RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM AND NEGOTIATION: ISLAMIC IDENTITY AND THE RESOLUTION OF THE ISRAEL/PALESTINE CONFLICT

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SHIRLEY DE VILLIERS

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Abstract

The use of violence in the Israel/Palestine conflict has been justified and legitimised by an appeal to religion. Militant Islamist organisations like Hamas have become central players in the Palestinian political landscape as a result of the popular support that they enjoy. This thesis aims to investigate the reasons for this support by analysing the Israel/Palestine conflict in terms of Human Needs Theory.

According to this Theory, humans have essential needs that need to be fulfilled in order to ensure survival and development. Among these needs, the need for identity and recognition of identity is of vital importance. This thesis thus explores the concept of identity as a need, and investigates this need as it relates to inter-group conflict.

In situating this theory in the Israel/Palestine conflict, the study examines how organisations like Hamas have Islamised Palestinian national identity in order to garner political support. The central contention, then, is that the primary identity group of the Palestinian population is no longer nationalist, but Islamic/nationalist.

In Islamising the conflict with Israel as well as Palestinian identity, Hamas has been able to justify its often indiscriminate use of violence by appealing to religion. The conflict is thus perceived to be one between two absolutes – that of Islam versus Judaism.

In considering the conflict as one of identities struggling for survival in a climate of perceived threat, any attempt at resolution of the conflict needs to include a focus on needs-based issues. The problem-solving approach to negotiation allows for parties to

consider issues of identity, recognition and security needs, and thus ensures that the root causes of conflicts are addressed. The contention is that this approach is vital to any conflict resolution strategy where identity needs are at stake, and it provides the grounding for the success of more traditional zero-sum bargaining methods.

A recognition of Islamic identity in negotiation processes in Israel/Palestine may thus make for a more comprehensive conflict resolution strategy, and make the outcomes of negotiations more acceptable to the people of Palestine, thus undermining the acceptance of violence that exists at present.

Table of Contents

Preface v

Introduction 1

Chapter One: Human Needs Theory 9

Human Needs and Conflict 10

Identity as a Human Need 13

Identity as a Conflict Provoking Need 16

Identity, Nationalism and Religion 21

Conclusion 25

Chapter Two: The Islamisation of Palestinian Identity 26

Nationalism and National Identity in Palestine 26

The Islamisation of Palestinian Identity 30

The Impact of Islamisation on the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict 35

The Impact of Islamisation on Settlement of the Conflict 41

Conclusion 45

Chapter Three: Conflict Resolution 47

Methods of Third-Party Intervention 49

Stages of Conflict Escalation and Relevant Resolution Methods 55

The Oslo Accords as Problem-solving Negotiation 59

Failure of the Oslo Accords 62

Conclusion 64

Conclusion 65

Bibliography 73

Preface

The nature of the topic of this thesis required in-depth and relatively recent research of the Israel/Palestine conflict. Due to the fact that I was located at Rhodes University, Grahamstown for the duration of the writing of this thesis, I had to make use of reading material and resources available to me, and compile an analysis of the conflict from these materials.

While the Internet is not regarded as an ideal resource for academic research, the nature of my enquiry dictated that I find information beyond that offered in the libraries available to me. The Internet references used in this thesis all come from credible sources and constitute sound academic research, and were used in cases where journal articles or books failed to provide me with the information that I required.

These sources, together with the academic journal articles and books, enabled me to put the Israel/Palestine conflict in perspective, analyse it, and make inferences with regard to the importance of reconceptualising conflict resolution in this particular context.

Many thanks to my supervisors, Dr Gary Baines of the Rhodes University History Department and Professor Peter Vale of the Rhodes University Political and International Studies Department. The time and effort that they spent discussing my thesis with me, offering criticisms and keeping me focused is greatly appreciated.

Introduction

The Israel/Palestine conflict has generally been considered in a religious light - in the Palestinian perspective, as a struggle of Muslims against an enemy that occupied Islamic land and dispossessed Muslim people, and in the Israeli perspective, as a fight against anti-Semitism and the protection of an historical Jewish territory (Humphries: 2001: 196). While the conflict is perceived to be rooted in biblical history, it is a struggle not only of religious difference, but also over land, resources, sovereignty, and most importantly, the survival of groups who perceive their ethnic and cultural identity to be under threat (Humphries: 2001: 46 - 48). The central protagonists - the Jewish Israelis and the Palestinian Arabs - both feel resentment over past injury and are unwilling to agree to a settlement that might undermine their security. The shared sense of victimisation by the Israelis and Palestinians, both political and psychological, is crucial as it provides a driving force in the conflict. In addition, neither is in a position to impose its will on the other over the long term, particularly as the actions of radical groups have increased the polarisation of the conflict.

The rise of radical religious nationalism within both groups has led to an increase in violence, where this violence continues to undermine the peace process. While the Jewish religious right has been influential in preventing settlement of the conflict, this thesis aims to explore how the actions of Islamist[1] movements like the Islamic Resistance Movement[2] have affected the conflict and attempts to settle it by mobilising Islamic identity.

While Muslim militants place the roots of the Israel/Palestine conflict in the distant

[1] I use the term "Islamism" rather than "fundamentalism" due to the fact that "fundamentalism" is rooted in a specific Protestant experience, premised on the fact that the Bible is the true word of God and should be understood literally. It makes no sense to speak of this in terms of Islam where the Qur'an is considered to be the literal word of God, and is understood as such. More importantly, "'fundamentalism' suggests the restoration of a pure, unsullied, and authentic form of the religion" where, in fact, these movements rather seek to revitalise and re-Islamise modern Muslim societies (Beinin & Stork: 1997: 3).

[2] The Islamic Resistance, formed by the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine in 1987, is otherwise known as *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya*, or its acronym, Hamas, which means "zeal" (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

past, citing the confrontation between Muhammad and the Jews of Medina as the first manifestation of this conflict in order to highlight the innate hostility between the two groups, the conflict, in fact, only dates back to the twentieth century (Humphries: 2001: 46). Similarly, Hauss (2001: 135 - 136) argues that while both the Jewish Israelis and the Palestinian Arabs have powerful claims to the same territory, and while that land is home to both Islamic and Jewish sacred religious sites, the conflict is largely a product of twentieth-century political choices.

The Jewish population of Palestine numbered only about 8 per cent of the total population of the region in the early 1900s, but anti-Semitism in Europe brought the realisation that there was no future for Jews as a minority in Europe, and that a Jewish future was most likely to be secured in Palestine, the traditional homeland of the Jews (Hauss: 2001: 136; Humphries: 2001: 49). This idea of a Jewish National Home in Palestine was formally propagated by the 1917 Balfour Declaration – perceived on all sides to be an endorsement of a Jewish state – and the 1922 League of Nations Mandate for Palestine. As the flight of Jews to Palestine increased in the 1930s and 1940s, Palestinians came to resent the new settlers on "their" land, and general strikes and an open revolt against British rule took place in the region (Hauss: 2001: 137).

The Peel Commission, established by Britain, investigated the situation and, in 1937, reported that as the Jews and Palestinians were unlikely to work out their differences, partition of the region, and the creation of a small Jewish state seemed the most viable solution (Hauss: 2001: 137). On the 29th of November 1947 the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181, calling for the creation of a Jewish state, a resolution that the Palestinians and other Arab states were adamantly opposed to. The State of Israel was proclaimed on the 14th of May 1948, and with this, the Palestinians not only lost control over most of their territory, but at least 800 000, or over 80 percent of the Palestinian population fled, while others fell under control of the new state of Israel (Hauss: 2001: 139).

Nationalism in the Middle East resulted from attempts by political movements to attain power (Halliday: 2000: 40), and arose as the dominant ideology in the Middle East as early as the 1930s, where national liberation movements attempted to end foreign domination of their territories (Salame: 1995: 28). The popularity of

nationalism peaked in the 1950s and 1960s during the era of Gamal 'Abd-al Nasir, the Algerian revolution and Ba'thist rule in Syria and Iraq (Gelvin: 1999: 72). The economic and political shortcomings of secular nationalism, together with the rise of conservative Gulf monarchies and the failure of unity schemes of a United Arab Republic proved the nationalism espoused by these movements to be empty and superficial. This led to disillusionment with the movement and provided the opportunity for the rise in popularity and influence of movements like the Muslim Brotherhood[3] in Egypt.

The waning of political support for secular nationalism in the Middle East can be attributed to various factors, the first of which is the fact that secular nationalism is considered to be a Western ideal that was not only imposed on former colonies, but also resulted in the erosion of traditional cultures and values (Juergensmeyer: 1993: 19 – 20). Further, secular nationalist movements are not only considered to be responsible for moral decline in their communities, but are also held accountable for their failure to perform in terms of promises of political freedom, economic prosperity and social justice (Juergensmeyer: 1993: 21). Secular nationalism failed to meet the hopes and expectations of the people it represented. In the fifties and sixties, the hopes of people in the Arab world hinged on ideas of socialism and pan-Arab nationalism, but the failure of these sparked a return to older and more familiar concepts (Ayubi: 1991: 65).

Despite the initial mobilisation of support based on nationalism, the waning of respect for secular nationalist movements has provided Islamist movements with an ability to situate themselves as a viable alternative to these movements in the political and social arenas. Thus, in the Middle East, one finds a move away from secularism toward a growing concern with a cultural identity that is considered to be under threat (Halliday: 2000: 43). As such, popular disillusionment with nationalism in the Middle

[3] Founded by Hasan al-Banna in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood's original aims were moral as well as political. It sought to reform society by encouraging a return to Islam rather than by attempting to capture the state apparatus through direct political action. The Brotherhood became increasingly radicalised in the years following the Second World War, and formed Hamas in the Palestinian occupied territories at the beginning of the 1987 intifada (Ruthven: 1997: 124).

East has left an ideological vacuum that is being filled by Islamism (Gelvin: 1999: 72).

The incorporation of Islam into politics should not be understood as a revival of faith in the Middle East region, but rather as an assertion of the relevance of that belief, selectively applied to politics (Halliday: 2000: 132). The claim is thus that Islam should not only play a dominant role in politics and social life, but should also determine the identity of Muslim groups. So, in attempting to gain and maintain control of the state, Islamist movements assert the claim of determining "a politics for Muslim peoples" (Halliday: 2000: 132).

The growing support of Islamist movements within the region points to the fact that these movements provide a means of furthering the interests and values of a specific identity group. According to Humphries (2001: 197), it is reductionist to argue that the rise of Islamism is rooted solely in the socio-economic conditions of the region. After all, secular movements attack the same socio-economic and political problems that Islamist movements do. What, then, explains the support that these Islamist movements enjoy, and how have they come to replace secular nationalist movements in mobilising political support?

It is the contention of this thesis that Palestinian Islamist movements like Hamas have surpassed nationalist movements in terms of political support not only because of disillusionment with secular nationalism, but also because they have been able to mobilise the population of Palestine by making appeals to Islamic identity. Furthermore, while this identity is of great importance to the people of that region, it is an identity that has, largely, been overlooked in negotiation processes. This oversight has not only provided these groups with increased political credibility among the people of Palestine as they are not seen to harbour a conciliatory attitude towards Israel, but it has also hampered the successful implementation of peace initiatives in the region.

As such, it is necessary to account for the importance of identity as a human need and situate it in group conflict. This thesis begins, then, with a discussion of human needs as they pertain to protracted social and political conflicts. While traditional methods

of conflict resolution focus on coercion and control through power mechanisms as a means of controlling conflict, Human Needs Theory posits that this merely targets the symptoms of the conflict rather than the cause (Azar: 1990: 145).

Conflicts arise largely as a result of the denial of those human needs that are essential for human development and survival (Azar: 1990: 146). More importantly, conflicts often arise as a result of the denial of the human need for recognition of social identity. The first chapter, then, analyses the importance of identity for both individuals and groups. In addition, in examining Social Identity Theory, it shows not only that the formation of identity groups is necessarily competitive and discriminatory, but also that when the survival of an identity group is perceived to be under threat, conflict is likely to ensue.

Due to the fact that multiple identities (for example, nationalist, Pan-Arab and Islamic identities) exist, in times of social or political upheaval, these multiple identities come to be expressed in terms of one dominant identity (Jabri: 1996: 119 – 120). In the current world context, nationalism provides an opportunity for individuals to evaluate themselves positively, thus making national groups valuable to identify with.

However, because nations and national identities are constructed, identities are circumstantial, volatile and diverse (Gelvin: 1999: 73). Nationalism is thus "a site where different representations of the nation contest and negotiate with each other" (Duara in Gelvin: 1999: 74). As such, national identity is not static but is constantly changing, and religion may provide a unifying force in nationalism, where political support is mobilised by religious-nationalist groups not only in terms of protection of a given territory and people, but also in order to protect a given cultural system. The construction of identity by religious-nationalist groups, then, can alter the primary identity of a group of people by mobilising them in order to protect a traditional, religious identity.

In terms of this, then, the second chapter of this thesis situates the analysis of identity and conflict in the Israel/Palestine conflict. While Palestinian nationalism has, in the past, been the primary identity group, Islamist movements have shifted the primary identity group in that region by conflating Islam and nationalism.

A contradiction appears to exist, though, between nationalist claims for an autonomous nation state, culture and identity, and the Islamic aim of uniting Muslim peoples, regardless of nationality or ethnicity. Because the goal of Islamist movements, of ordering society according to the dictates of Islam, can only be accomplished by capturing the levers of the state, these associations have been structured in a manner that coheres with the regional state system (Gelvin: 1999: 85). Furthermore, Islamist movements have accepted the existence of modern states, despite their once artificially drawn boundaries, and thus shape their agendas and goals to accord with national realities (Esposito: 1984: 293). Islamist movements have thus needed to reformulate their position in order to achieve equivalent support to nationalist claims, while upholding the basis of Islamic identity. So, while propagating a pan-Islamic ideal, most Islamist movements have had to include nationalist sentiments in their ideological platforms. Thus Ira Lapidus (in Juergensmeyer: 1993: 47) states that "the capacity of Islam to symbolise social identity has been merged into national feeling."

In Palestine, then, national identity has been Islamised by groups like Hamas through the means of embracing national symbols of Palestine and endowing these with Islamic meaning, thus turning the struggle for the sake of a Palestinian nation into an Islamic struggle for Palestine (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). Palestinian identity has been Islamised through imbuing national symbols with an Islamic essence, mythologising history, and sanctifying Palestine.

The effect of this has been to give religious sanction to actions carried out by these groups. While Halliday (1995: 112, 118) notes that there is no necessary or historic link between the religion of Islam and terrorist acts, it appears that the rise of Islamist movements, and their invocation of religion as a justification for political actions, is indicative of particular social forces and issues present within their societies. In this sense, these actions may be considered to be either a response to social problems, or they may arise as a result of state intrusion or external domination. In addition, Halliday (2000: 134) argues that the invocation of Islam is contingent not only on the social and political context in which Islamist movements act, but also on the political goals that these movements aspire to.

Important for conflict resolution, then, is the recognition of the importance of human needs in generating and perpetuating conflict. The third chapter of this thesis examines the problem-solving or consultation approach to conflict resolution, where human needs provide the basis for the theory.

