

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: An Ethnographic Study on Conflict Perception and Its Implications for Peace in the Middle East



Source: America.aljazeera.com

**An Undergraduate Honors Thesis Presented to the Department of
International Studies at the University of Oregon**

Colin M. McClellan

Spring 2015

Advisor: Professor Reut Livne-Tarandach, Ph.D.
Lundquist College of Business, Department of Management

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
ABSTRACT	5
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	6
What is the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict?	6
Recognition of Potential Author Bias	6
CHAPTER 2: Study of First Hand Experience with the Conflict	8
Unpacking the Rocket Fire: My Story with the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict	8
Reflections Post-Conflict Exposure	15
CHAPTER 3: Research Methods	19
Analytical Approach	19
First, Second, and Third Person Action Inquiry Research	20
Research Procedures	23
Research Sample	25
CHAPTER 4: Historical Context of the Conflict, with Focus on the Gaza Strip	27
World War I Transforms the Middle East 1900 - 1922	27
The Effects of Imperialism on ‘The Promised Land’ 1923 – 1947	29
The Founding of Israel 1948 – 1966	33
War and Occupation 1967	38
Palestinian Resistance 1968 – 1987	42
CHAPTER 5: The Modern Israeli-Palestinian Condition	46
Volatile Peace Attempts 1988 – 2000	46
Stalemate 2000 - 2014	47
Israel-Gaza War of Summer 2014	50
“Operation Protective Edge”	52
Outcome	55
CHAPTER 6: Israeli and Palestinian Interviews	59
Israeli Interviews	59
The Past: Key Drivers of the Problem	59
The Present: Thought Processes on the Conflict	64
The Future: Opinions on Conflict Transformation	70
Palestinian Interviews	75
The Past: Key Drivers of the Problem	75
The Present: Thought Processes on the Conflict	80
The Future: Opinions on Conflict Transformation	86
Cross-Category Interview Analysis	92
Similarities	93
Differences	95
CHAPTER 7: Concluding Thoughts Going Forward	98
Is Peace Possible?	98

“Acknowledge and Legitimize My Pain” – Compassion’s Role in Conflict Resolution. 100
Tangible Steps Towards Peace 104

APPENDICES 109

APPENDIX A – Thesis Research Protocol, Preliminary Interview Questions 109

APPENDIX B – Thesis Research Protocol, Background Information Survey 111

APPENDIX C – Map of Key Nation-State Actors in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict ... 113

BIBLIOGRAPHY 114

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 3.1 <i>Visual representation of types of Action Inquiry research that when practiced results in successful organizational transformation</i>	22
Figure 4.1 <i>British Mandate of Palestine geographic area 1923 - 1948</i>	30
Figure 4.2 <i>United Nations 1947 Partition Plan for Palestine into Jewish and Arab States</i>	34
Figure 4.3 <i>Map of Israel land gain post-1948 War</i>	36
Figure 4.4 <i>Israeli land acquisition post-1967 War</i>	40
Figure 5.1 <i>Modern Day Map of Israel and Palestinian Territories, as of 2015</i>	50
Figure 6.1 <i>Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs</i>	92
Figure 7.1 <i>Subprocesses of an empathetic response to the suffering of others</i>	101

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge God for not only providing the experience for me to study in Israel, but also giving me the continual strength to write this thesis. Second, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor, Professor Reut Livne-Tarandach, for being a transformative individual during my undergraduate education. I have never met anyone so invested in helping others achieve their goals. Reut has continually gone above and beyond, and invested countless hours to contribute towards both my academic and personal growth. I hope that one day I can pass on the depth of service to other individuals that she has shown me during my undergraduate tenure.

I also want to extend a huge thank you to my family for constantly supporting me throughout undergrad, and for always believing in my achievement capabilities. I would not be here today without their encouragement and sacrifice. Furthermore, thank you to the University of Oregon's Department of International Studies, and especially Kathie Carpenter, for providing this opportunity to write a thesis and answering any question I could possibly imagine. To all the individuals listed above, I am forever grateful.

ABSTRACT

This honors thesis examines how individuals in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict personally interpret the conflict, and how those perceptions are similar or different across the two populations. In order to achieve this I utilize a research method, known as Action Inquiry research, that involves researching first, second, and third person perspectives over the past, present, and future dimensions of time. Several firsthand accounts of conflict zone experiences are presented in the paper, including my own from being in Israel during the summer 2014 Israel-Gaza War. Using my experience, I present an analysis of my time on the ground followed by post-conflict exposure reflections. The thesis then presents a literature review of the key historical events from 1900 – 2014 that have unfolded to create the modern day Israeli-Palestinian condition. Furthermore, a qualitative analysis is discussed of in-person interviews that I conducted of three Israelis and three Palestinians to better understand their past with the conflict, present conflict interpretations, and future perceptions for conflict transformation. Interviews reveal significant overlap in emotional responses to violence, and the consequences of intense lifelong exposure to Israeli-Palestinian violence.

In conclusion this thesis argues that, based on my conflict exposure, history, and interviewee responses, subjective experiences play a crucial role in perpetuating the conflict. However, peace is indeed possible if resolution efforts are refocused on more realistic social change initiatives that build a relationship between the two parties, rather than first imposing a territorial solution. By utilizing the positive effects of mutual empathetic bonds between Israelis and Palestinians, compassion as a conflict resolution tool becomes the most effective measure for peace, where exposure and dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians in controlled environments is the most powerful, tangible step in implementing any form of a future territorial resolution.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

What is the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict?

The following thesis examines the subject of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, which has largely become one of the most controversial and polarizing issues within modern day international politics. While this geographic hotspot has seen conflict and land claims for a significant amount of history, the modern day Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not based in thousand-year-old historical or biblical conflict between the two populations. Nor is it a historically deep-rooted religious struggle between Judaism and Islam. Rather, its context is predominantly rooted in territorial claims, complex modern politics, and issues regarding sovereignty of the nation-state entity. Further complicating matters is the significant level of international involvement by global organizations such as the United Nations, and other significant players like the United States, Iran, Lebanon, and several other countries. At its core this conflict consists of two parties fighting for the right to peaceful statehood existence within the same geographical region of the Middle East. With the origins of violence and conflict extending back to the early 20th century, both narratives have been widely discussed and distributed for roughly 120 years. Both narratives involve historical depth and significance, and both Israelis and Palestinians have their own unique and poignant versions of the same deadly conflict.

Recognition of Potential Author Bias

When an individual begins to develop an opinion on the facts, narratives, and perceptions of this conflict they are consequently influenced by a version that more strongly caters to one side of the issue than the other. In large part this can be influenced by that individual's background, environment, and self-identification within the larger conflict. In this thesis, I take the role of both a primary researcher and a writer charged with developing an argument based off

historical facts and my personal observations. In an effort to be equitable and truly representative to each side, I made every effort to abstain from allowing my personal opinions and bias to encroach into the writing and research results presented in this thesis. However, research supports that self-identity, personal encounters, and various life experiences can profoundly impact the individual to the point of unconsciously influencing research results.¹ As a result, I would like to recognize my potential bias so that the reader can be alert and develop their personal opinion through critical thinking as opposed to possibly biased representation. Consequently, my arguments and research may be impacted by my formative background experiences and personal beliefs, which will be discussed later. I have more first-hand experience with the Israeli narrative of the conflict in my personal life, even though both sides have legitimate grievances and needs. Additionally, for various reasons I will also consider Hamas a terrorist organization in this thesis, and will not extensively detail the pros and cons of Hamas.² The scope of that task is beyond this thesis project. However, to study effective resolution to this overwhelming conflict, an individual must come to the realization that peace efforts must develop empathetic positions for the plight of both the Israelis and the Palestinians. For those with personal experience in the conflict this can be the most difficult process. Both populations carry large amounts of legitimate emotional pain and trauma from the violent cycle of this conflict.

¹ Supported by findings in "Claiming a Voice on Race":

Foldy, E. G. "Claiming a Voice on Race." *Action Research* 3.1 (2005): 33-54. 41. Web.

² Hamas is a violent political organization in the Gaza Strip. It is discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 2: Study of First Hand Experience with the Conflict

Over the summer of 2014 I was in Israel for a study abroad experience when the Israel-Gaza summer war erupted in July, resulting in a particularly unique time to be in the country. I desired to use my experiences on the ground to relay details of daily life in the region during conflict outbreaks, and utilize my perspective as a cultural outsider to communicate interpretation and internalization of first-hand experience with conflict violence. Below is a retelling of my story, followed by a first person reflection on my conflict exposure and its impacts me going forward from last summer.

Unpacking the Rocket Fire: My Story with the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

I traveled to Israel in the summer of 2014 to complete a study abroad program at the Technion Institute of Technology in Haifa, Israel. The program was a 5-week intensive entrepreneurship and innovation program in which students from around the world received the opportunity to work with various professors and Silicon Valley investors in order to create a high-tech business start-up. This was a unique opportunity given Israel's dynamic start-up culture and bustling high-tech activity. I arrived in Israel towards the middle to end of June looking forward to a transformative business experience. Ultimately, I ended up receiving that and much more. I did not have a background in Hebrew, Judaism, or other various Israeli cultural facets prior to my time in the country. The kidnapping of the three Israeli teens that sparked the summer 2014 conflict occurred soon after my arrival. Several Israelis spoke with me about this issue, but I remember not fully comprehending what this event entailed in this region of the world. I only knew a surface level of knowledge about the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict prior to traveling to Israel, and therefore did not realize this could be a source for potential conflict outbreak.

About two weeks later the tensions broke around the beginning of July. A few friends of mine and I traveled to Tel Aviv in order to celebrate the 4th of July holiday while we were abroad. Just a day after we returned to Haifa from this trip we received notification that rockets from the Gaza Strip had reached Tel Aviv, and citizens and tourists were running to fortified bomb shelters. People familiar with the matter told us this was a rare occurrence and Tel Aviv does not normally come under fire. In fact rather the opposite, Tel Aviv is usually relatively isolated from conflicts, which allows the city to keep its laid-back, modern metropolis atmosphere alive. I remember thinking in that moment that this conflict in fact is not just something you watch on the news from the comfort of your living room. This is a real conflict, with real people, and I am here during an outbreak. There were images scattered all over the news of tourists running from the beaches in order to find shelter in a matter of 90 seconds or less from the time the warning sirens blare. Due to Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system most of the rockets were aerially intercepted, but the process of witnessing incoming rockets is stressful and alarming. Prior to the Iron Dome defense system the unguided rockets posed a larger threat.

As the conflict began to heat up over the next few days Tel Aviv came under an increased amount of fire. My friends and I received notification that the city was experiencing rocket attacks roughly three to four times a day. This significantly disrupted peoples' daily lives, as one must always be alert and prepared to run into a shelter at a moment's notice. For example, if an individual was not located near a shelter and was stuck on the freeway when sirens went off they would need to pull their car over, get out of the vehicle, lie down on the road, and cover their head as they await for moment when the rocket is hopefully intercepted. Back in Haifa the situation was much more calm. It was an odd feeling to have just spent time in Tel Aviv, which

is about one hour south of Haifa, and then see it come under the threat of continual unguided rocket fire. The beaches that people were running from were the beaches I had just spent sunny afternoons at with my friends from the program. Haifa essentially became a sort of safety bubble up in the northwest corner of Israel. While Haifa did not see conflict most of the time, we did eventually have a rocket reach our area on July 11th at roughly three o'clock in the morning. This was my first experience with the rockets and bomb alarm sirens. I remember hearing the ear piercing sirens sound off over the whole city. Technion had briefed us about the security situation and what to do if a bombing happened in Haifa. I immediately woke up my roommate, and ran over to get my other friends up to ensure we would all be safe in a shelter together. We had one other Israeli in our program that had been through the rocket process before and knew what to do, so he was also helping to guide the process. It was a surreal experience, similar to a scene you would watch in an action or war movie: families running down the hotel stairs and 2 minutes to make it to the hotel's shelter on the base floor.

I was not able to wake all of my friends due to various constraints, and had to make a split second decision whether or not to go downstairs to the shelter and leave my friends behind. Everything in the moment happens so quickly you simply act on instinct without thinking about the larger situation at hand, yet you still somehow have time to process the consequences of your choices. I knew I would need to reconcile to myself in the future the choice to leave friends behind, go to the shelter with who you can, and hope for a final result of safety for all in the area. The Israelis were accustomed to the alarms and were calm and collected for the most part. They assisted us to arrive at where we needed to go and explained what to do. This notion of having other people around acts as a benefit to keep everyone calm and collected, as if you are experiencing the whole event together creating an additive strength experience. We sat in the

shelter for about 15 minutes until the sirens turned off and the rocket threat had likely been neutralized.³ It seems like some of the longest minutes in your life, yet you cannot truly remember them in vivid detail, rather more like a blur. I remember returning to my hotel room with my roommate wondering what had actually just happened, and was immediately in touch with family and friends to notify them all was okay. You know logically that you will likely be fine and try to remind yourself of that in the moment, but the intensity of the sirens coupled with moments like watching mothers run with their small children to shelters stirs up emotional responses in the moment and in the days following the event. Time helps to process the experience and prepare yourself for the future. It is difficult to adequately convey those 15 minutes to someone who has never witnessed something similar.

Fast forward a few weeks later and Haifa had remained calm. However, the situation had deteriorated for larger Israel, and especially for the Gaza Strip and communities around the Gaza Strip. Unguided rockets were being fired by Hamas at locations all over Israel, and Israel was preparing to do a ground invasion into the Gaza Strip in addition to their aerial target campaign. Thousands of Israelis were being called into the reserve forces and I was meeting citizens every day that were required to leave and fight. For example, one man I met at a local bar in Haifa was out with his friends for drinks one last night before he had to go into the Gaza Strip. I asked him what he would be doing in this operation and he replied he would be entering the Hamas tunnels to be on the front lines of combat. What an interesting and tragic dichotomy of meeting these people in daily life, and not just one but thousands similar to him. This is part of the Israeli condition. I remember asking him how he felt about being called into the reserves and he responded along the lines that he was proud to serve his country, but so fearful of what was

³ In Israel shelters are mandatory for all buildings. Shelters are an average looking room or basement that has been reinforced with concrete and a bombproof door.

ahead of him in the next few weeks. I never saw him again, but I sincerely hope he made it back safely to his family.

Towards the end of our program around July 20th students were being called from their respective home schools to leave Israel while flights were still available. The situation had deteriorated enough for the rest of the country to the point where leisure travelers were departing, and sibling academic programs in Tel Aviv had shut down. The U.S. Department of State had partially relocated further north from Tel Aviv and sent out warnings to U.S. citizens in the country to consider the deferral of non-essential travel in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. The embassy recommended departing from Israel, or to remain close to hardened shelters and to avoid various protests. The following information details the most severe warning U.S. citizens, including myself, received from the United States embassy in Israel:

The security environment remains complex in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza, and U.S. citizens need to be aware of the risks of travel to these areas because of the current conflict between Hamas and Israel... Long-range rockets launched from Gaza since July 8, 2014 have reached many locations in Israel – including Tel Aviv, cities farther north, and throughout the south of the country. Some rockets have reached Jerusalem and parts of the West Bank, including Bethlehem and Hebron. While many rockets have been intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defense system, there have been impacts that have caused damage and injury. In light of the ongoing rocket attacks, U.S. citizen visitors and U.S. citizen residents of Israel and the West Bank should familiarize themselves with the location of the nearest bomb shelter or other hardened site, if available. Visitors should seek information on shelters from hotel staff or building managers... consult city municipality websites for lists of public bomb shelters and other emergency preparedness information... Travelers should avoid areas of Israel in the vicinity of the Gaza Strip due to the real risks presented by small arms fire, anti-tank weapons, rockets, and mortars, as attacks from Gaza can come with little or no warning...⁴

In the fifth week of the program, right after receiving the above warning, we presented our high-tech business plans while concurrently making travel arrangements to immediately depart the country post final presentation. It was a different Israel than the one I had experienced in my first few weeks pre-conflict. My student cohort still undeniably had an enjoyable time learning and

⁴ U.S. Embassy in Israel. "July 21 Israel, The West Bank and Gaza Travel Warning." 21 July 2014. E-mail.

exploring Israel in our time there, but the change in the country was tangible. Technion had canceled travel to various sites around Israel like Jerusalem and the Dead Sea due to concern over the extensive rocket fire, so as students we were limited to the northern regions of Israel. There were protests in Haifa that I witnessed similar to the ones many watch on the news with riot police prepared for possible violence outbreaks. Towards the end of my time Israelis were not going out on Friday nights due to grief over the conflict and loss of life. People were still out busy with their daily lives and tried to not let the conflict affect them, but the tone of the population's attitude had changed.

The behavioral shift was the most noticeable in Tel Aviv at the end of my stay in Israel. It was not the same vibrant city I had come to know in my earlier explorations. My friend and I traveled down to Tel Aviv after our presentation in order to wait for a flight out of the country. A 24-hour flight ban from the FAA and various European airlines had been put into effect after a Hamas rocket had landed less than a mile away from Israel's Ben Gurion airport.⁵ My fellow student's various flights had been canceled due to the ban, and people were getting flights out of the country from evacuation insurance companies as soon as possible. We waited in Tel Aviv for the flight ban to be lifted, which ultimately lasted about 36 hours. During my time in Tel Aviv I experienced about 3 rounds of incoming rockets and their subsequent air sirens. Experiencing this with a friend feels easier, similar to just a hindrance in your daily routine. For example, we would be leaving to get lunch when sirens would go off and the hotel staff would quickly usher you into the hotel's shelter. Even from a sealed room underground the boom from the rocket interception is loud and thunderous; something your memory will take with you wherever you go. I remember the Israelis updating us that the loud boom meant the rocket had been

⁵ The choice not to intercept the rocket was done purposefully, as Iron Dome defense missiles cost upwards of \$50,000 each. Israel will only intercept rockets headed towards populated areas. The rocket next to Ben Gurion landed in an open area, but the international community saw this as a threat to incoming and outgoing flights.

intercepted, and then encouraged us to wait a few more minutes while the shrapnel fell from the sky. Upon leaving the shelter, you could see the remnants of the aerial explosion, with smoke billowing in the sky. It is an impressive yet disconcerting event to witness. Israelis are generally so accustomed to the process they did not seem phased, only showing strength throughout the transpiring events, and choosing to not let it impact their daily lives in a sort of defiance of the violence.

My friend was able to book a flight out before I was, resulting in me spending about 24 hours alone in Tel Aviv during the peak of the conflict. This time is best described by calling it a mixture of emotions. I loved being in Israel along the peaceful Mediterranean, but I knew it was time to leave. The rocket threat felt more genuine when I was alone, as you always have to be on alert even when trying to sleep. I was also fielding calls from various friends and family back home that were concerned for my well-being, which was perhaps one of the most stressful aspects. My last night in Tel Aviv I was on the roof of my hotel when I watched three rockets from Gaza fly over the Tel Aviv skyline, and three Israeli Iron Dome missiles shoot up to intercept it cueing the now-familiar loud explosion. I recall practically feeling the boom. This experience of watching the sky light up from rocket fire was overwhelming, powerful, fearful, and a host of unnamable thoughts.

I did not want to leave Israel and the situation feeling vested in the larger conflict by that point. It was difficult to depart knowing I had experienced the entirety of the summer conflict with my now friends in the region, and could leave while they had to stay behind and spend time everyday in shelters. Regardless, I was able to fortunately book a flight out and simply hoped it did not get canceled. I remember as the plane took off my fellow seat passengers and I wished there would no incoming rockets, and fortuitously there were none. I flew to Madrid, Spain for a

subsequent study abroad program. It was an odd sentiment to be in a country that was so calm after an intense experience in Tel Aviv. When I would hear an ambulance or police siren my initial mental reaction was a need to find a shelter. Over time, this sensation faded. Arguably the hardest part after leaving was watching the conflict continue to unfold on television, and hearing people talk about it without respect for the individuals on both sides who were deeply suffering.

Reflections Post-Conflict Exposure

At the time of this writing it has been almost a year since my experience in Israel. Due to the conflict outbreak I did not receive the opportunity to travel to Jerusalem or the greater West Bank territory, and therefore I received no exposure to the Palestinian Arab population since my time in the region was abruptly cut short. At the time, I did not truly understand why the larger events were unfolding, why the 2014 bout was particularly dangerous, or why the mounting death tolls were either worth the sacrifice or not. I remember feeling despondent when I heard about the loss of Palestinian life, and yet the more rockets I was exposed to the harder it was to listen to varying narratives of the conflict other than that I was witnessing first hand. I knew the Israeli narrative well, and was living it out with them day by day. In addition to the actual conflict, a primary difficult aspect of this type of situation was knowing your friends and family back home were constantly worried and afraid, yet felt helpless due to the separation of physical distance. All one can do in the moment is attempt to calm people and assure life on the ground is truly not as bad as the news and media sources around the Gaza Strip had made it appear. Media distortion was a powerful tool in the summer 2014 conflict. This issue not only affected my understanding of the conflict in the moment, but the world's vision of the summer outbreak. Life on the ground in Israel, minus areas around the Gaza Strip, was relatively straightforward as the organizational systems in place make it much easier to navigate the rocket threats and siren

warnings. My time in Israel was an impactful experience, both beneficial and difficult in learning about the complex arena of modern geopolitics and regional struggles.

I cannot speak to what the Palestinian sentiment was while I was in Israel because I did not witness it, but I assume it was that of despair, grief, and anger over the conflict. I recall expecting there to be more anti-Palestinian sentiment expressed from the Israelis when I was in Israel. However, this was not generally the case. While most Israelis expressed exhaustion with the conflicts, there was only one individual I encountered that expressed genuine hatred for the other side. This was a man who had been called up in the Israeli army reserves due to his expertise with explosive devices. He had been notified he was being called up for bomb detection and diffusion during the summer conflict, and expressed that his family had been crying every night that he had to leave them and might possibly not return. Although I did not agree with the expressed hatred, in the moment most individuals empathize with the source of the moment's hatred: fear of not coming back, of your family losing a father, and of the life-altering choices he would be forced to make in the coming weeks. These are not easy issues for an individual to grapple with, and are difficult to fully reconcile in one's moral consciousness. Without having experienced something similar it is difficult for those not involved in the conflict to directly understand the sacrifices it requires, and the effects those sacrifices have on the individual. Effective understanding of the conflict takes these sacrifices into account.

What truly impacted me most were the individual faces behind the larger conflict, and the stories that accompanied those individuals. I required a significant amount of time to process the conflict, and to arrive at a point at which I genuinely desired to understand the Palestinian perspective in addition to the Israeli perspective. For various reasons it is demanding and challenging to make that psychological jump of wholeheartedly listening to another side after

residual feelings of victimization surface due to that stressful summer experience. I had somewhat fallen into the “trap of polarization” immediately after leaving the country. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is such a strongly politicized issue that many who spoke with me post conflict solely asked about my perspective on which party was right or wrong. While effective and fair resolution is of the utmost importance, when these political questions were poised I remember questioning why that mattered given the current state of affairs between Israelis and Palestinians. I left friends behind in Israel who were still hiding in bomb shelters, and hundreds of people were dying in Gaza each week. Both sides in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict are involved in a lose-lose situation, in which the conflict continually generates a zero-sum conclusion. Both sides suffer from the violence, and most individuals I directly encountered were far more concerned for their lives and safety rather than politics. This is what motivated me to conduct research and write this thesis. To understand the root driver behind the larger conflict is a difficult task. If so many individuals have grown weary of the conflict, what allows it to perpetuate for decades beyond its origin? What continues to motivate people who fundamentally hope for and believe in peace after roughly a century of direct fighting?

