

Israel and Palestine: Some Critical
International Relations Perspectives on the
'Two-State' Solution

by

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ABSTRACT: This research questions whether Israel and Palestine should be divided into two states. Viewed through the International Relations (IR) theories of Realism and Liberalism, the 'Two-State' solution is the orthodox policy for Israel and Palestine. But Israelis and Palestinians are interspersed and share many of the same resources making it difficult to create two states. So, this research critiques the aforementioned IR theories which underpin the 'Two-State' solution. The conclusion reached is that there ought to be new thinking on how to resolve the Israel-Palestine issue.

Contents:

Glossary of Terms	4
Acronyms and Abbreviations	7
Chapter 1: Introduction	8
Chapter 2: International Recognition of Israel at the Expense of Palestine	12
- The 'Two-State' Solution for Israel and Palestine	16
Chapter 3: The Idea of Sovereignty in IR	18
- Nationhood in the Context of Israel and Palestine	21
Chapter 4: International Relations Perspectives on the Israel-Palestine Issue	28
- Realism	28
- Liberalism	32
- Critical Theory	35
Conclusion: New Thinking on the Israel-Palestine Issue	37
- A Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian State	38
Maps	43
Bibliography	47

*Glossary of Terms*¹

Bi-National: The idea that two distinct identity groups (determined by language or ethnicity) can live together in a single state, under one parliament – Switzerland for example (*cf.* ‘Two-State Solution’).

Historical Sociology: A branch of social science which analyses how societies evolve through history, often using empirical evidence.

Contemporary: Referring to a time period relevant to the present.

Critical Theory: A school of thought which questions prevailing and established social, cultural and economic trends in order to emancipate society from inherent forms of domination.

Enlightenment: A term rooted in Western epistemology referring to a time frame roughly coinciding with the Nineteenth Century when reason (or rationalism) was assumed to ground human understandings of science and culture. (*cf.* ‘Modern’)

International Relations Theory (IR): A social science discipline, rooted in the historical era of post-World War I America, with an established canon of ideologies and theorists. International Relations is primarily the study of state interaction, though it can include non-state actors.

Liberalism: A school of thought within IR which argues that actors can trust one another and cooperate thereby undermining the need to use military force in the international arena. States are therefore seen as interdependent actors, which can cooperate with transnational political and economic institutions. For an opposing viewpoint to Liberalism, see Realism.

¹ The glossary of terms provided are working definitions based on an understanding gleaned from a number of sources; for citations see in text references.

Non-Western: Identities or ideologies which fall outside Eurocentric understandings. Because of the hegemony of Western schools of thought and political institutions, that which is non-Western is often considered in the minority and, therefore, subordinate to Western ideologies. Importantly the term ‘non-Western’ is not intended to be used in a derogatory, ethnocentric manner but purely as a description (*cf.* ‘Western’).

Orthodox: Accepted or traditional standards. In the context of this research ‘orthodox’ refers to particular mainstream beliefs held by IR theorists and policymakers.

Qassam Rockets: Munitions used by Palestinian militants. These rockets are usually crudely constructed. They are normally fired from the Palestinian territories of Gaza or the West Bank into Israel but do not have guidance systems. So, they are imprecise in destroying targets.

Rationalism: A belief that reason leads to truth. In this understanding truth can be attained through deductive (or logical) thinking.

Realism: A school of thought within IR which argues that the international arena is characterised by anarchy; a lack of order in which actors are interested only in maximizing their own utility. Self-interested behaviour, between actors, means that the interstate relations are determined by relative power.

Reciprocity: Mutual dependence. In the context of this research reciprocity refers to the equal, impartial treatment of actors towards one another. Each actor adheres to prescribed rules of engagement towards another actor and expects the other to adhere to the exact same set in return.

Sovereignty: Supreme authority over territory. In the context of this research, sovereignty refers to statehood – specifically the ability of states to exercise control over their borders, population, central administration and international relations.

‘Two-State’ Solution: An orthodox solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict which advocates that peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians could be attained through two separate states living side-by-side (*cf.* ‘Bi-National’).

Western: A term used to describe a Eurocentric economic, political, social or technological ideology. Importantly the term ‘Western’ is not intended to be used in a derogatory, ethnocentric manner but purely as a description (*cf.* ‘non-Western’).

Westphalian: A term used to describe a type of political order originating from a series of treaties signed in Europe during the seventeenth century, based on the notion of sovereignty. The treaties established that states were the most fundamental actors in the international arena and that their internal affairs could not be interfered with by external actors. The goal of this arrangement was to ensure peace in Europe.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

EU (European Union)

IR (International Relations)

IDP (Internally Displaced Person)

UK (United Kingdom)

UN (United Nations)

UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)

US (United States of America)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Israeli Palestinian relations have been characterised by conflict for over six decades. But in order to understand Israeli-Palestinian relations it is necessary to explain how Israel and Palestine have emerged in the international arena. Methodologically this research seeks to explain the practical issues underpinning Israeli-Palestinian relations followed by a discussion on how IR theory can be used to explain these issues. So, Chapter 1 is an explanation of where, and the context within which, Israel and Palestine are located. Chapter 2 explains the central practical issues that have characterised the Israel-Palestine relationship. Chapter 3 explores the idea that the central issues faced by Israelis and Palestinians fall within the context of a broader problem suffered by all states in IR: sovereignty. The idea of sovereignty also underpins the two main IR theories of Realism and Liberalism. So, chapter 4 engages with these two main theories in order to source theoretical basis of the Israeli-Palestinian impasse. Understanding the theoretical basis which has failed to provide a solution to Israeli-Palestinian conflict over the last six decades is crucial if one is to source a creative solution. It is within the context of creativity or ‘new thinking’ that this research sees a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The year 2008 marked the 60th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel, a strip of land on the Mediterranean Sea, no bigger than South Africa’s Western Cape Province. The state was created after the Second World War in reaction to the killing of more than six million Jews during, what has become known as, “the Holocaust” (Stein, 1984: 5). Thus the creation of Israel amounted to international recognition of the rights of Jews to self-determination. Underlying this idea was a law that allowed all Jews the right to emigrate to Israel and claim citizenship on the basis of their ethnicity. Yet in order to accommodate the waves of Jewish immigrants, thousands of indigenous Palestinians were expelled from their homes (Allan, 2005: 47). The problem for Palestinian refugees was that they were not given a state, as the Jewish Diaspora was, and they were not permitted to return to their homes in Israel. Instead they became stateless (Allan, 2005: 47). Thus, for Palestinians, 2008 was commemorated as the 60th anniversary of the ‘Nakba’, or ‘catastrophe’. Consequently,

Israelis and Palestinians have, for the last 62 years, ferociously contested the land on which the Israeli state is built and no resolution to the issue has yet been reached.

Most Palestinians, today, live in the territories of the West Bank and Gaza, small enclaves adjoined to, and controlled by, Israel and its military – but lacking the autonomy of a state (*cf.* Image 1 & 2). Because they have no state, many Palestinians hold no passports, no state citizenship and are, thus, not recognised internationally. It is because of they are not recognised by other states that the orthodoxy favours a “Two-State Solution” (Sussman, 2004: 8) for Israel and Palestine – where Palestinians might achieve international recognition through statehood, just as the Jewish Diaspora did after the Second World War. So, this research questions whether it is possible to create two states living side by side – Israel and Palestine. In order to understand the idea of a ‘Two-State’ solution for Israel and Palestine, it is necessary to problematise its central feature: the state.

The state is a Western construct, initially produced as a means of ending the so-called “Thirty Years War” (Krasner, 2001: 232) in Seventeenth Century Europe, by demarcating areas in which different societies – or ‘nationalities’ (for example, French, Belgian, German) – could exercise autonomy (Axtmann, 2004: 260, Krasner, 2001: 21). The constitutors of statehood throughout the world (not just Europe) were then set out at the Treaty of Montevideo (1933)² which prescribed conditions under which all states would recognise each other. So, the underlying assumption of the Treaty of Montevideo is that statehood is good for *everyone* in the world regardless of cultural, religious or ideological predilections.

² The Treaty of Montevideo (Convention on Rights and Duties of States, 1934) codified the rights and duties of states, particularly the principle of state sovereignty and mutual non-interference in others’ affairs in the hope that such a principle would ensure an absence of war. The treaty was signed in the context of an increasingly expansionist Nazi Germany, on the Continent, as Europe began to fear for a Second World War. Yet even though this convention failed to prevent the Second World War, its underlying principle – state sovereignty – has remained and formed the cornerstone on which international relations are conducted today. All states operated, from 1933 onward, under the agreement that a state was a physical entity with defined borders, a stable population, government and the ability to enter into international relations with other states. It took a further 12 years for Europe to implement the conditions of the Treaty of Montevideo (following the end of the Second World War) and in most colonial states it took until the 1950s-1960s for the dismantlement of colonialism to bring about sovereign autonomy. Nevertheless, the Treaty of Montevideo codified the sovereign autonomy of *all* states over their affairs.

The key to statehood is offered by the term ‘sovereignty’ which plays a commanding role in both orthodox IR thinking and the discourse on Palestinian autonomy. The state is marked by the exercise of sovereignty – the idea that a state can control affairs within its borders but also that “outsiders... may not interfere with [its internal] governance” (“Sovereignty”. 2009). Thus, as much as statehood amounts to the inclusion of ‘citizens’ in the state, it is equally the exclusion of ‘foreigners’ from citizenship. The British social theorist, R.B.J Walker (1993), describes this as the “Inside/Outside” dilemma (Walker, 1993:61) where only citizens can enjoy rights advanced to those of a particular state.