Traditional conflict resolution theories consider substantive, conflict of interest issues is the root causes of conflict, and tend to consider negotiation to be a bargaining process where one party's loss is the other's gain. In contrast, the problem-solving approach recognises that conflicts are generally over subjective, or non-negotiable needs or values, and that, in reconceptualising conflict in this way, and in promoting a reconceptualisation of the conflict by the parties to the conflict, the means of resolving it are easier to attain. The problem-solving approach, then, may be used as a complement or a precursor to more traditional approaches as it makes substantive issues easier to resolve by facilitating communication between conflicting parties. The interactive nature of the problem-solving approach aims to assist parties in redefining their situations so that the conflict is perceived to be a shared predicament, thus placing an emphasis on constructive co-operation between the parties rather than on zero-sum bargaining. The problem-solving approach thus incorporates the aspect of human needs into the negotiation process in order to ensure that the root causes of the conflict are addressed.

The Oslo Declaration of Principles between Israel and Palestine provided a reasonably accurate depiction of the workings of the problem-solving approach to negotiations. Yet, this peace programme has never been implemented successfully, largely due to the opposition that militant groups have levelled at it. In examining the failings of the Declaration of Principles, one conclusion that can be reached is that, in focussing on the economic needs of the people of Israel and Palestine, rather than on subjective issues like the Islamic Palestinian Identity, the Accords failed to find the support needed to make them effective.

In conclusion, then, this thesis proposes to examine the viability of a more coherent conflict resolution strategy in Israel and Palestine – a strategy that not only takes cognisance of human needs and their place in conflict, but one that more fully

understands the social dynamics of the region, and thus includes a recognition of identity in the search for peace.

Chapter 1

"There exist specific and relatively enduring human needs which individuals will inevitably strive to satisfy, even at the cost of personal disorientation and social disruption"

- Rosati, Carroll & Coate (1990: 156).

According to human needs theorists, the interaction of individuals and groups striving for the satisfaction of basic human needs within specific contexts forms the foundation of politics (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 156). The central proposition that these theorists hold is that behaviour is determined by the level at which needs are satisfied "as related to the relative priority placed on these needs," where human needs are considered to be necessary for the full realisation and development of individuals (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 166).

According to Azar (1990: 145), protracted social conflict is characterised by economic and technological underdevelopment, unintegrated social and political systems, and distributive injustice. While it may seem that the only possibility of resolving these conflicts rests on the exercise of coercion or control through power mechanisms, this, in effect, is merely targeting the symptoms of the conflict rather than the root causes, and the conflict is thus likely to continue.

Azar (1990: 146-147) suggests that while situations of protracted social conflict appear to be unique in terms of local circumstances, histories and attitudes, certain structural and behavioural characteristics are common to all such situations, and these pertain to the satisfaction of basic human needs. The sources of protracted social conflict are rooted deeply in the lives and ontological beings of those involved (Azar 1990: 146). The root of social conflict is the denial of those elements required by all people and all societies for development; that is, the root of social conflict is the denial of needs – for security, social recognition of identity and effective participation – the pursuit of which is a compelling need in all. While it is difficult to detect, define or measure a sense of insecurity or other need deprivations, the ethnic and communal cleavages and political structures associated with them are easier to discern (Azar: 1990: 146). Thus, ethnic cleavages are manifestations of the deprivation not just of

one need usually (the need for ethnic identity), but of many. Thus, in this view, the denial of human needs is the primary source of conflict domestically, communally and internationally, where human beings act in order to safeguard their needs, or to ensure satisfaction of needs of which they have been deprived. Social conflicts, then, develop from attempts to combat conditions of perceived victimisation in terms of the denial of identity in the political process, the absence of security of culture and valued relationships, and the absence of effective political participation in remedying this victimisation.

This chapter proposes to investigate human needs as they pertain to conflict. The first section of this chapter will discuss human needs theory as a valuable analytical tool, as well as providing an examination of the rather nebulous concepts of needs, interests and values. The concept of identity as a need is examined in the second section of this chapter, where issues of self-esteem, social identity and group identity are discussed. The third section of this chapter will show how the need for identity may be conflict provoking, where identity groups are used as the vehicle by which individuals ensure that their basic needs are met. Finally, this chapter will relate identity needs to the concepts of nationalism and religious nationalism in order to show how the salience of the identity group chosen may influence conflict.

I

Unlike theories of social conflict as espoused by, say, the political realists, Human Needs Theory does not make inductive analyses from the basis of an untestable hypothesis regarding the inherent goodness of badness of human nature (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 160). Rather, human needs theorists make deductive analyses of the human condition by developing a theory based on fundamental assumptions about human behaviour and by paying attention to the impact that needs have on behaviour. Because needs theories recognise that the inherently conflictual and complex nature of the human condition causes individuals to join specific groups in the pursuit of the satisfaction of needs that are essential to human existence and full development, they provide a more realistic understanding of the sources that motivate human behaviour (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 159).

While theorists tend to assume that a basic set of universal needs exists as a result of man's "human-ness," and they further assume that this basic set contains both physiological and psychological elements, the difficulties of directly observing needs and observing the degree to which these are met pose problems for the theory as a whole (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 163 – 165). Further, the problem exists of determining exactly what the nature of these needs are: are they universals or are they culturally grounded; are they determined by socialisation or are they ontological givens? The contention of this thesis is that needs are universal requirements for human development and survival. Further, while needs may be manifested in various ways, this is a result of the more socially determined expression of needs through the values, interests and desires of specific communities. While needs may appear to differ across time and space, basic needs – both material and nonmaterial – exist. However, the expression of these needs, and the manifestation of needs deprivation may vary according to specific social contexts.

Masini (in Sites: 1990: 10) argues that

> needs can be understood abstractly to refer to those human requirements calling for a response that makes human survival and development possible in a given situation.

Burton (in Christie: 1997: 316) notes that, while needs are universal and thus commonly held by all, the expression of needs only becomes apparent in changing social and political conditions. As such, while the need for security is constant and universal, it may only become apparent in situations of danger or threat to the individual or group.

Maslow (in Fisher: 1990: 91) provides a hierarchy of needs, where lower order needs need to be satisfied before higher order needs are considered. His hierarchy includes self-actualisation needs, esteem needs, aesthetic needs, cognitive needs, belongingness needs, safety needs and physiological needs. Galtung (1980: 68), however, notes the inherent problem in seeing needs in a hierarchical fashion as this places a primacy on completely satisfying physiological (material) needs before focussing attention on other needs. A hierarchical ordering of needs thus fails to take into account that material needs are often subordinated to other, non-material needs in

certain circumstances (Galtung in Rubenstein: 1990: 341). Similarly, Lederer (in Fisher: 1990: 92) suggests that a hierarchical ordering of needs suggests a distinction between more and less basic needs with respect to the urgency of satisfaction where, in fact, the higher order needs in Maslow's hierarchy are equally important for human development once extreme material deprivation has been overcome.

While Maslow's hierarchical ordering of needs is problematic, the satisfaction of basic needs - both physiological and psychological - is essential for the survival and development of individuals. Needs, then, are inherent drives for survival and development (Burton: 1990: 39). Burton (1990: 37) argues that these basic needs will be pursued by individuals and, in situations where basic needs are not satisfied within the norms of society, "behaviour that is outside the legal norms of society" will arise. So, while needs are generally satisfied through socially sanctioned activities, where this is impossible, individuals attempt to satisfy needs through proscribed means (Christie: 1997: 316).

One must, however, draw a distinction between needs, interests and values. According to Galtung (1980: 59), needs are tied to the concept of necessity in terms of what it means to be human, and these are generally universal. In contrast, interests and values are more temporal and are also historically determined (Roy: 1990: 121). According to Burton (1990: 37), values are "those ideas, habits, customs and beliefs that are characteristic of particular social communities." Values are those linguistic, religious, class or ethnic features that lead to the formation of different identity groups. Burton (1990: 37) further argues that in situations of oppression, discrimination and underprivilege, the defence of values is integral to security and identity needs, and that the preservation of values in these situations is the basis of defensive and aggressive behaviour. Interests are those social, political and economic aspirations of individuals and identity groups in society that influence the policies and tactics of groups pursuing satisfaction of needs and values. In contrast to needs and, on occasion, values, interests are not an inherent part of the individual. Further, they typically relate to material goods and are thus negotiable (Burton: 1990: 38). Values and interests are thus closely tied to socialisation and a specific social, political and economic environment, and these shape and limit how individuals may act on and interpret their needs (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 168).

II

Sites (1990: 24) argues that it makes no sense to speak of a need for identity. While Maslow and other theorists believe that there is a need to belong to a group, and a need for freedom, according to Sites (1990: 24), these are not needs but necessary conditions for the satisfaction of needs. So, if needs are to be satisfied, it is necessary for persons to be both free, and meaningfully included in groups. Further, Sites (1990: 24) argues that to speak of the need for identity is nonsensical to the extent that all people have an identity of one sort or another, and that many groups provide a basis for identity. He argues that people who have an "identity problem" are those who are not included meaningfully in a group (a necessary condition for need satisfaction). The argument is thus that the perceived need for identity is not a need so much as a necessary condition (at least in terms of social identity and identity group formation) for the gratification of other needs.

In contrast, Roy (1990: 136) argues that identity needs are composed of both self-esteem and social recognition needs. Due to the fact that identity is not static but open to diverse and often incompatible stimuli, an individual selects that which he or she aspires to be. Thus,

> out of the list of numerous selves, the seeker of his truest, strongest, deepest self, as William James insists 'pick[s] out the one on which to stake his salvation' (Roy: 1990: 136).

In building a self-identity, it is important for the individual that others recognise what he or she aspires to be. The individual's concept of self, of personal identity, is taken from the position of evaluation by others. Without recognition of the self by others, the need for self-esteem goes unmet. Without recognition of the self by others, the personal or social identity of the individual cannot be formed. The need for identity that Sites disputes is comprised of the inter-related needs of self-esteem and recognition by others, where individuals select a dominant group identity in times of conflict or social change.

On the whole, human needs theories have tended to ignore the essential role that

society plays in the development of the individual, as society is considered to be merely instrumental in helping individuals to realise their purpose or needs (Roy: 1990: 132). As such, it is necessary to consider social identity theory and social psychology in an examination of needs theory in order to provide a more comprehensive account of identity formation and of the pivotal role that society plays, not only in identity formation, but also in group conflict.

Social identity theory is based on a recognition of early differentiation between the self and others, where the individual's identity is not constant, but rather a shifting framework based on interactions between the self and the environment (Jabri: 1996: 125). Nudler (in Fisher: 1990: 94) argues that identity is developed and maintained through the process of interaction between the individual and his/her social and political environment. As such, the need for identity is one that is determined more by social structures than the motivations of individual actors. Similarly, Mead (in Roy: 1990: 135) argues that personal identity is constructed through social interaction where,

> through the assumption of roles and the learning and use of language, individuals internalise the attitudes and beliefs of others and develop the faculty of seeing themselves as others see them.

While the individual as unit of analysis is useful in pointing to identity needs as fundamental to individual survival and well-being, individual survival and well-being impacts on societal survival and well-being (Jabri: 1996: 122). Thus, individual needs for identity may be extrapolated to the collectivity where a violation of identational expression has both individual and collective consequences (Jabri: 1996: 122).

Searle-White (2001: 50) notes that an individual's sense of self derives from two aspects. The first of these is personal identity, an identity that derives from individual history and experiences. The second aspect is that of a social identity that derives from an individual's membership of various social groups. Social identity is the individual's "knowledge that he belongs to a certain social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tjafel in Cottam & Cottam: 2001: 89). As such, personal and group identity are both an inherent part of the individual Self.

In order to cope with the complexity of modern society, Cottam and Cottam (2001: 88) suggest that individuals impose order and organise their social environment through the categorisation of people and objects. This identification of socially significant groupings, then, provides meaning and structure in a complicated world. Social identity thus serves the necessary function of ordering the environment in order to provide a system of self-reference and create and define an individual's place in society (Cottam & Cottam: 2001: 89).

Social identity theory, then, considers self-identity as actualised through group identification, where individuals pursue their interests and need satisfaction through their identity groups (Azar: 1990: 147). The link between the individual and the group is thus provided by social identity theory, as individual needs are pursued through group identification and action. The individual's self-esteem and self-worth needs are realised through group interaction, and identity then becomes the primary vehicle through which groups satisfy needs.

The individual's self-esteem is thus tied to both social identity, and the need for to strive for a positive self-image. Integral to this is the process of social comparison, where an individual's and group's self-esteem is enhanced by perceptions of one's group as distinct and different from other groups and better than other groups (Cottam & Cottam: 2001: 89).

The propositions that derive from this are that (1) individuals strive to maintain a positive self-image and social identity, (2) membership of a group contributes to social identity, (3) comparisons with other groups form the basis of evaluation of one's own group, and (4) positive social identity is based on positive comparisons (Fisher: 1990: 95 – 96). Thus, pressure to maintain distinctiveness and to evaluate the in-group positively lead to discrimination between groups. Fisher (1990: 96) thus argues that the basic need for social identity fuels the comparative process between groups, and this results in discrimination between groups.

III

Many needs theorists consider the concept of identity, and social identity in particular, to be a fundamental requirement for human development, and thus central to ongoing ethnic and religious conflicts. Podestra (in Christie: 1997: 319) examined conflicts in 25 countries and discovered that all these conflicts were rooted in the need to assert group identity and the fear of group extinction. In recent works on the causes and effects of political violence, the importance of identity needs has taken a place of central importance. Jabri (1996: 345) argues that needs associated with identity - self-identification, group-identification, recognition and belonging needs - constitute a useful paradigm through which to analyse conflict. The analysis of conflict in terms of identity needs indicates the similarities between seemingly disparate forms of conflict. Further, identity needs suggest a relation between individual psychology and group behaviour, where, in many cases of ethnic, national or religious conflict, needs for welfare, freedom and security are subordinated to needs of identity, recognition and belongingness (Jabri: 1996: 345 - 346).

Fisher (1990: 104) argues that group identity is supportive of self-esteem, as, when the group is threatened, the individual members of that group feel threatened in a personal sense. Fisher thus argues that a threat toward the fundamental identity of a group operates at both group and individual levels, and this enhances the potential for intergroup conflict. Finally, Klineberg argues that the need to belong to and identify with a group is almost universal and, as a result,

> human beings are willing to suffer immeasurably and to sacrifice – and in some cases take – their own lives in the struggle for and the protection of their identity (Fisher: 1990: 95).

Social identity theorists combine the concepts of self-esteem, social identity and social comparison in order to explain intergroup discrimination and conflict. Group formation and group differentiation provide the underlying causes of emergent conflicts, where the need for positive self-esteem is seen as a prime motivating force in group membership and social categorisation (Jabri: 1996: 125). Social identity theory posits a 'natural' human tendency to partition the world into comprehensible units, where these units are generally identity groups. Social identity, then, is clarified

by comparison with other groups and a desire for positive self-evaluation provides the motive for differentiation between the in- and out-groups (Jabri: 1996: 124). This process of differentiation thus forms the basis of intergroup discrimination where an individual not only identifies with a group, but also has a drive to "enhance and protect the identifications he or she has made" (Bloom in Jabri: 1996: 124).

