions of the new state.' Ben-Eliezer, U., 'A Nation-In-Arms,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, p. 272.

45 The industrial flagship of the *Histadrut*, Koor, is testament to the fact that Israel's economy and military-industrial complex are inherently linked and contribute to the preservation of a hegemonic collective identity and discourse. Koor was established in the 1940s and was Israel's largest industrial conglomerate. In the 1950s the company diversified into the field of military technology, setting up Soltam – producing military artillery and ammunition – and Telrad – producing telecommunications equipment. The hardware produced by these companies undoubtedly increased Israel's military

might. Shafir and Peled go as far as to state: 'The history of Koor is the history of the Israeli economy in a microcosm … Koor became a mainstay of the Israeli arms industry.' These companies played a prominent part in Israel's export-oriented defence industry, so much so that by the 1980s it was Israel's major source of foreign currency. Until 1987, Koor made a profit, in fact in that year it grossed sales of US$2.7 billion – 10 per cent of Israel's gross domestic product (GDP) – and employed 11 per cent of the labour force. Shafir, G. and Peled, Y., 'The Globalisation of Israeli Business and the Peace Process', in Shafir, G. and Peled, Y. (eds) *The New Israel: Peacemaking and Liberalisation*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press; 2000, p. 252.

The shrinking markets for military hardware in the 1980s and 1990s forced Israeli defence concerns to diversify their research and development teams into devising products for non-military markets and, more frequently, into adapting defence technology for civilian applications. The official Ministry of Foreign Affairs website boasts that 'many of the most innovative products developed by Israel's civilian high tech industry, especially in the field of telecommunications, trace their origins to military technology'. The industry has combined revenues of approximately US$3.5 billion and employs around 50,000 people (about 4 per cent of the labour force). There are approximately 150 defence firms – the three largest entities are the government-owned IAI, IMI, and the Rafael Arms Development Authority, all of which produce a wide range of conventional arms and advanced defence electronics. See Hanan Sher, 'Facets of the Israeli Economy: The Defence Industry, 2002', available at http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il. For more information on this issue, see Nitzan, J. and Bichler, S., *The Global Political Economy of Israel*, London: Pluto Press; 2002, especially the section 'From Breadth to Depth: War Profits and Inflationary Finance'.

Avishai Ehrlich argues that the large amount of foreign aid given to Israel goes towards the internal production of military hardware and that 'this brings about major changes in the entire structure of the economy, making much of the social structure dependant on the military and military production; hence, to the development of a military-industrial complex which has in turn major political repercussions'. Ehrlich, A., 'Israel: Conflict, War and Social Change', in Creighton, C. and Shaw, M. (eds) *The Sociology of War and Peace*, Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, 1987, p. 127.

46 Ehrlich, 'Israel: Conflict, War and Social Change'.

47 Dowty, A., *The Jewish State: A Century Later*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998, p. 62.

48 See Liebman, C. S. and Don-Yehiya, E., *Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983.

49 See Aronoff, M. J., *Israeli Visions and Divisions*, New Brunswich, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1988, p. 128.

50 Ibid., p. 141.

51 Aronoff, *Israeli Visions and Divisions*, p. 141.

52 See Rose, *The Myths of Zionism*.

53 Raphael Cohen-Almagor illustrates the attitude towards trying to assimilate the *Mizrahi* diaspora experience into the mould of the European Zionist narrative. He suggests that symbols, if used pragmatically, could prove more inclusive. He writes: 'Attempts have been made to incorporate elements from the history of Oriental Jewry into the Israeli civil religion. The claim that along with the memories of European holocaust survivors, the suffering of Oriental Jews at the hands of the Arabs should be mentioned.' Cohen-Almagor, R., 'Cultural Pluralism and the Israeli Nation-Building Ideology', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, November 1995, vol. 27, issue 4, pp. 461–84; p. 478. Liebman and Don-Yehiya give two examples of symbols that were used in such a way – Israeli football provided a great resonance of identification with many *Mizrahim* who came from footballing nations. This loyalty was easily extended

to Israeli clubs and players, many of whom are also *Mizrahi*. The second was the growing popularity of ethnic celebrations. See Liebman and Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel.*

54 Ben-Gurion, quoted in Peretz, D. and Doron, G., *The Government and Politics of Israel*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1997, p. 60 (emphasis added).

55 See Massad, J., 'Zionism's Internal Others: Israel and the Oriental Jews', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Summer 1996, vol. 25, no. 4, for an interesting account of the representation of the *Mizrahim* in Israeli society and the social unrest it has initiated; also Segev, T., *1949: The First Israelis*, New York: Free Press, 1986, especially Chapter 6, 'Nameless People'.

56 This large-scale uprising occurred in July 1959 – its immediate cause being the favouring of Polish immigrants with accommodation whilst the resident Moroccan Jews were still enduring slum conditions. However it was a culmination of the tension and frustration of the community whose members across many countries had for years felt themselves to be unfairly treated by the authorities.

57 Sharett Report, 12 December 1948, State Archives, Foreign Ministry, 130.11/2502/8, cited in Segev, *1949*, p. 173.

58 Gelblum, A., *Ha'aretz*, 22 April 1949.

59 Sa'di, 'A. H., 'Modernisation as an Explanatory Discourse of Zionist-Palestinian Relations', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 1997, vol. 24, no. 1, p. 25.

60 Piterberg, G., 'Domestic Orientalism: the Representation of "Oriental" Jews in Zionist/Israeli Historiography', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 1996, vol. 23, no. 4, p. 30.

61 See Cohen, E., 'Ethnicity and Legitimation in Contemporary Israel', in Krausz, E. (ed.) *Politics and Society in Israel, Vol. 3*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1985.

62 Historian Alan Dowty frames the issue in another way: instead of trying to explain why Labour Zionism declined, he asks how it managed to hold on to power for so long. Dowty points out that 'the bulk of the population came holding no strong prior commitment to socialism, the dignity of manual labor, a return to the soil, a change in the traditional Jewish occupational structure, the secularisation of Jewish life, a pragmatic approach to territorial issues, or other features of an ideology rooted on the ferment of late nineteenth century Eastern European revolutionary movements. They did not come to Eretz Yisrael in order to wage a "revolution against Jewish history."' The dominance of the Labour Zionists rested on their pragmatism, organizational skills, and infrastructure building gave them a long-term advantage over other Zionist factions such as the Revisionists. The new immigrants, many of them refugees, were more open to Labour Zionist ideology and the fact that they were building not only a new society, but 'new Jews', allowed the leaders greater freedom to gain ideological ascendancy in the absence of any other strong 'rule-makers'. See Dowty, *The Jewish State.*

63 Yaacov Goldstein argues that the political and ideological struggle between these two groups laid the foundations for the deep cleavages that characterize Israeli society to the present day. See Goldstein, Y. N., 'Labour and Likud: Roots of their Ideological-Political Struggle for Hegemony over Zionism, 1925–35', in *Israel Affairs*, Autumn/Winter 2002, vol. 8, no. 182, pp. 79–90. However, both parties were formed for and by an *Ashkenazi* constituency. This is significant because the core of Zionist ideology was and still is *Ashkenazi*, despite the competition for the *Mizrahi* vote.

64 Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled make this very argument. They term the labour movement the Labour Settler Movement and contend that the Zionist movement should be considered through the lens of colonial settler theory. See Peled, Y. and Shafir, G., *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 38, and Chapter 4.

65 Three works that, in particular, address the issue of intellectuals and the state in Israel are: Keren, M., *Ben-Gurion and the Intellectuals: Power, Knowledge and Charisma*,

DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press; 1983; Keren, M., *The Pen and the Sword: Israeli Intellectuals and the Making of the Nation-State*, Boulder Westview Press, 1989; Keren, M., 'Intellectual Discourse in Israel: George Steiner's "Our Homeland, the Text" Revisited', *Israel Affairs*, Winter 1996, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 1–11. Keren opposes the view presented by Jewish intellectual George Steiner in his tract 'Our Homeland, Our Text', which appeared in the journal *Salmagundi* in 1985. Steiner argues in this article that the dilemma faced by intellectuals is the contradiction between nationalism and critical humanism. Keren, however, argues that it is not necessarily participation in a national movement that will effect intellectual activity, but the relationship between that intellectual movement and the state. Keren notes that this relationship is variable over time and is affected by events of national importance as well as other social and political conditions. Thus he distinguishes between national movements (in this case Labour Zionism) and state structures. By doing so he breaks down a complex system of social dynamics in an effort to explain the inevitable struggle between intellectuals and the bureaucratic apparatus of the state once the national cause has triumphed. However, though the Lavon Affair signalled the beginning of this rupture in Israel, the challenge intellectuals confronted was exactly this: a clash with the state structures and leadership, not the dominant discourse and historical narratives that were bound to the hegemonic Zionist ideology, Labour Zionism.

66 Kieval, G., *Party Politics in Israel and the Occupied Territories*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983, p. 1. Gad Barzilai agrees with Kieval's assessment, but notes that Abba Eban and Golda Meir were exceptions to 'most Mapai members [who] believed the status quo in Israeli-Egyptian relations had to be breached and that Israel would most certainly be called upon, in the near future, to demonstrate her capacity to achieve a military outcome'; Barzilai, G., *Wars, Internal Conflict and Political Order*, p. 68.

67 Meaning the (Greater) 'Land of Israel' rather than the State of Israel.

68 Yigal Allon drew up a proposal on 13 June 1967 and presented it to the Israeli cabinet on 26 June 1967. It recognized the benefits of keeping some of the occupied territory. He wrote: 'The [proposed] map gives Israel strong strategic depth; it is responsive, to a large degree, to the rights and interests of the Palestinian population; it ensures the Jewish and democratic nature of our state, and it places us in a much more comfortable position in the international arena. In one word: the map gives Israel maximum security with the minimum addition of Arab population'. Cited from Kieval, *Party Politics in Israel*, p. 17.

69 Kaufman, E., 'War, Occupation, and the Effects on Israeli Society', in Kaufman, E., Abed, S. B. and Rothstein, R. L. (eds) *Democracy*, *Peace and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, p. 86.

70 See Chapter 5.

71 The first of these approaches represented the position of the Rafi party that had been founded by a disgruntled Ben-Gurion in 1965. In 1968, with the merger of Rafi and the Alignment consisting of Mapai and Ahdut Ha'avodah, the Rafi faction launched an assault on the leadership of the new Israeli Labour Party. Moshe Dayan championed those who advocated the economic integration of the land; there was the (Yigal) Allon Plan which advocated the exchange of some of the land in return for peace and, finally, the policy proposed by Pinhas Sapir who wished to use the land merely as a bargaining chip in future negotiations with the Arabs. For further reading, see Shapiro, Y., *The Formative Years of the Israeli Labour Party*, London: Sage, 1976.

72 It is interesting to see how this translated into a definitive policy position as far as the occupied territory was concerned. Moshe Dayan was the choice of Rafi, whereas Yigal Allon, then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Absorption, was seen as the successor of Levi Eshkol. Although Allon came from Ahdut Ha'avodah, his views represented those of mainstream Mapai. Sapir's view was the third position in the debate. As he controlled the party finances he was arguably the most influential man in the party,

and the official *Gush* (party machine) leader. Moshe Dayan believed that new patterns of Arab-Jewish coexistence should be developed in the region, beginning in the occupied territory. His plan was to nurture economic dependency between Israel proper and the occupied territory whilst allowing the Arabs living there to retain Jordanian citizenship or, rather, by not imposing Israeli citizenship upon them. Dayan's views won him support from the *Gahal* bloc.