The dissemination of narratives from each side behind the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is fundamental for full comprehension of the conflict as it enables one to learn how it has affected individuals on a human level. The conflict is much larger than politics. Talking first hand with Palestinians and Israelis helps to avoid a stereotyped image of violence, provides the opportunity to learn how each side has respectively suffered, and reveals the conflict’s substantial influence it holds on people. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict cannot be simplified to a matter of international law or historical study; this is only a part of the larger situation in the conflict’s modern day position. In this hotly debated struggle it is central to remember the real people on both sides

behind the greater face of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. This thesis seeks to display the humanness of both sides, the challenges of their daily lives, and the extreme difficulty of the choices and hardships each faces. Israelis and Palestinians both live with the consequences of their actions, positive and negative, and must reconcile these choices among themselves. This is a heavy burden, and not one that either side internalizes lightly.

CHAPTER 3: Research Methods

Analytical Approach

The research presented in this thesis examines the similarities and differences in how Israelis and Palestinians interpret the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. It seeks to reveal and illuminate the subjective takes on the conflict between the two parties by examining their unique interpretations of the past, present, and future. As a researcher I set out to accomplish this by learning about the impact of conflict exposure on Israelis and Palestinians. For example, when looking at the conflict from an embedded historical account, what does each party discuss as the key drivers for the conflict? Understanding the individual's subjective analysis of their past assists in explaining the conflict's affects on that same individual's present day thought processes. Additionally, to comprehend their interpretations the research probes what their direct conflict experiences were like when living in Israel or Palestinian Territories. This leads to interpretation of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the interviewee's present time and what emotions and perceptions that conjures.

Last, the research observes Israeli and Palestinian perspectives and interpretations of the future. Going forward, how do Israeli and Palestinian interpretations of the past and present influence their perceptions of a peaceful resolution for the conflict? This piece analyzes if Israelis or Palestinians themselves believe in a resolution, and if so, what form that resolution embodies. The research question guiding this thesis is what key themes of conflict perception and internalization are common or different among Israelis and Palestinians over time, and how can these perceptions be addressed when examining methods to progress towards peace? As a result, I have applied the Action Inquiry research method in order to interview Israelis and Palestinians with the goal of learning about their traumas and hopes. In one of the world's

leading gray and intractable conflicts often times there is no right or clearly defined answer, and research can reveal how various interpretations of the conflict can impact a future resolution.

First, Second, and Third Person Action Inquiry Research

Guiding the research in this thesis project is a managerial research method originally developed by Harvard Business School professor Chris Argyris known as Action Inquiry research. The process is used heavily for organizational change initiatives and various social change and development projects. Action Inquiry research involves three main components: first person, second person, and third person research perspectives and reflections.⁶

The first person portion involves studying one's own experiences and how that has impacted the individual's vision of the greater environmental issue at hand. It essentially seeks to answer the question how one's personal experiences impact a situation going forward. This process is entirely subjective to the individual researcher, and enables that person to better understand how individuals can possess varying and discrepant situational interpretations. First person research also helps individuals to identify their own personal and potentially unknown biases.⁷ In turn, identifying these biases assists the researcher to better understand and more comprehensively conduct second and third person research because the researcher has successfully recognized and named his or her personal biases. Even though most individuals fully attempt to prevent bias from encroaching on research processes, each person is unavoidably biased in some manner by their experiences. It is important to understand this bias and discover how it surfaces in our perceptions and research results. Conducting first person research enables the researcher to understand how his or her judgment is influenced and alerts themselves to their own experiences that could impact what they do or do not find important in research results. In

⁶ Torbert, William R., and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter. *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2004. N. pag. 219. Print.

⁷ Hynes, GERALYN. "First, Second, and Third Person Inquiry." *Actions and Reflections Participatory Research in Palliative Care* (2012): 53-63. Web.

this thesis my self-reflective study in chapter two on my personal experience on the ground in Israel serves as the first-person research in Action Inquiry. First person research also assists in solidifying my understanding of the Israeli perspective, and supports the endeavor to learn more about the Palestinian side that I had relatively no exposure to prior to this thesis.

Second person research works at understanding an individual's interaction with a group or event, and how that has shaped the story of the issue at hand.⁸ This procedure is known as an intersubjective process because it involves an individual's interaction with others.⁹ The second person research process is less subjective than an individual's personal experience, but is not as objective compared to something like definitive historical facts. It works at understanding how people interpret hard facts that come from third person study. Second person focuses on engaging with other people and learning what historical events and memories interviewees recall based on their perceptions of what is subconsciously important and easy to remember. In this thesis second person research is presented by the interviews I, as a researcher, have conducted of Israelis and Palestinians that have lived in the region and endured various Israeli-Palestinian Conflict outbreaks. These interviews are data sets I have collected in order to understand interpretation of the conflict more effectively, and to identify key themes among the interviewees and parties. Second person research attempts to understand the interviewees from my perspective.

Third person Action Inquiry research takes the form of assessing an objective experience.¹⁰ This process focuses on the dissemination of factual information to a wider

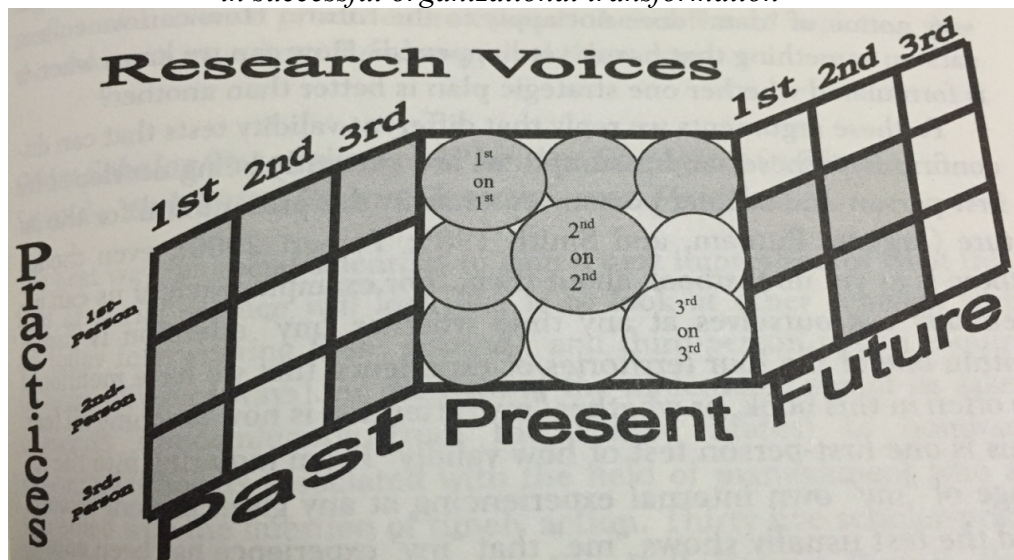
⁸ Torbert, William R., and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter. *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2004. N. pag. 219. Print.

⁹ Hynes, GERALYN. "First, Second, and Third Person Inquiry." *Actions and Reflections Participatory Research in Palliative Care* (2012): 53-63. Web.

¹⁰ Torbert, William R., and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter. *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2004. N. pag. 219. Print.

audience.¹¹ The third person portion of the Action Inquiry process is intended to be objective, neutral, and an information-based synthesized perspective. Here it takes the form of the historical analysis presented in the next chapter of this thesis. The history of the conflict has definitively happened and therefore is objective, but individuals could recall the history with varying versions that are potentially subjective among Israelis, Palestinians, and myself. Subjective versions of history are common in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict due to the individual's bias in favor of either Israelis or Palestinians. The third person research helps aid the researcher to understand his or her successes and failures when evaluating individual first and second person perspectives.¹² It is meant to be the least subjective portion of the Action Inquiry research process.

Figure 3.1 Visual representation of types of Action Inquiry research that when practiced results in successful organizational transformation



Source: "Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transformational Leadership"¹³

Interweaving the three methods provides a holistic approach to research, especially when there is a personal interest or life shaping experience at hand. Action Inquiry combines

¹¹ Hynes, Geryl. "First, Second, and Third Person Inquiry." *Actions and Reflections Participatory Research in Palliative Care* (2012): 53-63. Web.

¹² Torbert, William R., and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter. *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2004. N. pag. 222. Print.

¹³ Ibid., 223

subjective, intersubjective, and objective approaches in order to be an individually transformative approach through scientific research.¹⁴ The Action Inquiry process involves data collection and analysis to understand the underlying drivers of a problem, therefore enabling the researcher to make future predictions about change. This process also helps the researcher to develop more effective recommendations for change since the individual has established recognition of his or her personal bias. This allows the researcher to conduct more precise second and third person research, and transforms the individual's critical thinking and discussions about the topic at hand. In conclusion, each first, second, and third person perspective helps to evaluate each of the other perspectives. The Action Inquiry research model is a dynamic and continually changing model that a researcher can utilize to understand several different research voices over the past, present, and future.¹⁵ In the research presented in this thesis the first, second, and third person Action Inquiry perspectives take the form of understanding Israeli and Palestinian perceptions of the past, present, and future.

Research Procedures

The research method for data collection involves both the third person and second person action inquiry perspectives. The third person perspective is represented in the historical review and analysis from 1900 – 2014 presented below, which provides context for the conflict's modern day composition and drives a more holistic comprehension of the situation I encountered during the summer 2014 Israel-Gaza War. The second person research method is constituted of interviews I conducted of 6 individuals, both Israeli and Palestinian, specifically for this thesis project. The interview questions were poised to learn about the subject's childhood stories, modern day perceptions, and to understand how they envision the future and avenues to reach

¹⁴ Torbert, William R., and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter. *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2004. N. pag. 219. Print.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 223

peace. Some questions were full-tour questions that would ask an interviewee to incorporate several elements from their lives over the past, present and future into a cohesive response about the conflict (Please see Appendix A for the research protocol documents including the interview question outline).

Over the span of several months I conducted first-hand interviews with three Israelis and three Palestinians in which all interviews were completed face-to-face in-person, except for one Palestinian interview that was conducted over Skype. Two of the Israelis were interviewed at the same time due to scheduling constraints with their time in the United States. Prior to the actual interview participants were not extensively informed of my background or research question, other than my aim of writing a thesis about the conflict and broad categories of questions that would be asked. Participation in the study and responses were voluntary, interviewees could decline to answer a question and sometimes did pursue that option. Interviews lasted between 1 to 1.5 hours, which allowed us to delve into deeper and more personal material than a 15 or 30-minute interview would allow. The time length of the interviews was an important factor for the success of the research due to the necessity of establishing an emotional bond between researcher and interviewee so that the interviewee would feel comfortable discussing extremely personal and oftentimes unpleasant stories and thoughts.

Following the interview participants completed a background questionnaire form about basic identity information such as age, education, religion, nationality, and other potentially influencing factors (Please see Appendix B for the research protocol documents including the interviewee background questionnaire form). All interviews were recorded using audio recording equipment, and I took additional notes during the interview on important themes and stories the interviewee discussed. After subsequent completion of the interviews I re-listened to each

individual interview and transcribed key discussions relevant for this thesis research. Using the transcripts I conducted an extensive analysis across interviews within categories separated by nationality into Israeli or Palestinian data sets. The nationality divided data was then used to develop subsets of information categorized by whether the interviewee's response to a question related to the past, present, or future. After the separation of responses I developed two sections of results for the past, present, and future: an analysis across categories of questions to identify central themes for each respective population's interpretations, and a comparison between Israelis and Palestinians to highlight main similarities and differences across interpretations of the past, present, and future. To develop points about perceptions of each dimension of time representative quotes about the past, present, and future were selected and inserted into this thesis from the interview transcripts in order support and illustrate arguments. Based on these interpretations I generated a sustainable recommendation for the conflict going forward that addresses the primary issues highlighted between the past, present, and future among Israelis and Palestinians.

Research Sample

In total, there were three Israelis and three Palestinians represented in the research sample. Conducting six interviews is not a statistically representative sample size of the greater Israeli and Palestinian populations, but rather serves to understand core examples of common stories and perceptions from each people group for this undergraduate thesis project. At its core the interviews expose key similarities and differences between Israeli and Palestinian styles of thinking. The ages of those interviewed ranged from 18-30, where three participants were in the 18-25 age range and three were in the 25-30 age range. In total four females and two males were interviewed, consisting of at least one male perspective for each Palestinian and Israeli side. All Israeli interviewees were from various regions around Israel, whereas the Palestinian

interviewees were concentrated residents of the West Bank. Access to Palestinians from the Gaza Strip was essentially non-achievable due to severe communication restrictions and other dangers posed for those individuals.

Three interviewees were in the process of working towards an undergraduate degree, two had earned an undergraduate degree, and one was working towards a master's degree, with levels of education relatively evenly dispersed between Israelis and Palestinians. For the Israeli interviews, all three participants self-identified as Jewish as their primary ethnic background, and religions represented included Orthodox Jew, Secular Jew, and not religious/atheist. For the Palestinian interviews, all three participants self-identified as Arab (including Palestinian Arab) as their primary ethnic background, and two of the three were Sunni Muslims with the third reporting not religious/atheist. All six interviewees rated themselves as 10 out of 10 in proficiency with knowledge about the conflict, entailing it had affected a large portion of their lives and they remain actively updated on Israeli-Palestinian relations. In order to receive honest interviewee responses and ensure safety upon returning to the region, all participant identities in the analysis presented in subsequent chapters is kept anonymous.

CHAPTER 4: Historical Context of the Conflict, with Focus on the Gaza Strip

The modern origin of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict can be traced to the turn of the 19th century when calls for a Jewish homeland, or Zionism, began to surface more significantly between 1890-1900.¹⁶ This desire for a Jewish homeland has been a substantial aspect of historical Jewish culture, political thought, and religious thought. However, the foundational driver of the conflict was the fall of the Ottoman Empire during World War I, which had ruled the geographic area widely referred to as Palestine. The following historical account is not exhaustive, but rather a summary of defining periods to provide context for the larger issues at stake in the current day conflict with the Gaza Strip.

World War I Transforms the Middle East 1900 - 1922

Prior to World War I the land of “Palestine” was non-existent as a territory, but rather represented a geographic area spanning modern day Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and parts of southern Syria. Palestine, which was inhabited by a long-standing Arab population, had frequently changing borders and was governed as various districts under the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷ During the early 1900s the region experienced an overall decline in economic prosperity, and as rudimentary forms of Ottoman globalization began to take form Jewish hopefuls began migrating to the region in small numbers. This small Jewish population, estimated around 50,000, moved to the region due to its attractive economic potential, global interconnectedness, and hopes of future Zionism taking permanent shape.¹⁸ Over time Jewish immigrants purchased the legal rights from notable Palestinian families to own land along the coastal areas of modern day Israel. This land represented potential economic success for the Jews, and did not hold religious significance in comparison to Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria (biblical land regions near the Jordan River).

¹⁶ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 1. Print.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14

Additionally, there were not large native Arab populations in these coastal regions as most were in the more biblically prominent and hilly regions of Palestine. At this point in history Jews and Arabs lived in peace.

With the outbreak of World War I the region was thrown into turmoil as the Ottoman Empire allied with the Central Powers of Germany, Austria, and Bulgaria. The end of WWI ushered in the fall of the Ottoman Empire and its territorial governance. Britain and France were the two most prominent western powers that took control of swaths of Middle Eastern territory due to strategic alliances with local populations. Britain ultimately acquired control of Palestine and officially deemed the area of modern day Israel and the additional area of Transjordan (modern day Jordan) as “Palestine” under British Mandate. The results of World War I were transformative for the map of the Middle East and resulted in the creation of several new states including Turkey, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Transjordan.¹⁹ During WWI the British had made various promises of post-war rule of Palestine to three separate parties if each respective party aided British efforts to overthrow the Ottoman Empire. This resulted in three conflicting promises to grant self-autonomous rule in the Palestine geographic region to the local Jewish population, the local Arab population, and other various local Arab rulers.²⁰

Spurred by rising anti-Semitism in Europe and Russia the Jewish population was enthralled by this promise, and the Zionist movement began to gain momentum at an increasing rate. The Jewish homeland was becoming a reality. In contrast, the Palestine Arab population was celebrating the opportunity to finally receive self-rule and an autonomous nation-state post-Ottoman Empire. Arabs in Palestine were hoping to form their own state with a governing council similar to the newly emerging neighboring states of Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and

¹⁹ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 15. Print.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 16

Transjordan. As history shows, none of the parties involved with Britain received directly what each was promised. This failure induced resentment and mistrust of western powers especially from the local Arab population, and is a source for much mistrust of western intentions to this current day. However, a different result came about for the Jews in Palestine as the local Jewish population in London lobbied that Zionist interests for the region of Palestine aligned with British and Western economic interests.²¹ The resulting Balfour Declaration of 1917, put forward by Arthur James Balfour the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was the most formative promise to any of the three parties involved in the region:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that *nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine...*²² [emphasis added]

When news of the Balfour Declaration reached the Arabs living in Palestine, they became increasingly upset over the unraveling and broken British promises for their homeland. At this point in history the roots of Arab nationalism began to sprout in desire for a homeland.

Additionally, this nationalism took partial identity in the form of Anti-Zionism due to the timing of the Balfour Declaration.

The Effects of Imperialism on 'The Promised Land' 1923 – 1947

In 1923 the international community officially recognized Britain's right of rule over Palestine, and Britain became charged with creating the Mandate for Palestine. This task entailed creating a self-determining state that appealed to both the minority Jewish population and the majority native Arab population of Palestine. Facing pressure from Jewish nationalism, Palestinian Arab nationalism, and the international community's mandate system, Britain found it increasingly difficult to find a sustainable solution given the obvious Balfour Declaration

²¹ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 18. Print.

²² *Ibid.*, 19

favoritism towards the Jews constituting 10% of Palestine's population.²³ Britain's original plans consisted of creating a cohabitating Jewish and Arab state, but the anger among Arabs over the increasing Jewish immigration resulted in no formal governmental structures ever being created. This was a major turning point for Palestine, especially in comparison with its developing neighbor states.²⁴

Figure 4.1 British Mandate of Palestine geographic area 1923 – 1948



Source: historylearningsite.co.uk²⁵

During the 1920s the Jewish population increased and acquired more than seven percent of Palestine.²⁶ Land acquisition and immigration would prove to be a detrimental problem for the coming decades of Arab-Jewish cohabitation. A crucial difference between the Jewish and Arab populations was the level of coordination within the two people groups. The local Jewish population's strength consistently grew to the point of developing modern nation-state features including a military, taxes, education, and health care. On the contrary, Arabs continually suffered from internal divisions. Tensions continued to rise throughout the 1920s between Arabs

²³ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 23. Print.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 25

²⁵ "Palestine 1918 to 1948." *History Learning Site*. [Historylearningsite.co.uk](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk), 2014. Web. 08 Feb. 2015. <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/palestine_1918_to_1948.htm>.

²⁶ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 27. Print.

and Jews culminating in riots over access to the historic and holy Western Wall in Jerusalem, which is of major prominence for Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Systematic slaughter of Jews occurred in the city of Hebron, and over one hundred Arabs lost their lives during these riots. This notorious unrest became known as the “Western Wall Riots” of 1929, and reached as far as the predominantly Jewish coastal communities: “The tensions over access to the Western Wall galvanized the communal hostilities generated during the first decade of the mandate...they ended any real chance of Arab-Jewish peace in Palestine.”²⁷ Spurred by the surrounding countries of Iraq, Egypt, and Syria gaining full nation-state independence, Palestinian nationalism rose exponentially and became entwined with Islam, disgust for the British Mandate, and anger over the Jewish population. Arabs residing in Palestine associated Jews with European colonialism and imperialism, and had no desire for Europe’s reach to permanently extend into the Middle East. Arabs fundamentally believed this land was theirs by right of tradition and work.²⁸ Jews increasingly believed British Mandate Palestine was theirs by promise of the Balfour Declaration, religious right, and legally purchased land.

Throughout the 1930’s and 40’s a perfect storm of international events would bolster the cause of both Jews and Arabs in Mandate Palestine. During this period, the British government effectively lost control of the chaotic region, in part due to lack of incentive to control the area and in other part due to Britain’s preoccupation with World War II. At this point in time, no side was working cooperatively with each other. Jews, Arabs, and the British all fought each other over the right to complete independence. Beginning in 1936 the first coordinated Arab revolt against the British was launched. In response, Britain created the Peel Commission in 1937 to

²⁷ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 32. Print.

²⁸ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 13 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

investigate a possible solution that would force the two populations to live together in peace.

However, the report's findings were extremely disconcerting:

The [British] Mandate cannot be fully and honourably implemented unless by some means or other the national antagonism between Arab and Jew can be composed. But it is the Mandate that created that antagonism and keeps it alive...we cannot honestly hold out the expectation that either Arabs or Jews will be able to set aside their national hopes or fears and sink their differences in the common service of Palestine...Manifestly the problem cannot be solved by giving either the Arabs or the Jews all they want. The answer to the question 'Which of them in the end will govern Palestine?' must surely be 'Neither'...²⁹

The committee reached the ultimate conclusion that partition of Palestine would become the best solution for both races. With an Arab demographic majority it was clear at this point Jews and Arabs could no longer live together peacefully in this small geographic area. Peel was of the opinion the parties could split the land and live alongside one another in peaceful nation-state entities. The Arab population responded to the partition plan with a sharp rise in violent riots, in which Palestinian national identity soared to new levels. The Jewish population utilized their newly forming militias known as the Haganah to carry out violent terror attacks of their own, killing British soldiers and Arab civilians in their quest to independence. The British government responded sharply in suppressing the riots, and by 1939 it succeeded. This repression came at the expense of large portions of the Arab population and much of Palestine's economic infrastructure. The government agreed the British Mandate must be revisited, initiated a limit to Jewish immigration, and reconsidered the idea of a joint Arab-Jew nation.

The beginning of the 1940's revealed the horrors of WWII. German Nazi extermination camps brutally murdered over six million European Jews through genocidal mass killings. During WWII Palestinian leadership aligned interests with Hitler and Nazi Germany, causing

²⁹ Directly from The Peel Commission Report, Ch. 20, pg. 375:
"Palestine Royal Commission Report." (n.d.): 375. *Unispal.un.org*. United Kingdom H.M. Stationary Office. Web. 04 Feb. 2014. <<http://unispal.un.org/pdfs/Cmd5479.pdf>>.