The divisiveness of sovereignty suggests that the search for a ‘Palestinian state’ cannot guarantee peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Instead, it will – indeed does – reinforce the zeal of both groups, who prioritise the security of their own state, distrusting the motives of ‘other’ states (Walker, 1993: 61). So, and this is central to the argument, having two separate states, Israel and Palestine, might negate the “painful revision” (Gerber, 2003: 23) of one another’s pasts, necessary for peaceful coexistence in this particular case.

But there is an alternative to the orthodox ‘Two State’ approach. The idea of a ‘Bi-National’ Israeli-Palestinian State has received minor support in some circles (Tutunji & Khaldi, 1997: 31; Kovel, 2007: 135). Bi-Nationalism is the idea that two different ethno-linguistic communities can coexist in the same state, under a single parliament. Bi-Nationalism therefore has the potential to erode the divisiveness of sovereignty by allowing two separate nationalities to enjoy the same set of sovereign rights. In the case of Israelis and Palestinians, Bi-Nationalism would mean that the predominantly Arabic speaking Palestinian ethnic group could coexist with the predominantly Hebrew speaking Jewish ethnic group.

Switzerland provides an example of how different ethno-linguistic communities (German, French and Italian) have managed to live together in one state – largely because they are located in so-called ‘Cantons’, ethnic provinces within the borders of a sovereign state (Nordquist, 1985: 159). So, in Switzerland French speakers live in the west, Germans in the north and Italians in the south. Israel finds itself in a similar situation, where there are predominantly Arab areas in the north and predominantly

Jewish areas in the centre and south – meaning that a cantonal structure could work. The significance of cantons in Israel could be to preserve Jewish and Palestinian identity within one state, thereby possibly preventing the “Inside/Outside” (Walker, 1993: 61) dilemma.

Importantly, this is not to argue that Arabs and Jews ought to be separated, or even that cantons are applicable to Israel-Palestine, but given how communities forge along linguistic lines (as in Switzerland) a cantonal structure is one practical example of what a ‘Bi-National Israel-Palestine’ might look like (Tutunji and Khaldi, 1997: 31). Nor is this research concerned with the practical methods of constructing a Bi-National Israel-Palestine; rather it uses the idea of Bi-Nationalism as an example of the kind of new thinking that is desperately needed in order to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

A Bi-National State may have the potential to create harmonious relations between Israelis and Palestinians, but it is regarded as ‘wishful thinking’ by orthodox political commentators and influential international actors, such as the United States (US), European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN) (Shikaki, 2004: 45). Ironically, however, all three of these actors favour a ‘Two-State’ solution which seems equally, if not more, unrealistic – given the manner in which a ‘Two-State’ solution conspires to divide the region.

What is clear is that there are practical problems preventing peace in Israel and Palestine. Indeed it is these practical issues which will anchor this research, so it is to these that we now turn our attention.

Chapter 2: International Recognition of Israel at the Expense of Palestine

The first problem that this research will address is a dilemma; that Israel has been recognised internationally at the expense of Palestine. When the state of Israel was created in 1948, it replaced Palestine. But the names did not simply change; Israel was created as an exclusively Jewish state. This has meant that Jews around the world have been able to claim citizenship to the state of Israel whilst the indigenous Palestinian population has had to be removed. Since the creation of Israel, Palestinians have lost their state and, therefore, their international recognition. Subsequently, Palestinians have sought autonomy. The Palestinian struggle for autonomy is, at its core, a struggle for recognition; Palestinians seek to be recognised internationally, just as they were prior to the creation of Israel. The so-called ‘orthodox’ study of IR holds that autonomy is achieved through statehood because states are the central actors in the international arena. So, Palestinians seek their own state in order to be recognised by the international community of states. But the interstate recognition which Palestinians seek has emerged as a result of the historic struggle for Jewish recognition. This is because it was the struggle for Jewish recognition which resulted in the creation of the state of Israel and the subsequent displacement of Palestinians from what was formally Palestine. Displacement has, therefore, created a Palestinian struggle for international recognition.

So, it is evident that the attainment of Jewish recognition has directly resulted in the loss of Palestinian recognition. Whereas the phrase “The Jewish Question” (Markell, 2003: 136) was widely used to describe the Jewish struggle for recognition it has since been replaced by the term “The Palestinian Question” (Said, 1980: 4). This terminology, however, is a derogatory way of singling out an ethnic group as a ‘problem’ to be solved. It establishes the ethnic group’s struggle for recognition as a point of contestation or debate. Within this context, the ethnic group finds its status “uncertain, questionable [or] unstable” (Said, 1980: 4). As a result, ethnic groups feel insecure when their identity is debated because it threatens their existence. For example, in the Nineteenth Century, one ‘solution’ for Jews was thought to be assimilation into (mainly European) states. Through assimilation ‘ethnicity’ could be

replaced by 'nationality'. So, 'Jewishness' could be replaced with 'Frenchness' or 'Dutchness'. Such a solution is anti-Semitic, as it might eliminate Jewish identity (Sartre, 1946:110). Today, it is important not to eliminate Palestinian identity either, through assimilation.

The creation of the state of Israel finally put to rest these derogatory (and racist) debates on how to solve the 'Jewish question'; a Jewish state would ensure that Jews attained international recognition. This did not come without cost, however. The process has been the culmination of a historically painful struggle characterised by debate, racism, discrimination, violence and genocide especially since the Second World War. In fact, so charged is the issue of anti-Semitic behaviour, particularly since the Holocaust, that Israel ferociously protects its security. Given this, it is perhaps understandable, though not condonable, for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to believe that "any demand to resettle [Palestinian] refugees within Israel undermines Israel as a state for the Jewish people." ('Israel sets terms for Palestinian State'. 2009).

Netanyahu's statement affirms the exclusive citizenship rights, determined by ethnicity, on which the ideology behind the Israeli state is based. But any state which sought to create special citizenship rights for Blacks or Whites would be perceived as discriminatory. This is because racial discrimination is seen, today, as a violation of basic universal human rights (Cardenas, 2005: 373). A movement to create racial tolerance, in recent history, has been illustrated by the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. Many countries objected to apartheid because it was seen as unquestionably racist. However Israel has not received similar unanimous criticism. So why has Israel been allowed to create discriminatory citizenship rights?

The answer is in a particular political ideology which underpins the Israeli state: Zionism.

Zionism is a complex political idea with historical roots in Judaism. For the purposes of this research, a discussion of Zionism's connections to Jewish religious traditions is unnecessary. It is important, however, to address Zionism's central political feature; that it aims to address the problem of discrimination against Jews (Kelman, 1998: 48).

One of the ways of combating discrimination against Jews, particularly after the Holocaust, has been through the creation of the state of Israel. This is because states are seen as the primary credible entities in the international arena, whether or not one approves of the state in its current form (Kennan, 1956: 171). Within the borders of the state, so-called ‘citizens’ can enjoy certain rights, such as the protection of a unique Jewish identity in Israel (Rouhana & Sultany, 2003: 5). So, the Israeli state is seen as a “haven” (Kelman, 1998: 48) for Jews around the world, ensuring that their identity is secured. But the full rights of Israeli citizenship are reserved exclusively for Jews. This means that non-Jewish minorities³ in Israel cannot enjoy the full sovereign rights of citizenship, such as equal access to state funded education (Okun & Friedlander, 2005: 163) and title deeds (Peleg, 2004: 422). It is the political ideology of Zionism which underpins the belief that only Jews should enjoy full citizenship rights in Israel. Although it is important to protect Jews from discrimination, awarding tiered citizenship rights is necessarily divisive. So, Zionism ought to be critiqued as one of the primary ideational barriers towards a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Indeed since the founding of the state of Israel in 1948, Zionists have disguised their discrimination against Palestinians as protecting the rights of Jews. So, for decades influential international actors have not criticised Israel’s high-handed approach to security for fear of being perceived anti-Semitic. But anti-Semitism is not the same as anti-Zionism; anti-Semitism is racism against Jews; whereas anti-Zionism is opposition to a discriminatory political ideology. So, the failure of Israel to recognise the rights of non-Jews is not the fault of Judaism, but of a Zionist ideology based on the “messianic” (Said, 1980: 60; Kovel, 2007: 135) destiny of the Jewish people – an approach which necessarily excludes others. This is not to dismiss the terror and discrimination which has been suffered by Jews, and thus the “exultation out of which Zionism has been nourished” (Said, 1980: 60). But Zionism, by ferociously defending Jewish self-determination, is nakedly intolerant of other minorities.

³ There is a minority population in Israel who identify as “Israeli Arabs” (Peleg, 2004: 441). They hold Israeli citizenship but “view themselves as part of a greater Palestinian nation” (Peleg, 2004: 441). For the purpose of this research, the term ‘Palestinian’ refers to both Israeli-Arabs and those living in the West Bank and Gaza.

It is truly unfortunate that historical discrimination against Jews has been used by Zionists to equate “anti-Zionism with Anti-Semitism” (Said, 1980: 59). But Zionists in Israel has been so successful in publicising this fallacious equation that it is even reflected in the 1956 edition of Webster’s *Third New International Dictionary of the English Language*, which defines anti-Semitism as “Opposition to Zionism; sympathy with opponents of the State of Israel” (Kovel, 2007: 133). This definition of Zionism illustrates that Israel’s discriminatory citizenship policy was tolerated by the international community in 1956. Although this definition is time-bound, it is indicative of how the international community has set a precedent for subsequent generations to recognise Zionism.