For further reading on the delegitimization of the right wing by the Labour movement, see Goldstein, Y. N., 'Labour and Likud', in *Israel Affairs*, pp. 79–90.

73 Gad Barzilai explains that *Herut's* fundamental ideological goal was the 'integrity of Eretz Israel' and that the military occupation of 'Judea and Samaria' enabled it to realize this first goal. The second goal was the control of frontiers so that Israel would be able to defeat its Arab enemies in future wars and gain the control of the territories provided, in the view of *Gahal* and *Herut*, 'the strategic depth for more effective defence and enabled a clear-cut defeat of the Arab armies'. Barzilai, *Wars, Internal Conflict and Political Order,* p. 85.

74 Ibid., p. 87. The inclusion of *Gahal* in the government laid the foundation for the emergence of neo-Zionism and for the germination of a complex right-wing challenge to Labour Zionism's hegemonic discourse that would gain the necessary space after Oslo. See Chapter 6 for further discussion.

75 The Galili Document presented in 1973 was the party's first attempt to obtain a consensus, but it was not binding on members of the party. It has been argued that this fact decisively contributed to the disintegration of party unity and the corresponding decline of the party overall. See Kimmerling, B., *Zionism and Territory: The Social Territorial Dimensions of Zionist Politics*, Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1983.

76 This was despite the fact that the Agranat Commission, which presented its final report in 1974, failed to find Golda Meir or Moshe Dayan directly responsible. See Lochery, N., *The Israeli Labour Party in the Shadow of the Likud*, Reading: Ithaca Press, 1997, p. 18.

77 Aronoff, *Israeli Visions and Divisions*, p. 6.

78 Goldscheider, C., 'Ethnicity and Nation-Building in Israel: The Importance of Demographic Factors', in Goldscheider, C. (ed.) *Population, Ethnicity and Nation-Building*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995, p. 120.

79 Goldscheider writes: 'The distinction between "religion" and "ethnicity" as the basis of the Arab-Jewish differentiation within Israel lies centrally in the quagmire of a series of political and ideological debates.' Goldscheider, 'Ethnicity and Nation-Building in Israel', in Goldscheider, *Population, Ethnicity and Nation-Building*, p. 120. In other words, this actually raises the question as to whether the Jews constitute a nation or a religion.

80 Peretz and Doron, *The Government and Politics of Israel*, p. 52.

81 Aronoff, *Israeli Visions and Divisions*, p. 124.

82 This concurs with recent studies that suggest that ethnicity, class interests, and religious affiliations cut across one another. Ethnicity cannot be reduced to class interests and both class and ethnic identities can be held simultaneously without necessarily suppressing each other. It has been argued that, this being the case, the *Mizrahim* organized themselves along ethnic rather than class lines when they mobilized themselves politically in opposition to Labour hegemony by transferring their loyalty to the *Likud* party. Political mobilization along ethnic lines, with overlapping class and religious interests, was to have greater resonance in the 1990s in the era of the peace process. See Ben-Rafael, E. and Sharot, S., *Ethnicity, Religion and Class in Israeli Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. It has been argued that if the *Mizrahim* were to achieve greater economic equality (this being inextricably linked with better education and equality of opportunity) ethnic identities would fade. However, studies looking at class mobility in Israel show that Israel has one of the most fluid and mobile class

systems in the world. Meir Yaish argues that this is the result of government intervention rather than merely the outcome of economic liberalization. He writes: 'Social mobility and fluidity do not correspond to the industrialisation process in Israel – nor do they appear to be caused by immigration … historical and political features of Israeli society have affected the Israeli fluidity pattern.' Yaish, M., 'Old Debate, New Evidence: Class Mobility Trends in Israeli Society, 1974–91', in *European Sociological Review*, 2000, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 159–83, p. 178. Also see Benski, T., 'Ethnic Convergence Processes under Conditions of Persisting Socio-Economic – Decreasing Cultural Differences: The Case of Israeli Society', *International Migration Review*, Summer 1994, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 256–80. For an overview of *Mizrahi* politics over the last 20 years, see Chetrit, S. S., 'Mizrahi Politics in Israel: Between Integration and Alternative', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Summer 2000, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 51–65.

83 Cohen, Y. and Haberfeld, Y., 'Second-generation Jewish Immigrants in Israel: Have Ethnic Gaps in Schooling and Earnings Declined?' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, May 1998, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 507–28. Acculturation and integration developed at different rates in different subsections of ethnic groups under conditions of persistent ethnic inequality, yet decreasing cultural difference. These subsections seems to have been based on class. It has been claimed that the *Ashkenazi* middle class is the closest to the traditional model of the 'melting-pot' society – and it is the most integrated ethnic category widely permeated by second-generation middle class *Mizrahi* Jews. Thus 'a general process … is occurring at a differential pace among different subsections of the Israeli Jewish population'. This demonstrates that class differences amongst the middle-class *Mizrahim* is a key factor in integration. It explains how second-generation immigrants can at the same time be amongst the most culturally integrated ethnic subgroup, yet display the greatest disparity in earnings between themselves and their *Ashkenazi* counterparts. Benski, T., 'Ethnic Convergence Processes', *International Migration Review*, p. 259. This concurs with Smooha's view that 'ethnic integration is quite advanced in the middle, upper-middle and elite levels'. Smooha, S., 'Jewish Ethnicity in Israel', in Kyle, K. and P., Joel (eds) *Wither Israel? The Domestic Challenge*, London: I.B. Taurus, 1993, p. 171.

84 Two factors exacerbated the ethnic cleavage rather than diminished it. One was residential distribution – the *Mizrahi* immigrants, from this second wave especially, were housed in development towns far from urban centres. This was part of the Labour ideological orientation – to settle the land and make even the most inhospitable geographic areas flourish. In reality, these immigrants, less skilled and less educated than their *Ashkenazi* counterparts, faced higher unemployment, worse educational facilities and fewer educational and economic opportunities because of this housing policy. A pattern of ethnically defined residential areas emerged which encouraged continuing 'high rates of intra-ethnic marriages and ethnic self-identity … despite some increase in inter-ethnic marriages over time'. Goldscheider, C., 'Ethnicity and Nation-Building in Israel', in Goldscheider, C., *Population, Ethnicity and Nation-Building*, p. 133. For further reading on ethnicity within development towns see Kirshenbaum, A., 'Migration and Urbanisation: Patterns of Population Redistribution and Urban Growth', in Goldscheider, C. (ed.) *Population and Social Change in Israel*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992.

An early indication of the increasing mismatch between the national cultural identity and the nation is the emergence of the *Mizrahi* social protest movement in the 1970s. Calling themselves the *Panterim Sh'horim*, or the Black Panthers, this movement was formed at the end of 1970 against a backdrop of clear government discrimination against the *Mizrahi* section of society and a parallel positive discriminatory policy occurring on behalf of the new immigrants from the Soviet Union. Despite eventual government acceptance of the legitimacy of their concerns, a number of other factors, such as the political climate and its lack of an economic base, limited this movement's

success. However, 'most prominent amongst the factors beyond the Panther's control is the hegemony of Zionist discourse in all aspects of Israeli life – through educational institutions, cultural production, the media, and official policy – which gives greater resonance to appeals to "unity" in state building and against external enemies and which facilitates the de-legitimisation of Jewish dissident groups'. Massad, 'Zionism's Internal Others', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 64.

The state dealt with protests from ethnic groups with little restraint. In 1996, 20,000 Ethiopian Jews marched on the office of Prime Minister Shimon Peres in Jerusalem to voice their anger over the destruction of Ethiopian blood donations to the Israeli national blood bank. The reason cited was that Ethiopian blood was 50 times more likely to be infected with HIV. When interviewed, the commander of the Jerusalem police, Arye Amit stated: 'If we hadn't fired tear gas, they would have captured the Prime Minister's office and ministers would have been attacked by thousands of wild youths.' Cockburn, P., *The Independent*, 29 January 1996. This description of the Ethiopian protestors is similar to the official rhetoric of the state when dealing with the Palestinians. Humiliation, whether perceived or real, was felt acutely by the Yemenite community over the infamous affairs of the stolen Yemenite babies. The third commission to investigate 745 separate claims of missing babies, the Kahan-Kedmi Commission, established in 1995, made its findings public in 2001. Parents of the missing children claimed that the state stole the babies to give to *Ahkenazi* families for adoption. The Commission blamed the breakdown of communication between the parents and the staff in charge of the children's homes to where many of the children were moved. The Jewish Agency was also apportioned much of the blame, although the Commission failed to find evidence of a state conspiracy. Shas MK Aryeh Gamliel called the commission a 'whitewash' and said 'what happened then and what is happening now is an organised crime on the part of the Establishment'. *Jerusalem Post*, 5 November 2000. Many families lost babies during the immigration process and claimed that babies were stolen to be given to childless *Ashkenazi* couples for adoption. These allegations epitomize, albeit in the extreme, the *Askkenazi-Mizrahi* divide, and its reification by the state.

85 Smooha, 'Jewish Ethnicity in Israel', in Kyle and Peters (eds) *Wither Israel?*, p. 171.

86 In September 1997, the then Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, publicly apologized for the Labour party's treatment of the Mizrahi immigrants in the 1950s. For more reading on the media response of this step to address *Mizrahi* grudges of the past by the Labour Prime Minister, see Weingrod, A., 'Ehud Barak's Apology: Letters from the Israeli Press', *Israeli Studies*, Fall 1998, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 238–52. The link between poorer education and the gap in earnings is presented as the main obstacle to *Mizrahi* social advancement: 'Israelis are now more willing to admit that an ethnic problem exists here and that this problem stems first of all from gaps in income, schooling and private property, and not just from the feeling of being discriminated against.' Kim, H., 'The Ethnic Problem has just Begun', *Ha'aretz*, 5 September 2000.

87 For an illuminating critical perspective of the relationship between the *Mizrahim* and the Zionist movement, see Shohat, E., 'Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of its Jewish Victims', *Social Text*, Fall 1988, no. 19/20, pp. 9–68. In this article Shohat outlines the functionalist economic rationale behind the Zionist movement's interest in 'Jewish-Arabs' after the failure of the Zionist movement in Palestine to attract 'Hebrew labour' at the same low cost as 'Arab labour' in the early twentieth century. Shohat argues that 'Jewish-Arabs' were seen as a potential low-cost substitute workforce and that it was this ethos that stood behind the mainly *Mizrahi* constitution of development (or effectively 'Frontier') towns. The Arab-Jews provided a front between the Palestinians and the European Zionist Jews, cementing the historical roots of the 'hawkish' attitude of the *Mizrahim* towards the Palestinians in present times. Shohat argues against viewing Israeli identity in the dichotomous terms in which she believes the Zionist movement constructed it – East (bad/backward) versus West (good/

progressive), Arab versus Jew, religious versus secular – and she deconstructs *Mizrahi* identity tropes in order to illustrate the relationship between power and constructions of identity.