Thus Sherif (in Fisher: 1990: 95) argues that intergroup behaviour involves individuals interacting in terms of their group identifications. The mere perception of belonging to a group stimulates intergroup discrimination without there necessarily being a conflict of interests (Fisher: 1990: 95). The key concept in explaining this discrimination is that of social identity –

> those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which he or she belongs and the emotional and value significance of such membership. Social identity is seen as an important contributor to an individual's self-esteem or positive self-concept (Fisher: 1990: 95).

In terms of social identity and conflict, Fisher (1990: 103) argues that conflicts of interests, values, needs or power cause intergroup conflict as conflict over material needs is encompassed in competing interests that generally relate to resource scarcity. So,

> because people want to evaluate their group positively in comparison with others, conflict can occur over scarce social resources, economic resources, territory, values, ideology, and unmet needs regarding identity, security, status or power (Cottam & Cottam: 2001: 89).

Following the arguments of Burton and Azar (in Fisher: 1990: 103), all social groups have fundamental needs for recognition, identity, security and participation, and, when these needs go unmet, one finds a push for redress or need satisfaction.

The discrimination that arises between groups leads to destructive social interaction, according to Fisher (1990: 103), as conflict over need-satisfiers creates a mutually competitive attitude between groups. Further, conflict, cultural differences, the competitive orientation of groups, and a history of antagonism cause a perceived threat among the groups. This, according to Fisher, results in ethnocentrism, where one finds in-group solidarity and out-group hostility.

In terms of recognition, identity and security, if the actions of the other group are perceived to limit or deny these needs in any way, then the social group is placed in a position where its existence is threatened (Fisher: 1990: 104). This further stimulates in-group loyalty and results in a deterioration of intergroup relations, particularly as a result of the fact that group identity and cohesion is related to ethnocentrism, and self-esteem is positively related to group identity and cohesion, and negatively related to perceived threat.

While Fisher frames his argument in terms of ethnocentrism, the argument is not exclusive to ethnocentric discrimination. The formation of identity groups results in intergroup discrimination, where the identity groups are not necessarily based on ethnic identification, but may be religious, gender-based, or class-based. Individual identity is comprised of multiple group identifications and, in times of conflict or social change, the individual selects a dominant identity, and thus a dominant identity group, through which to pursue need satisfaction. Christie (1997: 143) threfore argues that individuals pick and choose particular identities depending on particular issues, and "the quest for self-determination takes various forms at different times and places and renders different identities meaningful because they serve as its vehicle."

Important for conflict resolution then, is the recognition of the multiple shifting identities of individuals. In conflict situations, the multiple identities of individuals come to be expressed in terms of one dominant identity that arises from individuals' membership of bounded communities (Jabri: 1996: 119 - 120). Further, in choosing a salient identity, individuals must make relevant group comparisons. So,

> one's political-group identifications, for example, will become highly salient and influential on behaviour when issues settled in the political system are under consideration (Cottam & Cottam: 2001: 91).

Finally, according to Jabri (1996: 128 - 129), the conduct and articulations of identity are situated historically, where "memories, myths, symbolic orders, and self-imagery form a constitutive part of the practical consciousness of situated individuals," and thus form a background that provides meaning to identity. Further, because identities are constructed as 'self' in relation to an 'other,' and because the construction of identity involves the active selection of particular modes of representation, the ability

to consolidate and reproduce authoritative power is dependent on the capacity to manipulate the memory traces of a community (Jabri: 1996: 131). Thus, while

> episodic ceremonials, symbolic representations, images of past glories and present achievements reinforce a sense of identity among the masses called upon in time of mobilisation for conflict,

the decision of the individual to support such action "is based on her or his need for identity" (Jabri: 1996: 132, 123).

When considering conflicts in terms of needs theory, it is necessary to consider the goals and tactics of the groups concerned. According to Burton (1990: 41), fierce or violent opposition can result from different responses to common conditions, even by persons and groups who have shared goals. The reason for this is the different tactics that different groups may use to attempt to achieve the same objective, and the tactic chosen - the choice of satisfier - may be conflict creating. The point here is that when analysing a conflict, one needs to separate out the goals and tactics - the negotiable differences over choice of satisfiers - from the non-negotiable needs which are held in common (Burton: 1990: 41).

Burton (1990: 41) argues that belief systems often govern tactics - when the nature of a problem is not understood, the approach that is adopted may not relate to the essence of the problem. The example that Burton cites to illustrate this is that the problem might be an increase in terrorism, the goal is to abolish this, but the tactic dictated by a belief system or a prejudice may not target the real cause of the problem. So, for example, the tactic might be to further suppress minority groups, when this would actually only exacerbate the problem.

For this reason, human needs theory needs to address the issue of ideology. Burton (1990: 41) argues ideologies are generally put forward as values and goals, but they could also be tactics. The need, then, is to differentiate between ideologies, goals and tactics. Needs, values and interests determine political objectives. As we have already established,

> human needs are universal and, therefore, held in common. Cultural and other values are shared to a large degree in any society. Interests, however, separate members of societies into groupings, frequently in opposition to each other (Burton: 1990: 42).

According to this framework, then, the fundamental goals of different ideologies would be similar - there may be differences in interests, and possibly in values, but needs are universal, and would thus be held in common.

Thus, Rosati, Carroll and Coate (1990: 170) argue that ideology affects the way that individuals and groups perceive their needs due to the power of those in authority over communication. While individuals pick and choose identities as required by different social situations, this argument merely implies that because the articulations of identity are situated historically - as memories, myths or symbolic orders - and thus form a background that creates meaning, the capacity of different groups to manipulate the memory traces of a community impact on the mobilisation of support for that specific identity. Ideologies impact on individuals' perception or awareness of the level of need satisfaction, and this influences not only the degree to which individuals participate in socio-political relationships, but also the extent to which social and political structures are viewed as legitimate (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 169). As such, ideology can explain why individuals or groups take action in order to satisfy unmet needs, as ideology determines the extent to which individuals are truly conscious of their socio-economic and political situations. As ideologies may alter the individual's consciousness of needs deprivation and reveal the exploited power in situations of deprivation, the awareness that they create may be enough to cause groups to challenge the status quo (Rosati, Carroll & Coate: 1990: 171).

Burton (1990: 44 - 45) notes that ideologies such as "fundamentalism" are emerging in states where unsolved problems are giving rise to frustration and desperation, and these extreme responses are characterised by high levels of both state and individual violence. These ideologies do not address the sources of the problem, but rather provide a rationalisation or justification of pragmatic responses to desperate situations. The different responses to commonly experienced conditions, the different tactics used, give rise to fierce and violent conflict, where the root of that conflict is not the tactic used, but the deprivation of needs of individuals or identity groups.

IV

According to Hastings (1997: 3), a nation may be formed from one or more ethnicities, but possesses or at least claims to possess the right to political identity, autonomy, and control over a specific territory. Nationalism may thus either be considered to be a theory or a practice of this belief. As a theory, nationalism is profoundly ideological, and assumes that the world is divided into groups of people with distinct characteristics and notes that these groups have an entitlement to a certain piece of land (Halliday: 2000: 32). Further, nationalism as an ideology assumes that these groups' entitlement to the practice of their own customs in an autonomous territory should be respected by other groups.

As a practice, nationalism involves the belief that a specific ethnic or national tradition is valuable and needs protection within the bounds of a nation-state. As such, nationalism is most likely to arise where a specific ethnicity or nation feels itself under threat (Hastings: 1997 3). Further, Halliday (2000: 32) argues that, as a practice, nationalism comprises a set of movements that assert a right to self-determination, and that this is achieved through these movements' definition of what the nation is, who its people are, and what characteristics, culture, history and language this nation is to have. As a practice, then, Juergensmeyer (1993: 6) argues that nationalism involves not only the extremes of patriotism, but also

> more subdued expressions of identity based on shared assumptions regarding why a community constitutes a nation and why the state that rules it is legitimate.

According to Anderson (in Searle-White: 2001: 52), a nation is "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign." As such, a nation is a community where the belief exists that each individual is connected to other members of that community. This belief need not be based solely on physical or economic connections between people but, more importantly, it is based on the psychological connection between members of that community that makes the nation real. So, "these connections do not have to be historically 'true'; they simply need to be psychologically real" (Searle-White: 2001: 53).

While some theories of nationalism ascribe the power of nationalism to the fact that nations are historical entities that have developed over centuries, and with them have developed tradition, roots and historical narratives, the modernist view of nationalism involves the conferral of legitimacy on the modern state (Halliday: 2000: 37). In this view, nationalist movements make use of history in order to mobilise political support and this, further,

> involves not the reproduction of a given identity or tradition so much as the selection, reformulation and, if necessary, invention of symbols and narratives to suit present purposes" (Halliday: 2000: 37).

According to Halliday (2000: 37 - 38), there is thus no one given identity or past from which these movements draw, but rather a range of symbols that they may appropriate in order to suit their political purposes and the past thus provides a means of conferring legitimacy on present actions. The point of this argument is not to claim that the historical link that nations may have with a certain territory is empty, but rather to show that the history and identity of a given people may be moulded by nationalist groups in order to confer legitimacy on a certain political state of affairs, and justify certain actions. Nationalism, then, is not a static concept, but one that is constantly changing and contingent on present needs in a community. Halliday (2000: 41) thus argues that nationalism

> is not a matter, as nationalists present it, of a 'true' versus a 'false' definition of identity, but shifts in identity and arguments about it, corresponding to shifting social and political relations.

National identity, then, evolves and changes in response to changing social conditions or through explicit efforts of certain groups (Searle-White: 2001: 57 - 58). Shifts and changes in national identity come about as a result of the need of groups and individuals in those groups to evaluate themselves positively.

The relevance of social identity theory to nationalism is that, if the nation provides an opportunity for individuals to evaluate themselves positively, then it is likely that individuals will identify with that national group (Searl-White: 2001: 62). Furthermore, nationalism provides more opportunities for positive in-group evaluation in the current world context. Firstly, the status that nationhood provides – the ability to give citizenship, receive international aid, and sit in the United Nations – makes national groups striving for independence valuable to identify with because "it may

achieve these markers of status vis-à-vis other national groups" (Searle-White: 2001: 62 – 63). Secondly, the international system privileges the self-determination of national groups. Thus, in terms of international respect, national groups are valuable to identify with. National identity, then, provides the means for a positive social identity as, if individuals believe that a group identity will enhance their self-esteem, then they will identify with that group, particularly "when they are suffering economic or social deprivation that diminishes their sense of self-esteem (Searle-White: 2001: 63 – 64).

National identity also becomes salient when it is under threat. Because self-perception is evaluative, individuals affiliate with national identities because they provide a means of improving self-esteem through positive evaluation with other national groups (Searle-White: 2001: 64).

> Changes in the social-political context, such as a potential bid for independence or a threat to some aspect of our integrity as a people, intensify that identification (Searle-White: 2001: 64).

Finally, because national identity is continually shifting and evolving, and because it is contingent on historical and social circumstances, a religious identity can serve the same function as a national identity (Searle-White: 2001: 65).

At first sight, the concept of religious nationalism – the attempt to link religion to the modern nation-state (Juergensmeyer: 1993: 40) – appears antithetical for, as Halliday (2000: 26) argues,

> once you invoke religion as a legitimation of description of difference, then you have forfeited the right to talk in terms of divisions in the contemporary world, sovereign states or 'national' cultures.

For this reason, secular nationalism and religion are often presented as rivals, where the presence of one undermines the importance of the other. Conversely, it has been argued that it is the similarities between secular nationalism and religion that situate these two belief systems in opposition to one another. Smart (in Juergensmeyer: 1993: 15) argues that both religion and nationalism incorporate doctrine, myth, ethics, ritual, experience and social organisation. Further, both provide the

ethical function of providing an overarching framework of moral order, a framework that commands ultimate loyalty from those who subscribe to it" (Juergensmeyer: 1993: 15).

Similarly, Armstrong (1997: 597) argues that both nationalism and religion appeal to the "human urge for identification with movements that transcend the individual," and thus, particularly in times of social transformation, the need for protection against a breakdown of identity may be provided for by nationalist or religious movements.

According to Juergensmeyer (1996: 4 - 8), three types of religious nationalism may be distinguished. The first is that of ethnic religious nationalism, where religion is politicised in terms of people and land, and where certain groups wish to establish a political identity of their own. The second religious nationalism is ideological in nature. In the realm of ideas and beliefs, this form of nationalism combines religious elements with the notion of the modern nation-state, and thus "religionises" politics by placing political issues in a sacred context. The final type of nationalism, one that is of particular importance for this thesis, is that of ethno-ideological religious nationalism. According to Juergensmeyer (1996: 8), ethno-ideological religious nationalism occurs where movements tap traditional symbols and beliefs for a new framework of ideas for a social order, and act both against ethnic rivals and against secular leaders of their own ethnic group.

Ethno-ideological religious nationalism develops within groups that have become disillusioned with secular nationalism and thus not only assert the legitimacy of traditional values, but also attempt to define a group identity based on these traditional values (Juergensmeyer: 1996: 9 – 10). Further, these groups perceive that the problem with politics is religious at some level, and they argue, therefore, that political problems have religious causes, and that religious goals may have political solutions (Juergensmeyer: 1996: 11). The third step in the development of religious nationalism is the identification of the enemy, where this enemy is identified as the source of social problems, and is portrayed in religious terms. Finally, the result of ethno-ideological religious nationalism is that violent images are given religious meaning, and this religious overtone tends to legitimise and sanitise acts of violence (Juergensmeyer: 1996: 15 – 16).

Young (in Cottam & Cottam: 2001: 29) suggests that common religious identity is recognised as a source of political unity that may override other identity differences. This makes religion both a historical rival and ally of nationalism. Many modern identity conflicts involve groups that have a religious-sectarian identity component[4]. As such, religious communities may provide a primary community base for nation-statehood, and can, therefore, tend to parallel nationalist manifestations (Cottom & Cottam: 2001: 30).

V

Social identity theory thus considers the very notion of identity to be both inherently competitive and conflictual. Furthermore, where the primary mobilising identity is that of nationalism or religious nationalism, group identifications tend to be stronger, and thus more likely to lead to conflict, particularly where this identity is considered to be under threat. The following chapter will consider the importance of identity in the Israel/Palestine conflict, where a religious identity has been mobilised through the Islamisation of society, and where this identity has great implications, both for the course of the conflict, and for attempted resolution thereof.

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[4] See, for example, the conflicts of Northern Ireland, Lebanon and the post Cold War Yugoslavian conflicts.

Chapter 2

"By looking at the Islamist upsurge simply as a result of the failure of the regimes in power we prevent ourselves from understanding the secret of its capacity to mobilise."

- Burgat, F. (2004: 43)

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, far from solely being a conflict over material resources, is a conflict over identity and threats to the identity of two peoples. As the dominant identities being mobilised in the conflict have changed, one needs to analyse the conflict in terms of social identity and human needs theory in order to fully understand it.

The rise in popularity of Islamism in the region, together with the increased emphasis placed on Islamic identity in Palestine, has altered the conflict to the extent that religion is used to sanction acts of violence and Islamist movements have largely de-railed any attempts at settlement of the conflict.

This chapter proposes to investigate the changing nature of nationalism and national identity in Palestine, considering why Islamist movements have surpassed secular nationalist movements in mobilising a Palestinian Islamic identity. Secondly, this chapter aims to consider how Hamas has Islamised the identity of Palestinians by constructing an Islamic national identity. The Islamisation of identity in Palestine has had great consequences both for the conflict itself, and for proposed settlement thereof. The third and fourth sections of this chapter propose to analyse the effect of Islamisation in the escalation of the conflict, and the resultant effects on the negotiation process respectively.

