



COMILLAS

UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS

Trabajo Fin de Grado

Grado en Relaciones Internacionales

**PSEUDOSACRED VALUES:
A NEW APPROACH TO
RESOLUTION OF THE ISRAELI-
PALESTINIAN CONFLICT**

Elena Gillis Cintrano

Director: Prof. José María Marco Tobarra

Madrid, junio 2019

ABSTRACT

Decisions made on the basis of sacred values differ from those based on rational or instrumental values in that they do not allow for cost-benefit calculations. Traditional approaches to conflict resolution have attempted to either (i) leave sacred values aside from negotiations or (ii) trade sacred values for material incentives. Empirical data and historical analysis lead to the conclusion that such methods are not only ineffective in conflict resolution but may also backfire into greater breaches between the parties involved.

The first part of this essay will attempt to analyse the nature of the conflict, as well as the perceived identity of both sides to the conflict. In the following chapters, it will analyse the means through which the conflict is perpetuated and the steps to take in future negotiations. The essay will argue that the rational-based negotiation approach was precisely the cause of the current polarization of the conflict, and advocate for a negotiation method based on symbolic concessions of sacred values.

Keywords: Israel, Palestine, sacred values, national narratives, conflict resolution.

RESUMEN

Las tomas de decisiones basadas en valores sagrados difieren de aquellas basadas en valores racionales o instrumentales en tanto que las primeras no admiten cálculos de coste oportunidad. El enfoque tradicional en materia de resolución de conflictos ha tratado de (i) dejar los valores sagrados apartados de las negociaciones o (ii) canjear dichos valores por incentivos materiales. Los resultados empíricos y el análisis histórico llevan a la conclusión de que dichos métodos no solo son inefectivos sino que, además, pueden resultar contraproducentes, llevando a un mayor distanciamiento entre las partes involucradas.

Este ensayo tratará de analizar la diferencia la naturaleza del conflicto, así como los componentes identitarios de ambas partes. El ensayo argumentará que la aproximación racional a las negociaciones ha sido precisamente la causa de la polarización de los actores involucrados en el conflicto, y abogará por un método de negociación basado en las concesiones simbólicas en cuanto a valores sagrados.

Palabras clave: Israel, Palestina, valores sagrados, narrativas, resolución de conflictos.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES	1
2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND STATUS OF THE ISSUE	3
3. METHODOLOGY	6
4. ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUE	8
A. THE IDENTITARIAN NATURE OF THE CONFLICT	8
The Palestinian and Israeli identities	9
Identity formation in contraposition to the other side of the conflict	11
B. THE ROLE OF NATIONAL NARRATIVES IN THE PERPETUATION OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT	16
Peace beliefs	18
Sacred values	20
Sacred values in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict	22
C. FIRST STEPS TOWARDS THE RESOLUTION OF THE ISRAELI- PALESTINIAN CONFLICT	26
Pseudo-sacred values: reframing perceptions	26
Legitimate transformations	27
Trust building	31
Negotiating sacred values	32
Recognition	33
Pardon	35
Material benefits	36
5. CONCLUSIONS	38
BIBLIOGRAPHY	40
Books and Articles	40
Religious and political texts	46
Polls and surveys	47
Interviews	47

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The Israeli-Palestinian peace process, understood as the intermittent negotiations that have taken place between these parties with the objective of reaching a peace agreement, is commonly considered to begin in 1991 with the Madrid Peace Conference, which set the framework for future negotiations. Two years later, Israel and the PLO signed the Declaration of Principles of Autonomy as the culmination of the Oslo Accords, spreading hope throughout the world that the conflict which started with Israeli independence in 1948 could come to an end.

Nonetheless, all hopes were shattered after the Camp David Summit which took place in 2000 between US president Bill Clinton, Israeli president Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat. Not only did the parties not reach an agreement, but the breakdown of negotiations led to the outbreak of the Second Intifada, a violent Palestinian uprising which left thousands dead and gave place to a stalemate to all negotiations between the parties. The efforts to revive the talks at the Taba Summit the following year did little to ameliorate the situation, nor did the intermittent contacts the leaders had in 2003, 2007 and 2010.