Jews to further mistrust Palestine's Arabs. Zionism, now more than ever, pressed the international community on the basic necessity of a safe Jewish homeland. Several western nations, including the United States, urged Britain to lift restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine and decried support for a Jewish national homeland in wake of the Holocaust survivors. Britain agreed and had no resolve to deal with the many issues in Palestine after the detrimental effects of WWII. In 1947 Britain turned to the newly formed United Nations in hopes of finding an internationally accepted resolution to the unrest in Palestine. As a result, the UN formed the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), and sought out Palestine as a solution for the thousands of Europe's displaced Jews.³⁰ Local Arab leadership in Palestine, angered by the UN's choice to make Palestine a solution to Europe's problems, refused to meet with UNSCOP and perceived Jewish immigration as attempting to ensure population growth in the region rather than seeking humanitarian safety. The Arab leadership's refusal to meet with UNSCOP committees unknowingly made themselves their own worst enemy in securing Arab interests for the future of Palestine. UNSCOP ultimately resolved to partition the land into Jewish and Arab nation-states in 1947 under UN Resolution 181 (II) 'Future Government of Palestine'.³¹ The fractured relationships between Arabs and Jews especially from 1936 – 1947 would prove to make any sort of partition plan that pleased both races extremely difficult.

The Founding of Israel 1948 – 1966

UNSCOP recognized four leading problems in its report when partitioning Palestine. First, the problem of population minorities varied throughout Palestine as the overall Arab population significantly outnumbered the Jewish population. If tasked with creating separate Jew and Arab states, the plan could not include Arab demographic majorities in both. Therefore,

³⁰ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 46. Print.

³¹ "A/RES/181(II) of 29 November 1947." *UN Special Committee on Palestine*. United Nations, 29 Nov. 1947. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>>.

UNSCOP sectioned the predominantly Arab geographic regions of Palestine from the predominantly Jewish ones, but there was still a large Arab minority in the proposed Jewish state. Second, both proposed states needed to be viable. This entailed an area large enough for future population growth, suitable water and sea access, stable borders, and several other key issues. Third, both states needed adequate space for future development. Jews were expecting additional waves of immigrants resulting from the continuing fallout of the Holocaust, and the Arab population continued to rise naturally. Fourth, UNSCOP recognized the vital need for both states to have contiguous borders as a natural requirement for effective state governance. However, this issue was ultimately waived due to the complex demographic and geographic factors involved in partition. In conclusion, UNSCOP regarded its solution the “least unsatisfactory” for all parties involved.³² They presented Arab and Jewish state partitions to the UN, with Jerusalem remaining an internationally neutral region.

Figure 4.2 United Nations 1947 Partition Plan for Palestine into Jewish and Arab States



Source: news.bbc.co.uk³³

³² Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 47. Print.

³³ "UN Partition Plan." *BBC News*. BBC, 29 Nov. 2001. Web. 04 June 2015.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/middle_east/israel_and_the_palestinians/key_documents/1681322.stm>.

The United Nations' controversial vote approved the partition plan, with 33 nations voting in favor, 13 opposed, and 10 abstentions. The Jewish state did not include the geographic areas of biblical importance such as the hilly regions of Judea and Samaria, but did comprise 55% of Palestine's total area. By quick examination of the map one can quickly arrive at the conclusion the UN drawn borders were bound to fail. The state borders were not congruous as the UN had attempted to group major Jewish and Arab populated areas together with their respective nation-state, and the Jewish state's population was still 45% Arab.³⁴ Additionally, there was no easy way for the Jewish population to reach Jerusalem, which had become a contentious issue during the Western Wall Riots due to Jerusalem's religious significance. The United Nations vote was welcomed with great approval from the Jewish community, and another round of protesting from the Arab community that did not believe any form of partition was fair for their inherited land. Regardless of these deficiencies in the partition plan, the hopes and dreams of the Zionists were realized and the Jewish state of Israel was born on May 14, 1948. The Arabs refused to recognize Israel and the 1947 partition plan, and therefore a Palestinian state was never created.

On May 15, 1948 war broke out as an alliance of Arab nations including Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq launched military attacks on the newly formed Israel. The War of Independence for Israel marked the first Arab-Israeli War and would last until 1949. It resulted in a sound defeat of the Arab alliance by the new Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). In a culture that takes pride in respect and social prestige, the Arabs were embarrassed by this defeat. The real victors in the 1948 war were Israel and Transjordan, which became Jordan in 1948. The results of the war were once again transformative for the Middle East map. Israel gained 50% of the territory originally allotted to Palestine's Arab population under the 1947 UN partition plan.

³⁴ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 49. Print.

Jordan annexed Palestine's Arab territory west of the Jordan River, effectively deeming it 'The West Bank,' and Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip in the south.

Figure 4.3 Map of Israel land gain post-1948 War, and newly created Palestinian refugee territories



Source: history-of-israel.org³⁵

After the 1948 war the world recognized Israel's rightful place as a sovereign Jewish nation-state. The Arab nations continued to refuse recognition of the state of Israel and still do not to this day, with the exceptions of Egypt and Jordan. The biggest loss in the 1948 conflict was the Palestinian Arabs themselves, as 700,000 Palestinians became refugees.³⁶ At this point their homes were either in Israel or the Arab nation controlled territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As a result, their living situations deteriorated. Israel also paid and continues to pay a high price for this refugee population in terms of its international reputation and hostility among its neighboring Arab countries.

The State of Israel would not allow these Palestinians to return to their homes in Israel for several reasons. First, the population of 700,000 was enormous and had legitimate potential to threaten the Jewish ethnic majority in Israel. Second, the surrounding Arab countries remained in

³⁵ Map of Israel 1949. Digital image. *HistoryOfIsrael.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Feb. 2015. <http://history-of-israel.org/history/images/map_1949_rhodes.jpg>.

³⁶ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 13 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

a state of war and tension despite an armistice being signed in 1949. From an Israeli perspective, allowing these Palestinians back in was synonymous with allowing 700,000 combatants into the country immediately following the Holocaust. Third, there was no unified power that could make an executive decision for the Palestinian body on negotiations for return. Fourth, Israel had nowhere to legitimately place these 700,000 refugees as the coastal and agricultural regions had practically reached capacity, only leaving the barren Negev desert region in the south.³⁷ As a consequence, the Palestinian Arabs became a sort of political and economic leverage for Israel and the Arab nations. The surrounding Arab countries refused to allow the Palestinians to integrate into their populations, and continually provided arms and weapons to them as a conduit to fight Israel. In Arab society education reinforced the ideal that only Israel was and always will be the true enemy, despite the surrounding countries also benefiting territorially and politically from the displaced position of the Palestinian people. The War of 1948 produced the most foundational problems that still persist in 2015. Many Palestinians still live in refugee camps and their plight has not been resolved, resulting in consistent violence between Israel and Palestinian Territories. It is not clear what the total interest is in this conflict for surrounding Arab countries. These nations are not exactly friendly with Palestinian people, do not offer them citizenship, and do not shield the Palestinians from conflict. Therefore a large factor of interest is likely due to cultural identity similarities and other political motives after Palestinians became refugees. Over time, only the two countries of Israel and Jordan have decided to grant Palestinians citizenship after they complete naturalization processes, but the number of granted citizenships is limited.

After the conclusion of the 1948 war a fierce battle loomed over Israel and Jordan's access to the international city of Jerusalem. The war resulted in the city being split into two halves with Israel controlling West Jerusalem and Jordan controlling East Jerusalem, yet the

³⁷ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 13 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

international community never officially recognized these divisions. Additionally, due to the Arab nations initiating the war Israel considered the surrounding countries as aggressors, resulting in a perceived need to clearly assert military superiority in order to deter any future conflict. This cycle of military display and recurrent Arab hostility would create a culture of conflict in the region.³⁸ Throughout the 1950's and 1960's the new border insecurity resulted in harsh military retaliation by Israel to any perceived threat. On the other side, the cause of the Palestinians both united and divided Arabs across the world. Some supported their struggle for independence, while others used their position as a way to bolster newly empowered Arab regimes.³⁹

War and Occupation 1967

Israel as a country was placed in a unique position as it was and continues to be geographically surrounded by enemies of the Jewish state. In 1967 the "Six Day War" would be another deadly conflict that would define Israel and its neighbors' histories. Prior to the war there were several key issues that came into play that created a heavy air of mistrust and insecurity. Pan-Arab nationalism came into full effect led predominantly by the leader of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser.⁴⁰ Nasser pushed Arab unity and desired to see Arab nations ban together against Western Imperialism and its respective forces. Arab leadership began the use of more aggressive language asserting all countries could gather around "destroying Israel," or they could "drive the Jews into the sea."⁴¹ Leading up to the war the Egyptian military also closed the Straits of Tiran, which was considered by Israel and by the international community as an act of war due to the Straits' vital shipping lines that bolstered Israel's economy. Lastly, the Soviets conducted Cold War espionage claiming to various Arab countries that Israel was amassing its militaries on their

³⁸ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 64. Print.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 68

⁴⁰ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict #2." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 20 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

⁴¹ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict #2." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 20 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

borders to prepare for an invasion.⁴² Due to the Soviet claims and Egyptian expectations of Israeli military retaliation in accordance with the closures of the Straits of Tiran, Arab armies began to mobilize on Israel's borders. The Arab threat was a real one as the various armies were allied and coordinated. The move to line up on Israel's borders was not seen simply as a random occurrence. In turn, in expectation of another war and because of Israel's historically hostile neighbors and intimidated psyche the country launched preemptive strikes on Arab forces. The Israeli military initiated extensive attacks on Egyptian air bases and other regions including the Gaza Strip, the Jordan controlled West Bank, and the Syrian held Golan Heights in the north.

The Six Day War was a decisive victory for Israel. It resulted in yet another re-drawing of the Middle East's tumultuous borders as Israel took control of the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. Israel had captured specific geographic areas for what they perceived as strategic safety purposes. For example, capturing the Golan Heights alleviated safety concerns for its citizens in the north by preventing Syrian snipers from hiding in the mountains and sniping Israeli farmers.⁴³ Moreover, Israel captured all of the coveted city of Jerusalem. The newly conquered territory would provide a dramatic boost in Israeli confidence and negotiation leverage with its Arab counterparts, however the majority of the international community did not recognize these land acquisitions as legitimate. The political results of this war reframed the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arab leadership was humiliated by the results of '67, which simply fanned the ever-growing flames of distaste for Israel. Also, since Israel had gained control over much of the territorial areas where Palestinian Arabs had been living (e.g. the West Bank and the Gaza Strip), the Israeli government consequently began ruling

⁴² Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 67. Print.

⁴³ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict #2." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 20 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

over the Palestinian refugees.⁴⁴ Given the violent history between the two parties this would obviously prove to be an overwhelmingly difficult task to accomplish considering the extensive conflicts of interest.

Figure 4.4 Israeli land acquisition post-1967 War



Source: [cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)⁴⁵

As these newly acquired geographic areas were not formally recognized by international standards they were ultimately deemed “Occupied Territories,” which is in reference to occupation by the Israeli military and governance of land it does not legally own. Many scholars and some of the international community resort to this terminology because Israel is often perceived as the aggressor in the 1967 war. Despite the Arab armies gathering along Israeli borders, Israel responded by conducting preemptive first strikes. The United Nations had established the “Rules of War” in the 20th century and in summation required an aggressor to return occupied lands. However, there are still heated debates over which parties were actually the aggressor in the Six Day War, and therefore Israel has to this day not rescinded access to all of the territory gained in 1967. Additionally, there are further complications by others on the right-wing spectrum that would argue Israel has come under special and unfair scrutiny from the

⁴⁴ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict #2." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 20 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

⁴⁵ Israeli Land Acquisition Post-1967 War. Digital image. CNN, n.d. Web. 05 Mar. 2015.

<<http://www.cnn.com/video/world/2011/05/19/dougherty.mideast.impact.cnn.640x360.jpg>>.

United Nations and other international governance bodies over this land issue. This argument poses that historically if a nation-state conquers land during a war it now owns it and that Israel was simply acting in self-defense. The 1967 war is a very gray issue in the larger history of this conflict with both sides claiming different narratives.

Regardless of whether or not the land truly belonged to Israel, over the years the Jewish state began constructing population settlements across the Occupied Territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The swiftness of victory in 1967 was seen as a return to the biblical lands of Israel, or “Eretz Israel,” which included Judea and Samaria in the West Bank.⁴⁶ With the continuation of settlement building the Israeli government possessed a bargaining chip with the surrounding Arab countries for peace agreements, essentially utilizing a “land-for-peace” strategy.⁴⁷ In November of 1967 the United Nations Security Council drafted Resolution 242, which would use this land-for-peace strategy during subsequent peace negotiations:

- 1.(i) Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
- 1.(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.⁴⁸

Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Israel accepted this resolution in 1967, but later discovered this acceptance was based on varying interpretations of the security resolution.⁴⁹ Due to the confusion over the language of the resolution diplomatic stalemate ensued. Further complicating matters was the Arab leaders conference in Sudan in 1967 that resulted in the three famous peace-defying “noes”: no negotiation, no recognition, and no peace with Israel.⁵⁰ Israel did not believe it needed to vacate all of the “Occupied Lands”, while its Arab counterparts believed the

⁴⁶ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 70. Print.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 71

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 72

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 73

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

resolution required vacating all land based on pre-1967 borders. The melting pot of disagreement over further steps involving the occupied territories, the rule of the Palestinian refugees, and the crushing defeat of '67 partially gave way to a rise in political Islam surrounding the conflict. Islamism initially gained traction through the increasing disillusionment with foreign ideologies and western ideals.⁵¹ The surrounding Arab countries began to fuse politics with the religious teachings of Islam, basing their perspectives of justice and politics off of Sharia Islamic Law. In time, this led to a rise in strict Islamic extremism and Islamic terrorist threats that Israel would face on its borders in the coming years.⁵² On the contrary, Israel's refusal to rescind parts of the 1967 territory and lack of clear resolution for the Palestinian refugee problem would also contribute to an increase in violence.

Palestinian Resistance 1968 – 1987

In the years following the 1967 war there was consistent violence between Israel and the surrounding Arab countries, especially between Egypt and Israel. The diplomatic impasse over the UN Resolution was at a grinding halt. This constant state of tension and ambiguity was finally broken when Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel and initiated the 1973 Yom Kippur War.⁵³ The two countries had been lining troops along Israel's northern and southern borders, but Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir made a controversial decision not to launch any form of defensive preemptive attack. While this war was not foundational for modern day Israel-Gaza relations, it did have dramatic effects for the mental state of Israeli citizens. Egypt and Syria's joint attack nearly defeated the Jewish state for the first time in history. It was not until a peace meeting that the war ended, and peace in Palestine became a top global concern due to complications with worldwide access to oil. The Yom Kippur War toppled the Israeli

⁵¹ Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict #2." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 20 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 74. Print.

image of invincibility and bolstered Arab pride for their military performance.⁵⁴ This was a crucial turning point for the Israeli psyche as they realized Israel was indeed vulnerable and could be destroyed at any moment. At this point in history a psychological feeling of intimidation swept over Israelis, resulting in the perceived need to assert and defend their nation more blatantly in the future. In 1978 a United States brokered peace agreement known as the “Camp David Accords” was led by President Jimmy Carter to establish lasting peace between Israel and Egypt.⁵⁵ The accords were formally signed in 1979 and resulted in Israel returning the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in exchange for peace. Egypt also additionally agreed to lasting peace and formally recognized Israeli in 1979 and continues to do so today. Israeli settlements continued in Gaza and the West Bank, as many Israeli citizens believed this territory was essential for Israel’s long-term security.

One lasting effect of the Yom Kippur War was the idea that peace can come as a result of war. This increased the hard-liner approaches to this conflict between Arab and Israeli counterparts. Israel refused to concede Jerusalem causing conflict with the Palestinians who imagined East Jerusalem as their capital in any future nation-state. The burden of occupation in the West Bank and Gaza became nearly unbearable for the Palestinians. Their society had been destroyed by the countless wars and their status as refugees, and the Israeli government gradually imposed heavy burdens on Palestinians such as curfews, road checkpoints, and other various freedom restrictions. One of the only characteristics keeping Palestinian national identity alive was their hopeful right of return to their historical lands.⁵⁶ In 1964 Palestinians created the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) with the goal of establishing a Palestinian state on all of historical mandate Palestine. The organization placed special emphasis on armed struggle and

⁵⁴ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 74. Print.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 75

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 80

terrorist tactics as the only viable strategy to liberate Palestinian lands.⁵⁷ Over the 1970s and 1980s the PLO would conduct several high profile attacks that would assert any Palestinian resistance as a terrorist struggle in the minds of Israelis and the international arena. For example, in 1972 the PLO was responsible for the massacre of several Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, and over several years hijacked other planes and ships threatening Jewish passengers.⁵⁸

Years later at the request of assistance from the Lebanese government and in an effort to oust the PLO base in Beirut, Israel invaded the southern border of Lebanon. Over time Israel established a security border in southern Lebanon and in the process enraged local residents who perceived this as another military occupation. Another radical Islamic group, Hezbollah, was formed in resistance to Israel.⁵⁹ The Israeli government finally withdrew completely from this security zone fifteen years later, but the establishment of Hezbollah was permanent along the Jewish state's northern borders. Additionally, in 1987 an organized Palestinian protest movement called the Intifada gained traction. This period was a huge wave of violence and disruption against Israel and the occupation status quo. The Intifada expressed Palestinian nationalism in methods and depths history had never before witnessed.⁶⁰ Resistance came as a result of the extremely poor living conditions of the Palestinians. For the first time in history a significant change in thinking surfaced in the international community as they began to believe Israel might be treating the Palestinians too harshly. Following the Intifada in 1988 the PLO and Israel signed a formal peace agreement, and the PLO officially recognized Israel's right to existence in accordance with UN Resolution 242. The PLO became a type of governing body for Palestinians

⁵⁷ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 82. Print.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 84

⁶⁰ Ibid., 87

in cooperation with another Palestinian political party organization known as Fatah.

Unfortunately, the Intifada movement also birthed another violent Islamic movement in the Gaza Strip known as Hamas.⁶¹ Hamas is widely considered a terrorist organization as it historically has refused to compromise with Israel, uses violent means as an avenue to accomplish goals, and calls for the destruction of the Jewish state in favor of the establishment of an Islamic state in mandate Palestine. The group also acts as a political party and provides some key social services to Palestinians. Considering the founding of Hamas and the Intifada rebellion in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, Israelis increasingly believed the occupied territories could no longer be viably sustained due to economic and security issues. The crushing force required to quell the rebellions had partially tarnished Israel's reputation abroad.

⁶¹ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 88. Print.

CHAPTER 5: The Modern Israeli-Palestinian Condition

Volatile Peace Attempts 1988 – 2000

Throughout the years following the Intifada the Palestinians gradually lost more and more financial and military support. Arab states largely ended their backing after the Gulf War against Kuwait because Palestinians had generally supported Iraq.⁶² However, since the international community was beginning to recognize the Palestinian refugee problem, western nations began administering some financial support for the people group. During the 1990s serious peace negotiations and efforts began between Israel and the Palestinians. In 1994 a peace treaty was signed between Israel and Jordan that resulted in Jordan dropping claims to the West Bank and formal recognition of Israel. In 1993 the Oslo Accords peace talks emerged with Israel and the PLO coming to a truce. The PLO renounced the use of violence and recognized the state of Israel, and in return Israel recognized the PLO as a legitimate governing body of the Palestinian people. This was a large step in progress for peace, as Palestinians had never before possessed a recognized governing body. The Oslo Accords did not resolve final status issues such as the borders of a Palestinian state, the Jewish settlements, or Jerusalem, but rather constructed a political space Israelis and Palestinians could utilize in the future for peace talks.⁶³

Oslo discussions were ultimately derailed over the following years as conclusions to various land, water supply, economic infrastructure, and terrorist violence issues could not be reached. Radical group Hamas refused to participate in Oslo peace negotiations and responded with increased suicide bombings against Israeli civilian targets in 1994 and 1995.⁶⁴ Although Palestinian leadership had discussed with Israeli leadership their commitment to ending armed violence, the dramatic rise in suicide bombings casted a shadow of doubt over Israelis about the

⁶² Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict #2." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 20 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

⁶³ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 91. Print.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 94

security of a formal Palestinian state side-by-side with Israel.⁶⁵ On the contrary, Palestinians became increasingly disillusioned without any type of formal statehood plan accepted by Israel despite their dire need. Prime Ministers of Israel became strictly focused on security issues and military strength.

Stalemate 2000 - 2014

In the years following Oslo, more rounds of negotiation occurred including Camp David II led by U.S. President Bill Clinton. Despite the good intentions, by this time it was too late and tensions had been simmering. Another Intifada uprising, known as the al-Aqsa Intifada, erupted from the Palestinians in 2000 and the years following witnessed severe destabilization in the region. By 2003 2,400 Palestinians and 800 Israelis had died with hundreds more wounded and traumatized.⁶⁶ The dramatic wave of violence caused Israelis to question if Palestinian leadership, specifically Yassir Arafat, really wanted to denounce violence and enforce peaceful transitions. Hamas gained traction in the wake of various failed peace negotiations. At the time Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon sought to disrupt the Palestinian Authority's (PA), the governing body of Palestinians, economic and physical infrastructure.⁶⁷ Israeli deployment of tanks, helicopters, and troops was commonplace in Palestinian territories in response to the wave of suicide bombings. Ariel Sharon no longer pursued negotiation, and sought to separate Israelis from Palestinians as much as possible.

The Israeli government constructed massive walls and checkpoints around the 1967 borders of Palestinian territories to help prevent suicide bombings and maintain order in Israel. Sharon also demanded unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005, which is home to

⁶⁵ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 97. Print.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 98

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 100

1.3 Million Palestinian Arabs and radical group Hamas.⁶⁸ The IDF forcefully removed Israeli settlers from their homes in Gaza, but left expansive Israeli agricultural infrastructure intact for the remaining Arab residents. However, Arab residents then burned down the infrastructure following the Israeli departure. Sharon was a conservative right-wing Israeli leader. Due to the highly militaristic culture that had developed in the region over time, having a right-wing military leader advocate for territory withdrawal was seen as legitimate for all sides of the Israeli political spectrum. This would develop of predisposition for real and accepted change to typically surface as a result of right-wing military leadership decisions, as it pleased the left's existing withdrawal agenda and the right's trust in military leadership and protection expertise. These beliefs fostered an Israeli perspective that withdrawal is only a viable strategy to pursue when the military perceives territorial withdrawal as safe and sustainable.

In 2004 a more moderate leader named Mahmoud Abbas, member of the Fatah political party, was elected as Palestinian Authority President residing in the West Bank. He denounced the recent Palestinian uprisings as disastrous for the Palestinian cause.⁶⁹ In 2006 Abbas developed open democratic elections in an attempt to de-radicalize and incorporate the Hamas political party from Gaza into the wider Palestinian Government. The results were shocking to the world as Hamas swept the elections with a decisive victory in the Gaza Strip after claiming to be responsible for the 2005 Israeli withdrawal. Happening concurrently in the north during 2006 was a conflict with Islamic radical group Hezbollah that resulted in heavy rocket fire and destruction in northern Israel, along with Israeli military bombing campaigns primarily aimed at Hezbollah in southern Lebanon and Beirut.