This is not to argue that Israel should not exist as a homeland for Jews, but rather that the state’s exclusive claims to citizenship, reinforced by the Zionist ideology, make it a bastion of the very racism it seeks to transcend. What Zionist leaders ask the international community to recognise, then, is the conception of a “unique [Jewish] identity” (Taylor, 1992: 38) which necessarily grants Jews “undue favouritism” (Taylor, 1992: 39) over other minorities.

But, today “many contemporary societies have become... tolerant – even welcoming – of difference” (Markell, 2003: 152). So, there is something awkward about Israel refusing to acknowledge diversity by denying non-Jews the same citizenship rights as Jews. A solution for Israel, then, would be to adopt “multicultural recognition” (Markell, 2003: 152) of minorities (who are predominantly Palestinian). The key, here, is a shift from safeguarding the sovereignty of a single identity, to recognising the right of other identities to coexist. Importantly Israelis and Palestinians must share resources, like the Jordan River (Amery, 2002: 313) irrespective of where they live. So, if Israelis and Palestinians share resources they need to coexist. Coexistence entails sharing the same physical space and not, as presently, erecting institutional barriers to protect (and defend) self-determination.

Within the context of coexistence, it is important to critique the orthodox ‘Two-State’ solution for Israel and Palestine.

The ‘Two State’ Solution for Israel and Palestine

The current orthodox solution for Israel and Palestine suggests that Palestinians ought to have their own state, separate from Israel. In this way a ‘Two-State’ solution might be reached. The method by which such a solution could be implemented involves a technical division of land with walls, earth mounds, road blocks and fences (Lagerquist, 2004: 6; *cf.* Image 4). This chapter discusses the so-called ‘practical limitations’ of a ‘Two-State’ solution. Notably it questions whether a Palestinian State is a viable option.

Israel and Palestine combined are no bigger than South Africa’s Western Cape Province and yet, for such a small amount of land, the ‘Two-State’ solution seeks the establishment of a Palestinian state, separate from the current Israeli state. Palestine itself is not one land mass. It is currently divided into two territories – named the ‘West Bank’ and ‘Gaza’ respectively. Gaza has a western coastline on the Mediterranean Sea and shares borders with Israel and Egypt (*cf.* Image 1) Gaza is a relatively small territory, merely 45 kilometres in length (Usher, 2001: 2). The West Bank is landlocked, sharing borders with Israel and Jordan (*cf.* Image 2). Although the West Bank is marginally larger than Gaza, it is not easy to freely access the territory as it is surrounded by a “723km” (‘UNOCHA’ 2009) concrete wall, 6-9 metres high in most places. The wall has been built by Israel to separate Israel from the Palestinian West Bank. But the wall does not follow the internationally recognised border between Israel and the West Bank (Usher, 2005: 25). Rather, it cuts into the West Bank annexing “13%” (‘UNOCHA’, 2009) of the territory for Israel.

The wall is characteristic of Israel’s “selfishness” (Falk, 2002:315) in claiming Palestinian land. Despite the low percentage of land annexed by the wall, this portion of land is, nonetheless, highly fertile and densely populated – mostly by Palestinian farmers. The livelihood of these farmers depends on the productivity of their land (Lagerquist, 2005: 6). Palestinians whose land has been annexed by Israel live in a so-called ‘seam zone’ between the internationally recognised Israeli-West Bank border and the wall. These Palestinians who live in the seam zone are known as “Internally Displaced Persons” (IDPs). By definition they are “persons... who have been forced... to flee... their homes... as a result of... armed conflict, violence, violations of human rights or... human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an

internationally recognised State border” (‘The Definition of an Internally Displaced Person IDP’, 2009). Palestinians whose land falls in the seam zone are only permitted access to their farmlands during designated hours with a required permit.

If a viable Palestinian state is to be created, the status of these IDPs has to be resolved, either by Israel offering financial compensation for appropriating Palestinian land, or by moving the wall and thereby allowing Palestinian landowners to return. Both of these solutions are technical in nature and are indicative of the so-called rational approach taken by Israeli policymakers. But despite this rationality, Israeli policymakers have not provided Palestinian landowners with rational options. As a result IDPs live in stressful circumstances. But the plight of IDPs is symptomatic of a larger problem of irrationality encountered in the West Bank. The overall fact of the matter is that the land set aside for Palestinians is too small and too densely populated to be divided without displacing people.

The vexing nature of how to divide Israel and Palestine comes without even discussing Jerusalem, a city which is contested by Israelis and Palestinians (Emmett, 1997: 16). Jerusalem is home to an estimated “250 000 [mostly Muslim] Palestinians... and 200 000 Jews” (‘Israel Condemned Over Evictions’, 2009). While Jerusalem is currently exclusively Israel’s “official capital” (Ram, 2005: 21), Palestinians seek to secure a portion of the city as the political capital of a Palestinian State. Israel is, however, unwilling to relinquish any part of Jerusalem for a Palestinian capital.

So, the obstacles faced by policymakers favouring a ‘Two-State’ solution are obstacles of control: which areas are to be controlled by Palestinians and which areas are to be controlled by Israelis. In other words, the question for those concerned with the Two-State solution is how to delineate land which can be controlled by the state. State control over territory is a central feature of the ‘Two-State’ solution and, for that matter, orthodox IR. This kind of control is termed ‘sovereignty’. It is to this issue that we now turn our attention.

Chapter 3: The Idea of Sovereignty in IR

Sovereignty, in IR, means “supreme authority over territory” (Sovereignty, 2009). Historical examples of ‘sovereigns’ include monarchs and feudal landlords (Axtmann, 2004: 259). But a discussion on the historical agents of sovereignty is outside the scope of this research. Rather it is necessary to focus on the entities which are recognised as having supreme authority over territory in the contemporary study of IR: states.

States are the entities which, in IR, are accorded supreme power over the territory within their borders. This means that states are free to “choose their own form of government” (Krasner, 2001: 21) or, in other words, to determine affairs within their borders. The corollary is that sovereignty ensures that outsiders cannot interfere with a state’s domestic functions (Walker, 1993: 69).

It is within the context of non-interference that the ‘Two State Solution’ for Israel and Palestine is rooted. Policymakers seek to divide Israel and Palestine into two separate states so that each may exercise supreme authority over its territory, without interference from the other. ‘Interference’ itself is a loaded term; how might an outsider interfere? Conflict is one way; outsiders might wage war on another state. Migration is another way; outsiders might migrate to a state without that state’s permission. Although conflict and migration are superficial examples of how states might interfere with one another⁴, they are nonetheless two central areas of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. So, the idea of a two state solution is aimed at ensuring that Israelis and Palestinians might not interfere with one another once the two groups are physically divided. (Newman & Falah, 1997: 111).

The means by which mutual non-interference is achieved between states is through a principle of so-called ‘recognition’. The term itself requires further explanation, in its relevance to the teaching and practice of IR. For IR theorists, recognition is commonly used to describe how states acknowledge one another. The most

⁴ There are many ways in which states interfere with one another beyond migration and war. For example the unregulated exchange of technology and raw materials.

fundamental aspect of inter-state recognition is respect for each state's sovereignty. The 'Two-State' solution hinges on Israelis and Palestinians recognising each other as sovereign entities and thereby not interfering with one another's domestic affairs.

To problematize the notion of interstate recognition it is useful to consider a passage from Hegel (1996) who is an influential scholar in IR. In 'Lordship and Bondage' (1996) Hegel discusses the relationship between two individuals, a Lord and a Bondsman.

'Each sees the *other*, and therefore also does what it does only in so far as the other does the same. Action by one side only would be useless because what is to happen can only be brought about by both... They *recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing* one another' (Hegel, 1996: 30)

Hegel's account of recognition between individuals has been applied to recognition between states, in IR. The principle, as we have seen, is that for states to exist they need to be recognized by other states. Moreover, in recognizing one another, states apply a principle of "reciprocity" (Gadamer, 1996: 159) – meaning that states agree to treat each other as they expect to be treated. So, regarding sovereignty states agree not to interfere with one another's domestic affairs. The principle of reciprocity is the means by which sovereignty is upheld, codified by the Treaty of Montevideo⁵.

Hegel's main idea in 'Lordship and Bondage' (1996) is that "we can only flourish to the extent that we are recognised" (Taylor, 1992: 50). If we apply Hegel's idea to IR, states prosper (or at the very least achieve international legitimacy) if they are recognised by other states. So, according to this interpretation of Hegel, the 'Two-State' solution for Israel and Palestine might work if the two actors each recognised one other's sovereignty.

But Israelis and Palestinians cannot be seen as two sovereign societies. They are already enmeshed together as a single society in at least three ways. First, Israelis and Palestinians share many of the same resources (Morag, 2001: 181). Secondly, there is an interdependent relationship between Israeli employers and Palestinian employees

⁵ See "Treaty of Montevideo" in the Introduction.

(Kadri, 1998: 518). Thirdly, many Israelis live in the West Bank (Makovsky & Benedek 2003: 26) and many Palestinians live in Israel (LeBor, 2009). So, a land division might – indeed does – interfere with the complex web of interactions which Israelis and Palestinians share. Given this it is difficult to understand why the principle of state sovereignty is used to divide the two societies⁶.