4 The Emergence and Works of the New Historians

1 Hobsbawm, E., *On History*, London: Abacus Press, 1997, p. 270.
2 Sachar, H. M., *A History of Israel, Volume II: From the Aftermath of the Yom Kippur War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 167.
3 According to Sachar, although the war was thus sold to the public, Sharon's personal agenda would see Israeli troops 'proceed to unseat King Hussein and give Jordan over in its entirety to the Palestinians, who already comprised two-thirds of the population there. Syria and Iraq were to be destabilised'. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, p. 172.
4 Dowty, A., *The Jewish State: A Century Later*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998, p. 85.
5 Menachem Begin, *Ma'ariv*, 20 August 1982.
6 Israeli political scientist Professor Gad Barzilai writes: 'The opening stages of the Lebanese War (June 5, 1982), were framed as a limited military operation and were supported by most of the public, the parties and extra-parliamentary groups, and the great majority of IDF senior officers and the media. But opposition to the war gradually mounted … [It] was alleged that the limited military operation was becoming an all-out offensive against the PLO and the Syrian forces in Lebanon and not an effort to protect the settlers in the Galilee, an attempt to impose a new political and military order in the Middle East that was in line with the Likud's political concept.' Barzilai, G., *Wars, Internal Conflicts, and Political Order: A Jewish Democracy in the Middle East*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996, p. 124.
7 For a full account of reactions to the war, see Sachar, *A History of Israel*, especially Chapter 9, 'The Lebanon War: "Operation Big Pines"'.
8 For a deeply illuminating personal account of the Israeli incursion into Lebanon, as well as an insight into the Lebanese civil war, see Fisk, R., *Pity the Nation: Lebanon at War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
9 The Israeli Defence Forces.
10 Sachar estimates the number of dead as being between 1,000 and 2,000; Sachar, *A History of Israel*, p. 197.
11 For more descriptive accounts of the Lebanon War see Schiff, Z. and Ya'ari, E., *Israel's Lebanon War*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984; Shlaim, A., *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, London: Penguin Press, 2001, especially Chapter 10: 'The Lebanese Quagmire'.
12 'Among other officers and troops, those misgivings reflected not merely Israeli losses, but the thoroughness of Eytan's "smash-up" offensive against Lebanese towns and Palestinian refugee camps alike … Reserve officers were stunned by the attitude of the high command, even of government ministers … [To] many reserve officers, Meridor's approach reflected the military commands, an apathy, even brutality, that infected everything and everyone. They discerned it in their own troops, not a few of whom engaged in widespread looting. A number of these officers accordingly decided not to remain silent. Once on furlough, they submitted detailed reports to Begin, to other members of the cabinet, to the media.' Sachar, *A History of Israel*, p. 193.
13 Peace Now was formed in 1978 to protest against the reticence of the Israeli government to come to a peace agreement with Egypt. It organized mass demonstrations in Tel Aviv in response to the Lebanon War, which were attended by over 100,000 people. According to M. Aronoff, one of these became the largest rally in Israeli history with as many as 400,000 participants. Aronoff, M. J., 'Political Polarisation: Contradictory Interpretations of Israeli Reality', in S. Heydemann (ed.), *Issues in Contemporary*

Israel: The Begin Era, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984, p. 67. For further information on Israeli grass-roots activism, see Laskier, M. M., 'Israeli Activism American-Style: Civil Liberties, Environmental, and Peace Organisations as Pressure Groups for Social Change, 1970s–1990s', *Israel Studies*, Fall 2001, vol. 5, no. 1, 128–52.

14 Literally meaning Block of the Faithful. They are the leading pro-settlement movement in Israel.

15 One of the most controversial figures in this debate is Rabbi Meir Kahane, whose stance is well documented in his book: Kahane, M., *Why Be Jewish? Intermarriage, Assimilation and Alienation*, New York: Stein and Day, 1977. Kahane also became the founder of the *Kach* movement which was later outlawed for its radical position vis-à-vis land and the Arab population living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

16 Peretz, D., *Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990.

17 For detailed accounts of the *Intifada* see Lockman, Z. and Beinin, J. (eds), *Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli Occupation*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1990; and Hiltermann, J. R., *Behind the Intifada: Labour and Women's Movements in the Occupied Territories*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991; Goldberg, G. and Inbar, E., *The Impact of Inter-Communal Conflict: The Intifada and Israeli Public Opinion*, Jerusalem: Leonard Davis Institute, 1991. For two personal accounts of the *Intifada* see Aburish, S. K., *Cry Palestine: Inside the West Bank*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993; and Finkelstein, N., *The Rise and Fall of Palestine: A Personal Account of the Intifada Years*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

18 Rabbo, S. A. and Safie, D. (eds), *The Palestinian Uprising: Facts Information Committee, Jerusalem*, Belmont, MA: Arab-American University Graduate Press, 1990.

19 Rabbo and Safie, *The Palestinian Uprising*, p. 134.

20 Moshe Amirav, a member of the Herut central committee, called for negotiations with the leaders of the *Intifada* – he was expelled for his dovish views.

21 Aronoff, *Israeli Visions and Divisions*, pp. 148–58.

22 More radical critics of the occupation were groups such as *Yesh Gvul* (There are Limits), *Dai L'Kibbush* (End the Occupation), and *Kav Adom* (Red Line). Membership of these groups consisted mostly of university faculty, writers, and other intellectuals. Peretz, *Intifada*, p. 140.

23 F. Hunter highlights a contradiction in reactions to the uprising, and notes that the most important affect on society was psychological – occupation could no longer be justified as being 'good for the Palestinians' – yet he argues that society shifted towards the right, in support of the *Likud*. Hunter, F., *The Palestinian Uprising*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991, pp. 171–72.

24 Peretz, *Intifada*, pp. 191–92.

25 Myron Aronoff wrote: 'The most recent trend toward re-emergent and deepening polarisation has the effect of eliminating flexibility, ignoring complexities and nuances by collapsing the multivalent, and cross-cutting nature of political division into simple dichotomous categories.' Aronoff, 'Political Polarisation', in Heydemann (ed.) *Issues in Contemporary Israel*, p. 71. Peled and Shafir also argued against a simplistic conception of the Israeli state in crisis that has been predominant since Lebanon. Quite rightly they point out that 'until 1977 it was Labour-led governments that consolidated Israeli control over the occupied Palestinian territory, whereas a Likud government relinquished the Sinai to Egypt and recognized that the Palestinians had "legitimate rights" in the West Bank and Gaza in 1979. Furthermore, it was a Likud government that, in 1991, formally launched the current peace process in Madrid. In addition, Labour's narrow coalition government can hardly signify a fundamental value change in the society'. Peled, Y. and Shafir, G., 'The Roots of Peacemaking: The Dynamics of Citizenship in Israel, 1948–93', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 1996, vol. 28, p. 394. For an example of the position that is refuted by Aronoff, see Weissbrod, L., 'Israeli Identity in Transition', *Israel Affairs*, Spring/Summer 1997, vol. 3, nos. 3–4, pp. 47–65.

Gad Barzilai expounded a number of interesting hypotheses as regards to the effects of military struggles on Israeli society in contention with traditional approaches to the topic. Contrary to the view that perceptions of the military fluctuated in tandem with transpiring political events, he suggests that: 'Since 1949, there has existed a constant, alternately latent, and undisguised pattern of controversy of how military force is to be conveyed and deployed. Differing perceptions drive this controversy as a political phenomenon, in general, and in the context of the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in particular. Beyond modifications of style, secondary political changes, or historical events (such as the Egypto-Israeli peace agreement of 1979), no intrinsic alterations took place until the beginning of the 90's in the ingredients of the controversy.' Barzillai argued that though it was not mirrored in the political behaviour of the state, all of Israel's wars have been considered controversial. However he does maintain that the Lebanon War was, like the preceding wars, distinctive in its effect on the socio-political order in Israel. He further states: 'Through wars and their attendant political crises, Israel's consensus/dissent balance has been moulded by the changing and continuous, multidirectional influences exerted by organisations, political values, attitudes, and behaviour. Particular importance attaches to the political dilemmas over armed force, organisational interests to preserve national stability or to challenge it, the states control and use of information, the divisiveness of political power centres, cognitive reactions and fears, and social sanctions and norms.' Barzilai, *Wars, Internal Conflicts*, p. 19. Though Barzilai recognized that to view the Lebanon War as a rupture in Israeli history is to miss the deeply embedded political structures and power structures in the country, he failed to view Oslo in the same way.

26 Many of the works of post-Zionist scholars, which are examined in Chapter 5, deal with this very issue.

27 Resistance to the 'Zionist paradigm' emerged from two camps – the Palestinians and 'unofficial Zionist work' which highlighted the 'extraordinary discrepancy between official Zionist discourse as spun out by institutions, designated spokespersons, apologists and polemicists'. Said, E. and Hitchens, C. (eds), *Blaming the Victims: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestine Question*, London: Verso Press, 1988, p. 9. Themes emerging from this 'unofficial' Zionist work were similar to those found in histories written by Palestinian historians – though to accuse New History of aping Palestinian history is a mistake for several reasons which will be elaborated on later in this chapter.

28 Uri Ram, one of the leading sociologists in the post-Zionist movement, suggests that Israeli society exhibits a colonial-settler type character. He argues, using Frederick Jackson Turners' 'frontier thesis', that from its very inception Israel was a colonial-settler state. However, he charts the changing face of sociological research from the period after the Six-Day War, when Israel's colonial nature was publicly revealed through the acquisition of the occupied Palestinian territory and this in turn affected the population. 'Issues that had been [previously] submerged under layers of Israeli official historiography and sociography came to the consciousness of a wider Israeli public, namely, the nature of the appropriation of the territories, the relationships with the Palestinian inhabitants of these territories, and the implication these issues might have on Israeli society itself.' Ram, U., 'The Colonisation Perspective in Israeli Sociology', in Pappe, I. (ed.) *The Israel/Palestine Question*, London: Routledge Press, 1999, p. 59.

29 Silberstein, L. J., 'Reading Perspectives/Perspectives on Reading: An Introduction', in Silberstein, L. J. (ed.) *New Perspectives on Israeli History: The Early Years of the State*, New York: New York University Press, 1991, p. 4.

30 Said and Hitchens (eds), *Blaming the Victims*, p. 1.

31 Ibid., p. 4.

32 Doumani, B. D., 'Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine', in Pappe, *The Israel/Palestine Question*, p. 25.

33 Morris, B., *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–49*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
34 Shlaim, A., *Collusion across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.
35 Pappe, I., *Britain and the Arab-Israel Conflict: 1948–51*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988.
36 Flapan, S., *The Birth of Israel: Myths And Realities*, New York: Pantheon, 1987.
37 *Mapam* – a left of centre Labour Zionist political party. *Mapam* opposed the annexation of the occupied Palestinian territory captured in the 1967 War and is strongly committed to Arab-Jewish co-existence.
38 Flapan, S. (ed.) *When Enemies Dare to Talk: An Israeli-Palestinians Debate*, 5–6 September 1978, organized by New Outlook, London: Croom Helm, 1979.
39 Segev, T., *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust*, trans. Haim Watzman, New York: Henry Holt & Co, 1991. He is also the author of *One Palestine Complete: Jews and Arabs under the Mandate*, trans. Haim Watzman, London: Little, Brown and Company, 2000; *1949: The First Israelis*, New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1986, amongst others.
40 The problem with using the term 'revisionist' history when discussing Israeli history is linked to Israel's historical past. In the Israeli context, revisionism immediately implies the politics associated with radical political leader Vladimir Jabotinsky. The Revisionists, who were led by Vladimir Jabotinsky and seceded from the World Zionist Organization in 1933, advocated militant political action to push for the establishment of a Jewish state. The view that this idea ran counter to the prevailing attitudes in traditional Zionism has been challenged by Avi Shlaim in his work *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, London: Penguin Press, 2000.
41 Pappe, I., 'Post-Zionist Critique on Israel and the Palestinians-Part I: The Academic Debate', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 1997, vol. 26, no. 2, p. 33.
42 He states: 'Of course Benny Morris was right that you cannot use the term "revisionist history" in Israel because it would mean something totally different, so it was the best available term. One shouldn't get too excited about terms. They are working terms and they serve a certain purpose and once they stop serving that purpose one should use another term.' Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
43 Shlaim, *Collusion across the Jordan*, Preface p. viii.
44 Ibid.
45 Said and Hitchens (eds) *Blaming the Victims*, p. 9.
46 The strike force of the *Haganah*, the underground Jewish defence force, preceding the formation of the IDF.
47 This is Morris' interpretation of his disrupted access. Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
48 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
49 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
50 Morris' political profile fitted that of much of the Israeli left – though considering himself a loyal Zionist, he felt that Israel had no business in the occupied Palestinian territory. 'I have always been political. I had always been, I think, on the left. As a soldier, when I was 19 or 20 in 1967 I was saying that we should leave the territories and there should be a Palestinian state here. So I always believed with the left that there should be two states and we should get out of the occupation and so on. This was true then as much as it is today, even though I have a different image today.' Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
51 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
52 A large amount of primary source material was released for research in the Central Zionist Archives, the Israel State Archives, the Kibbutz Archives, the Kibbutz Association Archives, the Haganah Archive, the IDF Archive, the Labour Party Archive, and the Ben-Gurion Archive.