⁶⁸ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 101. Print.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

In 2007 Hamas violently overtook Fatah's positions in the Gaza Strip and permanently ousted the party, killing its members who had remained in Gaza.⁷⁰ This internal conflict within the Gaza territory came to be known as "The Battle of Gaza," and resulted in the Palestinian Authority permanently retreating out of the Gaza Strip.⁷¹ In response and out of fear of Hamas attacks, Israel created a physical blockade of the Gaza Strip. The country now controls Gaza's airspace, seaports access, and border crossing points so that the Gaza strip effectively has no territorial autonomy.⁷² The largely tumultuous decade of the 2000s resulted in more insecurity, a rise in new and stronger radical threats, intense Israeli military retaliations, and continual hardship for the daily life of an average Palestinian. At this point in time there are semi-frequent conflicts with the Gaza Strip that occur every few years including a 2008 Israel-Gaza war, a 2012 conflict flare-up, and an extensive 50-day Israel-Gaza war in the summer of 2014. Each round of fighting generally entails Hamas firing explosives and unguided rockets at Israeli cities, uprisings and violent protests across the West Bank, and IDF bombings and/or ground invasions into the densely populated Gaza Strip. The West Bank is normally seen as more stable than the Gaza Strip, with only a small reach of Hamas into the West Bank that infrequently conducts lower-level violence such as kidnappings. There are also small conflicts among Jewish radical fundamentalists that have erratically killed Palestinians and conduct harsh confrontations around Jerusalem. Given the complex security situation and necessities of each side's demands, it does not appear the current state of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict will end in the near future.

⁷⁰ Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 103. Print.

⁷¹ Morley, Jefferson. "Israeli Withdrawal From Gaza Explained." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 10 Aug. 2005. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/10/AR2005081000713.html>>.

⁷² "Gaza Strip." *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency, n.d. Web. 25 Jan. 2015. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>>.

Figure 5.1 Modern Day Map of Israel and Palestinian Territories, as of 2015: The Gaza Strip, West Bank, Jerusalem, and Golan Heights are disputed areas



Source: upload.wikimedia.org⁷³

Israel-Gaza War of Summer 2014

In order to provide more context as to what an Israeli-Palestinian Conflict outbreak actually resembles in real life, presented below is a detailed examination of the summer 2014 Israel-Gaza War. This conflict had an official duration of fifty days lasting from July 8th, 2014 until August 26th, 2014. However, the actual total time length of cross-border violence did extend further than the officially defined beginning and ending dates.⁷⁴ In any outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence there is commonly a trigger event that catapults an already tense and delicate situation into a full-blown conflict. In the summer of 2014 this event, according to most sources, was the kidnapping of three Israeli teenagers as they were hitchhiking in the West Bank

⁷³ Modern Day Map of Israel and Palestinian Territories. Digital image. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 June 2015. <<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/51/Is-map.PNG/250px-Is-map.PNG>>.

⁷⁴ Facts and figures on casualties and other important data differ between news sources due to lack of information access and data reliability in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, different information may be presented in various sources compared to what is discussed below. The numbers presented are correct within an estimated range.

on June 12th, 2014.⁷⁵ In these situations Israeli culture is one of strong unity. As a result, an enraged Israeli public over the kidnappings prompted a swift IDF crackdown in the West Bank to find the missing boys, which was ordered by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Specifically, Netanyahu believed the military branch of Hamas had orchestrated the kidnapping using its reach in parts of the West Bank. Hamas leaders consequently denied any involvement with the kidnappings, but instead praised them as heroic.⁷⁶

By June 16th, nearly one hundred West Bank Palestinians had been arrested by Israel under the auspices of aiding Hamas, and in response Hamas fired four rockets into Israel from the Gaza Strip. The foundations for a large-scale conflict were laid as Israel retaliated with six airstrikes over the Gaza Strip.⁷⁷ The IDF arrested scores more of Palestinians, residents in the West Bank and Gaza were in uproar, and the rocket attacks on Israel increased. June 30th marked the day when IDF forces discovered the bodies of the three teens who had been murdered in the West Bank city Hebron.⁷⁸ News of the discovery broke over the next day prompting Anti-Arab riots in many usually quiet parts of Jerusalem. The riots resulted in a select few radical Israelis committing a retaliatory killing of a Palestinian teen. Israeli officials later found the teen had been burned alive on July 2nd, and the Israelis responsible for the murder were charged and later sentenced to prison.⁷⁹ Arab riots erupted over the killing of the teen, and Hamas used this as a pretext for increased rocket fire against Israeli civilian cities. Between July 2nd and July 6th forty

⁷⁵ Masi, Allesandria. "Timeline of Events in Gaza and Israel Shows Sudden, Rapid Escalation." *International Business Times*. IBTimes, 23 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.ibtimes.com/timeline-events-gaza-israel-shows-sudden-rapid-escalation-1636264>>.

⁷⁶ "Gaza War: Hamas Admits Kidnapping Three Israeli Teens - NBC News." *NBC News*. NBC, 21 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/west-bank-kidnappings/gaza-war-hamas-admits-kidnapping-three-israeli-teens-n186176>>.

⁷⁷ Masi, Allesandria. "Timeline of Events in Gaza and Israel Shows Sudden, Rapid Escalation." *International Business Times*. IBTimes, 23 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.ibtimes.com/timeline-events-gaza-israel-shows-sudden-rapid-escalation-1636264>>.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Levs, Josh. "Gaza: From Samson to Israeli-Palestinian Fighting - CNN.com." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 10 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/10/world/meast/israel-gaza-timeline/>>.

Gaza rockets were fired into Israel, and the IDF had rapidly increased their airstrikes of weapons stockpiles and terrorist targets within the Gaza Strip.⁸⁰ Hamas argued its rocket fire was justified in self-defense from Israeli aerial attacks on the Gaza Strip, and it was in opposition to the Israeli blockade of the Gaza territory.⁸¹

“Operation Protective Edge”

The Israeli-Palestinian cycle of violence had again reared its violent head when Israel announced on July 7th, 2014 the initiation of “Operation Protective Edge” as a defensive airstrike operation against the Gaza Strip.⁸² Israel argued for this operation as a legitimate means of self-defense against the persistent rocket attacks, and that a majority of other countries would respond in a similar manner given the threat of rockets that force citizens to run into bomb shelters multiple times per day.⁸³ Just 48 hours into Protective Edge the tolls on each side were significant: 64 people had died in Gaza from airstrikes, 180 rockets from Gaza were fired into Israel on July 9th alone, and the IDF had conducted aerial assaults on 590 targets in the Gaza Strip.⁸⁴ All major Israeli cities were threatened by the rocket fire of the summer 2014 conflict, entailing approximately 70% of Israel’s population lived under the threat of daily rocket attacks. For example, some rockets reached as far north as the city of Hadera, just south of Haifa, which

⁸⁰ IDF statements of terrorist targeting in the Gaza Strip are controversial, especially among Pro-Palestine individuals. Here the term is used in reference to IDF targeting of Hamas members, weapons, rocket-launching locations, or other violence based activities.

⁸¹ "10 Preguntas Para Entender Por Qué Pelean Israelíes Y Palestinos." *BBC Mundo*. BBC, 5 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2014/08/140801_israel_palestinos_conflicto_preguntas_basicas_jp>.

⁸² Masi, Allesandria. "Timeline of Events in Gaza and Israel Shows Sudden, Rapid Escalation." *International Business Times*. IBTimes, 23 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.ibtimes.com/timeline-events-gaza-israel-shows-sudden-rapid-escalation-1636264>>.

⁸³ "10 Preguntas Para Entender Por Qué Pelean Israelíes Y Palestinos." *BBC Mundo*. BBC, 5 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2014/08/140801_israel_palestinos_conflicto_preguntas_basicas_jp>.

⁸⁴ Masi, Allesandria. "Timeline of Events in Gaza and Israel Shows Sudden, Rapid Escalation." *International Business Times*. IBTimes, 23 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.ibtimes.com/timeline-events-gaza-israel-shows-sudden-rapid-escalation-1636264>>.

is roughly 62 miles north of the Gaza Strip and indicated Hamas had garnered more long-range weapons capabilities in comparison to previous years.⁸⁵ Throughout July Israel summoned more than 86,000 members of its reserve military forces in need of service to fight in the conflict or prepare for ground invasions into the Gaza Strip.⁸⁶

The summer 2014 conflict was notable, but not completely uncommon, for several reasons. First, the rapid progression and intensity of the violence was alarming. By late July Israel announced military ground operations into the Gaza Strip to directly fight Hamas. The high death toll in Gaza was increasing at an intensifying rate, and approximately 50-70% of casualties were predicted to be civilians due to the challenges posed by an urban warfare environment. Women, children, and other innocent parties were being killed daily as an unintended result of collateral damage from Israeli air strikes or ground fire. Hundreds of rockets from Gaza were being fired every day at large civilian metropolitan areas like Tel Aviv, which is usually isolated from most conflicts. In Israeli colloquial terms many citizens refer to Tel Aviv as the “State of Tel Aviv,” and then the rest of Israel as essentially a separate country. This term is in reference to Tel Aviv’s position as a critical cultural, economic, and international hub for Israel, similar in comparison to New York City’s role for the United States. During most engagements war usually occurs on the country’s borders, not in central metropolitan hubs, and having rockets over Israel’s most economically prominent city was a highly concerning factor in the summer conflict. Israel’s iron dome missile defense system was successful at intercepting most of these rockets over civilian areas, with an 86% interception success rate for rockets with a

⁸⁵ Magnay, Diana, Ed Payne, and Josh Levs. "Israel: Gaza Ground Op Might Become Necessary." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 8 July 2014. Web. 04 June 2015. <<http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/08/world/meast/mideast-tensions/>>.

⁸⁶ Israeli military reserve forces are civilians who have already served in the Israeli military, but can be drafted for service if their skillset is deemed a necessity for the current operation.

trajectory towards populated areas.⁸⁷ However, the threat posed at any moment a rocket alarm could sound and civilians were forced to run to a bomb shelter in any range of 15 seconds to 2 minutes of warning time. This is relatively normal for most Israeli citizens who have grown accustomed to handling the rocket threat, but the groundbreaking issue in the summer 2014 conflict was the reach of the rocket threat to Tel Aviv and the overwhelming majority of the country's population. Essentially, the whole country was at risk, and no individuals were safe except for a safety bubble around the city of Haifa in the northwest corner of Israel.

Second, the combat style had evolved in this spell of fighting and posed new threats that had not previously been an issue. Hamas had used some of the incoming humanitarian aid and reconstruction supplies to build underground attack tunnels that led to Israeli cities near the Gaza strip. Israelis had not seen this threat before and felt more insecure than ever as a Hamas member could simply pop up from the ground in their neighborhood and begin shooting or kidnapping with no warning. The IDF resolved to destroy tunnels they could detect, which led to a longer duration of the conflict. Third, several rounds of attempted peace negotiations failed. The United States and Egypt both endeavored to broker armistice agreements between the two parties, but none were successful. Each round of negotiations failed due to several issues including the violation of the temporary ceasefires and for other various reasons. During the negotiated ceasefires the Israeli government attempted to organize forms of humanitarian aid to be sent into the Gaza Strip with the purpose of hunger and medical relief for the thousands of suffering Gaza residents. Unfortunately, during each attempt Hamas misappropriated the aid or the supply was cut off due to the recommencement of fighting.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Asher, Zain. "The Economic Cost of the War in Gaza." *CNNMoney*. Cable News Network, 29 Aug. 2014. Web. 15 Apr. 2015. <<http://money.cnn.com/2014/08/29/news/economy/gaza-rebuilding-cost/>>.

⁸⁸ Please see this website on pg. 55 to read the extensive list of humanitarian supplies and medical evacuation services delivered by the Israeli government to Gaza during summer 2014:

Outcome

The conflict officially ended on August 26th after a delicate truce had been reached and both sides claimed victory. Hamas's weapons stockpiles and Gaza's infrastructure had been desecrated, and Israel desired to end the military action and loss of Israeli life. Public opinion polls among Israelis evidenced overwhelming support for Operation Protective Edge with 87% of Israeli Jews supporting the operation, and only 4% reporting they believed the IDF was using excessive force.⁸⁹ Support for the operation was galvanized especially following the discovery of Hamas tunnels into Israel's borders and towns. However, the loss of life was alarming. In total, roughly 2,150 residents in Gaza lost their lives; of which it is estimated more than 1,000 were civilians.⁹⁰ Within Israel 66 soldiers and 6 civilians died, with another 469 soldiers and 87 civilians wounded. According to the IDF, more than 3,700 rockets were fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip during the 50-day conflict. This figure is not including the reported additional 450 rockets that were fired earlier during the year prior to the summer conflict. Later in the summer Hamas officially admitted to the kidnapping of the three Israeli teenagers that had sparked the tensions pre-conflict.⁹¹

The economic impacts were also heavy for both sides, but not disastrous for Israel. The bank of Israel estimated the war cost the military and civilians roughly 10 billion Shekels (about

<http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Peace/Humanitarian/Pages/Israeli-humanitarian-aid-continues-10-Jul-2014.aspx>

⁸⁹ Booth, William, and Ruth Eglash. "Israelis Support Netanyahu and Gaza War, despite Rising Deaths on Both Sides." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 29 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/israelis-support-netanyahu-and-gaza-war-despite-rising-deaths-on-both-sides/2014/07/29/0d562c44-1748-11e4-9349-84d4a85be981_story.html>.

⁹⁰ Dearden, Lizzie. "Israel-Gaza Conflict: 50-day War by Numbers." *The Independent*. Independent Digital News and Media, 27 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israelgaza-conflict-50day-war-by-numbers-9693310.html>>.

⁹¹ "Gaza War: Hamas Admits Kidnapping Three Israeli Teens - NBC News." *NBC News*. NBC, 21 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/west-bank-kidnappings/gaza-war-hamas-admits-kidnapping-three-israeli-teens-n186176>>.

\$3 Billion US), or 0.5% - 1% of total GDP output for the year.⁹² As a result, the central bank made a moderate cut to interest rates to help spur the economy after total output had suffered from frequent rocket alarm sirens and disruptions to daily business.⁹³ Israel's tourism industry was heavily affected as a 36-hour temporary international flight ban was put into effect after a rocket landed near Tel Aviv's airport, and thousands of tourists departed the country due to the continuous rocket sirens. In Gaza the main impact was destruction of the region's infrastructure. Total economic damage to Gaza was estimated at \$4-6 billion required to rebuild the destroyed infrastructure in the strip.⁹⁴ The international community pledged \$5.4 billion US to help reconstruct Gaza, but in the months following Hamas was accused of misappropriating at least \$700 million of those funds.⁹⁵ The psychological impacts also took a heavy toll. Children more heavily exposed to the violence reported effects of trauma and nightmares post-conflict, and are more likely to engage in physical altercations with other children. Additionally, the stressful environment of war including bombings, riots, and army crackdowns in various cities negatively affects various Palestinians and Israelis. The qualitative effects of trauma inflicted during a conflict period are difficult to measure with hard data.

Conflicts significantly hurt the Gaza Strip due to the territory's already extremely poor living conditions. The Gaza Strip is one of the most densely populated areas of land on earth,

⁹² Scheer, Steven. "Gaza Conflict to Dent, Not Break Israel Economy." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters, 29 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/29/us-mideast-gaza-economy-idUSKBN0FY1KY20140729>>.

⁹³ Scheer, Steven. "Gaza Conflict to Dent, Not Break Israel Economy." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters, 29 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/29/us-mideast-gaza-economy-idUSKBN0FY1KY20140729>>.

⁹⁴ Asher, Zain. "The Economic Cost of the War in Gaza." *CNNMoney*. Cable News Network, 29 Aug. 2014. Web. 15 Apr. 2015. <<http://money.cnn.com/2014/08/29/news/economy/gaza-rebuilding-cost/>>.

⁹⁵ Langfan, Mark, and Gil Ronen. "Gaza Wants \$4 Billion, But Did It Steal \$700 Million?" *Arutz Sheva*. Arutz Sheva, 2 Oct. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/185757#.VUI5zkKIe0t>>.

ranking only behind Monaco, Singapore, and London,⁹⁶ and it does not possess the necessary resources to be its own viable nation-state entity.⁹⁷ During a conflict, in addition to safety concerns from Israel-Hamas military engagement Gaza suffers from deteriorating health, food supply, electricity access, and water sanitation problems.⁹⁸ The summer 2014 war was no exception as more than 400,000 Gaza residents were displaced, 500,000 individuals faced food insecurity, and unemployment witnessed a sharp rise.⁹⁹ The United Nations estimates that young people aged 15-29 years represent roughly 53% of the total population in Gaza, which is an unusually high portion due in part to these poor living conditions under conflict.¹⁰⁰ Without corresponding economic development, the U.N. projects that an increase in the number of conflicts experienced by these young people will contribute to a rise in violent extremism.¹⁰¹ It was estimated that the damage to Gaza's infrastructure as a result of the summer 2014 conflict was the worst in nearly 20 years.¹⁰² Further exacerbating the infrastructural consequences, some residents of Gaza reported Hamas attempted to garner more civilian deaths in order to win the "media war" against Israel. One anonymous Gaza storeowner reported the following:

There were two major protests against Hamas during the third week of the war. When Hamas fighters opened fire at the protesters in the BaitHanoun area and the Shijaiya, five

⁹⁶ "Cómo Es La Vida En Gaza Bajo Los Bombardeos Y El Bloqueo." *BBC Mundo*. BBC, 15 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2014/07/140715_gaza_palestinos_israel_vida_cotidina_mz>.

⁹⁷ The Montevideo Convention on the rights and duties of states outlines the rights of a sovereign nation-state entity. Gaza, which is currently not a sovereign nation-state, is lacking articles 2, 8 and 11, in addition to lacking access to critical natural resources and adequate space for population expansion. More information about the rights of nations can be found here: <http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/tratados/a-40.html>

⁹⁸ "Cómo Es La Vida En Gaza Bajo Los Bombardeos Y El Bloqueo." *BBC Mundo*. BBC, 15 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2014/07/140715_gaza_palestinos_israel_vida_cotidina_mz>.

⁹⁹ "El Conflicto Palestino-israelí En Gaza, En Cifras." *Europapress.es*. Europa Press, 21 Aug. 2014. Web. 20 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-conflicto-palestino-israeli-gaza-cifras-20140821120614.html>>.

¹⁰⁰ "Cómo Es La Vida En Gaza Bajo Los Bombardeos Y El Bloqueo." *BBC Mundo*. BBC, 15 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2014/07/140715_gaza_palestinos_israel_vida_cotidina_mz>.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Asher, Zain. "The Economic Cost of the War in Gaza." *CNNMoney*. Cable News Network, 29 Aug. 2014. Web. 15 Apr. 2015. <<http://money.cnn.com/2014/08/29/news/economy/gaza-rebuilding-cost/>>.

were killed instantly. I saw that with my own eyes. Many were injured. A doctor at Shifa hospital told me that 35 were killed at both protests. He went and saw their bodies at the morgue.¹⁰³

Not only did Palestinians in Gaza suffer from the Israel-Hamas war, but they also suffered internally from Hamas's tight reign of control over the Gaza Strip. Hamas has historically pressured Palestinians to stay in their homes after Israel warns an area to evacuate due to an impending aerial attack that will destroy weapons arsenals. Additionally, Hamas fired its rockets from civilian locations within the Gaza Strip such as schools, United Nations hospitals, and other locations that endanger civilians' lives and consequently caused Israel to target these sites.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Delingpole, James. "Palestinians Reveal the Truth about Gaza: 'Hamas Wanted Us Butchered So It Could Win the Media War Against Israel' - Breitbart." *Breitbart*. Breitbart, 24 Sept. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.breitbart.com/london/2014/09/25/palestinians-reveal-the-truth-about-gaza-hamas-wanted-us-butchered-so-it-could-win-the-media-war-against-israel/>>.

¹⁰⁴ Booth, William. "Amnesty International Says Hamas Committed War Crimes, Too." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 26 Mar. 2015. Web. 1 May 2015. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2015/03/26/amnesty-international-says-hamas-committed-war-crimes-too/>>.

CHAPTER 6: Israeli and Palestinian Interviews

In the analysis presented below interviewee identities are kept anonymous, and other potentially identifying information has been replaced in brackets with general information as opposed to a specific name or place. When quoting an interviewee the statement is notated by nationality, gender, and interview number. The following section details key themes and relationships discovered from the interview process, with an analysis that contains inferences about interviewee expressions and cultural discussions that I have interpreted as a researcher. Several of these factors could be known subconsciously to the interviewee, but may not be outwardly recognized or expressed the majority of the time. It is a researcher's responsibility to recognize these prominent patterns in an ethnographic study.¹⁰⁵

Israeli Interviews

All three interviewees had grown up in Israel the majority of their lives and had significant exposure to the conflict. Participants' experiences with the conflict ranged from living next to the Gaza Strip throughout incessant rocket fire to serving in multiple military operations including the summer 2014 Israeli ground invasion into the Gaza Strip. The interviewees' native language was Hebrew, so in certain quotes I have interjected some non-essential words, or words that do not change the meaning of the quote, in order to facilitate a better understanding despite mild English language barriers.

The Past: Key Drivers of the Problem

There were four key themes that surfaced among the Israeli interview subjects during discussions about the past. Throughout the interviews there was clear consistency that the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict encompasses the entire population in some form or another. There is a violent conflict happening all over the country, not just military areas. The general assumption is that primarily only soldiers are affected by the conflict, but in reality there is huge exposure to

¹⁰⁵ Spradley, James P. *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979. 188. Print.

violence and conflict for the everyday civilian as well. This exposure is most effectively evidenced by dividing the participants' interactions with the conflict into direct or indirect categories of contact. First, within direct exposure there are two dimensions of interaction on the continuum between childhood and adulthood. The experiences during childhood are formative for the individual and follow that person into adulthood so that a person's entire life is formulated by exposure to the conflict. Experiences can differ for Israelis between childhood and adulthood since they are interpreted differently depending on what phase of life the individual is in. Below lists several examples of direct exposure to the conflict during childhood that details the technicalities of what conflict zone living is like:

“...In class when there was an alarm we had 10-15 seconds to run [to shelter], we would just hide under a table because our classrooms were not protected by [reinforced] concrete.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“My first memory as a child was from the first Gulf War in 1991 they were shooting SCUD missiles at populated locations, every room in Israel had a sealed room because the biological chemical threat was a genuine one. Whenever I smell fresh new plastic to this day it takes me back to that room where I sat with my family having to wear gas masks.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“Every child has some experience with the conflict. When I was a teenager there were a lot of suicidal bombings and buses were exploding every day during the Intifada. Every kid was thinking about the situation he might not make it back home from school. I thought I should say goodbye to my family everyday or just stay at home because you don't know if you'll come back. My experience as a kid was that you are always afraid for your life... You don't know why but you know that someone wants to kill you via suicide, and you don't know if you'll be on that bus or at that mall.”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

Those examples were foundational for the Israelis during their childhood and effected how they developed their perspectives on the conflict. As the violence followed them into adulthood, they had different memories to discuss that exposed the diversity of threats and exposure levels:

“Over the summer [2014] it was scary you drove with the window open and the radio was on. If there is an alarm they stop the music and I heard the rocket was where I was. I had

to stop the car and run away from the car, lay on the ground, put my hands over my head, and try to figure out if [the rocket] was coming towards me.”