The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze the factors that have led to the failure of the continuous attempts of negotiations throughout the past two decades. The hypothesis is that the realist approach to negotiations that has traditionally guided all conflict resolution processes, including that between Israel and Palestine, does not fit the characteristics of the present conflict but rather has a backlash effect on the relations between the parties. In order to do so, the first chapter of analysis will study the nature of the conflict in order to understand the real interests of the parties and their objectives. The second chapter will analyze the role of national narratives in the perpetuation of the conflict and, in particular, how they create a national ethos which is favorable to conflict. Finally, the third chapter will establish the guidelines which need to be followed for future negotiations to be fruitful, both prior to the negotiations and during the proceedings.

The essay does not attempt to offer a holistic view of all the variables to be considered in the negotiations, but rather how a specific variable - the role of sacred values and peace beliefs – should be treated in future negotiations. Similarly, it does not establish a clear-cut solution to the conflict, as this would be far beyond the scope of the present essay. It

simply intends to analyze what it considers a prerequisite for any agreement, which is not necessarily to take place in the near future. The present political situation both in Israel and Palestine, most notable in Gaza, has led to a polarization whereby the proposals offered in the present essay are difficult to enforce as there does not exist an entrenched will for a peace agreement amongst the population. Thus, it will only offer guidelines for a future resolution when the political and social landscape is more favorable to an agreement, and requirements for the population's mindset to shift towards a peace-driven desire.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND STATUS OF THE ISSUE

Traditionally, States have adopted a realist approach to international conflicts, based on the assumption that actors are rationally-driven actors who perpetually seek the maximization of their material benefits. This approach has driven State actions throughout history, during traditional State wars and civil wars, where the parties to the conflict fought for territory, resources or individual rights. Thus, negotiations are a zero-sum game whereby the parties compete for the largest share of a finite amount of resources. However, the rise of devoted actors in the international panorama has led to academics and, at a lesser degree, policymakers, to realize that current wars are driven by completely different incentives. Thus, new constructivist international relations theories have appeared in an attempt to address these new obstacles to conflict resolution, taking into account the role of both sentiments and biases where non-rational actors are involved.

This new approach may be traced back to Fisher and Ury's famous interest-based approach or 'principled negotiation' (1981). Fisher and Ury acknowledge the importance of sentiments in any kind of negotiation. However, they analyze the role of sentiments from the viewpoint of the effectiveness of the negotiation: conflicts must be solved separating people and their emotions from the conflictive issue, but they are essential in establishing a relationship of mutual respect and cooperation for the solution to be effective. Thus, despite shifting the focus to the importance of sentiments in negotiation, this approach still operates on the assumption that competing actors are rational and thus capable of separating strategic interests from irrational feelings or sentiments.

This assumption was broken by Raiffa (1982) and later by Neale and Bazerman (1991), who asserted that most negotiations are not a zero-sum game. In fact, the parties to a conflict do not necessarily seek to acquire the 'largest piece of the cake', but rather decisions are generally influenced by cognitive biases and faulty assumptions on the other party's intentions. Thus, the realist rationality-based approach is left aside and human perceptions are positioned as the center of any kind of negotiation. This approach will influence most of the successive literature regarding conflict resolution, particularly in ideologically-based disputes, this is, *conflicts in which one or more parties represent, or believe they represent, deeper ideological values* (Wade-Benzoni et al, 2002, pp. 3-4).

The ideologically-based negotiation proposed by authors such as Wade-Benzoni, Thompson, Gillespie, Hoffman, Moore and Bazerman, takes on a deeper analysis on the nature of the aforementioned human biases. Their studies pivot around three main ideas. First of all, individual values and institutions are to be analyzed separately, and both of them need to be taken into account in order to acquire a deep understanding of the dispute and, consequently, find a suitable solution. Secondly, values – rather than scarce resources – are the main barrier to negotiations, and there exists a belief that mutually beneficial outcomes will require trade-offs which represent a threat to the core of their moral identity. Finally, value systems are institutionally influenced through regulative, normative and cognitive mechanisms (Scott, 1995; Palthe, 2014), and overcoming the barriers they create require an in-depth alteration of social structures. Thus, addressing individual biases does not suffice in order for solutions to be achieved.

Finally, the sacred value protection model (Tetlock et al, 2000; Tetlock, 2003; McGraw, Schwartz & Tetlock, 2005; Rai and Fiske 2011) studies the reactions to perceived violations of sacred values. Specifically, the authors conclude that there are two possible reactions to the violation of what one perceives as a sacred value: moral cleansing and moral outrage. Moral outrage is defined as *a composite psychological state that subsumes cognitive reactions (harsh character attributions to those who endorse the proscribed thoughts and even to those who do not endorse, but do tolerate, this way of thinking in others), affective reactions (anger and contempt for those who endorse the proscribed thoughts), and behavioral reactions (support for ostracizing and punishing deviant thinkers)* (Tetlock et al, 2000, 853-854). On the other hand, moral cleansing is the attitude whereby one *reaffirms core values and loyalties by acting in ways that shore up those aspects of the moral order that have been undercut by the transgression* (*ibid.*, 854).