Although it might be obvious to understand how Israelis and Palestinians depend on the same natural resources – like the “Jordan River” (Morag, 2001: 179) – it is not obvious that Israelis and Palestinians are already living together. Despite the fact that Israel has been created as a Jewish homeland, it still has a non-Jewish minority living within its borders. The minority living in Israel are known as ‘Israeli-Arabs’. Historically they are of Palestinian descent and although they hold Israeli citizenship they are nevertheless discriminated against (Okun and Friedlander, 2005: 164; Lagerquist & Cook, 2005: 47) within Israel. For the Israeli-Arab minority, total assimilation into the state of Israel is all but impossible, as there are limited employment opportunities in “skilled” (Okun and Friedlander, 2005: 165) professions for Arab workers. Some might argue that Israeli-Arabs, by and large, are less well educated than their Jewish counterparts, which might explain their discrimination on the labour market. Although Israel does not have laws which prohibit state education funding to Israeli-Arabs, “the educational systems of the Jewish majority and the Arab minority are almost entirely separate” (Okun and Friedlander, 2005: 165).

There is broader reason why Israeli-Arabs are marginalised in Israel: sovereignty. There is a perception that Jewish sovereignty is under threat due to the low ratio of Jews to Arabs in the Middle-East (Zureik, 2003: 619). So, in order to protect the identity of this small Jewish population, Jews are insulated within their own sovereign state – Israel. Non-Jews living within Israel are viewed as a threat. The protection of Jewish sovereignty would explain why there are limited employment opportunities for Arab workers in Israel and why Arabs receive different education to Jews.

⁶ There are states which share natural resources which do not share sovereignty. For example, South Africa and Namibia share marine resources. However Israelis and Palestinians both have a deep sense of entitlement to a very small area of land, especially Jerusalem. Therefore, dividing Israelis and Palestinians into two states seems unimaginative.

But it is not only Palestinians (or Israeli-Arabs) who live in Israel; Jews also live in Palestine. The Jews who live in Palestine (specifically the West Bank) are known as ‘Israeli settlers’. Israeli settlers are citizens of Israel who have chosen to settle on Palestinian land (‘Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention’, 2001). Most settlers believe that Palestinian land is part of Israel, and thus are only claiming what is ‘rightfully theirs’. But the problem for Palestinians is that they are forced to manoeuvre around – what can be termed – an ‘archipelago’ of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory, all of which infringe on the sovereignty of a prospective Palestinian state (*cf.* Image 3)

So, due to the fact that Israelis and Palestinians are interspersed, one possible solution is to “transfer” (Zureik, 2003: 621) Palestinians from Israel in return for those Jews who have settled in Palestine. Yet, such a solution is likely to create upheaval (Sussman, 2004: 12). So, if Israeli settlers live in Palestine and many Palestinians live in Israel, why does the orthodoxy seek the division of Israel and Palestine into two sovereign states?

The answer is that, despite their interspersion, Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs are seen as separate communities or so-called ‘nations’. As we have seen, a distinction between who belongs inside the nation and who belongs outside it – patterns of “inclusion and exclusion” (Grovgoui, 2002: 315) – are indicative of a troubling ‘otherness’ created by sovereignty. Indeed the very idea of ‘citizen’ and ‘alien’ underpins Walker’s (1983) idea that sovereignty is divisive (Walker, 1993: 61). The idea that separate nations require their own sovereign states should be a foreboding to Israelis and Palestinians because the ‘Two-State’ solution might only create distrust between insiders and outsiders. In order to further critique the ‘Two-State’ solution, the idea of ‘nationhood’ requires further explanation. It is to the issue of nationhood that we now turn.

Nationhood in the Context of Israel and Palestine

Benedict Anderson’s (1983) idea of how societies are constructed is useful in sourcing a definition of the ‘nation’. For Anderson the nation is purely ideational; it is constructed out of a sense, within citizenry, of belonging to a community. It is

ideational because no one within the nation will ever meet or know all its members. Yet there remains an idea of unity and comradeship between the individuals constituting it. So, the definition of a nation is “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited as sovereign” (Anderson, 1983: 6). It is limited because no matter how big a population it holds, the home of the nation – the state – still has “finite borders” (Anderson, 1983: 7). It is sovereign because the concept of the ‘nation’ arose from the Enlightenment when absolute authority shifted from the monarch to the state. Whereas the monarch used to have supreme authority to determine affairs within her borders, today that authority rests with citizenry. Finally, the nation is a community because regardless of differences in class, language or culture the nation is always thought to be a “deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson, 1983: 7). The underlying assumption which grounds the ‘Two-State’ solution is, as mentioned, that in as much as Israelis and Palestinians are two separate nations, they require their own separate states. So, what is the relationship between the nation and state?

The ‘nation’ and the ‘state’ are two separate ideas, although they can be linked to form the concept of the ‘nation state’. Certainly not all ‘nations’ are ‘states’ though most ‘states’ claim to be ‘nations’. One could argue that there is a natural bond between the citizen and the state which “constitutes ‘a nation’” (Hobsbawm, 1990: 22). What is clear, then, is that there is an interdependent relationship between citizens and their state which reinforces the idea of ‘a nation’, though as Gellner (1983) notes it is difficult to pinpoint which came first⁷.

Although it is difficult to disentangle the interdependence between nationhood and statehood, Israel is an example of a country which might claim its nationhood existed prior to the establishment of its statehood. This is because there is an idea of a Jewish nation, living in Diaspora, which existed before the founding of the state of Israel. Hobsbawm (1990) concurs with this argument, noting that early Zionists claimed there to be a Jewish nation “distinguishing itself from foreigners” (Hobsbawm, 1990:

⁷ For example, there is an understanding of a ‘Kurdish Nation’ living in Diaspora – even though their status as ‘a nation’ is sometimes debated. However, opponents to Kurdish self-determination find it easy to justify their claim on the basis that Kurds do not have a state. Even though such an argument is circular, ‘the state’, nevertheless, legitimises ‘the nation’ and visa versa.

22), pre-dating the establishment of Israel. Because Israel is barely 60 years old, it still has citizens who can remember what it was like to be part of a 'stateless nation'.

Palestinians are in the opposite situation: although some remember when there was a Palestinian state (prior to the creation of Israel) Palestinians are today part of a 'stateless nation'. Most people in the world, however, cannot recall a time when either the nation or the state was absent. So, most people take the state "for granted" (Gellner, 1983: 5). Yet because Palestinians do not have a state, they find themselves in an awkward position on the periphery of the defining power of 'statehood' where their national identity is vulnerable.

The idea that a nation's identity can be vulnerable is rooted within a larger idea: security. The idea – and indeed the study of – security in IR is too broad for this research to discuss in depth. So, for the purposes of this discussion, security refers to the protection of state sovereignty. Security is born out of the notion of threat; that the identity of a state can be threatened and, thus, needs to be secured. The identity of the state is, to a large extent, held by its citizens. The citizens are the guardians of sovereignty because without them there can be no state. So, if national identities assimilate (or merge) the state runs the risk of becoming redundant. If there is no nation to be identified with a particular state, what purpose does that state serve?

Whereas if the state demonstrates that it has control over its internal affairs, by offering its citizens "labour distribution" (Gellner, 1983: 5) and the prospect of human development it would seem strange if some – indeed most – citizens were not nationalistic. The corollary is that nationalism constantly serves to legitimize the State's existence. If there were no rulers and no ruled in any given area, one could not "blame" (Gellner, 1983: 4) people for not being nationalistic.

The key to understanding why many Jews are patriotic to Israel is, therefore, that they have achieved statehood and thus seek to legitimise their state's existence. So Israelis construct nationalism in order to endorse the feeling of intense community derived from a constructed sociological narrative (Weiss, 1997: 98). Yet one ought to be mindful (and weary) of constructed sociological narratives which offer empirical accounts of 'absolute' truth. For example, early Zionists in Israel influenced by

centuries of discrimination against Jews, constructed a narrative which rejected the image of the “effeminate Jewish male, unable to defend himself, family and community against the murderous violence of the non-Jew, [creating instead] the ‘New Jew’... militant, tanned, close to the soil and able to defend self and community” (Peteet, 2005: 160). It is in the protection of Jewish sovereignty that forms the basis of the relationship between the Israeli state and its nation. Today, there are few better examples of nationalism than in Israel where the terms “‘citizen and ‘alien’ [or] even ‘civilized’ and ‘barbaric’” (Falk, 2002: 320) are often used to differentiate Israelis from Palestinians based on their “specific ethnic identities” (Falk, 2002: 320). The physical boundaries built by Israel, to keep ‘others’ (mostly Palestinians) out, is an illustration of ethnic nationalism.

Just as there is fervent Israeli nationalism, there is also Palestinian nationalism. In fact Palestinian nationalism often arises in reaction to Israeli nationalism. The reason for such virulent Israeli and Palestinian nationalism is that both nations have contested the land on which Israel is built. So, contestation over territory has played a large part in the formation of nationalism. As Hobsbawm (1990) notes:

The logical implication of trying to create continent[s] neatly divided into coherent territorial states, each inhabited by a separate ethnically and linguistically homogenous population, was the mass expulsion or extermination of minorities (Hobsbawm, 1990: 132).

In Israel and Palestine, contestation over territory has characterised Israeli-Palestinian relations. As already discussed, Zionism was the central ideology on which the state of Israel was founded and it advocated that Israel be a state for Jews at the expense of Palestinians. The subsequent Palestinian struggle for international recognition is therefore a direct reaction against Zionist conquest, which cost Palestinians their land and autonomy. The result of the Palestinian struggle for international recognition has been a “Palestinian nationalism associated with a territory” (Hobsbawm, 1990: 138).