[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“I remember I would go home for a Sabbath vacation once a month and during Shabbat dinner suddenly a rocket that was fired from Hezbollah landed very close to where we live... We hadn't even heard the [warning] sirens.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“...The last summer [2014] I spent almost all my time in shelters, even though I had exams and school. All the time I was in bomb shelters...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

Additionally, due to Israel's small size most individuals have indirect exposure to the conflict that complements their direct exposure in formulating their understanding of the experiences.

Indirect exposure consists of violence that the individual did not directly witness or was a part of, but conflict events that happened to a loved one or someone they had regular interaction with:

“I had friends going in to the Gaza Strip knowing that they are not necessarily going to come back. It was really scary... they were in there and they would take their phone out and so you could hear if something was happening to them and if they were alive or not.”

[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“[During the 2nd Intifada] 2 girls from my high school died from a bombing explosion in a mall, a good friend of mine died by preventing a suicide bomber from exploding himself at a bus stop, but he died in the explosion with the terrorist.”

[Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“Being in the service drove me more towards the right side of the political map, because you lose a lot of friends...” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

Exposure to the conflict is constant and diverse, entailing there is not an adequate way to remove oneself from it or become completely isolated from its effects. Indirect experience more heavily generates a wide host of emotional reactions due to the Israeli's relationship with the individual who did experience the direct contact. It creates a new set of emotions realizing friends and family are at risk. The primary emotions that surfaced as a result of direct and indirect historical exposure were fear, confusion, helplessness, and lack of self-efficacy:

“In 2014 they talked mainly about the tunnel issue and this was actually very scary because some of those tunnels came to my Kibbutz. You feel like it is your home...I felt

confused because I spent a year in the U.S. talking about peace and then you go back home and surprise there is a war.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“...I did not know how to take the tunnels...when they launch rockets you have the alarm and you can run or hide but people popping out of the ground you can’t do anything about that.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

Another primary theme that emerged from the past was the reasoning behind the combat and an underlying explanation of why Israelis engage in all of this conflict. The Israeli interview subjects expressed several underlying rationales for participating in violence as hope for the future rather than engaging with the conflict as a villain. The first reason was self-defense, which involved an attempt to minimize total damage because they believe they are acting in service of the greater Israeli population’s safety:

“...all my brothers and I had to go through those experiences seeing combat and knowing our parents had to send all their children into combat...my parents allowed us to choose our own paths because they honestly believed this is what we have to do in order to sustain the state of Israel.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“...When people are telling me ‘why don’t you care about all the people that died in Gaza?’ They don’t know what they are talking about. I care about those people; I carry them on my shoulders every day for the rest of my life. The only reason I can fall asleep at night is because I know I did everything in my power to minimize casualties and to do everything in my power to maintain my morality...” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“I don’t see the Palestinian cause [in the 2014 war], I know a major reason this war broke is because of Hamas’s financial problems. The official reason was the kidnapping and vicious murders of the 3 Israelis, and then the killing of the Arab teen that set off riots. In the weeks prior Hamas was provoking Israel, Israel waited for the last minute before acting. We tried to contain this event; we didn’t want to go inside the Gaza Strip. When the rocket threat reached 2/3rds of the Israeli population you cannot have the population living in shelters.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

Self-defense is an activity the Israelis believe must be maintained in order to preserve the country of Israel. It justifies the conflict engagement as a necessity for the greater good of the country. The Israelis believed that ethics were a large part of their military actions, which acts as

justification for the conflict engagement because they uphold their personal morals and the moral codes of the IDF.

The other primary rationale for engagement was service for the Palestinian people. Israelis feel they can understand the pain of the Palestinians, and describe their conflict engagement as a release for Palestinians from the tyranny of Hamas. They do not picture their violence as an attempt to be an oppressor on the Palestinian people, but rather as an attempt to serve and alleviate suffering. Israelis consistently separated Hamas from the general Palestinian population:

“...Sometimes I felt I was helping both my family AND the Palestinian civilians. My main mission is to defend my country and my family, I am not going in to invade some country because I want to control that land. We went in, we did the mission, and we left. I didn’t want to stay for another day. But some of the additional effects I felt like I was helping the Palestinian people releasing themselves from the tyranny of Hamas...”
[Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“I never thought about the Palestinians before because my experience with the conflict is just one side. You know that the other side is suffering, but when you become a commander and officer you get more information about what is going on in Gaza and more about Hamas the terrorist organization... When you get older and learn more you understand you are not the only one that suffers from Hamas, the Palestinians suffer from Hamas.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

The third theme of the past was the utter complexity of the conflict. The Israeli interviewees consistently expressed themselves in a way that revealed the gray tones to the issue, with a clear understanding it is difficult to act in a faultless manner when the situation is so muddied. When interacting with the conflict Israelis were consistently placed in situations that had no simplified black or white solution in the moment:

“...I lost 3 of my friends and soldiers that I was responsible for their lives. I failed in my job because they died in Gaza. I couldn’t save them because I would not shoot at a hospital that I knew had a tunnel in it because it is against the moral codes of the IDF. According to the Geneva code, with the intelligence we had about that hospital, we could’ve shot it down...but I had to go in and understood why we needed to go there with cameras on our helmets, and why we need to be sure without any shadow of a doubt that

we won't harm civilians, and that there is no other way. So I had to get inside that building, find that tunnel and start working at it when Hamas terrorists blew the place on us. They had the walls rigged with explosives. If I would have shot at that building [my friends] Matan Gotliv, Omer Chay, and Guy Elgarnati would be here today. But they are not." [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

The quote above illustrates how truly difficult the conflict is and the tight grip of its effects on individuals. The Israelis hold a delicate balance between their ethics and military morals guiding their actions, and the reality of violence in life-threatening situations. The decisions are not made lightly and had significant emotional implications for the interviewee who expressed that he still holds himself responsible for his friends' lives.

Lastly, in discussions of the past Israelis revealed a perception of a sense of unity about the conflict. Even though in a country with 7-8 million people it is unlikely there is total unity within opinions over the conflict, the cultural make-up of the small nation delegitimizes resistance since everyone knows each other and has direct and indirect experiences with the conflict. The following quotes display the sense of unity across Israeli interview participants:

"In the last operation [summer 2014] public opinion was if you've already sent the soldiers in, finish the job and don't pull out. Bring the Hamas regime down, bring us peace not just for the next 2 years but for the next 20 years." [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

"Since you are a little kid your teachers teach you that we dream and wait for peace, we wanted peace, and we thought it would happen. We were happy..." [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

The Israelis were overall very unified in their perceptions of the past, despite varying political orientations, and in their explanations of what drives the conflict. They shared a sense of camaraderie over what they had experienced and its effects on people. This unity continued into the present and the future.

The Present: Thought Processes on the Conflict

In the present dimension some elements of the past, such as similar emotions, carried over to influence the Israeli interviewees' present day perceptions of the conflict. There were

five primary themes among Israelis for the present. The first was the prevalence of emotions in the present. Israeli feelings in the present are a variety of active and high intensity emotions mixed with lower intensity negative emotions. For example, anger is more active and a higher intensity emotion in comparison to being confused. Anger requires active engagement from the individual. The emotions expressed from the interviewees are divided into two categories: self-reflective emotions that arise from their individual processing of conflict experience, and subsequent externally driven emotions that are directed at the Palestinian population. Self-reflective emotions are more passive and are a result of either indirect or direct exposure to the conflict. The majority of the reflection emotions that surfaced were negative with relatively low intensity. These emotions consisted of isolation and confusion:

In reference to Hamas tunnels discovered during the 2014 summer conflict:
 “...It is very loud, you feel the windows shaking, it is very hard to transfer this experience to someone who has never experienced it...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

In reference to rocket impact:
 “...It is very loud, you feel the windows shaking, it is very hard to transfer this experience to someone who has never experienced it...” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“...When we understood [Oslo] was not going to happen you don't know if you still can keep hope for peace or if you should give up...Is it just us that wants peace? Both sides? You question this a lot.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

The feelings of isolation and confusion illustrated in the quotes above create a vacant space for despair and sadness over the larger situation to surface. Within the Israeli interviews none of the three participants expressed pure hopelessness, but rather a deep frustration with current the status quo of the situation for both Israelis and Palestinians:

”I think people do not understand it is really basic, we just keep killing each other. If we are not going to change it we will just keep killing each other...”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

”Sometimes it’s like will you please just stop and listen to me and stop firing rockets but they are not going to do this so you have to fight back.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“So I know when you compare number of casualties you would say ‘hey look you guys lost 72 lives, this is nothing compared to the over 2,000 casualties that the Palestinians suffered.’ *What is enough?* If we suffered 5,000 casualties? If we had no iron dome? If we had no soldiers?” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“First of all any loss of life is hard for us. We are not happy when someone from the other side died, actually I am sad. But when Hamas uses its own people as a shield for rockets and hides weapons in houses, it is hard to fight against Hamas as they fire rockets from houses at Israeli cities...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

The only positive feeling that surfaced from the self-reflective emotions of the present was hope that the larger situation will improve. Despite the negative connotation around the conflict, all three Israelis expressed hope, albeit varying depths of hope, during discussions of the conflict’s current state. Hope in their perception is not simply restricted for visions of the future, hope is something that is active in the here and now:

“...I think the people in Gaza suffer a lot and the majority want peace...”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

A message for Israelis:
“Don’t lose hope.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

The internal-reflective emotions partially contribute to the development of external emotions that are active with high intensity. These emotions are either focused directly at the Palestinian population or the larger conflict in general. The single most expressed and foundational external emotion for the Israelis was mistrust of the other side, and the lack of trust for the intentions of each party involved. The Israeli perception of the present is heavily dominated by mistrust:

“When you say trust I thought about the ceasefires and how the army tried to set in a ceasefire to help the people who got injured in the Gaza Strip, and during the ceasefire they are launching rockets at you. It is the minimum of the minimum of the trust if they

need help you feel you cannot even trust them even if you want to help the civilians.”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“Both sides don’t tell you everything that is going on. Hamas stores rockets under hospitals, and news reporters would film them launching rockets from UN buildings, but Hamas would take away this footage.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“I trust Palestinians, I do not trust Hamas.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

Other intense emotions represented in Israeli interview responses included anger and hatred.

During the interview it appeared the interviewees framed anger and hatred as something that

develops as a consequence of exposure to violence. The more the participant had direct

experience with violence the greater the expressed feelings of resentment, anger, and hatred in

the present:

“I feel angry they build tunnels. They could’ve done a lot of really good things with that money instead of build tunnels... A lot of things they could’ve done to rebuild the Gaza Strip and help the poor and sick people. Why do they do this?...”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

In reference to thoughts about an average Palestinian:

“Someone who has suffered from the conflict, maybe lost someone. Someone who might hate Israel, for sure hates the army.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“...You go through war and sometimes you think what did we do to deserve that?? It brings a lot of emotions of anger and hate towards the enemy. In every part of your training you are supposed to be professional. Hate has nothing to do with you being a soldier, you are not supposed to hate as it only clouds your judgment, but you cannot help not to.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

Another key theme of the present was the semi-normalization of violence. There is a certain sentiment expressed where Israelis believe the exposure to violence is normal, something they simply have to learn to deal with, and an issue to mentally move past. There is a higher tolerance level for violence and violence exposure due to their living conditions, even though all three interviewees explicitly stated they did not approve of violence as a means of accomplishing goals in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:

“It sounds weird to people when I tell them I am used to it...you know [rockets] can come at any time even when there is no war or operation. This is something I have to be prepared for and I am used to this.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

If the violence were not normalized, the rockets would be more alarming to a certain degree.

This could partly be a result of the highly militaristic culture in the region. However, even though the “routine violence” was somewhat normalized among Israeli interviewees, there was an agreed upon sentiment that the violence is not worth the cost that accompanies it. They desired to re-frame the conflict as a matter of the consequences it has on individuals and families, rather than the larger political discrepancies:

“...It’s not about who wins in this situation, because we both lose. It’s not about the numbers if more Palestinians than Israelis died. Both of them died and more families are breaking apart.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“...We are not what you think we are, especially the military. The soldiers are human beings and not everyone is bad and killing innocent people like you think. There are normal people and you might find something in common and become friends...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

Israelis focused on the people involved in the conflict and the consequences it has for the everyday civilian. They recognized the heavy toll it takes on individuals and families, and validated the suffering each person goes through. This gave a clear impression that Israelis do not believe the greater purpose of the conflict is worth the sacrifice it demands of the populations (e.g. to retain control of all of Jerusalem, settlement expansion in the West Bank, etc.)

The third central theme of the present was the Israeli desire to partner with the Palestinian population in going forward towards achieving a solution. This desire to come alongside the Palestinians was expressed by all three interviewees. Israeli responses were revolved around the “let me help you” ideal, and a feeling of knowing what the Palestinian population needed in order to thrive and be successful:

“...Not all Palestinians are bad. They are really good and nice people, and some of them really care about us. We can work together. I have friends from the other side that I trust and we both want to live in peace.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“We are not the enemy, we want peace and a good [surrounding country] neighborhood.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

There were several quotes from the interviewees about more efficient ways Hamas and other governing bodies among the Palestinians could have achieved more for the Palestinian people and their livelihood in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli subject group collectively believes they have better ideals for the Palestinian people that would benefit them more than the current ruling powers. They consistently pointed to Hamas being a disservice to the Palestinian people, and that the organization did not have the Palestinian’s best interests at heart:

In reference to Hamas:

“...You have a duty to give your civilians a decent life, don’t use them to protect your missiles... They don’t separate between military and civil life. That is not life. I can’t stand thinking about that.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“...We need to understand that Hamas uses its own citizens as shields. In Israel it is mandatory to build shelters to protect people, and we spend a lot of money on Iron Dome. The other side uses its own people. The majority in Israel are sad when the other side suffers from Hamas...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

Through the recognition of Hamas wrongdoings Israelis directly acknowledged the suffering of the Palestinians and expressed empathy with them for their current day situation. As part of this understanding, within the realm of empathy a subtheme surfaced that Israelis wanted to convey to Palestinians, and people in general, that they are not monsters even if they serve in the army. They expressed various rationales for what they do in another attempt to re-frame the conflict, provide justification for their actions, and build empathy with Palestinians over a bond of mutual suffering:

“Things are different when you hear it from a person, when you talk to them face to face...I told them about the army and that we are not monsters. I served in the military

and did not kill anyone and they realize we are not all bad. They realize that we also deal with rockets and suffer, something they would never see in their media.”

[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“After going into the Gaza Strip this last summer (2014) for the 3rd time, seeing the way they live, and their houses, the situation for the civilians. It’s terrible. It is. So for me, its kind of frustrating that I can’t do more to help them by fighting Hamas...”

[Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

In reference to the people in Gaza:

“...Their situation is not good it is like a refugee camp...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

It was clear that Israelis validated the heavy suffering both sides experience from the conflict.

There was a significant amount of desire for the Palestinians to change their image of Israelis from that of monsters to that of a partnership in the moment and going forward. Both of these themes carried over into the future.

The Future: Opinions on Conflict Transformation

Israeli perceptions of the future were separated into three primary categories: inhibitors to peace in the future, emotions in the future, and perceptions of a future solution and its implications. First, when the Israelis discussed inhibitors to peace they recognized passive factors that were a result of the conflict including a lack of trust and a lack of compromise. Both of these two missing factors were crucial for them in moving forward:

“In general when you say peace it is easy, everyone wants to live in peace...but then what does that mean what area do we have to give up? I like to think both sides are tired of fighting and want to live safe lives...but when you get into the details of peace less people are willing to compromise on what it looks like.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

Other inhibitors to moving forward that were common in the Israeli perceptions were essentially more active line items that people needed to consciously pursue in order to progress in their ability to achieve peace. These factors included gaining more exposure to the other side for both Israelis and Palestinians, a change in generational thinking, and the necessity for partnership to continue into the future:

In reference to meeting a Palestinian:

“...It changed his thoughts on me and other Israelis...He would tease me about serving in the army and we would joke. I think this is beautiful. This is the only way.”

[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“To be honest I do not think I will see peace during my lifetime. I wish I would, but I think it will take more time. Building trust, and getting to an agreement will take a new generation and a new line of thinking. This is key...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“...The way of getting there is not by destroying my home just because you live in a not so nice home. The better solution is me helping you build a bigger and better house.”

[Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

The quotes above illustrate what Israelis perceive as factors that can be improved in the future to increase the likelihood of achieving sustainable peace. These issues are largely outward and externally focused. However, perceptions of the future also conjured up a range of emotions that are unique to how they envision the future.

Israeli emotions towards the future are the second central theme of their internalization of the conflict's future. These emotions consist of a range of positive reactions such as hope, and various negative emotions. Hope for the future was heavily prominent among all three Israeli interviewees:

“I see changing the world through meeting people face to face, gaining exposure, and changing perspective...” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“I think [peace] is possible because otherwise I wouldn't have any reason to keep doing what I am doing. I believe that we endured so much suffering on both sides that we are ready to move forward to the next stage...I'm hoping the other side is as ready as we are.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“This is actually my biggest hope, that the next time I go to the Gaza Strip won't be for an operation but rather to have a good plate of Hummus.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“First, because [peace] is the only way to live in the Middle East. If you have hope you can believe that you can get peace in the end. Second, because we have made peace with Egypt and Jordan even though we were enemies. If peace is possible with them I believe the same is possible with the Palestinians.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

Despite their significant direct exposure to violence from the conflict, all participants were able to maintain their vision of hope. When individuals are involved in such an engrained issue as the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, this is a surprising finding in Israeli mentality and speaks to a cultural factor of positive outlook for their situation as a whole. In part this could be due to their economic opportunities available to them and cultural resilience from living in a conflict zone. This belief of peace and strong hope for the future also affected their perceptions of the present and the past in the sense that it gives Israelis an outlook that is less bleak than those who do not believe peace will ever happen. Hope for peace acts as a motivating factor for the interviewees to either alter behavioral patterns or the current state of conflict engagement in the present so as to achieve this higher dream of peace in the future.

On the contrary, negative emotions were also expressed for the future. These included mistrust, doubt, and a feeling that reality differs from envisioned peace. Even though the Israeli interviewees possessed hope, their hope for a solution was inhibited by the very mistrust they described as a problem for progression of peace. This mistrust creates cyclicity for the conflict as each generation repeats the same cycle of violence because of their experiences:

“...This new generation has also been exposed to the wars. I have friends, we are part of the new generation, but their experiences fighting inside of the Gaza Strip for days where they saw their friends die and they had to kill people has affected them...so maybe then a newer a generation. It is a complicated problem.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“We can talk about trust and peace, this is really what we want. But when you’re out there [fighting] and every few years the same thing is going on, and you’re saying how long can we keep trusting the other side? I’m not even saying moving forward into a peace process, but let each other live peacefully.” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“We cannot move another inch towards a territorial solution when the Hamas regime is still in power. The situation is so sensitive and could erupt at any moment that any agreement you’ll sign has no guarantee of lasting...” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“...I do not trust Hamas. Their own charter says they will fight Israeli and every Jew in Israel until they get the whole land. My goal is to make peace with the Palestinians, not with Hamas. Hamas attacks civilians, their goal is to kill as many as they can...”
[Israeli, Female, Interview 3]

The mistrust articulated above subsequently develops doubt for future resolutions. They possess hope but essentially kept this ideal at an arms length, wherein doubt fills that distance. The hints of doubt surface due to the vast historical roots of the issues, and the interviewees’ personal experience with watching peace processes rise and fall. The following quotes detail that even though Israelis hold hope in their perceptions of the future a sense of reality hits them about actual life on the ground in the region, which in turn produces the doubt:

“...I don’t know if it’s even possible to bring down the Hamas regime, but this is something I want not only for the citizens of Israel, but also for the citizens of Palestine for the sake of peace...” [Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“To solve it I think it will take a long time. I don’t know if I will live to see it...”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

The last theme for the future was a consensus view among Israelis for a solution. All three interviewees believed peace was possible; two of the three believed they would live to see peace, and the third believed peace would eventually happen but she would not live to witness the lasting peace agreement. This united vision for the future entailed a 2-State solution where Israelis and Palestinians live side-by-side in separate countries in peace:

“...I feel like the hatred is too big the only option is 2 countries for 2 people. This means both sides will have to give up on some things. Then maybe we can start to build the trust.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

In reference to a 2-State solution:

“...Today I can see the solution, when I was younger I didn’t know how to make a solution.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

The quotes above also demonstrate there is an understanding that sacrifices will have to be made in order to achieve peace. Israelis recognize these sacrifices are difficult to achieve, but they are

necessary for the future. Past suffering can lead to a future solution because the interviewees believe the populations are ready to move beyond their suffering and achieve a solution. This is in part what could contribute to the willingness to sacrifice goals for the greater cause of peace:

“... We have tried so much to get peace we must live next to each other there is no other option... otherwise we will fight till the end.” [Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

Lastly, in the future solution Israelis believe that the removal of Hamas is necessary.

Interviewees believe the elimination of Hamas is not only of service for Israel’s population, but also for the Palestinians. Essentially, it is not just removal of Hamas for the sake of ousting an enemy, rather the motivation is more closely linked to alleviation of suffering for both populations. This has strong ties to the past when the interviewees believed the ground invasions into the Gaza Strip were justified because it would improve individuals’ livelihoods when the end goal of Hamas disbandment is reached:

“... The terms are not right yet. Once you have Hamas out of the picture, once you have a stable Palestinian Authority and facilities that governs with democratic tools, once you have relative stability for a decade or so then you can sign an agreement.”
[Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

In order for the Israeli goal of Hamas removal to be achieved, the participants believed there needed to be more social movements from the Palestinians to delegitimize the Hamas government. Therefore Israelis implied they believed Palestinians need to empower themselves to rise up against the “root problems,” and that they are not doing enough at the moment to act on changing the status quo. Israelis understood that the reality of social movements are difficult due to repression of the freedom of individuals in the Gaza Strip, but that it was the only viable way for lasting peace wherein another radical organization would not take power. This was all from the Israeli perspective of what the core problems are, and what they believed needed to be achieved from an ethnocentric standpoint:

“I would like to see a movement from the people in Gaza, a social movement... I don’t know if we will see it but I hope these people do something against [Hamas].”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #1]

“A lot of people think the state of Israel is a destabilizing force in the region, I would say it is the only stabilizing force in the region. We are the only democracy in the Middle East. Israel can be the solution for the region, if you’ll only let us.”
[Israeli, Male, Interview #2]

“... We can achieve peace when Palestinians fight with us against Hamas...”
[Israeli, Female, Interview #3]

Palestinian Interviews

Palestinian interviews were conducted in an identical manner to Israeli interviews with nearly equal topics and questions covered. All three interviewees lived in the West Bank in major populated areas, and none were from the Gaza Strip. Their interactions with the conflict mainly revolved around contact with the IDF and other military forces. Palestinian interviewee experiences were diverse and ranged from Israeli West Bank checkpoint processes, to Israeli imposed curfews, home invasions, and other militaristic activities. One of the Palestinian interviewees references participating in peace camps, which are initiatives by non-profit organizations that bring Israelis and Palestinians together for the purpose of building relationships to further peace resolution efforts. All Palestinian interview participants desired to express the sentiment they are not representative of the larger Palestinian population, implying they are a privileged minority both economically and in their ability to travel to the United States. They stated many Palestinians would have a more hard line approach due to their living conditions that are more difficult than those of the interviewees.