These authors, together with others such as Atran, Axelrod, Lerner, Landman or Thompson have consequently studied how these values can be reframed. There is a widespread agreement amongst scholars that there exists a backlash effect when these values are directly confronted by proposing a “taboo trade-off”, this is, a trade-off of a sacred value for a material incentive. Thus, negotiations must be made through a recognition of the other’s values, first of all, and attempting to shift the moral framework in a manner that confronting values may coexist. Other authors define these as ‘pseudosacred’ values (Hoffman et al, 1999), as they are in fact traded at times when two

of one's values are confronted, but only when it is *allowed within an overarching moral frame of social duties as an attempt to balance duties* (Atran & Axelrod, 2008). Moreover, this will only take place if done indirectly in such a way that the other party does not perceive that its values are being attacked. There is a broad understanding that the best means to do this is through symbolic concessions (Atran, Axelrod & Davis, 2007; Ginges, Atran, Medin & Shikaki, 2007; Atran & Axelrod, 2008; Landman, 2010; Nagar & Shamir, 2013).

This essay will follow the constructivist approach advanced by the aforementioned scholars. Constructivism, as defined by Wendt (1992) explores how agents perceive themselves, this is, *the relationship between what actors 'do' and what they 'are'* (p. 424). Thus, it will analyze how the two parties to the conflict perceive themselves, on the basis of the values they believe conform their identity. Then, it will attempt to study the role of these values in the main obstacles to an agreement, in order to define the steps of action for future negotiations.

3. METHODOLOGY

This dissertation relies on a variety of primary and secondary sources. Two different types of primary sources have been used. First of all, it has used a range of religious and political texts which guide the actions of the actors involved in the conflict. Amongst the religious sources, it has drawn its conclusions primarily from the Quran and the Torah, being the main religious writings for the two religions most involved in the conflict: Islam and Judaism. The political sources which have been drawn upon are the Hamas Covenant, also known as Hamas Charter or Covenant of the Islamic Movement, and Fateh's Constitution, the writings which establish the guiding principles for the two leading factions of the Palestinian territories.

Secondly, it has used a wide range of surveys, polls and interviews retrieved from official sites, as well as a personal interview conducted with a former Lieutenant-Colonel of the Israel Defense Forces. It is worth noting that the availability of information for each side may represent a bias to the findings of the present research, given that there is a notable disequilibrium between Palestinian and Israeli available data, with Israeli statistics being much more accessible. Further research on Palestinian perceptions may be useful in future studies. Specifically, much of the data has been retrieved from the Peace Index, a research project led by the Israel Democracy Institute which offers monthly surveys that monitor public sentiment within the Israeli population on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and current events, and the Joint Israeli Palestinian Poll elaborated by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, an independent non-profit think tank focused on current public policy issues affecting Palestinians.

First-hand information was also drawn from papers published by negotiators during the Camp David Summit. Specifically, the dissertation has relied on the views of Gilead Sher, Israeli Chief of Staff during the negotiations, and Akram Hanieh, close advisor to Yasser Arafat and member of the Palestinian delegation during the summit.

Finally, it has drawn information from a wide variety of both empirical and analytical scholarly works on specific matters, such as the attitudes taken by the population of both sides regarding the core issues of the conflict. In this sense, it has relied, amongst others, on the works of Jeremy Ginges, Scott Atran, Robert Axelrod, Philip E. Tetlock and

Kimberly A. Wade-Benzoni, as well as on the works of authors from Israel and Palestine such as Yehudith Auerbach, Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, Shiri Landman, Yohanan Tzoreff and Sari Nusseibeh.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUE

A. THE IDENTITARIAN NATURE OF THE CONFLICT

Rothman and Olson (2001) define an identity-based conflict as that whose main elements enshrine mutual rejections of the legitimacy of the other side, on the basis that such recognition may undermine one's own legitimacy and values. Similarly, Auerbach (2010, p. 100) describes identity-based conflicts as those in which *at least one side sees the national identity of the other side as a threat, or, translating this identity into the political sphere – that is, into a 'nation-state' – as a danger to its independent national identity*, thus rejecting the recognition of the other as a nation. This does not preclude the existence of disputes over material assets, such as territory, water, borders or security, but rather defines the core of the dispute.