I

In the Arab world, collective identities contain multiple components, with religion, Arab nationalism and territorial patriotism being the most important (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). While these elements of identity are not exclusive and do often complement one another, the emphasis given to each of

these identities depends on the historical developments of a given time and place. The Arab-Israeli conflict has passed through various phases, each adding a different dimension to the type of conflict.

The conflict began as a conflict between two nationalist groups – Zionism and Palestinian nationalism – each claiming rights to the same territory (Litvak: 1998: 148). After the 1936 Palestinian rebellion, the conflict came to encompass various Arab states, and from the 1950s, the conflict was considered to be a struggle between Israel – perceived as a bridgehead of Western Imperialism – and pan-Arab nationalism. With the growing power and legitimacy of territorial states in the region, the conflict transformed from that of a zero-sum game between rival nationalist movements into a conflict between states (Litvak: 1998: 148). The Islamisation of the conflict, however, has situated it as a battle between two rival religions – Islam and Judaism.

Litvak (1998: 148) notes that

> the religious idiom has always played an important role in the evolution of Palestinian nationalism and in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Previously, though, nationalist Palestinian elites made use of Islamic symbols and themes in order to mobilise support for a national cause whose aims were largely political and secular. The rise of political Islam in the Middle East, and particularly in the Palestinian conflict has, however, presented a change from past patterns, leading to a new perception that the root causes and essence of the conflict are based in a war between religions (Litvak: 1998: 149).

According to Esposito (1984: 60), European colonialism precipitated a major crisis in Muslim identity where, near the end of the nineteenth century, the Islamic world had largely succumbed – politically, economically and militarily – to European colonialism. Further, he argues that this crisis of identity has affected the political aspirations of Muslims in the modern era.

A contradiction appears to exist, though, between the particularism of nationalism and the universal nature of Islam, and, as such, despite the fact that Islam "provides a national identity" (Gellner in Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm),

Islamist movements have generally been ambivalent towards nationalism. These movements have, however, been forced to accommodate nationalist sentiments in their teachings due to the rise of nationalism as a dominant ideology and political force in the region as early as the 1930s. In addition, the growing power of territorial states in the Middle East has transformed the notion of the pan-Islamic ideal into one that could only be fulfilled in the very distant future, if ever (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). In addition, Esposito (1984: 60) argues that Islam been integral to the rise of nationalism and religious nationalism to the extent that the modern nation has been redefined and legitimised to take precedence over a pan-Islamic community. So, despite the pan-Islamic rhetoric of Islamist movements, the reality of Islam's division into territorial nation-states has largely been accepted by Islamists in the Middle East, and these movements are thus organised along the lines of territorial units, and limit their activities to their respective states (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

The founding of Hamas at the beginning of the 1987 Palestinian Intifada by the Muslim Brethren was aimed at allowing that organisation to play a major role in Palestinian politics. Hamas' ideology was thus formulated not only in order to provide a rival to the secular nationalism of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), but also to refute Zionist-Israeli claims to the land (Litvak: 1998: 149). Furthermore, because of the unresolved questions of Palestinian nation-formation and statehood, Hamas has had to present itself as a religious as well as a nationalist alternative to the secular PLO leadership in order to appeal to a wider constituency (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). The formation of Hamas then, was the result not only of a growing Palestinian nationalist orientation in the region, but also of a desire to pursue a leadership role in Palestinian politics (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm) at a time when the PLO was politically and financially strangled by Israel and thus perceived as incapable of satisfying the aspirations of Palestinians (Keppel: 2003: 152).

An emphasis on the "Islamic essence" of the Palestinian cause lies at the heard of Hamas' ideology (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). Hamas argues that the PLO misconstrues the conflict by portraying it as a conflict between Palestinian nationalism and Zionism when, in fact, the Palestinian predicament is

caused by the absence of Islam from the realities of Palestinian society (Litvak: 1998: 149), and the Palestinian cause is thus "not about land and soil, but it is about faith and belief" (Hamas, quoted in Litvak: 1998: 148). Furthermore, Hamas argues that the liberation of Palestine can only be accomplished through Islam, since this is the only ideology "that can mobilise the full potentials of the people" (Litvak: 1998: 149).

In order to resolve the inherent tension between the religious and nationalist sentiments present in its ideology, Hamas has argued that the struggle with Israel is, in fact, a religious struggle between Islam and Judaism (Ganor: http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=2). The movement thus argues that its short-term goal is the establishment of an Islamic state in a liberated Palestine, after which a universal Islamic state presents the next challenge. The expanding concentric circles of liberation for Hamas, then, include first, Palestine, followed by Arab liberation, and, finally, the liberation of Islam (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). Hamas has thus reconciled the contradiction between its pan-Islamic character and its specifically nationalist aspirations by presenting nationalism as a part of religious belief.
Furthermore,

> if Hamas had to accommodate nationalism because of the intifada, it did so by reinventing an Islamist tradition that is now regarded, especially among those generations politically forged by the intifada, as an integral part of Palestinian national identity (Usher: 1997: 348).

The success and popularity of Hamas may be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, the movement gained great popularity, particularly in Gaza, where socio-economic hardship has nourished Islamic influence in the area, and where Hamas' emphasis on a solution that would include the liberation of all Palestine is attractive to the population. The bulk of support for Islamist movements in Palestine is drawn from socially conservative sectors of the population, who focus on the application of Islamic values and law to all social spheres, and are concerned with "the guarantee of Palestinians' human rights as Muslims" (Jarrar in Usher: 1997: 347). These demands have, however, become imbued with more overtly nationalist slogans, and the armed struggle of movements like Hamas has drawn a larger number of young, militant

supporters for whom Islam is not just synonymous with the mosque or shar'ia[5] rule, but also with liberation from Israeli occupation (Usher: 1997: 347).

Secondly, because the PLO leadership moved away from Palestine, Islamist leaders active in Palestine were perceived to be better situated to serve the interests of the Palestinians. Finally, the Islamist infrastructure in the territories has enabled Hamas to successfully form a social system that has provided an alternate social-political structure to that of the PLO. The fact that the movement contributes to the daily life of Palestinians as well as to the struggle against Israel and occupation has greatly increased its prestige amongst the people of Palestine (International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism: http://www.ict.org.il/inter_ter/orgdet.cfm?orgid=13).

In presenting itself as an alternative to the secular PLO while maintaining wide support, Hamas has had to incorporate nationalist elements and discourse into its Islamic ideology, and has solved the nationalism/Islam dilemma through the Islamisation of Palestinian identity and the introduction of Palestinian elements into its pan-Islamic ideal (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). The movement has transformed nationalist ideology by inscribing it with a religious tone of "spiritual and community release" that more secular movements like the PLO are felt to lack (Usher: 1997: 348). Islam has thus provided a unifying rallying cry, identity and ideology for Palestinians (Esposito: 1984: 60). Movements like Hamas have thus accommodated nationalism by a reconstitution of Islamist tradition that is now regarded as an integral part of Palestinian identity (Usher: 1997: 248).

II

As was argued in the previous chapter, articulations of identity are situated historically, and memories, myths, symbolic orders and the like provide the backdrop that provides meaning to identity (Jabri: 1996: 128 – 129). Furthermore, "collective identity is constructed by and experienced through shared symbols and representations" (Azaryahu & Kook: 2002: 198).

[5] Islamic law distilled from holy texts and traditional jurisprudence (Keppel: 2003: 433)

The construction of identity is contingent on specific political and historical circumstances and reflects prevalent political interests and power relations. More importantly, it reflects the needs of political elites and their ability to manipulate symbols and notions of common heritage (Azaryahu & Kook: 2002: 199). The construction of identity, then, involves the active selection of specific modes of representation, and the ability to consolidate and reproduce authoritative power depends on the capacity to manipulate the memory traces of a community (Jabri: 1996: 131). A sense of identity is defined and maintained in terms of attachment to symbols and representations, and the power of these to evoke identification is decisive in determining the social relevance of these symbols and representations (Azaryahu & Kook: 2002: 198). In mobilising an identity in a manner that aims to incite action, it must thus appeal to values and symbols that inspire intense, immediate and instinctive responses (Humphries: 2001: 61).

Similarly, Azaryahu and Kook (2002: 196) argue that national identity is a thematisation of history in terms of a shared heritage and cultural traditions. As there is no one definitive and coherent notion of a national history, it is constructed and mediated by groups attempting to gain power or influence social organisation. The symbolic construction of identity thus takes place through iconic representations like national symbols and national history, and sanctification of territory. In order to attain and maintain a political influence in Palestine, then, Hamas has needed to Islamise the Palestinian national identity in order to achieve its political aims.

In order to attain the immediate goal of the liberation of Palestine and the formation of an Islamic state, Hamas has embraced national symbols of Palestine and endowed these with Islamic meaning in order to turn the struggle for the sake of a Palestinian nation into an Islamic struggle for Palestine. So, while Hamas is first and foremost a religious movement that would prefer to subordinate nationalist sentiments to Islamic ones, it needs to emphasise nationalist sentiments in order to mobilise political support (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

The Islamisation of identity has taken place through the construction of iconic representations, the Islamisation of the past, and the sanctification of Palestine. Hamas has embraced Palestinian symbols and imbued them with Islamic meaning. For

example, while the Muslim Brethren was represented by a green flag with Qur'anic messages inscribed on it, Hamas has adopted the Palestinian national flag, modified it by including an emblazoned shahada[6] and named it the "Islamic Palestinian Flag" (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). Likewise, Hamas activists wear gowns or masks sewn with the colours of the Palestinian flag during political processions and drape coffins of activists with the Palestinian flag.

Further, Hamas has made use of the map of Palestine in posters, graffiti and emblems in order to visually integrate the nationalist and Islamic message that it propagates by painting the map with the colours of the Palestinian flag and adding a picture of the Dome of the Rock to it. A further example that demonstrates the iconic representation of Islamic nationalism is the modification of the Muslim Brethren emblem by Hamas. While the original emblem showed the Qur'an amidst two crossed swords, the emblem of Hamas has replaced the Qur'an with the map of Palestine (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

Nationalist movements tend to shape the past in accordance with present goals and aspirations in order to shape a national collective memory, and thus construct a national collective identity. Because the Islamic people of Palestine have a shared history, myths and collective memory, Hamas has Islamised the conflict, not only to expand the support base by the inclusion of the nationalist component, but also by reconstituting the collective memory and history of the Palestinian people in order to ensure a unified identity group, and to mobilise the Islamic population of Palestine into support for violent confrontation.

While Arab nationalist historiography has argued that the inhabitants of the entire Middle East from the time of antiquity have been Arabs, Palestinian historiography has attempted to show how Palestinians have maintained distinct features and identity throughout history. The purpose of this is not only to shape a collective national memory, but also to refute Zionist claims to the territory by establishing a claim to the

[6] The Islamic profession of faith (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

land that pre-dates that of Israeli settlement (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

The rise of Islamist movements as a major political force has led to the emergence of an Islamist narrative of Palestinian history. The pre-Islamic past presents a point of conflict between nationalist and Islamist depictions of history. While nationalists incorporate this past national heritage in order to enhance the legitimacy of the nation state, Islamists regard this period as Jahili[7].

The version of Palestinian history articulated by Hamas is aimed not only at refuting Jewish claims to the territory, but also at providing historical justifications for opposing any compromise over Palestine (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). Nabil Shabib (in Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm) argues that Palestinians' legal and human rights are secondary to their religious-historical rights as the right of Muslims to Palestine is "a firm historical religious right which does not cease or diminish, which stems form our affiliation with Islam."

Hamas, then, overcomes the problem of the pre-Islamic past by claiming that the land of Palestine has been Islamic since the time of the patriarch, Abraham. Islamist historiographers argue that Palestine is the place where the first contact took place between the divine and the human through the monotheistic message delivered through Ibraham (Abraham). Ibrahim is believed to have built the mosque of al-Aqsa prior to Muhammad, thereby laying claim to Palestine as Islamic territory from that time forward (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). In pronouncing Ibrahim a Muslim, rather than the first pure monotheist, Hamas has readapted the classical Islamic view in order to serve current political needs.

In terms of the modern period, Islamist versions of history highlight the role of Shaykh Izz al-Din al-Qassam[8] as the religious leader who first launched armed jihad against the British and Zionists. While nationalists tend to avoid mention of Qassam's

[7] "The dark age of ignorance before Islam" (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

[8] A Muslim religious functionary, active in Haifa, who organised a Palestinian guerrilla movement against the British and Zionists in 1935. The military units of Hamas, the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, are named after him (Beinin & Stork: 1997: 6).

Syrian birthplace for fear of detracting from his Palestinian credentials, Hamas stresses the leading role of Qassam's followers who combined religious and patriotic activities. Qassam's role in the 1936 – 1939 rebellion in Palestine allows Hamas to answer PLO accusations of the inaction of Islamic groups in the Palestinian national struggle by drawing a direct line between its religious and patriotic activities and those of al-Qassam and his followers (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

Finally, Hamas Islamises the intifada by depicting it as a jihad[9] that originated by divine will in the mosques, in order to prevent a settlement of the Palestinian cause that would have been tantamount to a capitulation. The intifada, which broke out after twenty years of Israeli occupation, is perceived to embody the emergence of a new generation, "imbued with firm Islamic consciousness" after a period of spiritual preparation (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). The intifada is thus depicted as a return of an authentic Islamic identity to the Palestinian people.

In addition to the Islamisation of history, Palestinian identity is also Islamised through the sanctification of Islamic Palestine. Because Hamas has instilled patriotism as part of the Islamic belief system, Palestinian identity and patriotism have been imbued with spiritual Islamic meaning by sanctifying Palestine as an Islamic holy land (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). In doing so, and in stating that "there is no greater patriotism than a situation when the enemy usurps Muslim land," Hamas is able to turn the struggle for Palestine from one waged on nationalist grounds to one waged on Islamic identity (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

The sanctity of Palestine is based, firstly, on the fact that Allah chose al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem as the place for the ascension of the Prophet Muhammad to heaven. The importance of al-Aqsa as a holy site is extended to the whole of Palestine, and used by Hamas as a justification for distinguishing Palestine from other Islamic states (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

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[9] A lawful or holy war prescribed by the Shar'ia against infidels (Keppel: 2002: 432).

The second component of Palestine's sanctity is its designation as a waqf[10] by the Caliph 'Uman ibn al-Khattab. This points, again, to the inclusion of the particularism of nationalism in Islamism, despite the fact that this is an invention of tradition, as it has no legal basis in Shar'ia law. Hamas' insistence on the designation of Palestine as a waqf is aimed not only at sanctifying Palestinian land, but also in preventing Palestinian concessions over parts of Palestine as part of a political settlement with Israel (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

In times of conflict individuals choose that identity that is most likely to advance their interests and protect their self-esteem. Through the Islamisation of the Palestinian cause, Hamas has emphasised the totality of the struggle in Islamic terms that appeal to a disenfranchised, oppressed and alienated community like the Palestinians (Ranstorp: 1996: 52). In so doing, Hamas has merged Palestinian identity completely with Islam "by making Islam the principle component of Palestinian identity" (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

III

The Islamisation of Palestinian identity by Hamas has had profound effects on how the conflict is perceived by Palestinians, and how the violence in the conflict is justified. The ability of Hamas to legitimise violent action by appealing to religious principles, together with stereotyping of the enemy and the sense of victimisation within the conflict, have all been central to the ongoing and seemingly intractable nature of the Israel/Palestine conflict.