The Past: Key Drivers of the Problem

There were four primary themes that surfaced in Palestinian interpretations of the past. For the Palestinian people experience with the conflict encompasses the entire population rather than an assumed select grouping of radical individuals. Palestinians reported that they are not

differentiated in their daily lives despite their backgrounds, and all feel as if they are presumed to be a potential threat. This experience of undifferentiated treatment results in significant exposure to the conflict for all individuals in both direct and indirect manners. First, within direct exposure there is again a continuum that follows Palestinians from childhood to adulthood, in which the individuals are completely surrounded by an inescapable conflict zone living situation regardless of their history. Palestinian interactions with the conflict during childhood are foundational for the formation of perceptions over the larger conflict into adulthood. The following interview quotes demonstrate the technicalities of living in a conflict zone for Palestinian individuals as children:

“Me and my dad were trying to go to the airport and we were at a checkpoint and we waited over 4.5 hours...we got stuck because there are so many people. Some of the Palestinians waiting began to get out of their cars and start talking and shouting, and they went up to the Israeli soldiers to ask what was going on. The soldiers did not want to hear it so they started throwing gas bombs, I didn't know what this was so I thought it was an actual bomb. Suddenly everyone was running away towards us and we had to get out of our car and run away. It was very hard to breathe.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“One of the scariest experiences is when they invaded our house in 2002. The [Israeli] soldiers were inside our house and my father [was gone]; we had a curfew for a whole month... it was me, my sister, and my mother, and they came in to our house these soldiers started searching everything. I was 13 so I was shaking and crying the whole time and the soldier approached me and asked ‘why are you crying?’ I could not speak; it was because he was there. He started telling me ‘Do you think I want to be here? I am a doctor I don't want to be here but we have to.’ I thought no you don't! So after that something inside me changed from that moment, which is one of the reasons I don't have kids yet... It is unpleasant.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“...2002 was my first time experiencing a war zone... They invaded [a West Bank city] with tanks, helicopters, and everything else you can think of in a war zone, and initiated a complete curfew for 7 days. We started running out of food... After 7 days two families in a home exhausted everything. I remember my mom and aunt ran through open fields and hid in bushes to reach other Arabs that had extra bread stacked in their fridge... After they opened the curfew for an hour we divided ourselves into 6 teams to buy necessary food items. You look around the city and it is like a movie people are just trying to run and hit each other, they just don't care they just have to get their food...” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

The direct experience as children described above primarily involves Palestinian civilian interaction with the Israeli army through home invasions, checkpoints, and military crackdowns during periods of conflict outbreak. Palestinians cannot escape these powerful and salient experiences that follow them well into adulthood. The technicalities of conflict interaction in adulthood were very similar to those they experienced as children. Throughout their lives Palestinians faced many freedom restrictions. The main difference into adulthood was the level of degradation Palestinians expressed due to cultural values of high respect for adults. For example, as one interviewee grew into adulthood, he increasingly described the checkpoints as a process of humiliation. Direct interaction with the conflict produced a host of emotions that mainly revolved around sentiments of dehumanization and oppression. As the Palestinian interviewees endured an increasing amount of direct exposure from childhood into adulthood it fostered feelings of anxiety and confusion:

“...One time [at a checkpoint] something in my pants was beeping and at that time there were a couple hundred people waiting in line. The soldier on the other side was just screaming and I could not understand what he was saying it was mix of English, Arabic, and Hebrew it did not make sense to me. You have anxiety from beeping and you don’t know what’s happening. They were screaming and yelling telling me to take off my pants in front of the 200 people behind me? They would not let me go back or forward and took me inside a room and did a complete body search...” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

“...Seeing the soldiers in my home flipping the mattresses, opening the fridge, what are you looking for? They took the laundry out of the laundry machine. All of these ideas float in your head of what the hell is going on? Why is this happening now? Where is my father? Why is he at [at work]? When I saw my father after this I told him I wanted to leave Palestine.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

Furthermore, in some interviewees their past experiences created feelings of humiliation and mistrust for the general Israeli population:

“...I don’t know how to describe [the conflict’s] effects on me. If you wanted to go visit a family member you will get stuck at a checkpoint. For 6 hours you are going to be humiliated by the [Israeli] soldiers just for the heck of it...”

[Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

“I didn’t trust the Israelis [at the peace camps] originally, I mainly was just with Palestinians...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

Indirect exposure to the conflict produced more of a sense of self-reflection for Palestinian interviewees within the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The emotions related to a larger scale due to the individual’s relation to other Palestinians experiencing the conflict across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Indirect exposure produced a severe perception of lack of self-efficacy in Palestinian individuals. These emotions align with a style of thinking wherein the Palestinians felt relatively helpless to change the past. This created feelings of despair, self-questioning, and grief:

“In the last summer 2014 war I knew two families in Gaza... I answered a call from my sister and she told me she had bad news. 7 people in Gaza that we know died in the same night, in the same house, *7 people, at one time*. I remember just being shocked like what is this life why 7 people at one time? I cried and got very emotional...what am I doing here? This questioning happens a lot for peace activists...”

[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“The least I could do was collect donations and send it to Gaza. There was a big demonstration I went to for the first time in my life... We started marching with 20,000 people and went to a checkpoint. Everyone was filled with anger. For me to go this close to a checkpoint where the clashes are, I’ve never thought about doing this before. I had this thing inside me that I just didn’t care anymore. Seeing what was happening...at that point I did not mind if I would be killed. It was not worth it any more to see what was happening, but also understand people [around the world] are not seeing at the same time. What the hell is happening we are not humans anymore, not even politics, just humans...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

Indirect experiences also continued to foster hatred and mistrust of the other side. For example, the interviewee referenced below believed the 2014 summer kidnapping of Israeli teens was fabricated by Israel after talking with other Arabs:

“The whole concept of [Israelis] burning a child who was alive... There will always be extremists on every side and in every nation, but what happened was really the catalyst and made the hatred re-surface because you looked at the other person like ‘wow you are capable of doing that to my children, I will never forgive you for that...’ Talking to people about [the Israeli teen kidnapping] made me look at it from a different

perspective: ‘No this is wrong, they deserve to be kidnapped...’ When all this happened I just stepped down and took out my human side and said I don’t care about Israelis, they can go all burn in hell they are not of my concern now... anyone who can make a conflict out of lies is not to be trusted...” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

Becoming angry while concurrently experiencing deep despair and grief contributed to an overall perception of helplessness, frustration, and mistrust over what occurs in the past, in which the Palestinian interviewees felt the situation had become so dire there was nothing left.

The third and final primary theme of the past was that Palestinians perceive history and their experiences in the past as critically important. The individuals find it difficult to forget and let go of what has happened to them or their people, implying that the past is too hard to overcome:

“After the Intifada my father could not visit his hometown [city in modern Israel] as he does not have a permit. So in 2010 we managed to get him a permit and took him [there]. It was very emotional I have never seen my father like this. The stones from where they used to live are still there. The sad part is that now the area is a dumpster, it is a desert that is a dumpster now. He was telling me ‘I used to play here, this is where we used to get our water from, etc.’ I have never seen my father so emotional.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“Jews, Muslims, and Christians lived in historical Palestine for thousands of years. Who justified a country to come in and be called Israel and create a big mess? If they would’ve just kept it the way it is, will all 3 living together in the cities nothing like this would have happened. I cannot say that Arabs would have accepted millions of Jews to live in Palestine at that time, maybe they would not because they thought Arabs would become a minority, but the whole concept of pushing something against somebody is what created the mess.” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

Images of the past heavily affect Palestinians and their perceptions into the present. Issues over the past and their direct experiences are partially what created various cultural norms around Palestinians being expected not to engage with Israelis either as individuals or in peace efforts. For example, one interviewee stated that she was requested to leave from her extracurricular activities because she was involved with a peace initiative group. Palestinian interviewees framed it as if one desires to move forward from the past it is envisioned as forgetting about the

suffering of the Palestinian people. The perception that Israel has historically caused them to suffer is simply too heavy of a burden that Palestinians carry into the present and the future.

The Present: Thought Processes on the Conflict

In the present there are four key themes among the Palestinian interviewees: a prevalence of intense emotions, justification for the conflict, cognitive efforts to humanize Israelis, and an interviewee perception of lack of Palestinian-wide unity. First, emotions are again a large factor of the present for Palestinians. The sheer range and persistence of emotion appears to be a central element of the Palestinian story as interviewee emotions are relatively consistent over the past, present, and future. Their emotions are a wide range of high intensity and low intensity emotions that are predominantly negative in nature. There are only slight differences in how the Palestinian individuals perceive present emotions when comparing the present results to the past results. Primary emotions that carried over from the past were anger, mistrust, helplessness, and the sentiment of perpetual suffering:

“[At the checkpoints] I feel like a sheep going to the slaughter. Not a human. I am not a human at the checkpoint.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

However, in addition to the emotions listed from the past, there is a special emphasis on frustration and resentment of the other side in the present:

“It was very hard for me to see what happened to me when I was young, and what happens to me every single time I cross a checkpoint and how they treat me, and how racist they are to me just because I am Palestinian and a Muslim.”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“I will not interact with an ex-soldier because if I am interacting with this person, this could be the person who humiliated me last year at the checkpoint, or my father or mother or neighbor. He could be the one who killed a person that was a loved one for someone else...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“...When I fly direct from New York to Tel Aviv you sit next to an Israeli and you have a lot in common and you talk to them...you feel they could be your friend. But the minute you touch down [in Tel Aviv], something just completely breaks. He looks at you differently and you look at him differently.” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

The primary motivating factors behind the Palestinian frustration are perceptions of racial discrimination and inequality. The Palestinian interviewees consistently expressed the idea that a large amount of injustice is committed against their population, which in turn produces the frustration outlined above. Interviewees perceive themselves as weak, inferior to Israelis, and that there is a disproportionate amount of force used against them as they suffer:

“I do not believe in violence, but there is no balance of strength and power between them and us. Their future generations are growing up thinking they are invincible and better than us. And we are growing up thinking we are less than them, at least I feel this, I am not equal to an Israeli citizen.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“...If anything comes out of this it tells you the world is not an equal place for everybody, there is a lot of inequality and discrimination. All of these small rockets that were getting fired at Israel were not doing anything to Israel’s buildings. They are man-made made out of very basic tools and were not doing large damage, but on the other side you have very sophisticated tools and the most advanced military system in the Middle East fighting these small people, and the whole world was freaking out when one small hand-made missile was shot at an Israeli city...” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

The views of discrimination and injustice expressed above are more so directed at an overall frustration at the current positioning of the conflict, and the interviewees’ role within it. Additionally, the effects of inferiority perceptions with regards to both race and power contributed to interviewee justification of the conflict.

The second primary theme of the present was Palestinian justification and rationale for the conflict. The Palestinians framed the population’s conflict engagement as essentially a reaction to Israel. In other words, in large part any level of Palestinian violence is in some form a response to Israel’s repression of the population. Hamas and other radical groups were mainly framed as a reaction to Israel’s Gaza blockade policy, and were not a root driver of the conflict’s modern status. While the interviewees acknowledged radical groups did contribute to the

conflict's complications, issues with violence from groups such as Hamas stemmed from deeper motivations related to Israel's policies towards Palestinians:

“My opinion on Hamas is no different than any other political party. I do not agree with any of them because each one has their own agenda, but when it comes to people being sacrificed just to be in power that is not good.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“If Israel did not have the blockade around Gaza I do not think Hamas would have chosen to go the violent route in general because Hamas slowed down a lot after 2005, they turned into being more political than a military and consolidated a lot of their military action. But at the same time when you keep pushing a child inside a corner and keep pushing it at some point he is going to fight back.” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

“...As a Palestinian I can understand the people in Gaza and that they live in a jail. I understand they feel fed up and want to change something. However, I do not agree with the way they do it, and Israel too...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“Everyone fights [the conflict] in their own way. I have artist friends that will make street art; one of them draws on the apartheid wall. This is resistance for him.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

None of the interviewees advocated for the violence or tactics used by these radical groups, but explained the rationale behind those groups as a side effect of oppression and lack of other viable opportunities. In interviewee perceptions Israel is an active oppressor and the Palestinian population needed to assert their strength through self-defense:

“...I remember over the summer hearing that Gaza had bombed Tel Aviv and feeling like oh my god its one of the first times that we actually protected ourselves in a way that Israelis are actually scared. For one second that felt good like we are actually standing up for ourselves and doing something, even though I don't believe in violence, but seriously we are all fed up with it and I don't want to live my life like that...I don't believe anything that Hamas does and I consider them terrorists. But, what other things can we do?” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“The [2014] conflict was not justifiable on either end. Hamas keeps saying they won and it is like no you lost over 2,000 Palestinians. This is not winning. For Israel, you won? No you lost nearly 100 soldiers. The suicide rates are getting higher within the soldiers. This is not winning, nobody won. In Gaza they cannot leave. Imagine you live there: you cannot leave, you only get electricity 8 hours a day, the house next to you was hit by an F-16, you lost your windows. If you oppress people they will explode.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“There are not a lot of peace people back home. This way of thinking is very hard for Palestinians when you face all these problems and difficulties, and how others treat you just because you are Palestinian, and what happened with your family’s history, it just makes you want to take revenge and fight.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

The violence serves as a way to rebel against “the oppressor” because the Palestinians feel they have no other avenue to effectively pursue, essentially entailing violence is the only voice for a desperate and voiceless population. The interviewees did not support Hamas driven violence, but rather rationalized their need to self-defend against Israel. They stated that the violence is not truly effective as a form of self-defense due to their lack of militaristic power, but functions as a larger purpose statement against the various ways they are treated. This translated to a clear depiction of a “victim mentality” mindset due to the various conditions and experiences the Palestinian interviewees had been exposed to as children and adults. History again played a large role in the justification of Palestinian conflict engagement as interviewees alluded to the perception of historical oppression affecting modern day behavioral patterns.

Palestinians provided additional justification for the conflict into the present by offering different rationales that relate more to an individual’s direct exposure with the conflict in the moment, and the high intensity emotions these experiences consequently produce. They essentially believed the living situation they face poses such a high level of hardship that Palestinians in general are not enabled to focus on other factors to build themselves up economically or socially. Interviewees became exhausted with the situation, and the conflict tends to breed violent reactions due to the suffering:

“...The people in the West Bank are suffering from high unemployment rates, everything is hard and normal means of living is hard... there is always an enemy to blame.” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

“I think things are getting worse now for Palestinians I do not know about [conditions for] Israelis. The economy, socially, politics... everything. [Palestinians] are living under pressure...for example my niece who is 8 cries whenever we cross a checkpoint. She

cries because one time she was at the checkpoint when clashes started and there were bullets everywhere. She cries when she sees soldiers. Imagine when she grows up how she will think. She is only one example.”

[Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“I hear the pain in [my grandma’s] voice. She would ask me to go to Jerusalem and use her key to see if her house is still there. I can’t do anything about it, it is just horrible there is a huge hotel there now instead of her house... Imprisoned families for sure they aren’t going to think about peace, this is natural and how people think... I think it is an engrained thought process on both sides to react violently.”

[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

Third, all three Palestinians made a direct and conscious effort to humanize Israelis. Even though all three interviewees had significant exposure and resentment for the Israeli army, they still did not wish harm on any individual in the conflict. Interviewees deliberately separated Israeli soldiers and civilians in their responses, but expressed every life lost as tragic. This is a unique finding that supports if the conflict was truly so engrained to a degree of utter hopelessness, the “humanness” aspect would likely be removed from both Palestinians and Israelis. Even though the Palestinian interviewees generally lacked hope for the situation, the very acknowledgement of the other side’s humanity proves the conflict has not removed the total ability to recognize people’s individuality, as opposed to simply a peg in the conflict:

“Killing anyone is not beneficial for anyone. I do not believe in violence. Even if they were soldiers, and they were the ones who invaded Gaza, it is just sad because even if I told you I disagree with the Israeli army underneath that uniform it is a human with a family, someone loves them...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“When I saw the funerals of a few [Israeli] soldiers I cried, I wouldn’t lie and say I didn’t because I saw their families crying. At the end, he is a human being who died, but even though they took the human side away from us when looking at us, I still look at them like human beings. I don’t agree with them, but I don’t want to see anyone die.”

[Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“If you look at the other side, the Israeli side, you will look at it and say yes those Palestinians are bombing us, they are taking over our promised land... Someone born in Tel Aviv who is my age sees themselves as Israelis and is taught that Palestinians are trying to kick Jews out of their homeland... I think I would have a reason as to why I do

not like them and would have some sort of hatred against them.” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

As part of the humanization aspect perceptions, all three Palestinian individuals discussed some aspect of feeling like Israelis do not understand them:

“... Israeli soldiers have no respect for me... I feel most Israelis consider all Palestinians terrorists.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“...Most of them do not even see us as people or humans. We are things at a checkpoint. They do not see us. For us, whenever we get a chance to go to the sea or Jerusalem we see them when they are not soldiers. Maybe we don't interact but we see them, we see there is a life going on there, but for them they do not know what life is like in Palestine or on the other side of the wall.” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

Last, even though there is relative consensus in themes over the past, present, and future in how each individual Palestinian perceives the conflict in an interconnected manner, there is a large difference in those perceptions between the Palestinian interviewees. Each individual is fairly different from the other, with the exception of various cultural themes that the interviewees share. In some cases, the interviewees alluded to the Palestinian population's division as a central problem:

“Internal divisions are holding back the Palestinian cause...”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

Interviewees referenced a division within the general Palestinian population due to several factors such as the clear geographic separation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Additionally, Interviewees discussed division comes in the form of quality of life and political ideals regarding the conflict. If individuals are not normalized to violence, or try to pursue peace efforts they are somewhat alienated from each other:

“...Now when I go back I can't take that when I go through a checkpoint I get anxiety attacks and I become really stressed out. This is because of the way I was exposed to life [in the United States] is very different, versus my family over there it is normal for them. They look at me as a weird person now asking why I freak out since I grew up in it.”
[Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

“When I went to the [peace] camp everyone back home thought I forgot about Palestine. They didn’t realize how hard [the peace camps] were and don’t think well about what I do. My friends listen and they understand it but they don’t want it. They just tell me about how many people have died, and I don’t know what to tell them.”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

Division has become a familiar pillar of the Palestinian cause. Historically, the lack of unified and clear governing structures contributes to this lack of social consensus for the general Palestinian population. As the Palestinian interviewees referenced the relative lack of consensus among the general population this also bled into interviewee perceptions of the future, and subsequent peace resolution efforts.

The Future: Opinions on Conflict Transformation

Palestinian views are significantly linked between the past, present, and future, in which each individual perceives the conflict in a similar manner across the three dimensions of time. In the future similar themes were discovered as those that emerged in the past and present. Palestinian thoughts on the future were separated into four common perceptions. First, none of the Palestinians honestly believed that peace is achievable. The two female interviewees stated they would at least never live to witness peace, if peace ever happened, and the third male interviewee stated that he believed the conflict would see no end:

“I do believe peace is possible, I learned that from my grandmother. If it happened before it can happen again. It’s just that we don’t know how to achieve it.”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“My perspective on the conflict is that at least in my lifetime there will be no solution...”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“I do not think there is a magic solution to this. I don’t think it will end. In my perspective I tend to be more on a religious side so from a religious point of view whether I am Christian, or Muslim, or even Jew, the Bible, Quran, or Torah talks about conflict continuing until the last day of earth. So I look at that and think it makes sense the cycle will continue, there is not a magic solution to break that norm.”
[Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

There were several inhibitors that Palestinian interviewees pointed to as preventing the conflict's current position from moving forward. The first of these was the common theme that history is simply too difficult to overcome for the Palestinian population. The damage is essentially too deep and produces too much residual hatred:

“...Everyone born and raised in that part of the world will always have hate. You cannot say I am into peace and what not, when you are going through invasion after invasion. And look at the [Israeli] side they suffer as well, not as much as the Palestinians, but Israelis did suffer at some points like when all those bombs were happening in Tel Aviv and Haifa. They feared for their lives, so I do not expect their kids to accept me, and at the same time I don't expect myself to accept them as neighbors. I don't believe anyone can get himself out of the picture and say we will just live happily ever after, all these memories you cannot erase. You may get over them, but you can't erase them. And the minute something comes back up you are just going to remember everything.”
[Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

“... You cannot get over what happened and you feel you need to stop it and people think about this in a violent way...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

The second aspect of inability to achieve peace was the cyclical nature of the conflict alluded to in the above quotations. Interviewees discussed the same violent events unfolding every few years, and they framed it in a manner in which the historical cycle of violence is inescapable. The cyclical stylization of the conflict is primarily driven by the perception of history described above as a key impediment to moving forward.

In turn, this lack of belief in a solution produces a host of emotions that relate to hopelessness for the future, and consequentially a relative sense of apathy about the conflict in the present. These emotions surface as a byproduct of active feelings such as mistrust that occurs systematically over the past, present, and the future. Palestinians believe they will be forced to live in their present situation well into the future, and will need to continue tolerating life's difficulties. The resulting mistrust and hopelessness with regard to the Israeli relationship is expected to continue:

“There is no hope for the future...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“I don’t think there will be any trust. I mean if you kill my brother I will not trust you. It is simple as that. Maybe I will forgive you, but I will never trust you. Will you look at it from a moral aspect? Or a psychological aspect? Things will never be fine again, and I think if you look at what’s happening now they are all just bull-----ing everyone has their own agenda and no one really wants to have a solution...”

[Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

An emotional perception of apathy about the future generates a sense of indifference about effectively changing behavior for both sides of the conflict. If there is no hope for the future, there is essentially no incentive to alter behavior in the near future that would affect the status of the conflict. This could in part add to the cyclical nature of the conflict that the Palestinian interviewees alluded to. Their perceptions of inevitable poor living conditions and active oppression from Israel could encourage a sentiment of simply “resisting” the conflict rather than seeking sustainable options for a solution. However, being a historically marginalized population that lacks some safety and physiological needs could exacerbate the hopelessness style of thinking about the future. Other emotions that specifically applied to the Palestinian perceptions of the future was pure exhaustion of the conflict. All interviewees desired for the larger conflict to end, but simply did not know tangible measures one could take that could end the conflict:

“Some people think they killed us they deserve to die, similar to an eye-for-an-eye thing, I do not believe in this. At the same time, if you just keep killing us then something should happen. If you keep killing us then no... There must be something other than killing people...” [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“...Can we just get along and live a peaceful life? I don’t have to marry you and you don’t have to marry me, but just live a normal life. When you see me in the street just say hi and don’t look at me like you are going to kill me like you just can’t wait for me to pass by so you can stab me. I want people to get the hatred out of themselves and live a normal life.” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

Despite the general Palestinian disbelief in a solution, the interviewees did raise several implications of a solution if one were hypothetically achievable for the Israeli-Palestinian

Conflict. One of the most prominent implications was the recognition that changing the modern day situation will require a certain level of sacrifice from both sides to break the historical cyclicity of the conflict:

“I think people are tired of [the conflict] enough to make concessions on some demands on both sides.” [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

“I don’t see peace as living in a place with Israeli neighbors, I want something more like [a city] where the signs are in Arabic and I feel safe when I am only surrounded by Arabs... Peace for me is a Palestinian and Israeli state, two different countries. No walls... Most Palestinians dream of getting all of Palestine back, including modern day Israel, we are already compromising by letting Israel exist.”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

Furthermore, in any resolution the Palestinian interviewees believe the most effective way forward is through a change in generational thinking, more exposure to both sides, acknowledgement of faults from both parties, and educational reform that presents the conflict in a non-biased manner:

“...When we talk about personal things, not politics, and from the heart, when we get closer and understand we are both humans this keeps us strong. If we want peace this is how it should be, we should be able to meet and see each other... You want to talk about what’s going to happen in the future for the next generation, not about the past you cannot change it... I changed because I met Israelis and talked with them. A crazy solution would be to let Israelis and Palestinians actually meet and talk to each other.”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“I think it would be education to change the style of thinking. All my history classes were about how bad Israel is and how we shouldn’t talk with them.”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

“...There should be something other than raising new generations from both sides resenting the other. There should also be some way to make people live together... I think education is important, stop brainwashing people.”
[Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

“Stop brainwashing the new generation from both sides of the conflict. Again I am more biased towards Palestinians and no our country didn’t exist, but also say that Jews existed before 1948 and we were living fine. Don’t say that Jews lived there their entire lives, say that we were living there and we didn’t have a country, but we made the Palestinians

suffer. If both sides acknowledged that both sides sacrificed and did something wrong, admitting the problem is a solution..." [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

However, possibly the most prominent desire for the Palestinian interviewees across the board in a peace solution is securing more freedoms for the general population. This includes more freedom of movement and absence of militaristic intervention in the average citizen's daily life. Palestinians perceive that if the general citizens have more economic opportunities and personal freedoms many of the central issues within the conflict would essentially evaporate:

"The way the conflict is now if you give the individual education, and a good job, and the freedom to go to the beach whenever they want to, and the freedom to pray whenever they want to, and to live a normal safe life he will not tell you 'f--- Israel and Palestine.'" [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

"The most important thing for me now is being able to go anywhere I want in Palestine/Israel without checkpoints, borders, and needing my ID. I want Palestinians to be able to go to Jerusalem and pray on a Friday morning. I want a Palestinian passport. I want to travel and not be checked just because I am Palestinian." [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

In this perception Palestinians pose that people could become "too busy" to focus on the conflict if there were more opportunities for civilians, and much of the interim issues would consequently subside. If more essential human needs were being met on a consistent basis the interviewees argue Palestinians would be better enabled to achieve esteem and self-actualization, resulting in more effective and permanent resolution.

Last, there was a general lack of agreement among Palestinian interviewees over what a hypothetical peace solution resembles, ranging from one to two-state solution responses:

"...Peace for me is a Palestinian and Israeli state, two different countries. No walls. Jerusalem is all for Palestine. That's the hard thing is I want peace, but under these long conditions. We don't have to give everything to Israelis in a peace deal..." [Palestinian, Female, Interview #1]

"I believe if there is a solution it would be the one-state solution, but that is why it will never happen. It would be a combined government of Palestinians and Israelis. This is a utopia solution. It would be one area, one government, everyone has the same rights and

same responsibilities... I want people to stop dying in a solution... Be less radical, be open minded..." [Palestinian, Female, Interview #2]

"Definitely not 2 countries only 1 country for both Israelis and Palestinians. If we are looking at hypothetical images here and dreaming I look at being in peace as one country for everybody regardless of the name of it. Everybody is working towards one picture of being in peace and living together, and preserving that holy land and the holy spirit that is living there." [Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

Even though there was a certain level of disagreement in what form a solution takes for Palestinians, the physical land was very clear and central to all three interviewees as arguably the most important factor in a peace solution. Due to their perceptions of history, going forward Palestinians feel a deep connection to the land, including modern day Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. The land is of more significance than the conflict, and Palestinians desire for the two populations to rally around the ideal of the land's importance for all three major Abrahamic religions. However, this was an idealized position and the interviewees expressed a sense of reality that hit them, expressing that the various populations could never cohesively come together again due to the vast historical issues in the region. If this goal is not achievable some interviewees believed they would require a form of compensation that would remediate the negative effects that history still holds on the Palestinian population:

"You are talking here about somebody who invaded a nation and took from them all the basic things of life and kicked them out. There will never be a solution unless you bring these people back to their homes or you compensate them..."
[Palestinian, Male, Interview #3]

The Palestinians' expressed empathy with Israelis during the interviews was not so much a desire for closeness with Israelis, but rather a mutual recognition of suffering around the pain the conflict brings for both populations. Many readers may notice a higher level of intensity within the Palestinian emotional perceptions of the conflict throughout the past, present, and future. Due to their status as essentially refugees, Palestinians oftentimes lack safety and

physiological needs, two of the most critical and life-sustaining factors according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs. This could possibly be once factor that prevents higher levels of empathy from surfacing, and allows for increased levels of resentment, anger, and hatred that the interviewees expressed over the past and the present. Even if interviewees lived in relatively modern parts of the West Bank, they still endured significant military intervention and unsustainable conflict exposure that dampened daily life. The lack of several safety and physiological needs during conflict periods could prompt interviewees to have a higher tolerance for conflict engagement with Israelis.

Figure 6.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs:



Cross-Category Interview Analysis

The following section presents a brief cross-category analysis across Israeli and Palestinian interviews. The aim of the analysis is to highlight a select few primary themes regarding similarities and differences in Israeli and Palestinian conflict perceptions that stood out during the interviews and data analysis process. In turn, the illumination of key points regarding

¹⁰⁶ Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Digital image. *Mirko Casagrande*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 June 2015. <<http://www.mirkocasagrande.com/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs/>>.

congruence and divergence in perceptions assists in examining the effectiveness of peace initiative efforts for the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

Similarities

Both Israelis and Palestinians undergo a significant level of direct and indirect exposure to the conflict. Despite the exposure narratives differing across the parties, both people groups are consistently exposed to violence either themselves or through friends and family. There is no removal from the conflict, which acts as an additive effect in the cyclical nature of the conflict described in the interviews. Even though Palestinians and Israelis understand better than most people the on the ground difficulties and complications of living in a conflict zone, the level of constant exposure the two parties face prevents new styles of thinking from emerging.

Immersion in the conflict is constant, which when coupled with low exposure to the opposing side tends to engrain the individuals into their respective beliefs. The high level of direct and indirect exposure to the conflict produces a host of emotions that are similar across Israelis and Palestinians. An individual's direct interaction with the conflict tends to produce emotions more focused on the self, such as mistrust, fear, confusion, anxiety, and hate. Indirect exposure contributed to emotions that were generally more directed externally towards the conflict on a larger scale. These emotions included frustration, helplessness, despair, mistrust, hatred, and anger.

Second, mistrust is extremely prominent in this conflict for both Israelis and Palestinians. The lack of trust is at the core of the conflict as all six interviewees expressed some form of mistrust over each dimension of the past, present, and future. There is a deep and earnest desire to resolve the conflict, but the prevalence of mistrust over all three dimensions of time prevents the situation from progressing further towards peace. For Israelis, the interviewees described that even though they earnestly desired to help the Palestinians, Israelis felt they could not trust them

to effectively reduce violent threats that are directed at the larger Israeli population. For Palestinians, the interviewees had essentially no trust for the Israeli army due to their limited interactions at daily checkpoints and various home invasions. Neither population group believes the other has its best interests at heart, and this gap is deep and difficult to overcome. Since there is no healthy historical relationship to build from, the lack of past trust offers no foundation for the parties to begin trusting one another going forward.

Third, there appeared to be a similar gap between what Israelis and Palestinians idealize as true in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, and in what real life holds for people. For example, Israelis discussed how the two populations were so exhausted with the conflict that to a certain level people would be willing to give up on certain factors for a peace resolution in the future. However, a primary inhibitor to peace in their future perceptions was that people are unwilling to compromise and Israelis need to continue self-defense of their population. Palestinians argued that they do not truly approve of violence as effective and that neither side should engage in violence with the conflict, but then additionally rationalized violence as a need to self-defend against Israel. Israelis and Palestinians expressed the sentiment that both populations should accept some level of fault associated with contributing to the conflict, but then in interview responses rarely acknowledged various “faults” within their own population groups.

The final similarity between the two groups of interviewees revolved around ideals related to a solution for the conflict. Neither side cohesively agreed that the international community should have a hand in negotiation efforts. Both Israeli and Palestinian interviewees felt most foreign governing bodies favored the opposing side. This entailed no broad consensus among Israelis or Palestinians as to whether international negotiations or stipulations should be a factor in this conflict. There was a certain sentiment expressed that the international community

is too biased and does not truly understand the level of depth of the situation in comparison to those who live out the conflict. Additionally, both sides validated the suffering of the other side in the conflict. There is mutual recognition that everyone in the conflict suffers, and that the people involved, especially civilians, do not deserve the level of suffering they face on a daily basis.

Both Israelis and Palestinians had developed a depth of empathy for the other population that was surprising given the level of historical intractability of the conflict. The validation of suffering prompted Israelis and Palestinians to point out that in peace resolution efforts the two groups do not have to develop a deep closeness, but rather simply agree to live next to each other in peace. The desire to purely live in peace enabled both sets of interviewees to acknowledge that any form of peace solution going forward will require a level of sacrifice on each end of the conflict. Placing themselves in a mental state of openness to sacrifice could act as a building block for peace efforts going forward. In an amazing sweep of unity across all six interviewees, both Israelis and Palestinians pointed to three main factors that would help peace efforts in the future: increased exposure to the other side, educational reform to teach a higher level of tolerance and acceptance of both populations, and a subsequent shift in generational thinking about the conflict. All interviewees believed these three crucial factors would empower both populations to achieve more and meet each other in the middle for future peace efforts.

Differences

One of the primary and most evident differences between Israelis and Palestinians was the level of consistency among interviewee subgroups. Israelis were for the most part very unified in their lines of thinking over the past, present, and future. Even though they perceived the past, present, and future as fairly unique entities, their perceptions of the three dimensions aligned fairly closely among each other despite varying self-described political orientations. In

part this could be a residual effect of stable governing structures and the strong sense of consensus within Israeli culture. On the other hand, Palestinians possessed a relative level of disagreement in their perceptions, and expressed that disunity affected the larger Palestinian population. Even though for each Palestinian interviewee their perceptions of the conflict's past, present, and future were extremely intertwined, the perceptions overall between the three Palestinians differed more so when compared to the Israeli interviews. This could partially be attributed to the lack of historical unification for the Palestinian population, and the current day geographic division between those living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. For example, their visions of the present and interpretations of Israelis differed from each other, in addition to fairly significant differences in their visions of a final solution. The lack of consensus alluded to in the interviews is likely a dominant factor holding back the Palestinian cause.

Going forward Israeli and Palestinian perceptions of the future are dramatically different. Both groups yearned for the peace and security that a sustainable peace resolution would bring, but the actual visions of the future vary between the two sets of interviewees. All three Israelis believed that peace would happen, whereas Palestinians generally did not hold out hope that peace would indeed occur. Belief in peace or lack thereof either generates an active desire to alter behavior to achieve peace, or produces an increased sensation of hopelessness. When in doubt about belief in peace the individual lacks the self-efficacy required to change the current situation, and consequentially no actions are taken other than those with a goal of furthering the population's historical beliefs. Palestinians were divided between a 2-state and a 1-state solution, but all believed the physical land was of the utmost importance to consider when moving forward due to the historical ties with the geographic area. All three Israelis believed in a

2-state solution to solve the problem, in which the land was not the most crucial factor if it meant living with neighbors in peace.

Furthermore, as referenced earlier Israelis perceive the past, present, and future as distinctly separate entities. Israelis are more focused on forward thinking and a hopeful sense of resolving the situation in the future regardless of what has occurred throughout history. There was a strong sentiment of leaving history in the past and a focused attempt on what could change for the future. On the contrary, Palestinians view the past, present, and future as linked. The Palestinian interviewees placed more weight on history as something that must be addressed going into the future, and as a hard factor that requires some form of compensation to alleviate the problems it has caused in the present. Their perceptions of history's wrongdoings are a fundamental concern in any form of resolution going forward. Additionally, throughout the past, present, and future Palestinians relate more to feelings of burdensome and inescapable oppression. The perception of high levels of oppression and lack of freedoms produces higher intensity emotional responses and is the rationale for conflict engagement. Emotions that were unique to the Palestinian interviewees included feelings of humiliation and dehumanization. Israelis related more strongly to self-defense as justification for participation in the conflict's violence. They live in a constant state of threat from virtually all borders of Israel, generating a need to assert strength while still attempting to simultaneously maintain their sense of morality and humanness. Israeli interviewees also expressed several emotions that varied from the Palestinians including vulnerability and isolation, but also a deep level of hopefulness for the future.

CHAPTER 7: Concluding Thoughts Going Forward

Is Peace Possible?

The findings reported from Britain's Peel Commission in 1937 still unfortunately holds true to this day. I do not have a solution for the treatment of both Israelis and Palestinians that ensures their expressed interim interests are met. Israelis have a legitimate concern for their safety and well being, in addition to a very real need to protect the country's civilians. Many times this results in forceful treatment against the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Many historical Palestinian movements and uprisings have utilized some form of violence. The violent threat that radical Palestinian groups pose (e.g. members of Hamas) is dangerous and produces mistrust in the larger conflict oftentimes at the expense of the large majority of innocent Palestinians. On the other hand, Palestinians have legitimate feelings of oppression. Even innocent Palestinian civilians that do not advocate for violence live under the effects of military forces on a daily basis. The way this population is treated does repress some of their human dignities and freedoms. This treatment does not come solely from Israel, but also the surrounding countries that have benefited politically from the Palestinians' marginalized position. Their historical marginalization has partially prevented the population from moving forward to achieve tangible progress economically, politically, and socially. Both parties have legitimate motivations and natural reactions as to why each one acts the way they respectively do. While the violence in this conflict is not condonable, after witnessing a conflict period in Israel and conducting first hand research I understand that it is a residual consequence of how each population is treated. The cultivated response of militaristic force from both sides is the natural and cyclical reaction in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, however it is this very cycle that breeds the mistrust and hopelessness that allows the conflict to continue. Author Ari Shavit best describes the conflict's emotional effects in his narrative about the state of Israel: "A close friend

is killed, then another, and another. Pain becomes rage, and rage becomes apathy. There is no time to comprehend, no time to mourn, no time to weep.”¹⁰⁷ Both sides suffer significantly from the conflict’s consequences, producing a large silent majority that is merely speechless and outspoken by the hard-liner approaches on both sides of the issue.

However, what drives this hope we see in Israelis and some Palestinians? If the situation is as desperate as it seems, and based on how the interviewees have described it then should not this hope have evaporated? Yet we still see it, at its core, despite over a hundred years of conflict, we still witness hope surface from both parties for resolution. At its core the resilience of the human spirit overcomes the despair with a hope that one day things will become far better for the generations to come. Any peace resolution efforts must capitalize on this hope through addressing the lack of trust, mutual pain of both populations, and the desire for increased exposure between Israelis and Palestinians. The only way to move forward effectively is through a means other than force that will effectively break the cycle of violence that has dominated for so many years. To focus simply on improving interim issues is akin to winning the battle, but losing sight of victory in the war. The only way forward is through exposure and a deep mutual understanding of the other side and their sufferings. The only way forward is through empathetic bonds at a level that allows the two parties to build some form of relationship that has never existed before.

Yes, peace is very much a possibility. It is an extremely difficult road not only politically, but also emotionally for each and every individual involved in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Decades of anger, hatred, mistrust, and resentment can still be broken down today to build a better future for tomorrow. Rather than imposing a solution from the outside in onto the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it would be significantly more effective to listen to the actual wants and

¹⁰⁷ Shavit, Ari. *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. 112. Print.

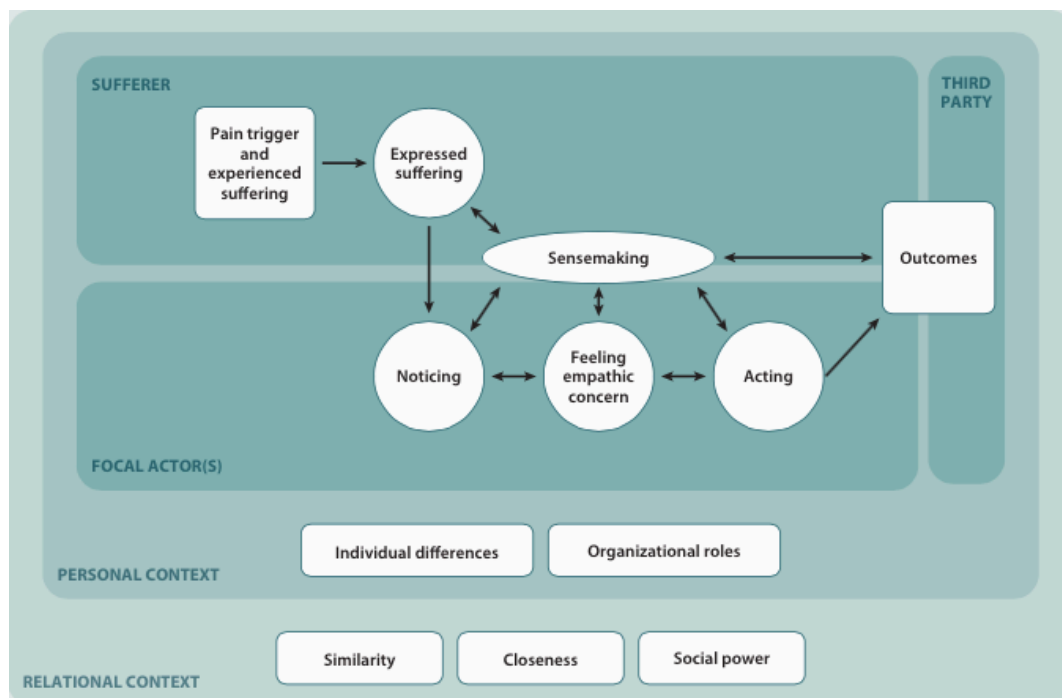
needs expressed directly by both Israelis and Palestinians. Both sides discuss a desire for more exposure between the two people groups, and for an evolving style of thinking in which conflict perception does not center on historical traumas or the residual effects of direct and indirect exposure to the conflict. Increased contact with violence further polarizes each individual in this conflict. Direct exposure to violence without concurrent exposure to the opposing side's civilians is the most potent concoction for a continually toxic outcome. However, greater exposure to the individuals and faces behind each side creates a more empathetic bond that revolves around mutual suffering, which in turn reduces the counterproductive residual effects of violence. Both sides are, at the moment, so polarized that it seems almost futile to focus on a sure-fire "permanent" resolution, rather it would be wise to instead first focus attention on the "building blocks" of conflict resolution. This entails active steps to begin the establishment of a relationship built on some level of trust, and a mutual empathetic understanding of how Israelis and Palestinians both suffer. To repair the void of a non-existent relationship, each individual in the conflict has to come to terms with a deep desire within themselves to wholeheartedly want peace and commit to efforts for a more sustainable future. The only force strong enough to overcome the power of history driven resentment is the process of building compassion by meeting individuals face-to-face, and identifying first hand with their story.

"Acknowledge and Legitimize My Pain" – Compassion's Role in Conflict Resolution

The human capability to exercise compassion receives significant attention from organizational research as it continues to reveal new capabilities to build supportive and effective organizations and social initiatives. To feel compassion is to experience an interpersonal process that involves three primary steps: the noticing of suffering, followed by making sense of suffering through empathetic concern, and then undertaking subsequent actions that aim to

alleviate suffering that the other individual is experiencing.¹⁰⁸ Compassion provides significant benefits not only for the person experiencing the direct suffering, but also for the individual providing compassion and various third parties that witness compassion in action.¹⁰⁹ It produces an empathetic concern and feelings of sympathy that are others-focused with altruistic internal motivations to relieve the suffering need.¹¹⁰

Figure 7.1 Subprocesses of an empathetic response to the suffering of others



Source: "Compassion at Work"¹¹¹

Within terms of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it has already been evidenced by several of the interviewees in this thesis that both people groups attempt to actively empathize with the suffering of the other side. An effective starting point for resolution in this conflict would be for

¹⁰⁸ Dutton, Jane E., Kristina M. Workman, and Ashley E. Hardin. "Compassion at Work." *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford Press, n.d. 277. Web. 28 May 2015. <<http://www.oupcanada.com/catalog/9780199989959.html>>.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 283

¹¹¹ Dutton, Jane E., Kristina M. Workman, and Ashley E. Hardin. "Compassion at Work." *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford Press, n.d. 282. Web. 28 May 2015. <<http://www.oupcanada.com/catalog/9780199989959.html>>.

this relational pattern to continue. The single act of validating each other's sufferings produces a recognition that the other person has suffered, and that the individual validating the suffering has personally legitimized their pain. It essentially accepts the traumas as real issues that going forward can be examined in attempts to understand various perspectives on the conflict. The very act of Israelis and Palestinians acknowledging each other's pains, rather than comparing who suffers more, serves as acknowledgement of a problem and acceptance of the other side's perceptions as legitimate. Without accepting each other's pain as viable there is no starting point that can adequately comprehend the core problems that cause the other side to suffer.

For the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict actively engaging in compassion can help the two people groups heal psychologically from the grief involved with the situation, and reduce other stressors like anxiety while simultaneously building more positive emotions.¹¹² Additionally, if individuals from both sides are effectively able to express compassion towards each other this would build perceptions of self-worth that communicate dignity and value from one person to the other.¹¹³ Receiving compassion as a sufferer enables the sufferer to make better sense about the situation he or she has found themselves in, and also helps to analyze the situation of their peer environment.¹¹⁴ In the conflict receiving compassion as an Israeli or Palestinian from the other side would enable them to better understand the conflict from a larger perspective. Individuals could examine the conflict situation not only for themselves but also for their peers across Israeli and Palestinian subgroups. In turn, both Israelis and Palestinians offering and receiving compassion in a variety of settings would ensure that no one party becomes fatigued from continually offering compassion without concurrently receiving it. In other words, both parties

¹¹² Dutton, Jane E., Kristina M. Workman, and Ashley E. Hardin. "Compassion at Work." *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford Press, n.d. 280. Web. 28 May 2015. <<http://www.oupcanada.com/catalog/9780199989959.html>>.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

must actively engage with giving and receiving compassion in order for it be effective in relationship building and conflict resolution efforts.