53 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
54 Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, Preface p. viii.
55 Interview with Ilan Pappe, 9 March 2004.
56 Interview with Ilan Pappe, 9 March 2004.
57 He notes: 'The fact is that I believed in the lie or lived in the lie. So it was shocking to look at yourself saying how for so many years you could have accepted a historical picture … The documents affected my ideological position.' Interview with Ilan Pappe, 9 March 2004.
58 According to Pappe, Shlaim asserted this to both himself and his other supervisor, Alan Bullock. Bullock (1914–2004) was an Oxford University historian who studied corrosive and corruptive power in twentieth-century Europe.
59 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
60 Interview with Ilan Pappe, 9 March 2004.
61 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
62 Shlaim, A., 'War of the Israeli Historians', unpublished paper.
63 In an article in *The Guardian* in 2001, Benny Morris asserted that the re-examination of history in Israel 'reflects the maturing and gradual liberalization of Israeli society and has begun to change the public's understanding of the country's past'. Morris, B., 'Comment: Expulsion or Flight? Israel's Changing View of the 1948 Exodus', *The Guardian*, 16 January 2001.
64 Elazar, D. J. and Sandler, S., 'Introduction: The Battle over Jewishness and Zionism in the Post-Modern Era', *Israel Affairs*, Autumn 1997, vol. 4, no. 1, p. 8.
65 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004.
66 Interview with Ilan Pappe, 9 March 2004.
67 She also published a work on the roots of the conflict. See Shapira, A., *Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881–1948*, trans. William Templer, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. In the context of the debate over new versus old history, even from its title, it can almost be seem as a defence – not only of Zionism, but also of the 'old' historians.
68 Interview with Anita Shapira, Tel Aviv, 14 March 2004.
69 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
70 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
71 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004.
72 Shlaim, A., 'The Debate About 1948'.
73 Interview with Anita Shapira, Tel Aviv, 14 March 2004.
74 See *Ha'aretz* – 7, 14, 21 April and 9, 19 May 1987 for the full exchange between Benny Morris and Shabtai Teveth.
75 Teveth, S., *Ben Gurion: The Burning Ground 1886–1948*, Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1987.
76 Moshe Dayan was the Minister of Defence during the Six Day War of 1967 and following Israel's swift victory became an important political and public figure. See Teveth, S., *Moshe Dayan*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1972.
77 Teveth, S., 'Charging Israel with Original Sin', *Commentary*, September 1989, vol. 88, no. 3, pp. 24–33.
78 Morris, *The Birth*.
79 Teveth, 'Charging Israel with Original Sin', p. 24. Norman Finkelstein assesses Morris' impact thus: 'Morris has indisputably produced landmark studies. He has permanently redefined the parameters of legitimate scholarly debate on the origins of the Palestinian refugee problem … In effect, Morris' research will serve as the benchmark for all future scholarship on this topic'. Finkelstein, N., *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*, London: Verso, 1995, p. 86.
80 The author of the book: Flapan, S., *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1987.

81 Teveth, 'Charging Israel with Original Sin', p. 24.
82 Interview with Anita Shapira, Tel Aviv, 14 February 2004.
83 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004.
84 He states: 'I was writing simply what happened and why it happened, in accordance to what the documents tell us, without any political motivation at all, from my point of view. It's to try and find out why people did the things they did and the way they did them – to clarify what happened in the past.' Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
85 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
86 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
87 Teveth, 'Charging Israel with Original Sin', p. 33.
88 His published works on this theme include: Karsh, E., *Soviet Policy towards Syria since 1970*, London: Macmillan Press, 1991; *Neutrality and Small States*, London: Routledge, 1988; *The Soviet Union and Syria: The Assad Years*, London: Routledge for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1988; *The Cautious Bear: Soviet Military Engagement in Middle East Wars in the Post-1967 Era*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985.
89 Karsh, E., *Fabricating Israeli History: The 'New' Historians*, London: Frank Cass, 1997.
90 'There is scarcely a single document Morris relies on without twisting and misleading, either by a "creative rewriting" of the original text, or by taking things out of context, or by truncating texts and thereby distorting their original meaning.' Karsh, E., 'Falsifying the Record: Benny Morris, David, David Ben-Gurion, and the 'Transfer' Idea', *Israel Affairs*, Winter 1997, vol. 4, no. 2, p. 51.
91 Karsh, *Fabricating Israeli History*, p. 9.
92 Ibid., p. 10.
93 He is the author of several articles that examine the relationship between Europe and Labour Zionism. See Kelemen, P., 'Zionism and the British Labour Party: 1917–39', *Social History*, 1996, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 71–87; 'Labour Ideals and Colonial Pioneers: Wedgwood, Morrison and Zionism', *Labour History Review*, 1996, vol. 61, no. 1, pp. 30–48; 'In the Name of Socialism: Zionism and European Social Democracy in the Inter-War Years', *International Review of Social History*, 1996, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 331–50.
94 Kelemen insists that it was two events in particular – the invasion of Lebanon and the *Intifada* – which 'have been indicated by those who identify with the "New History" as providing the intellectual context for its critical reflections on Israel's past … [The] prospect that this may give rise in Israel to an awareness of past and present relations with the Palestinians that is outside the current national consensus is the spectre that apparently haunts Karsh'. Kelemen, P., 'Zionist Historiography and its Critics: A Case of Myth-Taken Identity?', *Economy and Society*, November 1998, vol. 27, no. 4, pp. 353–79.
95 Another prominent journal in this area is *Israel Studies*.
96 According to Shlaim, these claims are, for example, that they all believe that Israel's cause is just, and that Israel's behaviour is of a higher moral standard than that of the Arabs.
97 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
98 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004.
99 Interview with Israel Bartal, Jerusalem, 16 March 2004.
100 Orr, A., *Israel, Politics, Myths and Identity Crises*, London: Pluto Press, 1994, p. 79.
101 Ibid.
102 For a useful criticism of this position see Vasquez, J. A., 'The Post-Positivist Debate', in Booth, K. and Smith S. (eds) *International Relations Theory Today*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997, pp. 225–29. Those people who agreed with Orr and Machover became known as the MATZPEN group and after the 1967 war, publicly confronted the official Israel version of the conflict in Palestine with an alternative version. Orr, *Israel, Politics, Myths*, p. 80.
103 Interview with Daniel Bar-Tal, Tel Aviv, 2 February 2004.

104 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.

105 Heydemann, S., 'Revisionism and the Reconstruction of Israeli History', in Lustick, I. S. and Rubin, B. (eds) *Critical Essays on Israeli Society, Politics and Culture: Books on Israel, Volume II*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press: 1991, pp. 5–6. The idea that the Israeli historical narrative was forced to adjust itself because of the new documentary evidence gleaned when the archives opened is in itself a matter of some controversy. Indeed, Palestinian historian Nur Masalha laments the fact that the claims made in the books of the New Historians (such as about Israel's role in the birth of the refugee problem) had been made before by Palestinian and Arab historians – and it was for this reason that they had been dismissed as nationalist propaganda. Said and Hitchens note that it is not the fact that the Zionist narrative competed and ultimately triumphed over a Palestinian narrative, but that it was easily refutable in light of material evidence – whether this was recorded or physically existent. These myths include the idea that Palestine was an unpopulated land before the arrival of the Zionist pioneers, and that there 'are no such thing as the Palestinians … they did not exist' as famously asserted by Golda Meir, Israel's only female Prime Minister. Cited in Kimmerling, B. and Migdal, J., *Palestinians: The Making of a People*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994, p. xvi. Said and Hitchens argued that: 'Somehow the myths have led to a life of their own. Today they seem more sublimely absurd than they did four decades ago, and they still keep appearing.' Said and Hitchens (eds) *Blaming the Victims*, p. 5. For a prime example of the reappearance of such myths see Peters, J., *From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine*, New York: Harper & Row, 1984, which has been thoroughly refuted. See Finkelstein, *Image and Reality*.

106 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004. Benny Morris agrees with this point. He states: 'During the 1950s–1980s, Israelis adhered to the story that the Arabs fled because they were called by the Arab leaders to leave Palestine – that's the traditional Zionist narrative. In 1998 on television, Limor Livnat, the Education Minister, was on TV and she said "when the Arabs were expelled in 1948 … " I was amazed. Who would have said such a thing before? It means it's trickled even into the political system … and people understand that there is a complex picture of expulsions – Arabs calling on them to leave and people leaving from fright, but is a much more complicated picture than some radio broadcaster from the Arab side had asked them to leave.' Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.

107 An example of the danger of overestimating such developments is illustrated by the personal experience of Peretz Kidron, an Israeli writer commissioned to work on Yitzhak Rabin's memoirs. He explains that although he disclosed information from a suppressed manuscript concerning the evacuation of Arabs from Lod and Ramleh, the outcome was not as he expected: 'I had hoped that an acquaintance with the facts would induce Israeli public opinion to rethink its attitude towards the Palestinians – the 1948 refugees in particular, and, by recognizing Israel's culpability in that tragedy, adopt a more enlightened view towards Palestinian resentments and claims. These hopes, far from being fulfilled, actually backfired. Whether in public debate or private conversations, it is difficult to detect remorse over Israel's treatment of the Palestinians in 1948.' Kidron, P., 'Truth Whereby Nations Live', in Said and Hitchens (eds), *Blaming the Victims*, p. 95.

108 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.

109 He observes: 'The only two countries where it wasn't well received were on both sides of the Jordan – in Jordan and in Israel. The Jordanians didn't write anything about it, but many of the Jordanians I talked to didn't like the book – resented the book, and the charges of collusion and thought that I had condemned Abdullah. But most of the criticism in writing came from the Israeli side.' Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.