Hamas pursues its ideological vision in uncompromising holy terms as a battle between good and evil, where the distinction between the faithful and those standing outside the group "is reinforced in the daily discourse of the clerics" (Ranstorp: 1996: 51). Furthermore, the language of the clerics shapes the reality of the followers, reinforcing the loyalty and social obligation of members to the group, and reminding them of sacrifices that have already been made for the struggle (Ranstorp: 1996: 51). In doing this, Hamas draws heavily on religious symbolism and rituals in order to

[10] An inalienable religious endowment (Litvak: http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm).

reinforce a sense of collectivity. In this way, the totality of the struggle, perceived as an all-out war against its enemy, is often used to justify the level and intensity of violence.

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of religious nationalism is that the invocation of religion may be used to legitimise the use of violence. Juergensmeyer (1994: 171) argues that

> because religion has the ability to give moral sanction to violence, and violence is the most potent force that a nonlegal entity can possess, religion can be a potent political tool.

Religious extremists, while regularly striking at symbols of tyranny are relatively unconstrained in the lethality and indiscriminate nature of violence used. They view themselves as a divinely 'chosen people,' who possess religious sanction and justification for the violence, and also "often act out of the belief that the violence occurs in a divinely sanctioned juncture in history" (Ranstorp: 1996: 54).

In the case of Hamas, while religious principles provide it with credibility and legitimacy, and the Islamic base of the movement provides it with support by virtue of the Islamisation of identity, these same principles have also provided it with the ability to justify its use of force (Juergensmeyer: 2000: 79). As such, Litvak (1998: 156) argues that

> The struggle against Israel, then, is a jihad for the sake of God, which should never be abandoned ... Unlike the PLO, however, Hamas endows its jihad with religious meaning, declaring that it is fighting not only for the liberation of the homeland, but equally important in order to defend 'the Muslim person, Islamic culture, and Muslim holy sites, first and foremost among them al-Aqsa in Jerusalem.'

Cottam and Cottam (2001: 94) note that because personal identity is intricately tied up with group identity, where a cohesive group exists, members are more willing to make personal sacrifices for the group, as self-definition is contingent on group survival. An individual has a sense of importance because what she does in the group is important as it relates to the history of her people and their future. The meaning of an individual's life extends beyond just her, as, even if she were to die in the conflict, this would have meaning to the extent that it was in service of a greater goal (Searle-White: 2001: 98).

Thus, in drawing on religious symbolism to reinforce a sense of collectivity, Hamas also emphasises the reputation of the Hamas fighters. In emphasising the Islamic essence of the conflict, Hamas has glorified martyrdom based on Qur'anic passages promising everlasting life to those who die for the sake of God (Litvak: 1998: 158). To this end, Hamas has lionised martyrs with songs, poems and shrines, pictured martyrs on posters adorned with passages from the Qur'an, glorified suicide attacks as the epitome of martyrdom, and published books detailing the exploits of leading fighters killed in battle, thereby stressing their religious motivation and their reward in heaven (Ranstorp: 1996: 51).

Not only does the emphasis on the religious nature of the conflict provide justification for the use of violence, it also situates the conflict as an "unbridgeable dichotomy between two absolutes" – the religion of Islam and that of Judaism (Litvak: 1998: 159). In perceiving the conflict in this way, a zero-sum outcome seems to be the only possibility, where one identity group's gain is the other's loss, and where the continued survival of one threatens the survival of the other.

Ranstorp (1996: 57) notes that the use and sanctioning of religious violence requires a clearly defined enemy. The definition of the enemy by an identity group, and the decision to use religious violence against it, is dependent on, and shaped by, the degree of the sense of crisis threatening the faith and community of that group. This is generally shaped by a historical legacy of repression, economic inequality or social upheaval (Ranstorp: 1996: 57).

According to Fisher (1990: 108), high intensity conflict is created when groups are placed so that the existence of one appears to threaten the existence of the other, and this is particularly important where identities are fused with overlapping territory. In the Palestinian case, then, the creation of Israel was perceived as a threat to the identity and security of the Palestinian people. The conflict has become further protracted by virtue of the fact that the perception exists that recognition of one group appears to deny the legitimacy of the other. The intergroup discrimination that is required by identity groups for the establishment of a positive self-identity results in the de-humanisation of the other – a result that has serious implications for the legitimation of violence against the other identity group.

According to social identity theory, one attempts to enhance self-esteem through positive comparisons with other groups, where self-esteem is enhanced by perceptions of one's group being distinct and different from, and better than, other groups (Cottam & Cottam: 2001: 89). This does, however, lead to stereotyping, discrimination and in-group favouritism. As Ranstorp (1996: 54) argues, religious nationalist groups

> refer to their alien or secular enemies in dehumanising terms which may loosen the moral constraints for them in their employment of particularly destructive acts of terrorism.

According to Jabri (1996: 127) the implications of categorisation of self and other are central to understanding processes that legitimate violence. Stereotypical images of the enemy are intricately linked to the dehumanisation of the other, and this legitimates violent behaviour as, in foreswearing the humanity of the opposition, acts of terror are legitimised (Halliday: 2000: 83). So,

> an enemy stereotypified as diabolical and inferior is, as a consequence, presented by a leadership of a conflict party as a legitimate target of direct violence or of discrimination (Jabri: 1996: 127).

The result is that the enemy is presented as a monolithic whole, where both population and leadership are portrayed as one deserving target (Jabri: 1996: 127).

Furthermore, Juergensmeyer (1996: 13) argues that, where politics is seen in a religious manner, and where political problems are perceived to have religious causes, the enemy is usually identified in religious terms, either as a religious foe, or as irreligion – a force opposed to religion.

Litvak argues that "every national movement defines itself in opposition to some 'other'" (http://www.dayan.org/d&a-hamas-litvak.htm). In addition, the depiction and definition of the other, usually a negative one, reflects the perception of the self. Thus, where the PLO depicts the conflict as one between Palestinians and Zionists, Hamas views it as one between Islam and Judaism, or between Muslims and Jews. Hamas' emphasis on the religious essence of the conflict, leads to the perception that the conflict is one "between good personified by the Muslims who represent the party of God against 'evil incarnated,' 'the party of Satan' represented by the Jews" (Litvak: 1998: 150). While the Palestinians are depicted by Hamas as "a living people, creative

with unrivalled honour and generosity' (Hamas Charter in Litvak: 1998: 151), Jews are portrayed in demonic terms, as 'blood suckers' and 'butchers' who do not recognise honour and generosity outside their group (Litvak: 1998: 151). As such, acts of violence against Israelis and Jews are legitimised by the demonisation of that group of people.

In addition to identity stereotyping, conflict may also be exacerbated by a sense of victimisation. According to Searle-White (2001: 91), the perception of victimisation of an identity group serves to fuel conflict situations as it confers a moral authority, where actions may be taken against an enemy while still blaming them for the violence. Furthermore, "the egoism of victimisation" provides a moral legitimacy for continued struggle (Searle-White: 2001: 93). The consequence of the emphasis on victimisation is that of retribution and revenge, where an identity group seeks to right the psychological aspects of the injury by attaining recognition of the wrong by the aggressor, and by changing the aggressor's evaluation of the aggrieved (Searle-White: 2001: 95). Thus, because we evaluate ourselves in relation to others, things like 'honour' and 'pride' become synonymous with how we evaluate ourselves, and how we believe that others evaluate us. As such, when an identity group is aggrieved, it appears necessary to undertake retributive action or revenge in order to protect the integrity of that identity (Searle-White: 2001: 96). Thus,

> if we experience an injury to our people, and we decide not to respond or take revenge, we might be accused of not being sufficiently patriotic or nationalist (Searle-White: 2001: 97).

Similarly, Humphries (2001: 47 – 48) argues that in a political discourse framed by a sense of victimisation, one gains rights by virtue of having been a victim. Because being a victim involves a sense of violation, powerlessness and humiliation, the victim needs to feel whole again, and it is this need that impels demands for violent action. The central problem with the sense of victimisation in conflict is that acts of violence by members of one community against another generate a counter-reaction, and produces a hatred that may undermine co-existence between two communities (Halliday: 2000: 81).

The sense of Palestinian victimisation is apparent in Islamist arguments that, since the establishment of the state of Israel,

> the Zionist enemy speaks only the language of weapons and the methods of manoeuvring and deception in order to achieve its wishes for expansion. Against all this the Muslim nation has been divided into two groups: one was the group of governments and regimes that followed the enemy by dialogue and talks that brought us only harm and the loss of rights. The other, the group of the peoples led by the Jihadi movements, has understood the lesson from the beginning, and has identified the nature and the language of the enemy. They sacrificed both soul and fortune for the defence of Arabic and Islamic rights (Tala't Muslim in Paz: http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.dfm?articleid=407).

Both Israelis and Palestinians consider themselves victims of the other in the conflict, and this becomes apparent in the endless cycle of retributive attacks. So, for example, after the Hebron massacre of 1994, a West Bank Palestinian rammed a care full of explosives into a crowded bus station in the Israeli town of 'Afula, killing eight and wounding forty others. This "revenge" for Hebron was supported by the population of the Occupied Territories (Usher: 1997: 343). In return, Israel closed off the West Bank and Gaza, rounded up hundreds of Hamas "suspects" and launched punitive raids against Palestinians in order to uncover "Muslim extremists." This, in turn, chipped away at the support of the PLO, and lent increased credibility to Hamas (Usher: 1997: 344). This, then, is the central problem with regard to the Palestinian sense of victimisation – the repression that results from each attack by Hamas on Israel, lends more legitimacy and credence to continued terrorist activity.

Threats to a group identity operate at both an individual and group level. When an identity group is threatened, the individual members of that group feel threatened as a result of the fact that membership of that group is supportive of their individual self-esteem (Fisher: 1990: 104). A threat to the identity of a group is likely to enhance the potential for group conflict as this increases in-group identification and cohesion.

The religious overtones of the Israel/Palestine conflict have resulted in the perception that the Islamic identity is under threat. The Islamisation of Palestinian identity by Hamas has largely contributed to the cohesion of this identity group, where stereotyping and victimisation exacerbates the conflict, while the sanctification of violence by religion provides justification for continued struggle in the name of Islamic identity. Furthermore, the conclusion that one may draw from this is that, as

the Hamas Charter states, any negotiation with the enemy is a "concession of principle, and granting recognition to murderers and usurpers on rights which are not theirs over land in which they had not been born" (Litvak: 1998: 154).

IV

The rise and popularity of Islamist movements in Palestine impact greatly on attempts to settle the conflict in that region. Of particular interest to this thesis is the effect that these groups have had on the Declaration of Principles, or Oslo Accords, of 1993.

The Oslo process was conducted in secret between representatives of the Israeli government and the PLO. While the specificities of the negotiation process will be dealt with in the next chapter, I will briefly lay out the major decisions of the Declaration here: the Oslo Accords presented a gradual plan for Palestinian autonomy, where interim negotiations resulted in the decision that Israel would withdraw from Jericho and Gaza; a Palestinian National Authority (PNA) would be nominated; and the people of Palestine would be granted a five-year transitional period of Palestinian self-rule under the PNA.

The extreme exclusivity of the Oslo negotiation process made the Accord difficult to legitimise and implement in Israeli and Palestinian societies. As only a handful of people knew about the Declaration of Principles prior to its publication, many parties - both Israeli and Palestinian - felt excluded, and the consequences of this, particularly in terms of the exclusion of both Jewish and Islamic religious groupings had serious implications for the successful implementation of the Accord (Dale: http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html).

According to Dale (http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html), the frame for the Oslo channel was comprised of discussions about economic development and peace in the Middle East. However, both the PLO and the Israeli Labour Party government were secular actors who focussed on the importance of the economic dimension in their analysis of the Palestinian conflict. Critics of the Accord claimed that the secular

participants failed to develop corresponding religious arguments in order to legitimise their policies.

Due to the fact that no strategy was developed to include a religious dimension of the process in order to engage new political groupings in the process, "the initiative to interpret the Accord and the process in religious terms has in this way been left to actors and parties excluded from the process" (Dale: http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html). The exclusion of a religious dimension in the Oslo process has resulted in extremist groups justifying terrorist attacks by reference to irreconcilable religious interpretations of the Accord, rather than the emergence of a religious platform supporting the process.

According to Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (1998: 175 - 176), despite the fact that both the Israelis and the Palestinians had come a long way in recognising each other, the agreement was unequal from a Palestinian perspective, and thus only viable as an interim agreement. The Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority (PISG) had no authority over Israeli settlements, external relations, resident rights or lines of communication between the autonomous enclaves that the Palestinians had been granted. Further, "future status" issues - the right of return of Palestinian refugees, the future borders of the Palestinian entity, the future of settlements in occupied territories, and the question of Jerusalem - had been deferred (Miall et al: 1998: 175).

Differences between the parties arose immediately, and extremist groups on both sides carried out attacks directed at the peace process - including the Hebron massacre and Hamas suicide bombings. The result of these militant actions was a sharp fall in living standards in the occupied territories, and the economic cooperation on which the Oslo Accord was based was undermined (Miall et al: 1998: 176). While right-wing Jews committed a number of attacks, and Jewish settlers built more settlements in the occupied territories in order to undermine the land-for-peace deal, Palestinians felt that the Accord gave too little to the Palestinians. As such, Hamas

> took those criticisms to the streets in a wave of bombings and other attacks that undermined Israeli support for the peace process (Hauss: 2001: 150).

Since the signing of the Oslo Accord, Hamas has made use of tactics of guerrilla warfare. Its aim, according to Usher (1997: 343) has been not so much to ruin the Declaration of Principles, but to delay their implementation in order for the PLO to lose legitimacy and support. Further, because Arafat's legitimacy and authority hinged on his ability to be seen to visibly deliver peace, any escalation in violence would reflect negatively on his leadership, and on the PLO (Wallace: 1993: 32). To this end, Hamas pursued various terror tactics: ambushing the Israeli Defence Force's coordinator of undercover movements; the killing of No'am Cohen (a General Security Service operative); and a retaliation to the Hebron massacre in February 1994, by ramming of a car full of explosives into a crowded Israeli bus station (Usher: 1997: 343).

The problem that arose for Arafat was that he was powerless to control Hamas, as the Palestinian police force had yet to be set up. Further, the Oslo Accord stated that Israel would be responsible for "external" security - i.e. for Israel and the Israelis - while the Palestinian Authority would be responsible for "internal security" (Usher: 1997: 344). This meant that, in order to safeguard the people of Israel, Rabin was pushed on numerous occasions to using collective sanctions against the Palestinians - a move that strengthened Hamas in the people's eyes due to its rejection of Israel, where the PLO was seen to harbour a conciliatory attitude to that country (Usher: 1997: 344).