In order for there to be any sort of Palestinian association with territory there ought to be a homogenous Palestinian consciousness. So, is Palestinian nationalism independent of the Palestinian struggle against Zionist conquest? In other words, do Palestinians have a common language, culture and a deep historical evolution in the

Middle-East which does not only define itself in relation to Zionism? It is not necessary to delve into the history of the region, before the founding of Israel, to recognise the presence of Palestinians in the Holy Land. In fact, today it is taken for granted that Israel was not founded on “uninhabited land”⁸ (Peteet, 2005: 155).

Some Zionists distance themselves from the claim that Palestine was uninhabited, instead arguing that they ‘bought’ Palestinian land, without forcefully displacing the owners (*cf.* Chapter 1). Certainly some land exchanged hands, but whether Palestinians were bought or fought off their land, the fact remains that they enjoyed a historical claim to the territory. So it is not possible to suggest that Palestinians were ‘never there’. As Gerber notes “local Palestinian identity clearly existed... before the British and before Zionism” (Gerber, 2003: 28). Indeed, even before the adoption of Westphalian statehood outside Europe, there had emerged in the Seventeenth Century a “sort of ‘Palestinian State’” (Gerber, 2003: 31) bound by the intermarrying of three families “based in Gaza (the Ridwan family), Jerusalem (the Ibn Farukh family) and Lajun (the Turabay family)” (Gerber, 2003: 30). These families formed principalities that even cooperated against external enemies such as “Fakhr al-Din II of Mount Lebanon in 1623” (Gerber, 2003: 31).

Aside from military cooperation, there is also evidence of a literate Palestinian community in the Seventeenth Century. Murphy (2005), like Hobsbawm (1990), notes the importance of “print-capitalism” (Murphy, 2005: 278) in solidifying the notion of a “distinct Palestinian identity” (Murphy, 2005: 278) during the period of Ottoman Rule, something which Zionist narratives seek to disclaim (Murphy, 2005: 278).

In fact there is even evidence that communities in Palestine began to prosper through trade. For example, the “production and export of Jaffa oranges” (Gerber, 2003: 33) in Palestine during the Nineteenth Century created such demand for the fruit that to

⁸ The Zionists’ claim that Israel was created on uninhabited land was based on a principle named *Terra Nullius* (Peteet, 2005: 155) which was used in English Law in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It stated that land could be settled by colonisers, if it was uninhabited, or if it was bought from its indigenous population. In Australia the principle was used by British colonists to argue that because the aboriginal population was sparsely populated, and appeared to be nomadic, the continent could be considered ‘empty land’ or ‘virgin territory’. (“Native Title Act”. 1993) Therefore, British colonists assumed that Australian land did not need to be bought from the indigenous population.

irrigate groves, Palestinian farmers introduced “500 European water pumps” (Gerber, 2003: 33). Such industry is also illustrated by Gazan barley growers who, during the same period, exported “40 000 tons” (Gerber, 2003: 33) of the raw product to European breweries. How, then, does one account for the decline in Palestinian prosperity?

One of the main factors was the British rule in Palestine. The British suppression of the 1936-1939 Arab revolt “was brutal and cruel, [including] the indiscriminate killing of villagers... stripping of women... and tying village leaders on trains as human shields” (Gerber, 2003: 36), such that, by 1948, most of the potential Palestinian leadership were “either dead, in prison, or in exile” (Gerber, 2003: 37). Due to this decimation of the Palestinian population in the early Twentieth Century, a perception emerged among Zionists that there was no Palestinian nation and thus the claim of Palestine being “a land without a people for a people without a land” (Muir, 2008: 55). Muir (2008) is at pains to indicate that this does not mean there were ‘no people’ living in Palestine in 1948, just that there was ‘no nation’. The fact is, “no matter how backward, uncivilized, and silent they were, the Palestinian Arabs *were* on the land” (Said, 1980: 9), whether they were part of a nation or not. Even Israeli military leader and politician, Moshe Dayan, admitted that there was “not one place [in Israel] that did not have a former Arab population” (Said, 1980: 14).

So there have clearly been Palestinians living on the land on which Israel was created. Herein lies the kernel of the Palestinian issue: much of the discourse on Palestinian autonomy – and indeed Zionist culpability in displacing Palestinians – centres on where the Palestinians should live. But it is notable that Palestinians and Israelis are already living together, despite the fact that Israel has built a wall to try and separate the two people (Usher, 2005: 25). In fact, 1.5 million “of Israel’s 7.3 million population” (LeBor, 2009) are Palestinian Arabs. These Palestinians are not separated from Israel by the wall. But it is not only Palestinians who live in Israel. Israelis also live in Palestine – specifically the Palestinian territory of the West Bank, discussed earlier.

Despite the fact that they share territory, it is evident that Israelis and Palestinians believe themselves to be separate nations and thus deserving of separate sovereign

states. So the 'Two-State' solution is seen as the so-called 'rational' end for Israelis and Palestinians. The idea that the 'Two-State' solution is rational for Israelis and Palestinians is built on a two particular theories in IR. So what are the IR theories that underpin the 'Two-State' solution? To this central problematique we now turn our attention.

Chapter 4: International Relations Perspectives on the Israel-Palestine issue

Israelis and Palestinians are clearly interspersed, yet the 'Two-State' solution seeks to divide them into sovereign states. We have seen that the idea of sovereignty underpins the 'Two-State' solution based on the distinct 'nationalities' of Israelis and Palestinians. Sovereignty also forms the core of two IR perspectives that are used in the discipline: Realism and Liberalism. This is not to say that Realism and Liberalism are the only IR theories. Nor is this to say that Realism and Liberalism are the only IR theories that can be used to explain the 'Two-State' solution. Rather, Realism and Liberalism are two of the foundational theories – or so-called 'schools of thought' – in IR. Therefore it is useful to discuss the 'Two-State' solution from the perspective of Realism and Liberalism. First, let us analyse the 'Two-State' solution through the prism of Realism, the school of thought which has been given the greatest primacy in IR (Burchill, 1996: 67).

Realism

Realists view the world as it “*is* rather than [it] *ought* to be” (Burchill, 1996:68). In other words Realists believe that there is no moral standard which dictates how states should behave toward one another (Morgenthau, 1945: 146). The lack of an “overriding ethical code” (Kennan, 1965: 171) to structure interstate behaviour is known as so-called ‘anarchy’. For Realists, power dictates how states interact with one another (Kissinger, 1957: 379). Because power relations are central to a Realist understanding of the international arena, states are sceptical of trust (Kissinger, 1959: 39). So, instead of trusting one another states choose their alliances based on one another’s strategic value in so-called ‘self-interested’ behaviour. Selfishness means that interstate warfare (although undesirable) is inevitable. In the Realist understanding, the international arena is brutal and the only way to deter actors from going to war is if the costs of doing so outweigh the benefits. So, Realists reduce human interests to strategies or games, advocating that actors constantly seek to maximize their utility through negotiations, trade-offs and alliances (Grovoqui, 2002: 319).

Realist Theory reduces the Israeli-Palestinian bilateral relationship to a power squabble, as each side attempts to gain the ascendancy. In these circumstances relations become a ping-pong match of provocation and conflict is inevitable. For example, a Palestinian suicide bombing in a Tel Aviv market might be reciprocated by an Israeli incursion into the bomber's West Bank village. Even cumulative small actions by one side can lead to one large action from the other – for example, when numerous 'qassam rockets', fired into Israel by Palestinian militants, result in an Israeli military offensive (as seen in December 2008). Presumably then, in the Realist understanding, peace is achieved when the costs of going to war outweigh the benefits of doing so. However, a cost-benefit analysis of going to war cannot claim to advance peace between Israelis and Palestinians; it can at best aim for an absence of war.

Herein lies an important distinction: For the purposes of this research, and in the context of Israeli-Palestinian relations, peace is not defined by a lack of hostile acts. The absence of hostile acts is an indicator of non-aggression, but not necessarily peace. Peace involves meaningful steps toward cooperation between the two actors.

Unfortunately interstate relations are often explained by power. This is lamentable because it seems unfair that some states can have greater material power than others. The Israeli-Palestinian relationship is an example of a power imbalance; Israel has greater material and military power than Palestine. But what is the source of Israel's power? The primary answer is its special relationship with the US (Kissinger, 1977: 177). The US has a "moral commitment to the preservation of the state of Israel" (Kennan, 1972: 223) and, to this end, provides it with unconditional financial and military support. But the US is also a mediator in the Israel-Palestine conflict. So, it seems unfair that Israel should enjoy US support.

Herein lies a problem with Realism in IR: Realists sometimes find themselves in the awkward position of endorsing an unethical relationship (as is the US' relationship with Israel) rather than critiquing it. Realists justify the relationship according to "power [and strategic] interests" (Grovoqui, 2002:319) and so fail to give an ethical account of how the US ought to mediate in the Middle-East. Realists readily overlook

the immoral practices involved in certain state relations in favour of giving a strategic account of policymaking.

But Realists do have a position on morality. The classical Realist, Hans Morgenthau (1945) argues that whoever is stronger is morally superior. In other words that “God is always with the stronger battalions, with the party who wins the elections, and with the biggest bank accounts” (Morgenthau, 1945: 1). Whilst accepting that unequal power relations are unfair, Realists justify their position by arguing that statesmen will always be faced with unethical decisions when formulating a particular strategy. Choosing a strategy sometimes involves making a trade-off between two options. Often both these options will be bad. But Realists argue that just because a statesman is faced with bad options does not mean he should waive action. For Realists, inaction is immoral. So, Realists argue that statesmen, when faced with two evils, have a moral duty to choose the lesser one (Morgenthau, 1945: 17). In order to accept this uncomfortable situation, Realists argue that ethical judgments should be divided into private and public spheres. So, whilst Realists might accept unethical behaviour in the public domain as a logical consequence of power, unethical behaviour in the private sphere might be less acceptable (Morgenthau, 1945: 6; Kennan, 1985: 205).