Further positive effects of showing compassion to Israelis and Palestinians include the self-satisfaction that results from helping another individual. Several times interviewees expressed an apologetic tone or brought their morality into the interview when discussing ways they have directly engaged with the conflict. This aspect rings especially poignant for Israelis who have witnessed life or death struggles in urban combat zones and struggle with the choices made in those situations. Showing compassion further builds a self-perception of seeing oneself as a caring individual, and contributes to others envisioning the individual as a more effective leader that can perceive situations more intelligently.¹¹⁵ This would also address the vast chasm of mistrust between Israelis and Palestinians. Showing consistent compassion to another individual would aid in building trust between the two populations. Furthermore, studies on compassion reveal that actively engaging in the compassion process can build a more collective strength for compassion as an entire people group, a stronger collective capacity for grief healing, and higher and more effective overall levels of collaboration.¹¹⁶

The human notion of suffering is dynamic and constantly changes depending on the situation the individual is placed in. People not only suffer in individual ways, but also express this pain individually.¹¹⁷ This could not be truer for the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, where so many individuals have been uniquely and prominently affected by the outcomes of violence. While each person's experiences and subsequent responses to these experiences are unique, the emotions the conflict triggers are semi-congruous among Israelis and Palestinians. The largest

¹¹⁵ Dutton, Jane E., Kristina M. Workman, and Ashley E. Hardin. "Compassion at Work." *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford Press, n.d. 281. Web. 28 May 2015. <<http://www.oupcanada.com/catalog/9780199989959.html>>.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 283

difference is in how the Israeli or Palestinian individual responds to these emotions. Israelis and Palestinians can cater their responses to the individual and their unique needs, including avenues such as a listening presence or more tangible services that offer physical resources to the sufferer.¹¹⁸ Exerting compassion in this sense can enable the Israeli or Palestinian to engage in perspective taking where they imagine their life in the shoes of the other individual. Several of the interviewees had already begun this process at the time of the interviews. In turn, as the actual expression of compassion grows, the two populations will perceive each other as more deserving of an increased amount of compassion, which will build up more trust and cooperation between the two parties. Based on how the actor responds in the present to the sufferer, at a future point when the actor himself is suffering the previous sufferer will have made sense of effective compassion techniques, and begin a new cycle wherein the old sufferer is now providing mutual support to the original actor.¹¹⁹ Empathy replaces the cycle of violence we have witnessed in the current Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, and instead substitutes it with a positive-sum relationship that builds additive trust each time the cycle is repeated.

Tangible Steps Towards Peace

People frequently ask me if I have a desire to return to Israel, or the greater region, after my experience during the summer. Surely enough I surprise them with a resounding yes. There is an intangible asset in the region that is special, and a depth to the people that is not commonly found in many other countries I have traveled. One could partially attribute this to the hardships each party in the region faces on a daily basis. There is a draw to that area of the world that is difficult to replicate in many other places, and in the months following my departure it became clear to me why both parties desire to retain control of the land. In its current political state, the

¹¹⁸ Dutton, Jane E., Kristina M. Workman, and Ashley E. Hardin. "Compassion at Work." *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford Press, n.d. 281. 284. Web. 28 May 2015. <<http://www.oupcanada.com/catalog/9780199989959.html>>.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not poised to end. The following conclusion presents tangible ways both Israelis and Palestinians can exercise compassion and relationship building techniques that will build essential foundations for effective conflict resolution in the future.

Since neither Israelis nor Palestinians are going anywhere, it is obligatory to find sustainable methods to live next to each other in peace. The largest problem has now become one of coexistence, rather than who gets what territories. While a territorial resolution is important, the main concern expressed throughout interviews was simply to live in peace and safety. The extensive talk about peace and co-existence is pleasant, but the individuals are so polarized in this conflict that many simply have no desire to talk with the other side. What is the best avenue around this? A consistent theme across my first hand research, experiences in Israel, and literature reviews has proven that an increased level of consistent and healthy exposure of Israelis and Palestinians to each other proves to be the most effective method in negating the effects of conflict exposure. There are peace efforts already in place that are centered on providing the opportunity for Israelis and Palestinians to come together and discuss their stories, and foster a greater sense of cooperation between the two populations. A concrete example of this is the Peres Center for Peace in Tel Aviv, Israel. The Peres Institution brings together thousands of Arabs and Jews annually to promote a healthy environment of collaboration with regards to increased levels of tolerance, future economic and business technological development, and overall well being. The organization's leadership chooses to focus on creating the right environment where individuals can not only avoid becoming victims of the larger conflict situation, but also actively build peace despite differences.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ This does not serve as an endorsement for the Peres Center for Peace, but rather showcases an example of peace efforts that promote exposure between the two parties. More information about the Peres Center for Peace and other peace effort methods can be found here: http://www.peres-center.org/our_mission

Additionally, there are countless other peace initiatives operated by various NGOs and non-profits that remove Israelis and Palestinians from the region for several weeks in order to discuss their stories, pain, and healing processes going forward. The primary touch point for effectiveness in these situations is when participants return home and still actively choose to engage the other side, and continue to build out their relationship of trust. If this pattern can continue an increase in small peace movements on the ground could more effectively gain a stronger foothold. In an organizational setting, effective change in most organizational structures comes from micro-moves towards change.¹²¹ The reason more than 70% of organizational change initiatives fail is because they follow a radical top-down change approach.¹²² Micro-moves for change are small and oftentimes barely noticeable changes in behavioral patterns that engage people both collaboratively and respectfully, and consequentially generate collective enthusiasm and momentum for future change. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, micro-moves align with historical conflict reform success stories including the Four Mothers' ground movement that occurred in Israel during the southern Lebanon invasion. Due to the high death toll, social movements gained traction where mothers gathered to demand withdrawal of troops to bring their children home. The social movement withdrawal demands became so strong and effective that the Israeli government responded by removing troops. This same behavioral pattern can be undertaken in the larger Israeli-Palestinian Conflict when micro-moves for exposure gain traction, in turn empowering Israeli and Palestinian individuals to come together and directly express compassion for the other population's suffering.

¹²¹ Branson, Max. "Create Micro-moves for Organizational Change." – *Center for Positive Organizations*. University of Michigan Ross School of Business, 30 Mar. 2015. Web. 1 Apr. 2015.
<<http://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/blog/create-micro-moves-for-organizational-change/>>.

¹²² Ibid.

In conclusion, upon gaining exposure building the empathetic bond over mutual suffering will necessitate each side recognizing its historical missteps, taking responsibility for them, and subsequently implementing change initiatives to ensure the cycle of mistakes is not repeated. The dehumanization of both sides that runs rampant in the larger conflict will need to subside. This can be directly alleviated when individuals are immersed in healthy environments focused on empathy building capabilities. The processes described above will require a significant amount of time to overcome the near century of fighting and conflict that has come to be known as commonplace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. It is a deeply engrained and intractable issue. However, if resolution efforts shift to focus on trustful relationship building and compassionate responses to each side's suffering, it will better enable territorial negotiations to succeed down the line. Each generation brings more hope for the future than the last. By confronting their differences, Israeli and Palestinian youth who have more in common today than ever before will discover their similarities, as some are already doing.¹²³ After living in Israel during a conflict outbreak and witnessing the region at its most vulnerable time I believe exposure is the only way forward, and a conscious choice to continue building empathy for times of adversity. Author Henri J.M. Nouwen best summarizes the effects of empathy's power in relationships:

When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds... The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.¹²⁴

¹²³ Awad, Mubarak, and Abdul Aziz Said. "8-Steps to Israeli-Palestinian Peace." *EIGHT STEPS TO ISRAELI -PALESTINIAN P EACE* (n.d.): n. pag. American.edu. Web. 15 May 2015.
<<https://www.american.edu/sis/islamicpeacechair/upload/Eight-Steps-to-Israeli-Palestinian-Peace.pdf>>.

¹²⁴ Nouwen, Henri J. M. *Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria, 1974. N. pag. Print.

Arabs and Jews come together in mutually beneficial partnership every day across this pivotal and small area of the Middle East. I witnessed this during my time in Israel, and I continue to watch stories about it now almost an entire year after experiencing the 2014 conflict. The human resilience of both populations has triumphed for nearly a century. Peace is possible, and peace is happening now.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Thesis Research Protocol, Preliminary Interview Questions

PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Can you describe your level of exposure to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Were you born/raised in Israel or Palestinian Territories? Please give a description of your history with the conflict and how it has affected you and your family? What emotions do these conflicts make you feel?
2. Can you share your opinions with me on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in general? Do you believe each side has a legitimate cause?

MINI-TOUR QUESTIONS

3. If you can remember, please describe what daily life was like during one conflict that you experienced? How did it affect you daily? Was it hard, scary, annoying, easy, traumatic, not really an issue, etc.?
4. Can you share your opinions with me on the 2014 Israel-Gaza War? Was it justifiable? Do you think it helped either side? What do you think daily life was like for Israelis and Palestinians (in Gaza) during the 2014 conflict?
5. Walk me through your thoughts about Israelis and Palestinians? Due to this long history do you find it difficult or easy to relate to them? What do you think the “stereotypical” Israeli/Palestinian is like?

PEACE QUESTIONS

6. Do you believe peace is possible between Israelis and Palestinians? In your lifetime? Why or why not?
7. Let's imagine you do think peace is possible, what would that look like? What type of solution do you think is necessary? What do you want most out of a solution? What steps can we take to make this possible?
8. Do you think most Israelis and Palestinians want peace? Do you think the representing governments want peace?
9. If you could send one message to the other side of this conflict, what would it be? A message to both sides?

A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

10. What role do you think the international community should play in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, if any? Is it justifiable to support one side or the other? It seems the whole world has a passionate opinion on this conflict, why is that? Do they have a right to express their opinion when they have not experienced this conflict first-hand?

APPENDIX B – Thesis Research Protocol, Background Information SurveyBackground Information Survey

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this information and conduct an interview. Please circle and write the response that best fits for you.

Name:

Date:

Contact Email:

Age: 18-25, 25-30, 30-40, 40-50, 50+

Gender: M/F

Would you like the information provided in this survey, interview responses, and other associated information you provide to remain confidential and anonymous? (Confidential information will only be accessed by my thesis advisor and me)

- Yes
 - No, I don't mind being identified
 - I only care about certain information being anonymous: please specify below...
-

Educational Background:

- High School Diploma or GED equivalent
- Some College
- Undergraduate Degree
- Master's Degree
- Advanced Degree (including PhD, JD, etc.)

Citizenship/Nationality (If dual citizen, please indicate both):

- United States of America
- Israel
- Palestinian Territories
- Other, Please List:

-
- Prefer not to respond

Self-Identifying Primary Ethnic Background:

- African American/Black
- Arab (including Palestinian Arab)
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Jewish

- Latino/Hispanic
- White/Caucasian
- Other, Please Specify:

-
- Prefer not to respond

Religious Identification:

- Baha'i Faith
- Buddhism
- Christian (Including Protestant, Catholic, Non-Denominational, Baptist, etc.)
- Druze
- Hinduism
- Islam - If applicable, please indicate Sunni or Shi'ite: _____
- Judaism
- Mormon
- Not Religious, Atheist
- Other, Please Specify:

-
- Prefer not to respond

Please indicate which side of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict you more closely identify with:

- Israeli
- Palestinian
- Neutral
- Prefer not to respond

Please rate on a scale of 1 – 10 how involved/proficient you are with the subject of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:

- 1 = Not involved at all, no formal education on the topic, I don't keep up with the news on Israel-Palestine relations, etc.
- 10 = Lifetime of history, I have possibly taken advanced classes on the subject, It has affected a large portion/majority of my life, I remain actively updated on Israel-Palestine relations, etc.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please briefly (1-2 sentences) describe your involvement/history with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict below....

APPENDIX C – Map of Key Nation-State Actors in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Not pictured: Iran



Source: aryanism.net¹²⁵

¹²⁵ <http://aryanism.net/wp-content/uploads/Israel-neighbours.jpg>

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "10 Preguntas Para Entender Por Qué Pelean Israelíes Y Palestinos." *BBC Mundo*. BBC, 5 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015.
 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2014/08/140801_israel_palestinos_conflicto_preguntas_basicas_jp>.
- "A/RES/181(II) of 29 November 1947." *UN Special Committee on Palestine*. United Nations, 29 Nov. 1947. Web. 03 June 2015.
 <<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>>.
- Asher, Zain. "The Economic Cost of the War in Gaza." *CNNMoney*. Cable News Network, 29 Aug. 2014. Web. 15 Apr. 2015.
 <<http://money.cnn.com/2014/08/29/news/economy/gaza-rebuilding-cost/>>.
- Awad, Mubarak, and Abdul Aziz Said. "8-Steps to Israeli-Palestinian Peace." *EIGHT STEPS TO ISRAELI -PALESTINIAN PEACE* (n.d.): n. pag. American.edu. Web. 15 May 2015. <<https://www.american.edu/sis/islamicpeacechair/upload/Eight-Steps-to-Israeli-Palestinian-Peace.pdf>>.
- Booth, William. "Amnesty International Says Hamas Committed War Crimes, Too." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 26 Mar. 2015. Web. 1 May 2015.
 <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2015/03/26/amnesty-international-says-hamas-committed-war-crimes-too/>>.
- Booth, William, and Ruth Eglash. "Israelis Support Netanyahu and Gaza War, despite Rising Deaths on Both Sides." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 29 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/israelis-support-

netanyahu-and-gaza-war-despite-rising-deaths-on-both-sides/2014/07/29/0d562c44-1748-11e4-9349-84d4a85be981_story.html>.

A Bottle in the Gaza Sea. Dir. Thierry Binisti. Prod. TS Productions. 2011. Online Film.

Branson, Max. "Create Micro-moves for Organizational Change." – *Center for Positive Organizations*. University of Michigan Ross School of Business, 30 Mar. 2015. Web. 1 Apr. 2015. <<http://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/blog/create-micro-moves-for-organizational-change/>>.

Bunton, Martin P. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.

"Cómo Es La Vida En Gaza Bajo Los Bombardeos Y El Bloqueo." *BBC Mundo*. BBC, 15 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2014/07/140715_gaza_palestinos_israel_vida_cotidina_mz>.

"CONVENCIÓN SOBRE DERECHOS Y DEBERES DE LOS ESTADOS." *CONVENCIÓN SOBRE DERECHOS Y DEBERES DE LOS ESTADOS*. International Conference of American States, 26 Dec. 1933. Web. 18 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/tratados/a-40.html>>.

Dearden, Lizzie. "Israel-Gaza Conflict: 50-day War by Numbers." *The Independent*. Independent Digital News and Media, 27 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israelgaza-conflict-50day-war-by-numbers-9693310.html>>.

Delingpole, James. "Palestinians Reveal the Truth about Gaza: ' Hamas Wanted Us Butchered So It Could Win the Media War Against Israel' - Breitbart." *Breitbart*. Breitbart, 24 Sept.

2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.breitbart.com/london/2014/09/25/palestinians-reveal-the-truth-about-gaza-hamas-wanted-us-butchered-so-it-could-win-the-media-war-against-israel/>>.

Dutton, Jane E., Kristina M. Workman, and Ashley E. Hardin. "Compassion at Work." *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Oxford Press, n.d. Web. 28 May 2015. <<http://www.oupcanada.com/catalog/9780199989959.html>>.

"El Conflicto Palestino-israelí En Gaza, En Cifras." *Europapress.es*. Europa Press, 21 Aug. 2014. Web. 20 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.europapress.es/internacional/noticia-conflicto-palestino-israeli-gaza-cifras-20140821120614.html>>.

Fisher, Max. "9 Questions about Israel-Gaza You Were Too Embarrassed to Ask." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 21 Nov. 2012. Web. 02 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2012/11/21/9-questions-about-israel-gaza-you-were-too-embarrassed-to-ask/>>.

Foldy, E. G. "Claiming a Voice on Race." *Action Research* 3.1 (2005): 33-54. Web.

"Gaza Strip." *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency, n.d. Web. 25 Jan. 2015. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html>>.

"Gaza War: Hamas Admits Kidnapping Three Israeli Teens - NBC News." *NBC News*. NBC, 21 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015. <<http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/west-bank-kidnappings/gaza-war-hamas-admits-kidnapping-three-israeli-teens-n186176>>.

Harris, Maurice. *Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Progressive Zionist Perspective*. Slideshare. N.p., 12 Mar. 2012. Web. 05 Jan. 2015. <<http://www.slideshare.net/MauriceHarris/israeli-palestina-conflict-progressive-z-perspective>>.

Hockley, J. M., Katherine Froggatt, and Katharina Heimerl. *Participatory Research in Palliative Care: Actions and Reflections*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.

"Humanitarian Aid to Gaza Continues." *Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. State of Israel, 27 Aug. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015.

<<http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Peace/Humanitarian/Pages/Israeli-humanitarian-aid-continues-10-Jul-2014.aspx>>.

Hynes, Geryl. "First, Second, and Third Person Inquiry." *Actions and Reflections Participatory Research in Palliative Care* (2012): 53-63. Web.

Israeli Land Acquisition Post-1967 War. Digital image. CNN, n.d. Web. 05 Mar. 2015.

<<http://www.cnn.com/video/world/2011/05/19/dougherty.mideast.impact.cnn.640x360.jpg>>.

"Key Dates in Israel's History." *Key Dates in Israel's History*. Anti-Defamation League, n.d. Web. 24 Mar. 2015.

<<http://archive.adl.org/israel/advocacy/chronology.html#.VOP9wkKIeUQ>>.

Langfan, Mark, and Gil Ronen. "Gaza Wants \$4 Billion, But Did It Steal \$700 Million?" *Arutz Sheva*. Arutz Sheva, 2 Oct. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015.

<<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/185757#.VU15zkKIe0t>>.

Laub, Zachary. " Hamas." *Council on Foreign Relations*. Council on Foreign Relations, 1 Aug. 2014. Web. 10 Mar. 2015. <<http://www.cfr.org/israel/hamas/p8968#p5>>.

Levs, Josh. "Gaza: From Samson to Israeli-Palestinian Fighting - CNN.com." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 10 July 2014. Web. 03 June 2015.

<<http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/10/world/meast/israel-gaza-timeline/>>.

Lewis, Avi. "What Jordanians Talk about When They Talk about Israel." *The Times of Israel*.

The Times of Israel, 6 Apr. 2015. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.

<<http://www.timesofisrael.com/what-jordanians-talk-about-when-they-talk-about-israel/>>.

Lynch, Dennis. "Israeli Boys Kidnapped: 15-Year-Old Palestinian Boy Killed During Israeli

Search Raid." *International Business Times*. IBTimes, 20 June 2014. Web. 15 Apr.

2015. <<http://www.ibtimes.com/israeli-boys-kidnapped-15-year-old-palestinian-boy-killed-during-israeli-search-raid-1607706>>.

Magnay, Diana, Ed Payne, and Josh Levs. "Israel: Gaza Ground Op Might Become Necessary."

CNN. Cable News Network, 8 July 2014. Web. 04 June 2015.

<<http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/08/world/meast/mideast-tensions/>>.

Map of Israel 1949. Digital image. *HistoryOfIsrael.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Feb. 2015.

<http://history-of-israel.org/history/images/map_1949_rhodes.jpg>.

Map of Israeli Checkpoints in the West Bank. Digital image. *News.BBC.co.uk*. BBC, n.d. Web.

10 Mar. 2015.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/middle_east/03/w_bank_checkpoints/img/intro_map.gif>.

Map of Key Nation-State Actors in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Digital image. *Aryanism.net*.

N.p., n.d. Web. 01 June 2015. <<http://aryanism.net/wp-content/uploads/Israel-neighbours.jpg>>.

Masi, Allesandria. "Timeline of Events in Gaza and Israel Shows Sudden, Rapid Escalation."

International Business Times. IBTimes, 23 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.

<<http://www.ibtimes.com/timeline-events-gaza-israel-shows-sudden-rapid-escalation-1636264>>.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Digital image. *Mirko Casagrande*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 June 2015.

<<http://www.mirkocasagrande.com/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs/>>.

Modern Day Map of Israel and Palestinian Territories. Digital image. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 June

2015. <<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/51/Is-map.PNG/250px-Is-map.PNG>>.

Morley, Jefferson. "Israeli Withdrawal From Gaza Explained." *Washington Post*. The

Washington Post, 10 Aug. 2005. Web. 03 June 2015.

<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/10/AR2005081000713.html>>.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life*. Notre Dame, IN:

Ave Maria, 1974. N. pag. Print.

"Our Mission." *The Peres Center for Peace*. The Peres Center for Peace, n.d. Web. 29 May

2015. <http://www.peres-center.org/our_mission>.

"Palestine 1918 to 1948." *History Learning Site*. Historylearningsite.co.uk, 2014. Web. 08 Feb.

2015. <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/palestine_1918_to_1948.htm>.

"Palestine Royal Commission Report." (n.d.): 375. *Unispal.un.org*. United Kingdom H.M.

Stationary Office. Web. 04 Feb. 2014. <<http://unispal.un.org/pdfs/Command5479.pdf>>.

"The Palestinian Liberation Organisation." *History Learning Site*. Historylearningsite.co.uk,

2014. Web. 08 Feb. 2015.

<http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/palestinian_liberation_order.htm>.

"Profile: Hamas Palestinian Movement." *BBC News*. BBC, 11 July 2014. Web. 20 Nov. 2014.

<<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13331522>>.

Qualitative Analysis of Interview Data. YouTube, 19 May 2013. Web.

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRL4PF2u9XA>>.

"Quick Tips for Ethnographic Interviewing(A Guide for College Students)." *Interview Tips*.

University of California, San Diego, 15 Mar. 2005. Web. 01 Apr. 2015.

<<http://pages.ucsd.edu/~dkjordan/resources/InterviewingTips.html>>.

Reason, Peter, and Hilary Bradbury. *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2008. Print.

"Recommended Format for a Research Protocol." *WHO*. World Health Organization, n.d. Web.

01 Mar. 2015. <http://www.who.int/rpc/research_ethics/format_rp/en/index.html>.

Rudoren, Jodi, and Anne Barnard. "Hezbollah Kills 2 Israeli Soldiers Near Lebanon." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 28 Jan. 2015. Web. 28 Jan. 2015.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/29/world/middleeast/israel-lebanon-hezbollah-missile-attack.html?_r=1>.

Scheer, Steven. "Gaza Conflict to Dent, Not Break Israel Economy." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters,

29 July 2014. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/29/us-mideast-gaza-economy-idUSKBN0FY1KY20140729>>.

<<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/29/us-mideast-gaza-economy-idUSKBN0FY1KY20140729>>.

Shavit, Ari. *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.

Spradley, James P. *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.

Print.

Tessler, Mark A. *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994.

Print.

Torbert, William R., and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter. *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2004. N. pag. Print.

"UN Partition Plan." *BBC News*. BBC, 29 Nov. 2001. Web. 04 June 2015.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/middle_east/israel_and_the_palestinians/key_documents/1681322.stm>.

U.S. Embassy in Israel. "July 21 Israel, The West Bank and Gaza Travel Warning." 21 July 2014. E-mail.

Weiss, Dan. "6 'Easy' Steps to Solving the Israeli-Arab Conflict." *The Huffington Post*. The Huffington Post, 23 Jan. 2014. Web. 03 June 2015.

<<http://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/4170740>>.

Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict #2." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 20 Nov. 2014. Lecture.

Zahler, Reuben. "Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." Oregon Hillel, Eugene, OR. 13 Nov. 2014. Lecture.