While the armed struggle of Hamas resulted in a loss of credibility on the part of the PLO and Arafat, it has hampered the peace process and thus hampered the attainment of Palestinian autonomy and self-rule. The number of Israelis killed in the thirty months after the signing of the Accord – 213 - was greater than that of the preceding decade – 203 from January 1983 to September 1993 (Falk & Schwartz: http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=434). In order to fulfil its mandate of the protection of Israeli citizens, Israel redeployed into the Gaza Strip in 1994 and into the West Bank in 1995 and 1996, at the expense of Palestinian land, autonomy, freedom of movement, and water resources (Hass: http://www.guardian.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4071052,00.html).

As of June, 1994, the Palestinian Authority took over responsibility for the repression of militant groups, and in November, for the first time, the PA's police force opened fire on Hamas demonstrators outside the Grand Mosque in Gaza, killing 16 people (Keppel: 2002: 329). This incident, together with the fact that Israel set up roadblocks and control points, along with travel bans in the West Bank and along the Gaza frontier, making life impossible for the average Palestinian, lost the PLO much-needed public support (Keppel: 2002: 329). Hamas stepped up it's campaign of violence and suicide attacks within Israel, using violence to block the implementation of the Accord in order to wring further concessions from Israel.

> It was with this long term hope in mind that the Palestinian population could tolerate violence, given the immediate price it had to pay in the form of Israeli retaliation and a dramatic fall in living standards (Keppel: 2002: 330).

According to Dale (http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html), the final status negotiations when Peres and the Labour Party were still in power were brought to an immediate halt by Israeli reactions to suicide bombings by Islamist movements in February and March 1996. Further, the subsequent election and installation of the right-wing Netanyahu government - who openly denounced the Oslo Accord - worsened the climate for continuing the process, which later ground to a halt.

Under Netanyahu's Israeli government, a harder line was taken with regard to Hamas attacks. Israel's borders with the territories were closed, leading to the economic strangulation of Palestinians, Israel's gradual withdrawal from the West Bank was gradually halted, and the number of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories increased. The political influence of terror tactics against Israel lost its appeal to a Palestinian population "exhausted and demoralised by this never-ending struggle" (Keppel: 2002: 331).

The second intifada – the "al-Aqsa intifada" – took place as the Oslo peace process reached a stalemate. Despite the fact that Arafat hoped that the increase in violence would be of political currency for the nationalist movement, he steadily lost ground to Islamists. Suicide bombers have become the main symbol of this intifada, becoming heroes of the Palestinian youth. Furthermore, the events of September 11 have provided Israel with an incentive to use unrestricted force in this "war on terror,"

while Islamist radicals have again embarked of a fresh cycle of suicide bombings (Keppel: 2002: 333 – 334).

According to Rubinstein (in Usher: 1997: 344), after Oslo,

> Hamas's terrorist activities contain two main political messages. The first – to 'Arafat and the PLO – is do not dare ignore us; the second – to the state of Israel – is that negotiations with the PLO do not constitute the final word and that Hamas must also be taken into account.

Ultimately, Hamas still holds a relatively powerful position in the Palestinian political landscape. It has retained the ability to mobilise the people of Palestine, to influence policies in the region, and to undermine the peace process. While it must be noted that there is no necessary link between the religion of Islam and acts of terror, the general trend of identifying Islam and terrorism serves to delegitimise the actions of groups who mobilise Muslims (Halliday: 2000: 80). According to Halliday (2000: 86 - 87), the moral guideline to be considered when a group commits acts of terror is that these acts must be separated from the justice of the cause, as "the act no more disqualifies the cause than the cause justifies the act."

V

The religious "terrorism" of organisations like Hamas, while succeeding in mobilising support, results not only in increasingly oppressive state measures to counteract violence, but also ensures that the voice of the people that they represent is effectively excluded from any kind of negotiated settlement. In short, the violent actions that Hamas has undertaken are counterproductive in terms of the reasons underscoring their support in the first place. The resort to violence and acts of terror by Islamist movements discredits the cause that they uphold in the eyes of both the international community and the central negotiating partners. The popularity of these movements, and the support that they enjoy is the result of a need for identity recognition, but the actions that they undertake ensure that these are excluded from a negotiated settlement. Thus the identity and recognition needs of Islamist supporters, while they may be met in terms of belonging to an Islamic identity group, are not met or recognised by other parties in the conflict. And if the identity group is the primary unit for ensuring the gratification of other needs, then the Islamic people of

Palestine's primary identity group for ensuring need-satisfaction is proving to be ineffectual.

The Israeli/Palestinian conflict is one where discrimination between identity groups has led to a situation of protracted social conflict, where needs of recognition of the other are not met, and where the denial of the humanity of the other has resulted in the deprivation of other basic needs. Ranstorp (1996: 62) argues that one should not treat religious forces in global politics as single, monolithic entities,

> but rather seek to understand the inner logic of these individual groups and the mechanisms that produce terrorism in order to undermine their breeding ground and strength.

In order to attain greater understanding between the parties in the conflict, then, and in order to maintain the focus on conflict as the result of needs-deprivation, the next chapter considers the problem-solving approach to negotiation in order to determine whether greater recognition between the opposing groups could open the path to dialogue and thus take an initial step toward settlement.

Chapter 3

"Not only do ... identity groups constitute a binding force that brings individuals into social relationships, those groups can also be the locus of conflict behaviour in world society."

- Burton, J. (1988: 192)

Conventional, or traditional means of conflict resolution have largely focussed on conflict settlement rather than on real resolution of conflict situations. The reason for this, according to De Reuk (1990: 185), is that conventional means of negotiation involve a bargaining process aimed at trading losses, and only result in a temporary accommodation representing the smallest concessions that parties to a conflict are prepared to make. Further, the zero-sum nature of traditional means of resolution results in a situation where one party's loss is the other's gain, and this precludes resolution. The fact that parties to a conflict generally have mutually exclusive frames of reference and that these preclude co-operation, as collaboration is perceived to equate to disloyalty, further hampers the possibility of true resolution (De Reuk: 1990: 186).

Burton (1988: 192) argues that two phenomena affect traditional negotiation methods. First, traditional negotiation does not take account of values and human aspirations that are not subjected to societal control. Second, no responsible leader is in a position to hand control over to a third party as a means of settlement. Further, traditional processes have failed due to the fact that, where important values are at stake, compromises may prove impossible to implement, and power bargaining, rather than resolving conflict, may result in its escalation (Burton: 1988: 188).

Conventional wisdom on conflict resolution perceives conflict only in terms of negotiable interests that may be bargained, altered or traded (Burton: 1988: 194). According to this, conflict over interests is zero-sum, and individuals may be socialised or coerced into accepting certain social norms and means as a method to settle disputes. Both theory and application reveal that protracted conflicts are generally over both substantive or objective interests, and subjective or non-negotiable needs and values. The problem that subjective issues poses to negotiation

is that these relate to human and identity needs, and individuals cannot be socialised into behaving counter to their security, identity and other needs as "there are needs of individual development and control that will be pursued, regardless of consequences" (Burton: 1988: 193 - 194).

As conflict is reconceptualised, Burton (1988: 188) argues that there is a move from the more traditional power politics of bargaining and settlement to a new theory of problem-solving that takes non-negotiable needs and values into account. Thus, Human Needs theorists do not focus on the settlement of conflict only by means of legal or power norms, but rather through an analysis of the nature of the conflict, and through a reconceptualisation of the conflict by the parties concerned, in order to resolve it.

The point here is not that traditional methods of conflict resolution are completely without success, but rather that, in the resolution and de-escalation of conflicts that involve both objective and subjective issues, one needs to determine which method is most suited to either resolving a conflict, or preparing the ground for future negotiations, at a given time.

This chapter proposes to begin by examining the various methods of third-party intervention in conflict situations, with particular emphasis on the problem-solving or consultation process of negotiation. The second section of this chapter will examine the stages of conflict escalation and the corresponding third-party interventions that will be most likely to succeed in managing or resolving the conflict. In particular, this section will show how the success of third-party interventions in situations of protracted social conflict is often contingent on the success of the problem-solving approach. Thirdly, this chapter will examine the process of the Oslo Accords as a method of consultation, or problem-solving, while the fourth section will consider whether the failure of this approach was largely determined by the fact that it failed to deal with the subjective issues necessary for continued negotiation.

I

In order to understand the importance of the problem-solving or consultation approach to negotiations, it is best to begin by briefly describing the more traditional approaches to third-party involvement in conflict resolution and management.

According to Fisher and Keashly (1991: 33), conciliation involves a third party providing a communication link between antagonists in order to identify the major issues of the conflict. Furthermore, the third party is charged with lowering the tension between the antagonists and encouraging a move toward direct interaction in order to settle differences.

Mediation refers to the involvement of an intermediary who facilitates a negotiated settlement on a set of specific substantive or objective issues (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 33). The mediation process may include meetings with individual groups and joint negotiating sessions, and makes use of reason, persuasion and the suggestion of alternatives in order to assist the antagonists in finding an agreement acceptable to both parties.

In contrast, what Fisher and Keashly (1991: 33) refer to as "mediation with muscle," or "power mediation," builds on the function of mediation, but makes use of leverage or coercion by the third party in the form of promised rewards or threatened punishments. As such, the third party becomes part of a negotiating triad, bargaining with each party in order to move them towards a settlement.

In arbitration, the third party provides a binding judgement to the parties by considering the merits of the opposing positions and imposing a settlement that is deemed to be fair and just (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 33).

While these traditional methods of third party intervention may prove useful at certain points in a conflict, they tend to sideline subjective issues in their analysis of conflicting positions. In contrast, problem-solving, or consultation, attempts to "confront the opposing perceptions and attitudes and to reveal the underlying

emotional and relationship issues" in a given conflict situation (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 33). This does not deny that objective issues – real conflicts of interest in terms of resource scarcity, territory and the like – are not of great importance in intergroup conflict, but notes that

> once a conflict is initiated, the perceptions, attitudes and interaction of the parties become crucial elements in determining its further course (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 32).

At issue here, then, is the fact that subjective elements increase and take on added significance in conflict situations. In addition, while any agreement on objective, or substantive issues may constitute a short- or medium-term settlement, "for long term resolution to occur both objective and subjective elements must be addressed" (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 34).

Jabri (1996: 153) argues that traditional means of negotiation that have outcomes based on coercion preclude the possibility of resolution of the underlying causes of conflict in a way that facilitated, interactive communication does not. Interactive communication through the problem-solving approach, rather, aims at understanding and mutual recognition between parties as a basis for more lasting, mutually reinforcing outcomes. In short,

> while traditional, coercive mediation may achieve settlement of issues, it cannot produce resolution of the fundamental causes of protracted conflicts centred around identity and security concerns (Jabri: 1996: 153).

Problem-solving negotiation is not only focussed on the cessation of hostilities, but places an emphasis on constructive and interactive co-operation between conflicting parties. The problem-solving approach to negotiations aims at resolving the blocks that traditional approaches pose to the search for constructive outcomes in conflict situations by assisting parties to redefine their situations so that the conflict is perceived as a shared predicament (De Reuk: 1990: 186).

The approach rests on facilitating the creation of conditions that will make a certain kind of interaction between parties possible. Parties to a conflict are placed in a position where they act as analysts of the conflict, explore mutual perspectives and generate new ideas in a joint problem-solving, or workshop approach. The purpose of the interaction is to create products - new ideas, knowledge, attitudes and perceptions

- that make for innovative resolution proposals to feed into policy in order to redefine or transcend the conflict so a positive-sum outcome may be explored (Kelman: 1990: 200 - 201). The central aim of the approach is to bring representatives of the conflict together in a

> series of informal and flexible small group discussions, not unlike academic seminars, in a neutral and supportive atmosphere (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 32).

These workshops aim to serve the dual purpose of producing a change in the participants' understanding, perceptions and attitudes, and to transfer these changes into the policy arena, thus serving both an educational and a political purpose (Kelman: 1990: 203).

Problem-solving, then, emphasises mutual understanding between the protagonists of conflict in order to determine if outcomes other than violence are possible. The aims of the problem-solving approach, according to Rothman (in Jabri: 1996: 155), include:

1. Mutual recognition between parties, and legitimate participation in the process of communication.
2. Parties gaining insight into the central concerns, fears and position of the adversary as well as an understanding of the attitudinal and structural constraints that the parties operate under.
3. A gradual recognition of changes in the attitudes and positions of the adversary, as well as potential openings for peace signals.
4. Within the workshop environment, participants gain an understanding of the actions that they can adopt that would not only be meaningful to the other side, but that would also entail little cost to themselves.

In short, problem-solving emphasises not only a mutual understanding of the position of self and adversary, and the constraints which limit manoeuvrability of the parties, but also of the process of the negotiation rather than the outcome - a process that precludes manipulation and coercion (Jabri: 1996: 154).

Burton (1990: 202) argues that problem-solving has four distinctive characteristics. Firstly, it must be noted that the solution is not an end product as it establishes a new set of relationships that contains its own set of problems. As such, it is to be seen as a

continuing process that complements other negotiation methods, rather than a final determination of outcomes.

Secondly, as noted earlier, problem-solving requires a synthesis of new knowledge and new techniques and thus results in a change in the conceptualisation of the problem at hand. Thirdly, it is necessary that problem-solving deals with a situation in its complete environment and, as such, needs to take cognisance not only of the immediate issue at hand, but also of the impact of the greater environment. Finally, in order to be effective, problem-solving needs to go back to the sources and origins of the conflict. As Burton (1990: 203) argues,

> when we witness the eruption of a conflict we are inclined to attribute it to some immediate causal factor, and find difficulty in justifying the response by reference to the apparent stimulus that triggered it. We fail to place the stimulus and the response in the total causal setting.

Problem-solving, then, focuses on the breaking down of conflict situations into parties and issues, and creating the opportunity for face-to-face interaction between representatives of the parties to a conflict (Burton: 1990: 143). Further, the approach makes use of a facilitator or panel of facilitators to assist dialogue between the parties in analytical workshops. The primary activity engaged in by the parties is analysis - an exchange designed to reveal positions, frustrations, constraints and perceptions, and through this analysis parties are led to discover options. The analytical thrust of the process negates the relevance of power in the negotiation process, as it is, in essence, a process of informed decision-making.

The role of the third party in the process is to help participants accurately define their negotiable interests, and their non-negotiable needs and values. As such, the role of the third party is seen to be mostly facilitative and diagnostic, but is also non-evaluative, non-directive and non-coercive. The main aim of the facilitator(s) is to "further the parties' analysis and use their social skills to facilitate the problem-solving process" (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 32). The third party assists the parties in discovering options that are acceptable in terms of their interests and that satisfy their needs (Burton: 1990: 143). The facilitator thus induces mutual motivation for problem-solving, improves the openness and accuracy of communication, diagnoses

the processes and issues, and regulates interaction between the antagonists (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 32).

Once participants have articulated the basic needs that need to be satisfied, they begin to explore possible solutions that will be responsive to the needs and fears of both sides. This, then, moves the process to a point where the participants can discuss the psychological and political barriers that need to be overcome in order to put such solutions in place, and how each side may help the other in the effort to change psychological and political barriers to resolution.

In terms of human needs, Kelman (1990: 289) argues that three inter-related aspects of the problem-solving approach, namely the definition of the enterprise, the structure of the workshops, and the workshop process, are important. In short, the problem-solving enterprise is "defined as an effort to find - through joint, creative problem solving - solutions to the conflict that would satisfy the needs of both parties (Kelman: 1990: 289). The problem-solving workshops are thus structured so that their focus is on the needs that are at the core of the conflict, and are geared to allow the parties to identify and understand each other's needs and thus take both sets of needs into account.