110 Morris, B., *1948 and After*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
111 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
112 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
113 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
114 These include: Pappe, I., *The Israel/Palestine Question: Rewriting Histories*, London: Routledge, 1999; *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947–1951*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1992; and most recently *A Modern History of Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
115 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
116 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
117 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
118 Interview with Israel Bar Tal, Tel Aviv, 2 February 2004.
119 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
120 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004 (emphasis added).
121 Shapira states: 'I am not sure that their opinion about new appointments is as liberal as ours. And this worries me because as long as you have an open academic arena in which various opinions clash and are reformulated, this is lovely. But the moment you have one opinion predominant and you don't allow others to enter the arena, this worries me, and I don't know if we are not heading into this direction. I think this is very dangerous … this is something which worries me.' Interview with Anita Shapira, Tel Aviv, 14 March 2004.
122 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
123 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
124 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004.
125 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
126 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004.
127 Morris argues: 'Even if you hear nasty things about Israel's past it is not going to undermine or change identity. The identity is more or less fixed: this is a Jewish state, the Jews have a right to be here, they have behaved pretty well, not quite as well as they thought they would, but pretty well in the conditions that existed here. So I don't think it's had a revolutionary effect on society or the sense of identity of the people here.' Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
128 Morris, *The Birth*, p. 286.
129 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
130 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
131 'I realized that in my mind historians are divided into two – those who acknowledge the impact of politics on their work and those that don't. But there isn't a group of historians which is not impacted. So I became more vocal and active politically and I wrote in a more political way, and this gave ammunition to those who said that my books were not very academic.' Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
132 He explains: 'I appeared both as a political activist talking about 1948 and an historian. My party's acronym is *Hadash* which in Hebrew means "new" and they used to call me "historian *Hadash*" which is the historian of *Hadash* – the one who belongs to the party, not necessarily a "new" historian which I never minded because I don't think it was very honest to hide these ideologies and views and claim that you are totally neutral or objective.' Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
133 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
134 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
135 Gelber, Y., *Transforming Israeli Society*, unpublished paper.
136 Interview with Yoav Gelber, Haifa, 29 February 2004.
137 Gelber, Y., 'Ilan Pappe and the Tantura Blood Libel', posted on the *History News Network*, 6 June 2002, available at http://www.hnn.us/comments/1359.html accessed July 2002.

138 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
139 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
140 Pappe asserts: 'It depends on whether you decide either to struggle with it or let it guide you. That depends on how you do it. One of the sociologists in Israel said "those who are like me, who are relativist, are very careful eventually because we are very aware of it – we are so aware of the ideology"'. Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
141 Although the basis of positivist academic enquiry, objectivity is still, arguably, a notion that requires belief. See Chapter 6.
142 Gelber, Y., *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations, 1921–48*, London: Frank Cass, 1997.
143 Gelber, Y., *Palestine, 1948: War, Escape and the Emergence of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2001.
144 *Tzomet* (Movement for Renewed Zionism) was established by former army chief-of-staff Rafael Eitan. It was originally part of the right-wing *Tehiya* party, but split from it in 1988 before the elections held in that year. *Tzomet* is a secular party, and joined the *Likud* in 1996, winning five seats in those elections. It did not win any seats in the 15th Knesset. The main political platform of the party is that it totally opposes the Oslo Accords and calls for Israel to retain all of the occupied Palestinian territory.
145 The nature of his attacks on Pappe were public, and personal. *Ha'aretz* even reported that in September 2000, Gelber was unwilling to have his name mentioned alongside Pappe's. *Ha'aretz*, 22 September, 2001.
146 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
147 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
148 Said, E., *Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho 1993–1995*, London: Vintage, 1995.
149 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
150 Shlaim states: 'I think that and I feel very strongly that Israel's behaviour is unacceptable by any international standards and I feel that I have a duty to speak out, not to hide behind a screen or cloak of scholarly detachment. I am an expert on this conflict and therefore it is my duty to write about it for the general public and there I make no attempt to conceal where I stand and my criticisms of Israel.' Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
151 The continued expansion of settlements after 1993 can be considered one of the chief reasons for the failure of Oslo. Despite Israel's commitment to a settlement 'freeze', the number of settlements and settlers has continuously grown: by the end of 2002, a total population of almost 400,000 lived in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem; see B'Tselem, *Land Grab: Israel's Settlement Policy in the West Bank*, May 2002.
152 Morris, B., 'Politics by Other Means', *The New Republic*, 22 March 2004.
153 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
154 Interview with Eyal Naveh, Tel Aviv, 4 February 2004.
155 Morris, B., 'Looking Back: A Personal Assessment of the Zionist Experience', *Tikkun*, March/April 1998.
156 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
157 Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.
158 Interview with Anita Shapira, Tel Aviv, 14 March 2004.
159 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
160 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.
161 See Edward Said's account of the conference in his book: Said, E., *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After*, London: Granta Books, 2000, pp. 273–77. Ilan Pappe stated: 'Benny Morris told them that the Arab historians were not good historians because they are Arab, and Arabs cannot be good historians, so all the Arab historians were offended and went out. And only Said, Morris and myself remained there. It

was a terrible thing; nothing ever came out of it.' Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.

162 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 20 March 2004.

163 Sternhell, Z., *The Founding Myths of Israel: Nationalism, Socialism and the Founding of the Jewish State*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.

164 Interview with Ze'ev Sternhell, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.

165 Interview with Ze'ev Sternhell, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004. He answers the question by stating: 'Opposing taxation was for Zionist reasons. This would constitute a negative effect on immigration from Poland. Polish Jews who were fleeing from Polish taxes didn't want to find them here. Eretz Israel under British rule had a capitalist rule with a free market capital coming and going until the beginning of the war. All these are questions that traditional historians didn't ask. This is less a question of generation than of perspective.'

166 Interview with Moshe Zimmerman, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.

5 The Promise of Post-Zionism

1 Middle East Media and Research Institute (MEMRI), a think tank based in Washington, DC.

2 Wurmser, M., *Middle East Quarterly*, March 1999, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 3–13.

3 Interview with Aharon Megged, published in the Israeli quarterly: Megged, A., *Ha'Uma [The Nation]*, Summer 2000.

4 This is not to suggest that versions of the events of, and prior to, the 1948 war written by Arab historians were not equally incorporated into their own complex nationalist projects – balancing nation-state nationalism with pan-Arab nationalism. One popular claim was that international pressure alone prevented the Arabs from victory against the Jewish forces, although it is accepted by many historians today that Israel's forces, though smaller in number, were more than a match for the Arab armies for a number of reasons. This myth was a way for the Arabs to make sense of their defeat, while the odds were, seemingly, in their favour. Even today it has been to the advantage of the national projects of both sides to uphold it. For a deeper understanding of the mythology of Arab histories, see al-Khalidi, W., *Khamsun 'aman 'ala harb 1948, ula al-harub al-sihyuniyya al-'arabiyya [Fifty Years since the 1948 War, the First of the Arab-Zionist Wars]*, Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 1998. Other Palestinian intellectuals have also tackled the events of 1948 from a critical viewpoint. Perhaps the best known example to reach a Western audience is Edward W. Said's book: Said, E., *The Question of Palestine*, London: Vintage, 1992.

5 Just a few examples of such histories are as follows: 'Allush, N., *al-Muqawama al-'arabiyya fi filistin [The Arab Resistance in Palestine]*, Beirut: Dar al-Tali'a, 1968; Kayyali, A.W., *Palestine: a Modern History*, London: Croom Held, 1978; Khalidi, W., *Dayr Yasin: al-Jum'a, 9/4/1948 [Dayr Yasin, Friday 9/4/1948]*, Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies 1998.

6 Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat witnessed Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Executive Council Member Abu Mazen sign the Oslo agreement. Though frequently overlooked in the historical retelling of the road to Oslo, initiatives taken by Israeli academics Yair Hirschfeld and Ron Pundak, who negotiated on the framework for Oslo, laid the ground for politicians such as Yossi Beilin to present an agreement to the then Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin. This illustrates the role of academics and intellectuals in state-building and the link between power and knowledge.

7 For more information regarding Israeli settlement activity see the B'Tselem website at www.btselem.org, and the bimonthly Foundation of Middle East Peace (FMEP) Settlement Reports (available at www.fmep.org). Also see UN reports relating to the

effects of occupation; available on the website of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for the occupied Palestinian territory at http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/opt.

8 See Bouillon, M.E., *The Peace Business: Money And Power in the Palestine-Israel Conflict*, London: I.B Tauris, 2004; Parker, C., *Resignation or Revolt? Socio-political Development and the Challenges of Peace in Palestine*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1999. Also Farsoun, S.K. and Zechariah, C. E., *Palestine and the Palestinians*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997. Between September 1993 and September 2001, the number of housing units in the settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip rose by more than 50 per cent. By the end of 1993, there were 115,700 settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; by the end of 2002, the settler population had increased by 90 per cent to 219,000. In East Jerusalem, growth was slower (20 per cent), but still brought the number of settlers there from 146,800 in 1993 to 176,900 in 2001. Figures are based on the FMEP's bimonthly *Settlement Reports*; and Israeli Ministry of the Interior statistics obtained from the YESHA Council; and *Land Grab: Israel's Settlement Policy in the West Bank*, May 2002, p. 12.

9 Horkheimer, M., *Critical Theory*, New York: Seabury Press, 1972, p. 215.

10 Cox, R. W., *Approaches to World Order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 89.

11 Livneh, N., 'Post-Zionism Only Rings Once', *Ha'aretz*, 22 September 2001.

12 Interview with Avi Shlaim, Oxford, 25 January 2005.

13 Interview with Adi Ophir, Tel Aviv, 1 February 2004.

14 Interview with Adi Ophir, Tel Aviv, 1 February 2004.

15 Ophir stated: 'Benny Morris is a symptom. A racist position has now become legitimate within the debate.' Interview with Adi Ophir, Tel Aviv, 1 February 2004.

16 Shalev, M., *Labour and the Political Economy of Israel*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

17 See Shalev, M., 'Liberalization and the Transformation of the Political Economy', in Shafir, G. and Peled, Y., (eds) *The New Israel: Peacemaking and Liberalization*, Boulder: Westview Press, 2000; 'Zionism and Liberalization: Change and Continuity in Israel's Political Economy', *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 1998, vol. 23, nos. 1/2, 219–59; 'Have Globalization and Liberalization "Normalized" Israel's Political Economy?', *Israel Affairs*, 1999, vol. 5, nos. 2/3, pp. 121–55; 'The Labor Movement in Israel: Ideology and Political Economy', in Ellis Goldberg (ed.) *The Social History of Labor in the Middle East*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996.

18 Also see Nitzan, J. and Bichler, S., *The Global Political Economy of Israel*, London: Pluto Press, 2002. Nitzan and Bichler claim that they were the first to introduce such an approach, but were marginalized by more mainstream figures such as Shalev who built upon the foundations of their – more radical – work.

19 Michael Shalev notes that the approach he adopted in regard to Israel – falling broadly within the category of post-Zionist scholarship – is still very much marginal. He states: 'My position is not central. I think of myself as part of a group of people who introduced a new perspective and still find myself with very different fundamental assumptions to the vast majority of my students who are closer in their worldview to Lissak.' Interview with Michael Shalev, Tel Aviv, 27 January 2004.

20 Shalev, M., 'Time for Theory: Critical Notes on Lissak and Sternhell', *Israel Studies*, Fall 1996, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 171.

21 He states: 'We came to the conclusion that the melting pot in small towns, and the *moshavim* is maybe a good idea, a utopia, but it couldn't work and it's counter-productive. And this was absolutely against the basic concepts, ideas and convictions of Israeli society – or at least the Establishment.'