Following these definitions, it becomes evident that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict falls into such a category, as both the origin and the cause of its perpetuation is based on the denial of the recognition of the other side and its right to establish a state in the territory (*ibid.*). Indeed, the former President of Israel Ehud Barak – who was in office during the 2000 Camp David Summit – clearly stated when asked about the conflict: “From our perspective, it is a real and substantive question involving the Jewish identity of Israel” (Sher, 2006, p. 70). This perception is shared by Palestinians, who establish a direct relationship between the physical element of the land and the value-based element of identity (Tzoreff, 2010; Lybarger, 2007). Any agreement reached between the two parties therefore represents much more than a simple negotiation, but rather implies a confrontation with the other's identity, this is, with its sacred values.

The identity of a nation is defined by both its population and its institutions, with both mutually influencing each other. Institutions are shaped by the population in that their decisions and the enforcement of their values are subject to the accountability of their people. Thus, institutions represent the values of a given population at a given time. However, institutions are also highly influential in shaping the population's identity. This influence is exerted through three different mechanisms: regulative, normative and cognitive (March, 1981; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 1995; Wade-Benzoni et al, 2002; Palthe, 2014). Regulative or legal mechanisms are those that guide individual and organizational actions through coercion, in a way that actors comply in order to avoid the

ascribed legal sanction (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Normative or social mechanisms comprise of rules-of-thumb, standard operating procedures, occupational standards and educational curricula, where actors comply due to moral obligations, social pressure or norms established by universities, professional institutions or trade associations, in a way that they abide by that which is socially expected from their own actions (Wade-Benzoni et al, 2002). Finally, the cognitive or cultural mechanism comprises cultural rules and frameworks which define our understanding of reality and the frames through which the meaning of such is developed. Thus, actors will abide without consciously knowing they are doing so. When combined, these three mechanisms form a set of filters that determine how important issues are perceived, and consequently delineate what actions are to be taken when facing said issues.

The combination of the population's beliefs and institutional influence shapes what is known as the 'national narrative' or, in Auerbach's words (2010), 'national meta-narratives', which are "holistic, hierarchical framework that embraces the national narratives [concrete stories about dramatic events in the recent history or distant past of a nation] and creates and feeds them, while the national narratives revive, reinforce, and feed the meta-narrative" (p. 101). Examples of meta-narratives are Christianity, the Enlightenment, Marxism or Liberalism and, of course, Judaism and Islam. The national narrative serves to shape what one perceives as its identity. In a conflict over identity, metanarratives are generally shaped in a manner that is directly opposite to the other's, in a way that one side's identity is created so that it directly confronts the other's. This is how both Israeli and Palestinian identities were created or, at the very least, reinforced.

The Palestinian and Israeli identities

Nowadays, both identities are created around two pillars: nationalism and religion. The July 2017 Peace Index asked in its survey the following question on the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: "Is it more religious, more national, or religious and national to the same extent?" A large majority within both the Jewish and Muslim population in Israel (55.5% and 50%, respectively) chose the third option. Thus, nowadays there is a broad agreement within the Israeli public that the conflict has a mixed nature.

However, religiosity was not a prominent element in the early stages of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In fact, its role was marginal until the Israeli victories over the Arabs

following the 1967 war (Mitchell, 2017, p. 13). Said year was a turning point regarding religiosity both on the Israeli and on the Palestinian sides. For the Israelis, particularly right-wing religious-Zionists, the victory was perceived as a sign of God to settle all of the land that used to be Israel (Abu, 2008). Indeed, religiosity has experienced an exponential growth in the past decade both within the political institutions and within the Israeli Defense Forces (Drori, 2015). For Palestinians, it was a clear sign of the PLO's inability to defend Palestinian interests. Consequently, it was the turning point that shifted public opinion towards favoring a new movement in their aspiration to retain their homeland through political Islam, thus giving birth to Hamas, who published its well-known Covenant of the Islamic Movement (also known as Hamas Charter) in 1988.