In terms of the definition of the enterprise, the central element is finding a solution that would satisfy the needs of all parties to the conflict. Thus the task of the workshop is to restructure the conflict in order to allow for a positive-sum outcome. Thus, by focussing on needs like identity and security, problem-solving assists the parties in redefining the conflict in a way that may make it susceptible to a solution satisfactory to all parties. And, once the existential concerns of the parties have been addressed, issues of redistributive bargaining over territory and resources may be undertaken.

There are three major implications for the structure of the workshops in a negotiating context where human needs are at the core of the resolution process. First, individuals participating in the workshops are those who are most directly and immediately involved in the conflict (Kelman: 1990: 292). While this does not deny that other parties are involved in the greater conflict arena, the starting point to the resolution

process must be a direct interaction between those parties most immediately involved in the conflict. While, ultimately, agreements must be reached at an official level and fed into the official policy process, bilateral, unofficial problem-solving workshops provide the base for this, later, policy (Kelman: 1990: 293).

Secondly, Kelman (1990: 293) argues that

> in focussing on the parties most immediately involved in the conflict, we make the assumption that enduring, high-quality solutions, that are responsive to the parties' needs, cannot be imposed.

These solutions, rather, emerge out of the direct interaction of the parties, where the workshops are structured so that the interaction necessary for the satisfaction of the needs of both parties becomes necessary and possible. This can only take place in a situation where the interaction of the parties focuses on each other, with the goal of understanding the concerns and constraints on the other's perspective.

Finally, unlike traditional negotiation methods where power imbalances affect the outcome of the resolution processes (Burton: 1988: 190), Kelman (1990: 293) argues that the workshops must be structured on the basis of equality in order to assure that the parties' needs may each be satisfied without violating the needs of the other. Without the structure of the workshops ensuring the equality of parties, it is likely that the discussions will yield resolutions that are only responsive to the needs of one of the parties, thus not resolving the conflict, but only temporarily settling it.

The workshop process should be designed in such a manner that the parties are able to identify and understand each other's needs, and take both sets of needs into account as they arrive at an overall solution (Kelman: 1990: 295). As such, it is important that workshops begin with an exploration of the parties' needs and concerns in order to ensure that these needs are understood by the parties to the conflict. More specifically, the focus of the discussion must centre on collective needs, as

> people pursue satisfaction of their needs through collective entities - particularly through 'identity groups' at the national, subnational, and transnational level (Kelman: 1990: 296).

There are two reasons for the focus on collective needs and identity groups. First, identity groups serve as vehicles for the satisfaction of basic needs of their members (for security, self-development, self-expression and personal identity), and second,

> in view of members' identification with these groups, the status of the groups is itself a source of the members' personal identity, self-esteem, and sense of dignity and meaning (Kelman: 1990: 296).

The problem-solving approach, then, unlike traditional zero-sum bargaining over interests, incorporates the aspect of human needs into the negotiation process in order to ensure that the root causes of conflict are addressed, rather than focussing solely on the manifestations of needs-deprivation.

II

Kelman (1990: 213) notes that the consultation, or problem-solving process should not necessarily be viewed as a substitute for other forms of negotiation, but rather as preparing the way for, supplementing and feeding into official negotiations. Due to the fact that these workshops may provide a unique input into conflict resolution by creating an atmosphere conducive to negotiation, or establishing an appropriate framework for parties that are ready for communication but not for official negotiations, or by "allowing parties to work out pieces of a solution that can then be fed into the formal negotiation process" (Kelman: 1990: 213). These workshops may be useful, then, at various phases in the negotiation process.

Similarly, Fisher and Keashly (1991: 30) argue that consultation complements the mediation process to the extent that problem-solving

> might be used to analyse and de-escalate need and interest conflicts to the point where mediation of interests would more likely be successful (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 30).

In order to determine at which points in conflict resolution the consultation process would be effective, one needs to examine the escalation process of conflict, and the corresponding methods of resolution.

Fisher and Keashly (1991: 35) have developed a stage model of conflict escalation, where four stages of escalation occur, namely: (1) Discussion; (2) Polarization; (3) Segregation; and (4) Destruction. These four stages are distinguished by

> changes in the nature of communication between the parties, their perceptions and images of each other and their relationship, the overt issues at the fore of the dispute, the perceived possible outcomes and the preferred strategy for handling the conflict (Fisher & Keashly: 1001: 35).

Stage one of conflict escalation is characterised by relatively good communication, where the parties engage each other in debate and discussion, and where each party has a relatively accurate, or at least a benign, perception of the other. Concurrently, the relationship between the parties begins as one of trust, respect and commitment. The issues fuelling the conflict in this first stage are those substantive issues and their related positions that highlight a conflict of interests between the parties. Initial perceived outcomes include a joint-gain, or positive-sum result from negotiations that involve joint decision-making (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 35 – 36).

As the conflict escalates, these characteristics change in the second stage of conflict escalation. Communication in this second stage has diminished to the point were parties rely on interpretation (and often misinterpretation) of actions and events, and less direct communication is evident than in the first stage. Corresponding with this change, parties begin to perceive each other through rigid and negative stereotyping. While each party still considers the other as important in its own right, concerns about the relationship between the parties dominate the issues table. Outcomes in the second stage, unlike those of the first stage are concerned with mutual compromise rather than joint-gain, and negotiation takes the place of joint decision-making as the parties' preferred strategy for resolution (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 35 – 36).

The use of threats as a means of communication between parties becomes evident in the third stage of conflict escalation where each party perceives the conflict as one between "good" and "evil" due to the mistrust and disrespect characterising the relationship. Issues of fundamental needs or core values such as identity and security are increasingly emphasised in this stage of the conflict, and parties perceive a win-lose outcome to the conflict, thus preferring a strategy of defensive competition to one of negotiation or joint decision-making (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 35 – 36).

The final stage of conflict escalation is characterised by a complete absence of direct communication and attacks of violence. In this stage perceptions of the other have deteriorated to the extent that the other is portrayed in non-human terms, and each party perceives an improvement in the relationship to be impossible. The central issue at this point is the question of ultimate survival of both parties and, as a result, parties perceive that lose-lose outcomes are the most likely to ensue. As such, each party attempts to minimise its losses while maximising costs to the enemy, and thus prefers the strategy of attempting outright destruction of the adversary (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 35 – 36).

While this is a relatively simplified version of the conflict escalation process, it is apparent that differing methods of resolution and de-escalation are required at different points in the conflict. The point of conflict resolution is to de-escalate the conflict back through the stages mentioned above in order to reach some form of settlement and resolution.

Due to the fact that the central issues in the conflict are substantive in the first stage, and both parties believe that joint gain is possible, it is necessary to ensure that communication between the parties remains of high quality. For this reason, conciliation is best suited to stage one conflict, as it facilitates clear and open communication of interests and related positions, thereby opening the way for direct negotiations in order to settle the dispute before any damage is done to the relationship between the parties (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 36).

Because trust and respect are threatened and distorted perceptions and simplified negative stereotypes emerge in the second stage, the relationship between the parties becomes of central concern to third party intervention. Consultation becomes of central importance, as it is most appropriate in terms of dealing with subjective issues like mistrust, distorted perceptions and negative attitudes (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 36). The substantive issues of the conflict can only be addressed once a cooperative relationship is established or re-established between the parties, and consultation thus provides the grounding for direct negotiations in this stage of the conflict.

The third stage of conflict escalation is characterised by defensive competition and hostility, and the conflict is perceived to threaten basic needs, such as identity and security. While it is necessary to halt the spiral through some means of immediate control, like arbitration or power mediation, this is most likely to be successful if it is complemented by a process of consultation. Consultation, in addition to more coercive methods, may be used to improve the relationship between the adversaries so that the substantive issues may be dealt with either through stage two mediation, or through the direct negotiation of stage one (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 38 – 39). Consultation, then, allows for a focus on the subjective issues of the conflict

> rather than assuming that settlement of the substantive issues will by itself improve the relationship between the parties (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 39).

The nature of fourth stage conflict escalation makes it more difficult to de-escalate, and peacekeeping may be required as a means of minimising the losses of both adversaries. While this includes processes of mediation and arbitration, in order to stabilise the relationship between the adversaries, the consultation process, as in stage three, is used to provide a full analysis of the conflict and its escalation, and to identify the key elements and issues in the conflict, some of which may be solved by pure mediation, and others by continued consultation (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 39).

The point here is that consultation makes an important contribution to the conflict resolution process due to its focus on the subjective issues of the conflict and the perceptions of, and relations between, the adversaries. Consultation, then, has a useful role to play in pre-negotiation and pre-mediation, where parties are encouraged to jointly articulate their underlying concerns along with the substantive issues present in order to move toward a shared definition and analysis of the conflict. Fisher and Keashly (1991: 38) note that one of the primary reasons for the failure of mediation and negotiation is that

> the relationship between parties has deteriorated significantly, interests are often interfused with needs and appear non-negotiable, and the respective positions have become intransigent through a series of past commitments (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 38).

The utilisation of the consultation process, in contrast, facilitates the improvement of the relationship between adversaries, separates out interests and needs, and allows

each party the opportunity to articulate those subjective fears that may impact on the conflict, thus opening the door to more direct negotiation between the parties.

III

Perhaps the best-known case of consultation in the Israel/Palestine conflict is that of the Oslo Accords, or Declaration of Principles of 1993. In order to analyse the effectiveness of the consultation approach in this particular conflict, and the effectiveness of this approach in dealing with the specific issues of this conflict, it is, perhaps best to begin by detailing the process by which the Declaration of Principles was reached.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the unchallenged hegemony of the United States in the Middle East following the 1991 Gulf War, the greatest source of potential instability in the region was the Arab-Israeli conflict. Further, the politically weakened and diplomatically isolated position of the PLO following its support of Iraq in the Gulf War, together with the growing strength of Islamist movements in the region, made negotiations between Israel and the PLO possible (Beinin: http://www.merip.org/mero/mero032699.html).

Beinin (http://www.merip.org/mero/mero032699.html) argues that the Oslo Declaration of Principles was not a peace treaty between Israel and the PLO, but rather a negotiation process without a defined outcome. During the five-year interim period in which negotiations were to continue, Israel was to withdraw from Gaza and Jericho first, and then from unspecified parts of the West Bank. In return, the PLO not only pledged to recognise Israel, but also to cooperate in suppressing terrorism.

Both Israeli government actors and PLO leaders were looking for the possibility of opening a back channel in order to conduct negotiations more efficiently. To this end, Terje Larsen, the Director of the Norwegian Labour Union's applied social research institute and Jan Egeland, Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister, offered to facilitate a secret back channel in Norway between Israel and the PLO (Dale: http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html).

At the initiative of Yossi Beilin, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister, talks were initiated between Yair Hirschfeld, a social scientist of the Israeli NGO Economic Cooperation Foundation, and Abu Ala, the PLO's Minister of Finance, at an economic cooperation conference in London in December 1992. There it was decided that, should the two groups wish to continue talks, they would be organised by Larsen's research institute and the Norwegian Foreign Ministry under conditions of absolute secrecy in Norway (Dale: http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html).

The key facilitators of the Oslo Channel were Larsen, Egeland and Norwegian diplomat, Mona Juul. Their approach was based on a model of maximising flexibility through governmental and non-governmental cooperation. Further, the facilitators did not enter into substantial discussions other than by analysing the conflict or recommending which parties to include. As facilitators in a problem-solving approach, their primary tasks were to build up confidence and credibility between the parties, to contribute to a relaxed and informal atmosphere, and to act as buffers for the parties' emotions and frustrations (Dale: http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html).

The first meetings were held in January 1993, where the PLO representatives included Abu Ala, PLO political advisor, Hassan Asfour, and economist Maher al Kurd. Hirschfeld and his academic colleague and former student, Ron Pundak, represented Israel in these preliminary negotiations. Although Abu Ala initially insisted on meeting with official negotiators, he accepted temporary assurances that the Israeli academics could be seen as Beilin's envoys (Dale: http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html).

The first meeting was an eight-hour brainstorming session devoted to exploring possibilities for dialogue. In accordance with the theory of problem-solving, the discussions did not focus on resolution of the conflict, but rather on whether it was possible to find common ground from which the two parties could work.

Three weeks after the first meeting, the participants reconvened in Norway. At this meeting, the idea of a Joint Declaration of Principles allowing for Israeli withdrawal

and gradual Palestinian autonomy was presented and adopted as the main substance for the negotiations. Participants agreed to deal with the least problematic issues first, and gradually tackle the more intractable issues. The result of the adoption of this graduality principle meant that the most difficult questions were only dealt with to the extent that they were put on the agenda for future negotiations. In the five subsequent meetings, participants spent time getting to know each other, sounding out different attitudes and view points, breaking down barriers and enemy images, and seeing the problem from the other side's point of view. According to Dale (http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html), the participants

> learned to know each other not only as negotiating partners but also as fellow human beings with similar concerns ... The successful establishment of personal and valued relationships between the participants in this pre-negotiations phase was crucial for the later dynamics of the process.

The Palestinian representatives did, however, threaten to discontinue negotiations unless Israel sent official state representatives. On condition that the talks remained secret, the Israeli government sent Uri Savir, the Director General of the Foreign Ministry, and Yoel Singer, a legal expert, and Hirschfeld and Pundak were urged to stay on in order to share their experiences with the others, and to preserve the informal atmosphere of the talks.

By the end of August 1993, the negotiated agreements were published, to be signed by Arafat and Rabin, and officially sanctioned by the United States of America in Washington on the 13th of September. The first steps in the process were interim negotiations, resulting in Israel's withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza, the nomination of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), and the beginning of a five-year transitional period of Palestinian self-rule under the PNA. Further, Oslo was followed by Oslo II, an Interim Agreement in September of 1995, aimed at expanding Palestinian self-rule by withdrawing Israeli forces from six large cities in the occupied West Bank. Finally, the permanent status of negotiations commenced in May 1996 (Dale: http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html).

IV

The Israel/Palestine conflict may be considered on two levels. If one considers the PLO and Israel as representatives of the Palestinian and Israeli sides of the conflict, then the conflict may be termed to have reached, or at least been de-escalated to stage three of the conflict escalation model. The PLO and Israel both display attitudes of distrust towards each other and are concerned with fundamental needs such as security and identity.

In contrast, when one considers the conflict as one between Islamism and Israel, the conflict seems more typical of a fourth-stage conflict. No direct communication exists between Islamist movements and Israel, and these antagonists portray each other in non-human terms, thereby legitimising violence against the other. The conflict is perceived in terms of ultimate survival, where the recognition and survival of one party is perceived to limit the survival of the other, and this has led to a situation where each party attempts the outright destruction of the other.

In either case, the consultation approach to negotiation is vital in order to attempt a de-escalation of the conflict to a point where other means of negotiation may deal with the substantive issues of the conflict.

Dale (http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html) argues that two lessons may be learned from the process and failed implementation of the Oslo Accords. First, the model of secret, informal negotiations in a workshop-like back channel strengthen creativity and the capacity for problem-solving where more traditional approaches are less flexible in this regard. The Oslo process provided the opportunity for mutual recognition between the PLO and the Israeli government and broke down barriers between the parties that previously seemed insurmountable.