22 Interview with Moshe Lissak, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.

23 Shalev, 'Time for Theory', p. 170.

24 For a discussion of Said's contribution to postcolonial theory, see Chapter 1.
25 For example, see Ahmad, A., *In Theory: Classes, Nations and Literatures*, London: Verso, 1995.
26 This book is concerned with the social sciences, yet obviously postcolonial theory has had a tremendous effect on the understanding of Israeli literature. See Shohat, E., 'Travelling "Postcolonial": Allegories of Zion, Palestine and Exile', a lecture delivered at the Edward Said: A Continuing Legacy Conference, SOAS, University of London, 3 October 2004. Also Oppenheimer, Y., 'The Arab in the Mirror: The Image of the Arab in Israeli Fiction', *Prooftexts*, 1999, vol. 19, issue 3, p. 205.
27 Turner, F. J., 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', in George R. Taylor (ed.) *The Turner Thesis*, Boston, MA: Heath Press, 1956.
28 Ram, U., 'The Colonisation Perspective in Israeli Sociology', in Ilan Pappe (ed.) *The Israel/Palestine Question*, London: Routledge, 1999, p. 59.
29 See Ram, U., *The Changing Agenda of Israeli Sociology: Theory, Ideology and Identity*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995.
30 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.
31 For example, see Tzahor, Z., *On the Road to Yishuv Leadership*, Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben Zvi, 1981.
32 See Shohat, E., 'Rupture and Return: A Mizrahi Perspective on the Zionist Discourse', *MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, May 2001, vol. 1, pp. 58–71.
33 Postcolonial studies counter the popular conception that because the Palestinians did not officially 'exist' in 'Western' terms, i.e. they were not a 'nation' but a people who formed part of the Ottoman Empire, and who had diffuse identities and no independent political will. See Massad, J., 'The Post-Colonial: Colony: Time, Space and Bodies in Palestine/Israel', in F. A. Khan and K. Sheshadri-Crooks (eds) *The Preoccupation of Postcolonial Studies*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000. Joseph Massad is a Palestinian-Jordanian who has also used a postcolonial approach to understand the relations between the Ashkenazim and the *Mizrahim* in Israel. For example, see Massad, J., 'Zionism's Internal Others: Israel and the Oriental Jews', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Summer 1996, vol. 25, no. 4. Massad also applied this approach to understanding the formation of Jordanian identity, see Massad, J., *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2001. Ahmad H. Sa'di is a Palestinian citizen of Israel and a lecturer in the Department of Government and Politics at Ben Gurion University. He examines the colonial and imperialist approach of the Zionist settlers to the indigenous Arab population in Palestine in his article: Sa'di, A. H., 'Modernisation as an Explanatory Discourse of Zionist-Palestinian Relations', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 1997, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 25–48.
34 Ella Shohat, in a lecture delivered at the Edward Said: A Continuing Legacy conference, held at SOAS, in October 2004.
35 See Shohat, E., *Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1989; Shohat, E. and Stam, R., *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, London: Routledge Press, 1994; McClintock, A., Mufti, A. and Shohat, E., *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Postcolonial Perspectives* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997; Shohat, E. and Stam, R., *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Trans-national Age*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003; Shohat, E., *Forbidden Reminiscences*, Bimat Kedem, 2001; Shohat, E., 'Antinomies of Exile: Said at the Frontiers of National Narrative', in M. Sprinker (ed.) *The Edward Said Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell Press, 1993, pp. 121–43; Levy, L., 'The "Whirling Dervish" vs. "The Universal": Discourses of Culture and Power in Israel', *Arab Studies Journal*, Fall 2001/Spring 2002, vol. 9/10, nos. 1–2, pp. 10–30; Shenhav, Y., 'Ethnicity and National Memory: The World Organisation of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC) in the Context of the Palestinian National Struggle', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2002, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 27–56; Meir-Glitzenstein, E., 'Our Dowry: Identity

and Memory among Iraqi Immigrants in Israel', *Middle Eastern Studies*, April 2002, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 165–86.

36 Yiftachel, O. and Meir, A., *Ethnic Frontiers and Peripheries. Landscapes of Development and Inequality in Israel*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998.

37 Interview with Oren Yiftachel, Tel Aviv, 10 March 2004.

38 For a fascinating study of the use of geography in Israel's nationalist and ideological struggle for hegemony in Palestine, see Cohen, S. B. and Kliot, N., 'Place-Names in Israel's Ideological Struggle over the Administered Territories', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, December 1992, vol. 82, issue 4, pp. 653–80; Lustick, I., 'Yerushalayim and Al-Quds: Political Catechism and Political Realities', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Autumn 2000, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 5–21.

39 Segal, R. and Weizman, E. (eds), *A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture*, Tel Aviv: Babel Publishers, 2003.

40 It was commissioned by the Institute of Architects. According to Yiftachel, only a few hours before the launch it was pulled from the shelves because it was too 'critical'. He comments that, compared to work being produced in the social sciences, the book was relatively mild – a pictorial representation of the settlements and the 'ghetto-ization' of the West Bank. Perhaps it was precisely for this reason that the book elicited such a strong response.

41 Shafir, G., *Land, Labour and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1882–1914*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996, x.

42 Ibid., p. xi.

43 Horowitz, D. and Lissak, M., *The Origins of the Israeli Polity: Palestine under the Mandate* [Hebrew], trans. Charles Hoffman, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

44 Interview with Moshe Lissak, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.

45 Shafir, G., 'Israeli Decolonisation and Critical Sociology', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Spring 1996, vol. 25, no. 3, p. 29.

46 Ram, *The Changing Agenda,* p. 205.

47 Interview with Oren Yiftachel, Tel Aviv, 10 March 2004.

48 He states: 'Everything is invented, societies are invented and ideas are invented … Narratives! Everything is a narrative. All the narratives are equal. The Zionist narrative is equal, that's what some of them say, the Palestinian narrative is equal. And facts don't matter because the narrative so more important than the facts.' Interview with Moshe Lissak, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.

49 Ram explains: 'They want people to look at society as a system and they want people to look at national and social integration. Since postmodern(ists) don't tend to do these things but rather criticize the concept of a system and integration it looks as if they are dealing with minor and unimportant issues.' Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.

50 Interview with S. N. Eisenstadt, Jerusalem, 9 February 2004.

51 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.

52 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.

53 Swirski, S., *The Oriental Majority*, London: Zed Books, 1988, originally published as *Lo ne hshalim ele menu hshalim*, Haifa: Mahbarot le-Mehkar ule-Vikoret, 1981.

54 Swirski notes:'[I used it as] an expression of a broadening of the political and sociological discourse. There were no Palestinians when I went to school.' Interview with Shlomo Swirski, Tel Aviv, 5 February 2004.

55 Interview with Shlomo Swirski, Tel Aviv, 5 February 2004.

56 He says: 'At that time there was a young group of lecturers who came into the sociology department of Haifa University, and many of them were ousted with me – I was maybe more prominent because I had started writing, but it wasn't just intellectual debate. Many of them left the country or sociology altogether. I believe I am the only one who went on with sociological work after that. So for a long time, after 1978,

I wasn't given tenure – that's the way to do it.' Interview with Shlomo Swirski, Tel Aviv, 5 February 2004.

57 Interview with Moshe Lissak, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.
58 Interview with Shlomo Swirski, Tel Aviv, 5 February 2004.
59 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 1 March 2004.
60 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.
61 He states: 'I think it will be healthy for our society not to have unlimited immigration. We must create a demos. We must create a community of empowered citizens in order that we start to govern ourselves … In that respect, the law of return is an impediment for that.' Interview with Oren Yiftachel, Tel Aviv, 10 March 2004.
62 Interview with Oren Yiftachel, Tel Aviv, 10 March 2004.
63 *Ma'ariv*, an Israeli daily newspaper, declared that he is 'anti-Israeli, post-Zionist, totally lacking accuracy and balance, lacking integrity, in his articles which pretend to be academic, which present the Zionists as the side to be blamed for everything without saying one word about the Arabs, one thing about the damn rejectionalism of the Palestinians to recognize Israel … or about the Palestinian incitement against Israel'. *Ma'ariv*, 5 March 2004.
64 PALISAD.
65 ADVA: Centre for Information on Equality and Social Justice in Israel.
66 Chazan was a member of the Knesset from 1992 and participated in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth Knessets as a member of *Meretz*. Chazan was also a professor of political sciences and served as head of the Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace at the Hebrew University.
67 Interview with Naomi Chazan, MK, Jerusalem, 26 June 2001.
68 Ben-Ami was a lecturer on Spanish history. His academic background meant that when Israel established diplomatic relations with Spain he was asked to serve as Israel's ambassador to Spain. Whilst in the position he became increasingly interested in what he terms 'the Israel problem'. For him this began as an interest in various socio-economic problems that Israeli society was faced with. Although he was not politically active as an academic, he moved into 'real' politics in 1996 when he ran for the Knesset as a member of *Meretz*. Ben-Ami believed that his political career unfolded unexpectedly, unlike that of Naomi Chazan, who had particular motives for moving politics. He had no particular notion to become involved specifically in the debate on the peace process, but opportunities arose for him to participate in the debate. Ben-Ami's committee memberships reflected his personal interests – he was on the Education and Culture Committee and the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee and served as the Head of the Sub-Committee on Foreign Service.
69 Interview with Shlomo Ben-Ami, MK, Jerusalem, 20 July 2001.
70 Interview with Adi Ophir, *Tikkun Magazine*, January 2001. He continues: 'It was then that Yossi Beilin's idea to find a formula that would let 80 per cent of the settlers stay in their places was born. It was a reaction to Rabin's assassination, not to the reality of the negotiations with the PA [Palestinian Authority]. After the assassination, for many on the left it seemed more important to make peace between the Jewish right and the Jewish left than between Jews and Palestinians.'
71 Interview with Oren Yiftachel, Tel Aviv, 10 March 2004.
72 Interview with Oren Yiftachel, Tel Aviv, 10 March 2004. He notes: 'All the requirements to actually make people's minds change which takes a decade after such a bitter conflict weren't fulfilled. There were some scratches perhaps, but they disappeared and I think now we are in the position of the same grave hostilities as there were in the 1970s and 1980s.'
73 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
74 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.
75 *Ma'ariv*, 21 January 2000.

76 Pappe explains: 'Weakened by a stroke several weeks earlier and subjected to enormous pressures by his family, friends, and neighbours in the kibbutz where he lived, he acquiesced on the advice of one of his lawyers (a cousin of his) to bring an end to the whole affair; he was likewise assured by the university lawyer, an unofficial member of his legal team, that signing the agreement would be for his own good, appearing to hint that it would enable him to continue his studies at Haifa University.' Pappe, I., 'The Tantura Case in Israel: The Katz Research and Trial', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Spring 2001, vol. 30, no. 3, p. 26.

77 In regards to the use of oral history, Pappe writes: 'Katz was able to overcome the suspicion and, indeed, de-legitimisation that is usually applied in Israel to Palestinian oral history (and, indeed, to Palestinian history in general) only because he succeeded in obtaining testimonies about the massacre not only from Palestinian witnesses but also from Jewish soldiers who had participated in the events. Had there not been corroborating Jewish testimonies on the Tantura affair, even the article in *Ma'ariv* would not have been taken so seriously.' Ibid., p. 21.

78 Phone interview with Teddy Katz, Israel, 15 March 2004.

79 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004.

80 Pappe, I., *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

81 Morris, B., 'Politics by Other Means', *The New Republic*, 22 March 2004.

82 He writes: 'Pappe is a proud post-modernist … he believes that there is no such thing as historical truth, only a collection of narratives … moreover every narrative is inherently political and consciously or not, serves political ends.' Benny Morris, 'Politics by Other Means', p. 25.