Realists might argue that in as much as the US-Israel relationship is a public relationship, the US is less constrained by ethical considerations in lending unconditional support to Israel than if the relationship were private. For example, the US currently gives Israel money and arms, without concern for the wars which Israel wages with US aid. Realists might argue that this ‘special relationship’ might be immoral, but is acceptable in as much as it happens in the public domain.

Even if one accepts that there is a difference in moral standards between what happens in the private and public domains, it still seems unacceptable that the US can be called to mediate between Israelis and Palestinians when it has an obvious bias towards Israel (Kissinger, 1977: 177). Indeed the US’ insistence that Palestinian militants “renounce violence” (Black, 2009) is unfair if Israel is not called upon to reciprocate – as Hegel himself says “one sided action... serve[s] no purpose” (Gadamer, 1996:159).

The problem, as we have seen, is not that the US gives Israel unconditional support, but that it mediates between Israelis and Palestinians whilst acknowledging its bias towards Israel. A fair mediator should be impartial, but the US is not. So, why does the US support Israel unconditionally?

The US-Israel relationship is powered by several influential pro-Israel lobby groups in Washington – known generically as ‘the Pro-Israel Lobby’ or ‘the Lobby’. The Pro-Israel Lobby is not a state actor, it is a “loose coalition of individuals and organisations” (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006) which manages to influence US foreign policy towards Israel. The Lobby ensures that Israel receives large annual armaments and monetary packages from the US (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). It does this by persuading US senators and congressmen to support Israel. The importance of gaining the support of US politicians is to ally Israel with the world’s most powerful international actor – the US. In order to gain the unconditional support of the American population (and thus the US government) the Lobby discourages critical thinking on the Israel-Palestine issue, even denouncing dissent from within its own ranks as “irresponsible” (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). So, the views of Lobby members are not just biased towards Israel, they are unaccommodating of new thinking around Israeli-Palestinian coexistence. In this way, the Lobby is intolerant of a “candid” (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006) discussion of Israeli-Palestinian relations for fear that such a discussion might lead Americans to criticise Israel.

But what incentives do US politicians get for supporting Israel? Money is one kind of incentive. The Lobby readily bankrolls the political campaigns of those senators and congressmen who support its agenda. On the other hand, those who do not support its agenda run the risk of being lobbied against. So, part of the success of the Lobby has been its ability to “reward legislators and congressional candidates who support its agenda, and punish those who challenge it” (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006).

Not only does the Lobby itself have power, but there are large numbers of Jewish supporters amongst the American populous who have the power to elect American presidential candidates that have a pro-Israel agenda. So, Presidential candidates “go to great lengths not to antagonise them” (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006).

The Lobby has extensive reach in US society, from Congress to Academia, ensuring that debates on issues pertaining to Israel are controlled (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). The significance of the Lobby is twofold. First, it secures financial support for Israel – \$140 billion from the US since the end of the Second World War. This is the largest cumulative aid package from one country to another in history (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). Secondly, as mentioned, it ensures that Israel is not publically criticised in the US. One way to ensure that Israel is not criticised is for the Lobby to discourage critical thinking on the Israel-Palestine issue for fear that new ideas might “force” (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006) Israel into coexisting with the Palestinians. The Lobby’s underlying belief, therefore, is that Israeli-Palestinian coexistence is undesirable. So, if Israelis and Palestinians are to embrace new thinking on the issue of autonomy, the Pro-Israel Lobby is a significant obstacle to be overcome.

The power of the Lobby in influencing the US to formulate a favourable policy toward Israel, underscores the Realist belief that the international arena is brutal. In other words, that the Lobby can encourage the US to give Israel unconditional support, regardless of the latter’s behaviour. Realists might explain that the US-Israel relationship is a consequence of the power imbalance in the international arena, where alliances are built on strategic interests. They might also argue that it is a moral imperative for states to prioritise their own wellbeing. But there is a school of thought in opposition to Realism. It is to this school of thought that we now turn our attention.

Liberalism

Where Realists, such as Hans Morgenthau (1945) and Henry Kissinger (1957) believe that actors are selfish and power seeking, Liberals such as Hedley Bull (1979) and Michael Doyle (1986) believe that actors can cooperate and “get along” (Walker, 1993:69). Liberals believe that actors can observe and have respect for one another’s “individual freedom” (Doyle, 1986: 1152), or the right not to be dominated. So, Liberals are opposed to the Realist belief that political success is measured by the “degree to which one is able to maintain, increase and demonstrate one’s power over others” (Morgenthau, 1945: 14). Liberals believe, instead, that by adhering to laws and exchanging trust actors can cooperate without power-seeking behaviour.

For Liberals, trusting behaviour between states is based on ethical norms of interaction, where states do not necessarily have to make immoral trade-offs, as Realists would argue (Bull, 1979: 172; Doyle, 1986: 1163). Whereas Realists believe that states choose their allies based on their relative power or strategic usefulness, Liberals argue that alliances can be formed between states based on shared values. Bull (1979) argues that there are at least some ethical principles from which states cannot deviate (Bull, 1979: 172). So, Liberals believe that states have a moral imperative to do what is just, and not what is strategically sensible. For Bull, there ought to be a code of ethics which practitioners in IR can call upon to judge “by rational investigation” (Bull, 1979: 180) whether or not an action has moral worth. This code of ethics might include principles such as the protection of “life, property and the sanctity of agreements” (Bull, 1979: 180).

In relation to the Israel-Palestine issue, Liberals might argue that if two states were to be created (Israel and Palestine), the land would have to be divided fairly. In other words, Israelis might have to acknowledge that annexing 13% of the West Bank is morally wrong. Moreover, allowing Israelis to settle in the West Bank, in as much as this policy infringes on Palestine’s sovereignty, is also morally wrong. In relation to the pro-Israel Lobby, Liberals might argue that the US has a moral obligation not to submit to Lobby pressure and support Israel unconditionally, in as much as such support makes the US a biased broker between Israelis and Palestinians.

The notion that states can “establish peace amongst themselves” (Doyle, 1986: 1156) is a feature which grounds a Liberal understanding of state interaction. This is not to say that interstate warfare is impossible but that likeminded states are less likely to engage in hostilities. In fact like minded states are more likely to achieve a level of “interdependence” (Doyle, 1986: 1161) through their peaceful interaction. Importantly, if states are to be interdependent a degree of sovereignty must be relinquished. Although the Israeli-Palestinian relationship is not an interstate one, the two have nevertheless reached a level of interdependence through their sharing of resources. Moreover, although their interactions have not always been peaceful, the fact that the Israeli and Palestinian populations have mixed has diminished their exclusive sovereignty.

Although Liberals might disagree as to how much states can share their sovereignty – so called ‘pooling’ – Liberals do not believe that interdependent states should merge. The Liberal philosopher, Emmanuel Kant even believed it “impossible or potentially tyrannical” (Doyle, 1986: 1158) for states to relinquish their sovereignty in favour of a single state. In other words, for Liberals, the sovereign state ought to remain in the international arena. So, a ‘Two-State’ solution for Israel and Palestine is important for Liberals in as much as it upholds the idea of sovereignty.

In fact both Realist and Liberal narratives can readily be used in favour of the ‘Two State Solution’. Realists and Liberals are dependent on the idea of sovereignty to explain that Israelis and Palestinians are two distinct identities that are deserving of separate states. Realists use the idea of sovereignty to explain that Israelis and Palestinians are self-interested identities which will jockey for power in the international arena and, therefore, need their own separate states. Liberals use the idea of sovereignty to explain that although states ought to remain separate, they might learn to cooperate.

But Rob Walker (1983) argues neither Realists nor Liberals move beyond the centrality of the sovereign state in their approach to the teaching of IR⁹. So, neither Realists nor Liberals acknowledge that Israelis and Palestinians might not be able to be separated. First, Israelis and Palestinians are dependent on one another for labour. Secondly, Israelis and Palestinians share the same water resources. Thirdly, and most importantly, Israelis and Palestinians share the same land (*cf.* Chapter 1). Land sharing erodes sovereignty because it blurs the delineation between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’. In effect, then, Israel and Palestine are already ‘one sovereign entity’ by virtue of their interdependence. So, Realism and Liberalism – in as much as they prioritise sovereign self-determination – fail to account for how Israelis and Palestinians are already coexisting.

⁹ The classical Realist Hans Morgenthau believes there could be “alternative structures” (Burchill, 1996: 81) to the sovereign state. But Morgenthau also believes that the “laws of politics are ‘impervious to our preferences’” (Burchill, 1996: 81) meaning that there is little chance of transcending the sovereign state, even if we want to. In other words, we ought to be ‘realistic’ and accept the centrality of the sovereign state in IR.

Due to the inability of Realist and Liberal narratives to move beyond the idea of the sovereign state in IR, it is useful to discuss a recent mode of thought in social science which can be used to emancipate Israelis and Palestinians from the so-called 'rational' approaches of Realists and Liberals towards statehood. It is to this approach that we now turn our attention.

Critical Theory

There is a theoretical movement which can be used to critique the IR theories of Realism and Liberalism and thereby explain the uniquely interdependent Israeli-Palestinian relationship. This movement has been termed 'Critical Theory'. It claims that the world is socially constructed, comprised of a variety of different and subjective interests which cannot be explained rationally by objective empiricism, as Realists or Liberals might argue.