As a process of consultation, the Oslo Accords were successful in achieving mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO, and bringing them together in an environment where they could break down stereotypes and gain insights into the fears and concerns of each other's position. The problem-solving nature of the process

allowed for face-to-face interaction between representatives of the two groups, and allowed for each to articulate fears, and offer solutions that would be responsive to both sides needs and fears.

As a process of consultation, the Oslo Accords failed to meet certain requirements that are necessary for successful consultation outcomes. In limiting the process to the PLO and the Israeli government, the Declaration of Principles failed to stabilise the relationship between the various parties to the conflict, as it did not identify the key elements and issues at stake.

Dale's second point (http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/two/3/p25.html) is that, although the staged approach to peace created strong and potentially fruitful relationships between the participants, the exclusivity of the approach produced a problematic re-entry problem through the exclusion of important groups in the process.

As a consultation process, the Oslo process focussed mainly on substantive concerns in the conflict, without giving enough credence to the importance of Islamic identity in Palestine. The Oslo process was primarily concerned with economic development, and thus with the satisfaction of physiological needs for survival. As was noted earlier, consultation needs to focus on discussions of collectivities, as needs are pursued through collective entities, especially through identity groups. As such, the emphasis on objective issues in the Oslo process rather than an increased emphasis on important substantive issues – like those of Palestinian Islamic identity – made the Declaration of Principles more difficult to introduce into Palestinian society.

Furthermore, consultation is most effective when practiced in conjunction with, or as a precursor to, other methods of conflict resolution. The Oslo process failed to deal with subjective issues like Islamic identity in Palestine, and consequent attempts at mediation proved unsuccessful as the initial problem-solving process failed to attain sufficient support due to its failure to include a recognition of the Islamic essence of both the conflict and of Palestinian national identity.

V

While secular nationalism previously existed as a primary mobilising identity group in Palestine, the rise of Islamist movements and their increased popularity has pointed to the fact that Palestinians no longer see themselves as nationalists only; the advent of ethno-ideological religious nationalism has resulted in a merging of Islamic and nationalist identities within the Palestinian population. Organisations like Hamas have received growing credibility and legitimacy with the declining support of the PLO, yet, despite their growing popularity, they have been sidelined in negotiation processes. It is not enough to assume, as was assumed by the Oslo participants and facilitators, that Islamist movements will readily agree to negotiation outcomes when they have not been included in the initial negotiation rounds. More importantly, it is not enough to assume that Palestinians will readily agree to negotiation outcomes that sideline a recognition of the identity of the group that they mobilise around.

While previous negotiation attempts to resolve the Israel/Palestine conflict have focussed primarily on Israel and the PLO as those parties most immediately involved in the conflict, these attempts have failed to incorporate other important aspects of shifting identities. Islamist movements, and the sentiments that they express, have largely been ignored. Even needs-based negotiation processes like the Oslo Accords, have failed to take cognisance of Islam as an important aspect of Palestinian national identity. In order to ensure the viability of future negotiation processes, and in order to satisfy as fully as possible those needs that are vital to individuals and collectivities, it is necessary to provide recognition of the importance of religious identity in both the Israeli and Palestinian populations.

Conclusion

Religious conflicts are generally more resistant to traditional techniques of diplomatic or political mediation and negotiation than substantive conflicts of interest. Kelman (1990: 285) argues that an emphasis on subjective social processes, or a needs perspective to conflict, focuses attention on a set of collective psychological needs, including needs for identity, security and recognition, where a failure to fulfil these needs contributes to the causes, escalation and perpetuation of conflict. Furthermore,

> the profound resistance to change – despite changing realities and interests – that characterises intense, protracted conflicts is typically rooted in the impact of such needs and associated fears on the perceptions and beliefs of the parties (Kelman: 1990: 284).

While real differences in interests may cause intergoup conflict, due to the fact that conflict is at least partly, and at times, predominantly a subjective social process, once a conflict is initiated,

> the perceptions, attitudes and interaction of the parties become crucial elements in determining its further course (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 32).

The popularity of third party intervention in situations of protracted conflict demands that the understanding and skills of theorists of conflict resolution be increased in order to completely understand the objective and subjective mix that underlies most conflicts (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 42). To this end, a synthesis of the consultation model of negotiation and more traditional approaches of mediation and conciliation is valuable. Rather than seeing these methods as competitive or contradictory, a recognition of the complemetarity of the approaches

> provides a useful point of departure for further understanding pacific third party intervention and for ultimately increasing its efficacy in dealing with protracted social conflict (Fisher and Keashly: 1991: 42).

Third party intervention in conflicts may be impotent due to the lack of matching and sequencing of third party interventions. If power mediation is relied on in the early stages of the conflict without complementing this with consultation, the suppression of basic issues and the escalation of the conflict may manifest (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 41). Further, the use of consultation in early conflict stages may successfully contain hostility between parties and settle some of the substantive issues in order to

improve the basic relationship between the parties, thus opening the way for the settlement of more deep-seated substantive issues.

In later conflict stages, the need to utilise the complementary approaches of consultation and mediation is necessary in order to de-escalate the conflict so that substantive issues may be dealt with, and the relationship between the parties can be improved, and thus the process can return to a substantive focus (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 41).

Consultation should thus not be viewed as a substitute for other forms of negotiation, but rather, as a means of de-escalating conflict by improving relationships and communication between parties, and highlighting key issues, like identity and security, thus establishing an appropriate framework for continued settlement of substantive issues.

That being said, the concluding chapter of this thesis proposes to consider a more holistic approach to resolution in the Israel/Palestine case. Furthermore, objections to the emphasis placed on the consultation process will be dealt with in the second section. The final section will consider the importance of reconceptualising conflict resolution by considering the complementarity of consultation and traditional negotiation methods. This reconceptualisation ensures that both subjective and substantive issues are dealt with in conflict resolution, and issues like identity thus receive the recognition that they deserve in negotiation, as sources of protracted social conflict.

I

The Israel/Palestine conflict is perceived by both parties to be a zero-sum conflict over territory and the survival of an identity group. Kelman (1990: 290) thus argues that, while the focus of resolution remains on territory, the conflict will remain defined in zero-sum terms. The conflict can, however, be defined in existential terms, in terms of identity and security of existence. While this tends to be perceived in zero-sum terms by the parties, Kelman (1990: 290) argues that a focus on identity and

security may provide the key for achieving conflict resolution. While the territorial issue is, indeed, a zero-sum conflict that may only be solved through compromise, defining the conflict in existential terms provides the possibility of a positive-sum outcome. As noted by Burton (1988: 198),

> conflicts over material interests tend to lead to win-lose outcomes in which the gain of the one is the loss of the other, whereas conflicts over human needs have possible win-win outcomes. This is because basic needs, such as identity, security, recognition, justice, and political participation, can be met without depriving others. In fact, in most cases, the supply of the resource increases because of reciprocal behaviour.

Thus Kelman (1990: 291) argues that if Israelis can be assured that Palestinian self-determination can be achieved without a threat to Israeli security, and if Palestinians can be assured that Israeli security concerns can be accommodated without denying political expression to Palestinian identity, an attempt at an historic compromise over land and resources may be undertaken.

Important for third party intervention in the case of Israel/Palestine, then, is an emphasis on the subjective issues at play in the conflict. Of particular interest to this thesis is an emphasis on the Islamic identity of the people of Palestine and the impact that this has had on both the conflict itself and on settlement thereof.

The exclusion of Islamic identity in the negotiation process has largely occurred as a reaction to the extreme actions of militant Islamist movements like Hamas. Because acts of violence by members of one community against another generate a counter-rection, these actions produce hatred that may undermine the possibility of lasting co-existence between the two communities (Halliday: 2000: 81). However, Halliday (2000: 36, 86), however, argues that, while groups like Hamas attempt to achieve their goals through morally reprehensible means,

> the crucial moral guideline is that when a group commits acts that could be regarded as terrorism, these must be separated from our judgement of the justice of its cause.

In line with this, it is important to ensure that identity groups that have such political support, despite the tactics of militants, are represented at the negotiation level. For this reason, the participants in the consultation sessions play a great role in ensuring that decisions and attitudinal changes reached in the process are transferred back into society. As such, Fisher and Keashly (1991: 32) note that participants in consultation

sessions may range from interested and representative members of the respective groups to the conflict, to appointed but informal influentials who have a direct input into decision-making. The identity of the participants is, however, significant, "since it relates directly to the difficult question of transfer of outcomes back to the actual relationship between the parties" (Fisher & Keashly: 1991: 32).

As issues of Islamic identity have been sidelined in the Israel/Palestine negotiation process, the PLO has been unable to transfer the changed perceptions, attitudes and negative stereotypes back into Palestinian society. At issue, then, is the fact that Islamic representatives, either from Islamist movements or as independents, should be included in consultation processes in future negotiating structures in order to ensure that the identity needs of the Palestinian people are articulated and recognised by other parties to the conflict.

In order to have more hope of success in the resolution of the Israel/Palestine conflict, conflict resolution strategies need to include a greater analysis of the subjective issues underpinning the conflict. As such, the synthesis of problem-solving and more traditional conflict resolution methods provides the opportunity for a more holistic approach to the analysis of the conflict, where both substantive issues and subjective identity needs are considered integral to any attempt at resolution. Most importantly, though, the inclusion of the Islamic sentiment is of crucial importance, as the Islamisation of the conflict and of Palestinian identity has brought the Islamic identity to the fore in public consciousness.

II

The emphasis that this thesis has placed on the consultation process of negotiation is not without its problems.

One of the central difficulties in including an Islamist voice in the negotiation process is that organisations like Hamas are generally characterised by a disavowal to negotiate with Israel. How, then, does one ensure that the Islamic identity will receive due recognition in a process of consultation and negotiation?

The first counter to this argument is that, due to its merging of Palestinian nationalism with Islam, Hamas has accrued a relatively significant percentage of moderate support, and in order to ensure its political survival, this organisation needs to maintain political support in the region.

In terms of this, then, Keppel (2002: 328) argues that, since the Oslo process, Hamas has had to reconcile its maximalist position – calling for the liberation of all of Palestine and the installation of an Islamic state – with "the everyday aspirations of ordinary people, who wished to be rid of the Israeli occupiers as quickly as possible." As a movement that enjoys both radical and moderate support, Hamas has had to reformulate its position since Oslo in order to maximise its social support base. Thus, while some supporters view participation in the PNA as lending the Accord a credibility that it does not have, others argue that if Hamas were to participate, then it would form the strongest opposition party in the territory (Usher: 1996: 346).

The mix of social conservatism and radical nationalism evident in the Hamas support base thus proves a dilemma for the organisation. While pragmatic Palestinians are prepared to put the long-term goal of complete liberation on hold in return for autonomy of some sort, radical Islamists foreswear any sort of negotiation with Israel. Usher argues that one solution to the dilemma that Hamas faces – one that is under intense discussion in Islamist circles - is to form an Islamist political party for the changed circumstances of autonomy. As one Hamas leader, Isma'il Haniyya argues, "a political party is crucial for dealing with the new situation" (in Usher: 1991: 350). If Hamas decides to pursue this course of action in order to ensure its political survival, it becomes better placed to represent Islamic needs in future negotiation processes.

If, however, Hamas continues to refuse negotiation with the Israeli government, another possible means of ensuring an inclusion of the Islamic voice in negotiation processes is to sideline militant organisations like Hamas in favour of influential Islamic leaders in Palestine. As was noted earlier, the identity of participants in consultation processes is vitally important for transferring outcomes back into society. If one considers the importance of ensuring the articulation of Islamic Palestinian

identity needs in consultation, then an inclusion of Muslim theologians in the process may fulfil the identity needs of moderate Islamic Palestinians, and thus make the recourse to violent action less socially acceptable.

One of the central problems with the problem-solving approach is ensuring that the changed attitudes and perceptions of parties to the consultation process may be transferred back into society. This problem of re-entry is determined by the fact that

> deeply ingrained political belief systems are extremely resistant to attempts to change them by political leaders, especially if they are reinforced by an intense victimhood psychology (Montville: 1993: 123).

Adams (in Montville: 1993: 123) suggests that, in the study of mass communication, the media is most likely to strengthen already held views rather than change them. In particular, when it becomes a question of public attitudes towards distrusted or disliked groups, sociological factors (social networks, value systems and influential leaders) and psychological factors (family, peer and ethnic biases) act as barriers to the receipt of alternative information relating to opposing groups (Montville: 1993: 123).

However, according to Montville (1993: 123), even these barriers may be vulnerable

> if the dissonant, 'good' news, conveyed by mass media, comes from a credible source; and is repeated with variation, is disseminated via multimedia, reinforced by personal contact, and presented in balanced, 'two-sided' accounts.

Thus Rogers (in Montville: 1993: 124) argues that the altering of attitudes and beliefs depends on interpersonal communication networks. Where respected opinion leaders and their peers accept the new information as valid and change their attitudes correspondingly, the diffusion rate of that idea has great effect in changing public perceptions and beliefs[11].

Finally, this thesis may be charged with ignoring the intractable substantive issues that underscore the Israel/Palestine conflict – issues that include the future status of Jerusalem, the problem that the Jewish settlers pose to Palestinian autonomy, and, indeed, the issue of how the territory should be divided.

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[11] For more information on the dissemination of information contrary to current attitudes and beliefs, refer to Rogers, E. "Diffusion of the idea of Beyond War" in Gromyko, A. and Hellman, M. (eds) Breakthrough: Emerging New Thinking. 1988. Walker: New York.

This thesis does not attempt to make prescriptive statements about the resolution of substantive issues of this particular conflict, but rather considers how the parties to the conflict may reach a point where these issues may be addressed without being impacted on negatively by the destructive perceptions that subjective attitudes engender. Important to this thesis, then, is the notion that substantive issues may only be resolved once the parties to a conflict are prepared to accept and recognise each other. The process of consultation, then, provides a means of breaking down destructive stereotyping, addressing the important notions of needs such as identity and security and facilitating the communication process. In this way, consultation aims to improve the relationship between the parties in order to improve the chances of success in making the compromises that mediation and conciliation require.

III

This thesis has sketched out the importance of human needs as they pertain to conflict. Inherent needs for survival, recognition and identity may serve to drive conflict and, as such, they need to be taken into account in any attempt at resolution of protracted conflicts like that of Israel and Palestine.

Further, it was determined that identity as a human need plays a central role in conflict situations by virtue of the fact that the human need to belong to identity groups is, in itself, inherently competitive and conflict-creating. In addition, the salience of national and religious identity groups is of great import in the context of conflict, where group allegiance is stronger and greater discrimination against other national or religious groups may result, particularly where a specific identity is perceived to be under threat.

The religious identity group holds particular importance in the analysis of conflict, as violent actions against the enemy are given moral authority and lent legitimacy due to the religious sanction of violence. As such, in any analysis of protracted religious or identity conflict, it is necessary to include an analysis of the impact of human needs

deprivation on the parties' perceptions of the conflict and the adversary, and thus on the escalation of the conflict.

Rather than considering conflict resolution methods as isolated and conflicting, then, it is important to recognise that these methods may complement each other and, in considering both the objective and subjective elements inherent in conflict situations, may make for a more holistic approach to both the evaluation and analysis of conflict, and the resolution thereof.

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