83 Pappe writes: 'The prosecution, represented by Haifa's Dean of Humanities demands my expulsion from the university due to the positions I have taken on the Katz affair … These offences are in a nutshell my past critique of the university's conduct in the Katz affair, the MA student who discovered the Tantura massacre in 1948 and was disqualified for that. The reason the university waited so long is that now the time is ripe in Israel for any act of silencing academic freedom. My intent to teach a course on the *Nakbah* next year and my support for boycott on Israel has led the university to the conclusion that I can only be stopped by expulsion.'

Available at http://www.zmag.org/content/Mideast/pappecase.cfm accessed June 2002.

84 See Pappe, I., 'Why Haifa University Cancelled My Conference', available at http://hnn.us/articles/1482.html accessed March 2003.

85 In a statement it released, Haifa University denied that the reasons for Pappe's uncertain future with the university was because of his ideological and political beliefs, and instead cited unauthorized absences to be amongst the complaints levelled against him.

86 Interview with Ilan Pappe, Haifa, 9 March 2004. He admits that: 'It came too early … but we know that the critics in Europe, at the time they were writing criticism nobody paid any attention to them, and many years later people said, "now we can see what these people meant".'

87 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.

88 Interview with S. N. Eisenstadt, Jerusalem, 9 February 2004.

89 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.

90 Shafir, 'Israeli Decolonisation', p. 26.

91 Masalha, N., 'A Critique of Benny Morris', in I. Pappe (ed.) *Israel/Palestine Question*, p. 211.

92 This claim, of course, can be seen in itself as a claim to truth, which others reject.

93 This topic will be elaborated in the next chapter.

94 Interview with Uri Ram, Tel Aviv, 12 March 2004.

6 Neo-Zionist Responses – Seizing History, Shaping Policy

1 The parameters of this new discourse were later re-established internationally through the autobiography of Clinton, B., *My Life*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, which relates Clinton's view of Camp David II and the collapse of the peace process, and the book written by leading American negotiator, Dennis Ross, both published in 2004. Both men augment the Israeli discourse established by Barak. Ross gives a detailed account of the negotiations leading up to Camp David II, but concludes: 'Did we ultimately fail because of the mistakes that Barak made and the mistakes that Clinton made? No, each, regardless of his tactical mistakes was ready to confront history and mythology. Only one leader was unable or unwilling to confront history and mythology: Yasir Arafat.' Ross, D., *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004, p. 757. Aside from Agha and Malley, this discourse has since been challenged by Clayton Swisher in his corroborating work: Swisher, C., *The Truth About Camp David: The Untold Story About Arafat, Barak, Clinton and the Collapse of the Middle East Peace Process*, New York: Nation Books, 2004, and Cofman Wittes, T. (ed.) *How Israelis and Palestinians Negotiate: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Oslo Peace Process*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, March 2005.
2 Agha, H. and Malley, R., 'Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors', *New York Review of Books*, 9 August 2001, vol. 48, no. 13.
3 Sontag, D., *New York Times*, 26 July 2001.
4 Morris, B., 'Camp David and After: An Exchange: An Interview with Ehud Barak', *New York Review of Books*, 13 June 2002.
5 Ibid.
6 'They will exploit the tolerance and democracy of Israel first to turn it into "a state for all its citizens", as demanded by the extreme nationalist wing of Israel's Arabs and extremist left-wing Jewish Israelis. Then they will push for a bi-national state and then, demography and attrition will lead to a state with a Muslim majority and a Jewish minority. This would not necessarily involve kicking out all the Jews. But it would mean the destruction of Israel as a Jewish state. This, I believe, is their vision. They may not talk about it often, openly, but this is their vision. Arafat sees himself as a reborn Saladin – the Kurdish Muslim general who defeated the Crusaders in the twelfth century – and Israel as just another, ephemeral Crusader state.' Ehud Barak, quoted in Benny Morris, 'Camp David and After'.
7 Barak muses: 'They are products of a culture in which to tell a lie … creates no dissonance. They don't suffer from the problem of telling lies that exists in Judeo-Christian culture. Truth is seen as an irrelevant category. There is only that which serves your purpose and that which doesn't. They see themselves as emissaries of a national movement for whom everything is permissible. There is no such thing as 'the truth'". Ehud Barak, quoted in Benny Morris, 'Camp David and After.'
8 This constituted the biggest margin of victory ever, by far, in Israel's electoral history.
9 This position was only challenged three years later, in 2004, in the debate between the former head of the research division of Military Intelligence (1996–2001) and CoGAT (Coordinator of Government Activities in the (occupied) Territories) (2001–03), Amos Gilad, and his erstwhile superior, former head of Military Intelligence, Amos Malka, and featured prominently in the pages of *Ha'aretz* in June. It began with a number of articles by Akiva Eldar that appeared in *Ha'aretz* on 10/11 June 2004, in which Amos Malka was quoted at length, disputing the widespread 'there is no Palestinian partner' theory, which he attributed to a large extent to Gilad's influence. Malka has claimed that no document produced by the Military Intelligence's research division (or any other intelligence agency) ever backed up Gilad's conception (the Hebrew term *kontseptsia* consciously plays on the intelligence failures in the run-up to the Yom Kippur war) and that Gilad, now head of the political-military unit at the Defence

Ministry, retroactively changed the assessments for the government he now works for. Malka asserts clearly that 'if Gilad claims that MI's evaluation was – at least until the Taba meetings – that Arafat did not intend to reach an agreement, then he is distorting the truth. Throughout his service, MI's evaluation was that Arafat's flexibility range is limited, but that it was possible to reach an agreement with him.' (Yoav Stern, another former MI official supports probe of assessments, *Ha'aretz*, 13 June 2004). Malka's claims have been supported by Gilad's erstwhile immediate subordinate, former head of the Palestinian affairs section of Military Intelligence Col. Ephraim Lavie, former Shin Bet head Ami Ayalon, and Arab affairs expert and former advisor on Palestinian affairs to the head of the Shin Bet, Matti Steinberg, who, now retired, has demanded that the 'mistaken conception' be 'reviewed critically' and replaced with a conceptual framework 'better suited to the facts'. Rubinstein, D., 'The Stronger Side Creates Reality', *Ha'aretz*, 22 June 2004.

10 In an interview Benny Morris stated: 'It would be really nice if the Palestinians also knew and observed the truth about their past – their leaders and their mistakes, and their bloodthirstiness … I know the reasons why the Palestinians are not able to face their past … Islam suffers from a lack of self-criticism – if you like it's like Catholicism 1,000 years ago. Christianity had developed in such a way and in so many different ways, and so many self-critical ways, that self-criticism is inbuilt into it – and even some tolerance of the other. These are things which haven't happened in Islam and it affects the way Arab culture has generally developed and exists today … So long as they don't face their past as many Israelis have managed to do over the past few years, we won't have a solution.' Interview with Benny Morris, Jerusalem, 17 February 2004.

11 Huntington, S., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order,* New York: Simon & Shuster, 1996, first published as an article 'The Clash of Civilizations?' in *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993, vol. 72, no. 3. The main hypothesis of this work is that after the collapse of Communism the world has returned to division along 'civilizational' lines, rather than 'ideological' lines as defined the clash between capitalism and communism. Huntington defines these civilizations in the following manner: Western, Latin American, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, and Slavic-Orthodox. Future conflicts according to this theory will occur at the micro- and macro-level between civilizations, and as they struggle for control of international institutions, and military and economic power. The main axis for this 'clash' falls between the 'Western' civilizations and the 'Islamic' civilization. This theory has been hugely influential in shaping the way American policy-makers, in particular, view the world. For a refutation of Huntington's hypothesis see Fox, J., 'Ethnic minorities and the clash of civilizations: A quantitative analysis of Huntington's thesis', *British Journal of Political Science*, 2002, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 415–35. Fox has written extensively on ethnic identities and conflict. Also see Fox, J., 'Nationalism vs. Civilizations: An Assessment of Alternate Theories on the Future of Ethnic Identity and Conflict', *National Identities*, 2003, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 283–307.

12 The failure of Camp David resulted in much soul-searching from the Israeli left. For example, Israeli author Amos Oz, one of the most renowned authors in Israel and a leading figure in the Israeli left, discussed the viability of the peace process in the pages of Israeli daily newspaper, *Yediot Aharonot*, on 29 August 2000. His article illustrated the pervasive nature of the hegemonic discourse – he criticized the Palestinians for not embracing Barak's peace proposals which he claimed were the most far-reaching peace proposals ever advanced to the Palestinians by any Israeli government, as well as criticizing the Israeli left for not supporting Barak's efforts.

13 Ram, U., 'Historiosophical Foundations of Historical Strife in Israel', *The Journal of Israeli History, Politics, Society, Culture*, Summer/Autumn 2001, vol. 20, no. 2/3, p. 50.

14 Quoted from Lori, A., 'Leaving? Us?', *Ha'aretz* Magazine, 27 June 2003.

15 The *Hesder Yeshiva* is a combination of military service and religious *yeshiva* study.
16 See Newman, D., *Jewish Settlement in the West Bank: The Role of Gush Emunim*, Durham: University of Durham, 1982; Morris, B., *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict 1881–1998*, New York: Alfred Knopf, 1999, 329–36. As members of the *Gush* act as mayors of many regional and local settlement councils, the movement also controls the YESHA Council (*Mo'etzet Yesha*), which functions as a coordinating body, regional parliament, and interest group. YESHA is a Hebrew acronym for Judea and Samaria (the two areas forming the West Bank), and Gaza. It is the official body that therefore often represents more hard-line ideological views on behalf of the settler population than prevailing political attitudes really are.
17 See Peled Y. and Shafir, G., 'New Day on the Frontier', in *Being Israeli: the Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
18 As shown in the previous chapter, post-Zionist scholarship identified the Zionist settler movement as a form of colonialism, though not displaying all the characteristics or developing out of the same historical processes as the colonial projects of imperial powers such as France and Britain. Conquest of the land and various methods of controlling or dominating the native population were, according to this model, central to Zionism's success as a national movement.
19 He argued that that the only way to make peace with the Arabs, or at least to force them to accept the existence of the Jewish state, is in military terms, by beating them into submission. See Shlaim, A., *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, London, Penguin Press, 2000.
20 Jewish Leadership is a group founded by former *Zo Artzenu* leader Moshe Feiglin, who was convicted of sedition following the assassination of PM Rabin in 1995. The group has the explicit aim of taking over the largest mainstream party in Israeli politics (the *Likud*) and turning it into a vehicle for nationalist-religious, or Neo-Zionist, ideology and politics.
21 A large Jewish settlement in the West Bank.
22 He defines this objective quite simply: 'The only useful definition of victory is the conclusion of a peace that accords with Israel's interests, and the strategic objective of war is that which will force the Palestinians to acquiesce to Israeli objectives … Israel has no choice but to respond to the PLO's threat of politicide by destroying the PLO.' Klein, Y., *Israel's War with the Palestinians: Sources, Political Objectives, and Operational Means*, 2001, Policy Paper No. 213, p. 8.
23 Interview with Yitzhak Klein, Jerusalem, 27 June 2001.
24 Many neo-Zionist (including right-wing) opponents of Oslo share this view, especially since the successful vote was not passed with a Jewish majority but through the inclusion of the votes of the Arab MK's.
25 This is a reference to the British policy of Appeasement vis-à-vis Hitler before the Second World War.
26 See Segev, T., *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust*, trans. Haim Watzman, New York: Henry Holt & Co, 1991.
27 Outside Israel, the hegemonic Labour Zionist discourse on the Holocaust (as a moral precept for the Israeli State) also has been challenged, mainly by American Jews, who are highly critical of Israel, or who are anti-Zionist. Though this group appears to be very small, it has some highly vocal advocates, such as Norman Finkelstein and Noam Chomsky. They argue that Zionism has 'captured' the experience and memory of the Holocaust, using it for its own political ends, binding it within a discourse where to be a Jew, and not to accept that the Holocaust provides the moral foundation for the State of Israel and its actions, is a virtually untenable position and often earns them the title of being 'self-hating Jews'. See Finkelstein, N., *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering*, New York: Verso, 2000.
28 Yitzhak Klein, personal correspondence with author.