The idea of Critical Theory emerged from the Frankfurt School, predominantly comprised of Marxist intellectuals who were critical of capitalism and the technical solutions it offered. The school aimed at emancipating oppressed individuals (Agger, 1991: 107). It could be argued that Israelis and Palestinians are oppressed by an IR discourse which aims to divide their territory into sovereign states. Thus this research aims to be critical of any knowledge which claims to offer objective, rational, solutions to affairs in the international arena. Such solutions include the fences, walls and permit restrictions proposed by Realists and Liberals to separate Israelis and Palestinians into two sovereign states (*cf.* Image 4).

Thus Critical Theory aims to emancipate both Israelis and Palestinians from the divisiveness of 'Two States', a solution which might see both sides become more self-interested and less trusting of one another. At the outset it is important to clarify that the idea of a Critical Theory draws on strands of social theory, without limiting itself to the prescriptive models of the house of IR, in order to "reveal [the] obvious and subtle forms of domination" (Devetak, 1995: 148), which are inherent in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

First, Critical Theory takes, as its stimulus, the prevailing international order and questions “the global configuration of power” (Devetak, 1995: 151) whilst avoiding the temptation to offer technical solutions. This is not to argue that the technical solutions offered by Realists and Liberals are illegitimate, but these do not “exhaust the possibilities” (Wight, 2002: 33), of explaining order in international affairs.

Moreover, the solutions sought by Realists often disregard ethical decision-making because they favour actors which have greater power in negotiations. For example, Israel has more power than Palestine in as much as it has a strong alliance with the US. This has meant that impartial solutions in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations have often been sacrificed for ones weighted heavily in Israel’s favour. So, Critical Theory can be used to “emancipate” (Devetak, 1995: 145) Palestinians from the imbalance of power which weakens their autonomy.

The key to emancipation is a critique of who belongs inside the state and who belongs outside it; in other words citizens and foreigners (Walker, 1983: 61). The institutional measures used to keep foreigners ‘out’ include the policing of borders which protect the sovereignty of the state, distinguishing it from other states (*cf.* Image 4). So, it is these technical measures from which Critical Theory seeks to emancipate individuals.

The institutional lines sovereignty draws to keep people separate ought to be erased in Israel and Palestine, due to interdependent Israeli-Palestinian relationship.

Policymakers’ belief that sovereignty grounds interstate relations is the underlying assumption of the ‘Two-State’ solution. The ‘Two-State’ solution is located within the context of a broader problem within IR theory, that “there is little real incentive to search for new theoretical mappings... [such that IR remains] within the comfort represented by continuities, rather than engaging in the search for new notions that might lead to different ideas, different interpretations, and so deliver different policy outcomes” (Vale, 2003: 14).

IR’s preoccupation with mainstream theories, such as Realism and Liberalism has meant that the discipline has failed to produce nuanced thinking on what constitutes international affairs (Tickner, 2008: 735; Tysgankov, 2008: 763). Indeed, because IR literature deals with mainstream thinking, Israelis and Palestinians are compelled to

see their future within the parameters of already established canons. In the first instance, Israelis and Palestinians conform to the idea that they are two ethnically diverse nations which each require protection within the borders of their own sovereign state. The corollary is that they both then recognise the sovereign state as the most credible entity in the international arena and consequently seek it. But the 'Two-State' solution, offered by Realists and Liberals, is not a rational option for Israelis and Palestinians, due to their interdependence. Therefore, this research aims to break with the stale thinking of orthodox IR by offering imaginative solutions to the future of Israel-Palestine.

At this point it is important to add a disclaimer: this research does not aim to dispense with the state¹⁰. Rather, it shows that dividing Israel and Palestine into two states might be unhelpful because the land is densely populated and the resources are shared. Israel and Palestine cannot be divided impartially. Thus the challenge for policymakers is to acknowledge, what appears to be the proverbial elephant in the room: that the territory occupied by Israelis and Palestinians is too small and too densely settled to be divided into two sovereign states. But new thinking on the issue of Israeli-Palestinian autonomy might offer a resolution. It is to these ideas that we now turn.

¹⁰ There is an idea of a post-state system, where the state itself is eliminated. But it might take a long time to create a post-state system (if at all). In Israel and Palestine there is an urgent need for a practical solution. So, a discussion on a post-statehood is, in the immediate context of their struggle, unhelpful.

Conclusion: New Thinking on the Israel-Palestine Issue

This chapter returns to the research question and answers it in light of the analysis. Here is the question: Should Israel and Palestine be divided into two states?

A 'Two-State' solution for Israel and Palestine aims to use the idea of sovereignty to separate Israelis and Palestinians into two separate states. But we have seen that the extent to which Israelis and Palestinians share sovereignty bedevils the successful implementation of the 'Two-State' solution. In fact the very proposal of sovereign statehood for interdependent societies, such as Israel and Palestine, is symptomatic of a larger problem in IR: that there is a lack of critical thinking on how to settle land disputes. As we have seen the current (orthodox) approach to settling the Israel-Palestine issue is through the creation of an autonomous Palestinian state. So, statehood is traditionally seen as the panacea for issues around autonomy in IR.

But Anderson's (1983) scholarship on the construction of nations could be read as an invitation to 'imagine' alternatives to autonomy in IR. In order to demonstrate the context out of which 'new thinking' arises, I turn to ideas offered by Shani (2008), Tickner (2008), Tysgankov (2008) and Callahan (2008) who challenge the assumption that 'the state' ought to be the foundation of IR.

For these authors, a critical appraisal of orthodox IR Theory reveals that it readily prescribes sovereign statehood as a solution for people, such as the Palestinians, who seek autonomy. But orthodox IR theorists do not consider options which do not hinge on the sovereignty of the state.

The state itself is hegemonic, in as much as it is used throughout the world, regardless of whether there are other structures of order (Shani, 2008: 722; Tysgankov, 2008: 762; Callahan, 2008: 749). The state is an oppressive construct because it fails to accommodate peripheral conceptions of society formation. Only a 'post-state' system might be inclusive of understandings of order that do not prioritise the state as the central political structure to order society. So, a post-state community would

presumably be a society bound by “shared ethical norms... [which] structure social and political life” (Shani, 2008:727), rather than constituting people who hold citizenship to a particular state.

In an idealistic sense a ‘post-state’ system might bring an end to the hegemony of the state in policymaking and in IR theory. However, a post-state system is neither pragmatic nor realistic for Israel and Palestine because it does not offer a practical solution to their problem. The state is not going to be abolished anytime soon and Israelis and Palestinians need an urgent solution. Yet, as I have outlined in this chapter, the ‘Two-State’ solution is riddled with practical difficulties, not least of which remains the presence of Palestinians living in Israel, Israeli settlers in the West Bank and the question of how to divide Jerusalem.

IR is bound to the current states system and it is unlikely that the US – as the world’s remaining superpower – is likely to formulate a pioneering policy in the direction of a post-state system. However, it is important to remember that new thinking, beyond the limitations of state sovereignty, allows for a creative solution for Israel and Palestine.

A Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian State

A ‘Bi-National State’ solution (*cf.* Introduction) offers an alternative to the ‘Two-State’ solution. Bi-Nationalism is the idea that two nations which are ethnically diverse, such as the Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, can live together in a state which preserves their ethnic identities (Nordquist, 1985: 162). Bi-Nationalism is pragmatic because it marries the need for new thinking around ‘autonomy’ with the desperate need to solve the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

In a Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian state, both identity groups would live together under a single parliament. The significance of having a single parliament might be to construct a constitution – or legally binding document – in which the rights of both Israelis and Palestinians are recognised. Within a Bi-National state, Israelis and Palestinians might retain their identity, language and culture if they lived in delineated areas – so-called ‘cantons’.

The idea of cantons requires further explanation. Cantons are semi-autonomous zones within the state's boundaries. They are semi-autonomous because they have the ability to order their own affairs but are ultimately accountable to the state. A canton has an ethnic majority population. So, in the case of a Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian state, there would be cantons where Jews were in the majority and others where Palestinians were in the majority. A collection of all the cantons would be a so-called 'federation' under the supreme authority of a single state (Nordquist, 1985: 162). The purpose of cantons in a Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian state would be to preserve the ethnic identity of Israelis and Palestinians within separate semi-autonomous zones. In essence, then, Israelis and Palestinians would share a single state without assimilating (Nordquist, 1985: 162). Indeed, it is unlikely that the two societies would agree to a Bi-National state (at least initially) which required total assimilation.

So, cantons ensure that Jewish and Palestinian identity can be preserved. The idea that national identity can be 'preserved' means that an element of sovereignty is retained within the borders of a Bi-National state. In other words, that Israelis and Palestinians are still recognised as sovereign identities, but within the borders of a single state. Cantons are a 'relaxed' form of sovereignty, where the state retains absolute authority but the ethnic identities retain an element of self-determination. Therefore, a Bi-National state (which uses cantons) straddles a line between Walker's (1993) idea that sovereignty is divisive and the orthodox idea that sovereignty structures political life (Krasner, 2001: 229).

It is important to note the critics of a Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian state. One author has dismissed Israeli-Palestinian Bi-Nationalism as "unrealistic and counterproductive" (LeBor, 2009), mainly because he does not accept the 'relaxed' form of sovereignty offered by the cantons of a Bi-National state. Another holds that Israelis and Palestinians are fundamentally independent nations and that nothing less than 'Two States' will do (Joffe, 2005: 39). Even if Israelis and Palestinians share land and resources, sceptics maintain that cooperation between the two is difficult (LeBor, 2009; Joffe, 2005: 42). So, how do Israelis and Palestinians simply put aside their differences?