29 Hazony, Y., 'The Jewish State Doesn't Live Here Anymore', *Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 7 July 2000, p. 13.
30 The Hebrew University was founded in 1925 and was the first university to be established in Palestine.
31 Hazony, Y., *The Jewish State: the Struggle for Israel's Soul*, New York: Basic Books, 2000, p. xxvi.
32 This hypothesis has been challenged by Allan Arkush, who argues that Hazony erroneously blames Martin Buber and the German intellectual elite of the pre- and early-state period for today's intellectual post-Zionist current because he fails to engage with the defenders of Zionism and the post-Zionists. According to Arkush, Hazony has retreated to the past for his defence of Zionism and response to post-Zionism. Arkush believes that Zionism needs to engage not retract in order to revive itself. Arkush, A., 'The Jewish State and Its Internal Enemies: Yoram Hazony Versus Martin Buber and His "Ideological Children"', *Jewish Social Studies*, Winter 2001, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 169–91.
33 Hazony, *The Jewish State*, xxii.
34 Ibid., p. 30.
35 Many left-wing institutes function in the same manner; however, in this work right-leaning think tanks are mentioned to frame right-wing efforts to influence societal discourse, identity, and policy. The left-wing institutions, it can be argued, function within the parameters of the hegemonic discourse and serve to maintain, adjust, and perpetuate it. Due to constraints of space, they are not examined as a separate realm linking power and knowledge.
36 Lauder was also Benjamin Netanyahu's most important financial backer during his campaign for the premiership in 1996.
37 Again it must be stressed that Klein is an example of the multifaceted nature of neo-Zionism, and contributed to several strains of the movement at one time.
38 Oren, M., *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*, London: Penguin Books, 2003.
39 Oren states: 'I don't come from the right – I worked with Rabin – I come from Labour Zionism. I grew up in the Labour Zionism movement. What then brings us all together? Firstly, this is a Zionist institute and in a world of post-Zionism that says something already. Second of all, it's conservative but not on issues of the West Bank and Gaza. We don't deal with West Bank/Gaza here – we deal with issues of social policy and economics, which I have nothing to do with because I'm a socialist and nobody cares. I am a conservative historian though, in my methodology and in my approach, and my starting point is not that Israel was created in sin.' Interview with Michael Oren, Jerusalem, 16 February 2004.
40 For example see Bar-Tal, B., 'Societal Beliefs in Times of Intractable Conflict: The Israeli Case', *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 1998, vol. 9, pp. 22–50. (Also published in *Megamot*, 1999, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 443–91[Hebrew]; 'The Rocky Road Toward Peace: Societal Beliefs Functional to Intractable Conflict in Israeli School Textbooks', *Journal of Peace Research*, 1998, vol. 35, pp. 723–42; Bar-Tal, B., and Labin, D., 'The Effect of a Major Event on Stereotyping: Terrorist Attacks in Israel and Israeli Adolescents' Perceptions of Palestinians, Jordanians and Arabs', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 2001, vol. 31, pp. 1–17; Bar-Tal, D. and Harel, A. S., 'Teachers as Agents of Political Influence In The Israeli High Schools', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 2002, vol. 18, pp. 121–34; Bar-Tal, D., 'Collective Memory, Intractable Conflict and Reconciliation', *Presentation at the Stockholm International Forum: Truth, Justice and Reconciliation*, 24 April 2002.)
41 Interview with Daniel Bar-Tal, 2 February 2004.
42 Naveh, E., untitled unpublished manuscript, 'In the Space between Times gone by and Times to come', Introduction.

43 'I was blamed as someone who is not patriotic enough; who is willing to install some doubt in Israeli students about their righteousness.' Interview with Eyal Naveh, Tel Aviv, 4 February 2004.
44 'In Israel, New Grade School Texts for History Replace Myths with Facts', *New York Times*, 14 August 1999.
45 The advertisement ran: 'Oppose it! Do not buy it! Do not study from it and do not teach from it. The book is written in a post-Zionist spirit that will weaken the pupil's sense of the rightfulness of the Zionist way and of the establishment of the State of Israel, to the point of undermining our right to our country … This book rewrites our history, distorts and falsifies facts, and trains pupils to identify with the Arab side and even to understand Arab terrorism as a supposedly legitimate political struggle. Do not allow your children, the citizens of the future, to serve as hostages in the hands of the new historians. Do not buy Eyal Naveh's book!' *Ha'aretz*, 10 September 1999.
46 Naveh, 'In the Space between Times Gone By and Times to Come'.
47 Hazony, Y., Oren, M. and Polisar, D., *The Quiet Revolution in the Teaching of Zionist History: A Comparative Study of Education Ministry Textbooks on the 20th Century*, Jerusalem: The Shalem Center, September 2000.
48 Ya'akobi, D., (ed.), *A World of Changes* [Hebrew], Jerusalem: Education Ministry, 1999.
49 Rosenblum, J., 'How Not to Eat Crow', *The Jerusalem Post*, 27 April 2001.
50 Bartal explains: 'The left-wingers are not only historians or history teachers or Hebrew University professors but everyone who is an intellectual. Which … is the main thrust of neo-conservatism in America. If you think too much, if you ask too many questions. If you doubt some icons of the past.' Interview with Israel Bartal, 16 March 2004.
51 Interview with Israel Bartal, 16 March 2004.
52 It is interesting to note that Bartal associated anti-Zionism with post-Zionism in much the same way as did Hazony and other neo-Zionists such as Limor Livnat.
53 Interview with Ron Breiman, Tel Aviv, 17 February 2004.
54 Breiman describes a meeting he had with current Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, during a tour of a West Bank settlement. Breiman relates that Sharon, having taken the tour, apologized for thinking of Israel's borders only in terms of defence and security, instead of religion and history. Breiman explains: 'Maybe for security you can have all kinds of solutions, but from the ideological point of view you can't say we don't have the right to be in Judea and Samaria and not in Tel Aviv – our history started in Judea and Samaria, not in Tel Aviv. When Zionism was established 100 years ago, Tel Aviv didn't exist.' Interview with Ron Breiman, Tel Aviv, 17 February 2004.
55 Interview with Ron Breiman, Tel Aviv, 17 February 2004.
56 Available at http://www.acpr.org.il/about/index.html, accessed June 2005.
57 Ibid.
58 Key neo-con figures include Irving Kristol, a Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute since 1988 and a lifetime member of the Council on Foreign Relations since 1972; Paul Wolfowitz, former Deputy Minister of Defence and President of the World Bank; Richard Perle, chairman of the Defence Policy Board Advisory Committee which advises the Department of Defence and current resident fellow at the conservative think tank American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research; Norman Podhoretz, Editor-in-Chief of the American Jewish Committee's monthly magazine *Commentary* from 1960 until his retirement in 1995 and currently a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.
59 For two different readings of neo-conservatism see Stelzer, I. (ed.), *The Neo-Con Reader*, New York: Grove Press, 2004, and Halper, S. and Clarke, J., *America Alone: The Neo-conservatives and the Global Order*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
60 Professor Shlomo Sharan contributed a paper on post-Zionism for ACPR: Sharan, S., 'Zionism, the Post Zionists and Myth: A Critique', *Ariel Center Policy Paper No. 134*,

2001. Though unwilling to be interviewed on the topic he did state: 'I detest those people (post-Zionists), and have no wish to get into a polemic about them. I wrote the book – it's all I have to say on the matter. It's caused me nothing but aggravation and psychological distress. There is no bone in my body that has anything but contempt for the left.' Phone Interview with Shlomo Sharan, Israel, 26 February 2004.

61 He argues: 'I cannot accept that Jews are not allowed to live in any part of the world. Suppose tomorrow France decides that Jews are not allowed to live in half of Paris. What will people say? That France is anti-Semitic. They will not accept this. So how can I accept that Jews are not allowed to live in certain parts of the land of Israel? The other thing is I cannot accept that parts of my land will be considered as a foreign country. I cannot tell my children that they are allowed to live in Tel Aviv but not in Hebron for example. Why? Because they are Jews. Then it's pure racism.' Interview with Ron Breiman, Tel Aviv, 17 February 2004.

Conclusion

1 Historian Linda Colley examines this relationship in her book: Colley, L., *Britons: Forging British Nationalism*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992. She explains how a combination of economic incentives, internal violence, and war with France led to a distinct British national identity emerging.

2 Rogan, E. L. and Shlaim, A. (eds), *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 2.

3 Crucial to the resolution of the conflict, there has been no structural change in the operations of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For a powerful insight into the occupation viewed through the problematic of donor aid, see Keating, M., Le More, A., and Lowe, R., *Aid, Diplomacy and Facts on the Ground: The Case of Palestine*, London: Chatham House, 2005.

4 Bar-Tal, D., 'Collective Memory, Intractable Conflict and Reconciliation', *A Presentation at the Stockholm International Forum: Truth, Justice and Reconciliation*, 24 April 2002.

5 Indeed, the Geneva Initiative, launched in October 2003, by Yossi Beilin, a former Labour minister, and Yasser Abed Rabbo, who has served as the Palestinian Authority's Minister of Cabinet Affairs and who participated in previous official negotiations, includes a clause that calls for a joint historical narrative for both Palestinians and Israelis, under the reconciliation steps included in their Accord. It reads: 'The Parties will encourage and promote the development of cooperation between their relevant institutions and civil societies in creating forums for exchanging historical narratives and enhancing mutual understanding regarding the past … The Parties shall encourage and facilitate exchanges in order to disseminate a richer appreciation of these respective narratives, in the fields of formal and informal education, by providing conditions for direct contacts between schools, educational institutions and civil society … The Parties may consider cross-community cultural programs in order to promote the goals of conciliation in relation to their respective histories … These programs may include developing appropriate ways of commemorating those villages and communities that existed prior to 1949.'

6 Beinin, J., 'Forgetfulness for Memory: The Limits of Israeli New History', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 2005, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 6–23.

7 These include the geo-political circumstances of Israel: being surrounded by the hostile 'Other', the military as a major identity-shaping tool, the distinction between the Occident and the Orient, the distinction Zionism makes between home and diaspora, and the role of victim and victor, amongst other things.

8 Haim Ramon is a good example of neo-Zionism. Initially a Labour MK, serving as Minister of Health under Rabin, he opposed Ehud Barak's proposal for Labour to enter

into a coalition with Ariel Sharon. Yet following Sharon's split from the *Likud* and the establishment of *Kadima*, Ramon left Labour to join the new party, emerging as one of the government's hawks during the Second Lebanon War.

9 Literally meaning Forward.

10 For an overview of the neo-con/neo-Zionist convergence as demonstrated by the relationship between George W. Bush and Ariel Sharon, see Matthews, M., *Lost Years: Bush, Sharon and the Failure in the Middle East*, New York: Nation Books, 2007.

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