Bi-Nationalism does not suggest that Israelis and Palestinians would simply be able to reconcile and get along. But it might be pragmatic for Israelis and Palestinians to sideline their differences in the interests of coexistence. Tickner (2008) argues that although actors will have differing opinions on certain issues, they are “well advised to eliminate sources of friction... when their material interests are not directly at stake” (Tickner, 2008: 744). Actors choose to avoid issues which may lead to conflict in the alliance, and in so doing present a united front, thereby eroding the divisiveness of sovereignty.

But Palestine and Israel’s ‘material interest’ is at stake – so how can Israel’s exclusively Jewish identity be swept under the rug? Certainly for a Bi-National state to be created, the idea that Israel ought to be a Jewish state remains a problem. But there is a difference between the idea of Israel as a Jewish state and the practical reality. As indicated Israel is not – in practicality – an exclusively Jewish state. There is a non-Jewish (Palestinian) minority living in Israel. So, Israel as a ‘purely Jewish state’ is an idea not a reality.

Israel and Palestine need to acknowledge their interdependence and, therefore, their collective wellbeing. This might undermine the idea that Israel ought to be a state only for Jews. Ultimately, what Israel and Palestine seek is so-called ‘social security’. In other words, Israelis and Palestinians seek human development, such as “job continuity [and] health” (Jacobson & Bar-Tal, 1995: 569). In Palestine this means the acquisition of food, medicine and building materials for schools and hospitals. In Israel this means defence-spending cuts which could free financial resources for a greater social security net. As Tickner (2008) argues, what is needed is “decision making and action capacities deemed crucial for satisfying objectives such as democratic strengthening, and welfare” (Tickner, 2008: 745), thereby protecting the ethnic identities of all members of society, instead of focussing primarily on safeguarding the sovereignty of the state (Jacobson & Bar-Tal, 1995: 568). This is not to argue that sovereignty ought to be erased altogether. After all, a Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian state would be a sovereign state among other sovereign states. But the sovereignty between Israel and Palestine ought to be relaxed in order that the two can coexist.

Perhaps the idea of a Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian state is a lofty goal, but what is obvious is that imaginative thinking on the Israeli-Palestinian issue necessarily requires a critical appraisal of orthodox IR policymaking.

It is evident that Israelis and Palestinians contest the same land. But Israel is a state, and Palestine is not. In fact Palestinians lost their statehood when Israel was created. So, Israelis have been recognised internationally at the expense of Palestinians. In order to redress this imbalance, the orthodoxy seeks a Palestinian state.

But just because Palestinians are stateless does not necessarily mean that they need their own sovereign state. As we have seen Israelis and Palestinians are interspersed and although they might claim to be separate nations (Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990; Joffe, 2005: 39; LeBor, 2009), the pattern in which they have settled undermines a 'Two-State' solution. Given the fact that Israelis and Palestinians share each other's supposedly sovereign territory, there ought to be a critique of the IR schools of thought which uphold the idea of sovereignty: Realism and Liberalism.

Despite their different points of departure, both Realists and Liberals routinely support the idea of sovereign statehood and, therefore, can be interpreted as supporting a 'Two-State' solution. But neither Realists nor Liberals account for the fact that Israelis and Palestinians already share sovereignty due to their interspersion. So, Realism and Liberalism offer unimaginative options for Israeli-Palestinian autonomy (Anderson, 1983: 7). Consequently, Israel and Palestine should not be divided into two states.

Instead, an imaginative solution for Israel and Palestine might be a Bi-National state. But a Bi-National state would only reduce the divisiveness of sovereignty. It would not abolish sovereignty. After all, it is unlikely that Israelis and Palestinians would accept assimilation into one state. What is more likely is that both Israelis and Palestinians would wish to retain an element of their sovereignty – perhaps through a cantonal structure. Whilst Critical Theorists might lament the survival of sovereignty in a Bi-National Israeli-Palestinian state, such a state would nevertheless balance the need for new thinking around issues of autonomy with the urgent need for a pragmatic solution for Israelis and Palestinians.

The goal of reducing the rigid structures of state sovereignty might, as indicated by Shani (2008), Tysgankov (2008) and Callahan (2008), illustrate that a post-state system is possible. This is not, however, to say that such a system is imminent. A post-state system is perhaps too far in the future to be a useful option for Israelis and Palestinians. Indeed, for the destitute and starving in refugee camps around Khan Younis and Gaza City long term academic imaginings of a new world order seem a luxury.

Despite the urgent need for a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue, Critical Theory is nevertheless useful in explaining how sovereignty is an obstacle to new thinking on issues of autonomy. So, this research contributes to a host of critical literature being produced in IR today highlighting the desperate need for fresh ideas on issues of autonomy (Callahan, 2008: 749; Shani, 2008: 722; Tickner, 2008: 735; Tysgankov, 2008: 762).

Israelis and Palestinians would do well to acknowledge that they both have deep roots in the region: both Israelis and Palestinians share the same physical space, and barriers which separate them is simply an admission of this fact. So, the 'Two-State' solution is untenable. What is clear is that neither Israelis nor Palestinians can 'wish away' the presence of the other. Accepting that they share the same space is a crucial point for Israelis and Palestinians if they are to construct a new relationship beyond the divisions of the 'Two-State' solution.

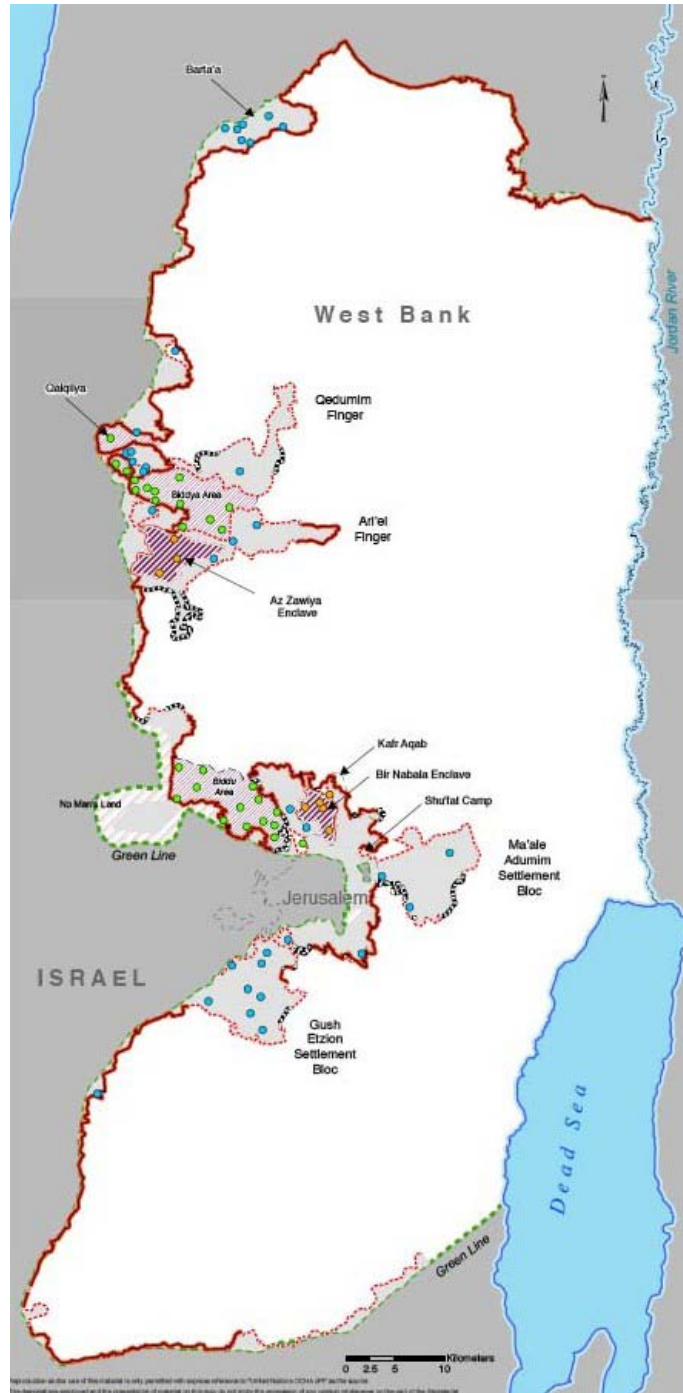


Image 2.

Route of Israel's Separation Barrier (wall).

Dark Grey Areas: Israel

White Areas: Palestine (The West Bank).

Red Line: Wall

Light Grey Areas: Palestinian land claimed by Israel

(Source: United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNOCHA <http://www.ochaopt.org/>)



Image 3.

Grey Areas = Palestinian access prohibited.

White Areas = Palestinian access permitted.

Red Circles = Military blockades preventing Palestinian movement.

*(Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNOCHA <http://www.ochaopt.org/>)*



Closures Update

Number of closures by type (30 April 2008)



71

Checkpoints

A barrier manned by IDF



17

Partial Checkpoints

A periodically manned checkpoint.



84

Road Gates

Restricting movement along roads.



72

Roadblocks

Concrete blocks obstructing vehicles



238

Earthmounds

Used to obstruct vehicle access.



17

33.5
km

Trenches

Ditch used to prevent vehicle access.

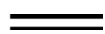


75

124.5
km

Road barriers

Barriers placed alongside road.



33

16.2
km

Earth Walls

A continuous wall restricting access.

607

TOTAL (30 April 2008)

Image 4.

Physical obstacles used to divide territory in the Palestinian West Bank.

(Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNOCHA <http://www.ochaopt.org/>)

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