On the Israeli side, Prominent Zionist figures, such as Ben-Gurion, Netanyahu, Barak, Herzl or Jabotinski have been known to refer to Judaism as the most profound source of legitimacy of the Zionist movement and its materialization in the creation of the State of Israel (Abu, 2008). In fact, Barak, a self-defined 'secularist' asserted that the three areas in which he was not willing to compromise were: "The security of Israel, those things that are holy to Israel, and the unity of our people. If we will be forced with the alternative between compromising one of these and a confrontation, the choice is clear to every Israeli" (Swisher, 2004, p. 337). It is thus evident that religiosity is a key component in the formation of Israeli identity through national narratives, even amongst secular leaders.

Regarding the Israeli population, there exists a direct correlation between religiosity and allegiance to Jewish ethnicity, which is translated into Jewish nationalism or Zionism. Amongst the Ultra-Orthodox population, 39% felt ethnic allegiance was "very" important, whilst only 4% felt so amongst the non-religious. Similarly, only 25% felt it was "not" important, whilst the percentage amounted to 66% amongst the non-religious. Thus, "the more religious one is, the more one tends to define oneself as Jewish, the more one aspires to a more Jewish culture in Israel" (Ben-Rafael & Peres, 2005, p. 71). Moreover, the modern Orthodox, particularly the National Religious, endorse Jewish nationalism and the building of a Jewish state in the land as a holy task in itself.

This understanding of identity is mirrored by the Palestinians. As stated by Lybarger (2007): "Islamism, while it emerges from a very particular cultural political milieu within Palestinian society, nevertheless must be understood as a dimension of Palestinian

nationalism” (p. 4). The increase of religiosity amongst the Palestinians was evidenced by the overwhelming victory of Hamas in the 2006 elections, where it claimed 76 out of the 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council, defeating the traditionally leading party Fatah with only 43 seats. No elections have taken place in Gaza since.

The Hamas Charter considers the struggle for Palestine as a struggle in the name of the Muslim World. Following Article Twelve, “Nationalism, from the point of view of the CIRM, is part of the religious creed”. It is therefore evident that Hamas adopts a religious approach to nationalism. However, this approach is not exclusively taken by Hamas. Although being the most blatant defender of Islamism as a core element of Palestinian identity, the PLO has also viewed religious elements as central to nationalism. In this sense, the Fateh Constitution states in Article 9 that “Liberating Palestine and protecting its holy places is an Arab, religious and human obligation”, thus placing religion at the center of its narrative. Thus, Palestinian institutions are inherently and openly religious. This reflects the general public opinion. As of June-July 2018, 95% of the total Palestinian population considered itself “religious” or “somewhat religious” (PCPSR, 2018).

Consequently, there has been a hybridization of secularity and religiosity as definers of Israeli and Palestinian identity. Abu (2008) shares the views of Latour (1993), Asad (2003) and Lybarger (2007) that “secularity and religiosity both have room under the broader umbrella of nationalism, but rather than being seen as two binary concepts ... [they are] inherently hybridized” (p. 4). Thus, the Palestinian and Israeli identities are both based on religious nationalism (Roy, 2004), in the sense that religion has become an intrinsic part of their identity. Even those considered non-religious, such as Ehud Barak, adopt religious elements in their narratives, thus conforming the population’s national values. To this extent, Abu (2008) takes a further step asserting that “The focus of the Zionist movement on the Land of Israel as the sole place to realize the national aspirations of the Jewish people was not only shaped or influenced by Judaism; rather, it was a necessary condition for the emergence and development of Zionism as a viable and legitimate national doctrine for Jews” (p. 8).

Identity formation in contraposition to the other side of the conflict

This mixed identity is shaped and reinforced through direct moral confrontation with the other party in order to legitimize their correspondent claims, in a manner that both

identities are mutually exclusive. This is done through three mechanisms: self-victimization (Halperin, Oren & Bar-Tal, 2010; Abu, 2008), religiosity outbidding and secularity outbidding (Abu, 2008). These mechanisms serve to legitimize one's own values (thus reinforcing one's own narrative) and delegitimize the other side's.

Self-victimization is the process through which each party portrays itself as the vulnerable and morally abused party to the conflict. Indeed, the rhetoric of being a victim throughout centuries of diaspora is a recurrent message in Israeli politics. The land of Israel was illegitimately stolen from the Jews, who consequently suffered from centuries of repression. Thus, the Jews are the vulnerable party and need protection under the formation of a nation-state. Similarly, the narrative portrays a one-sided conflict whereby the Palestinians have consistently carried on attacks on Israel merely because of its existence, and consequently Israel has only responded to these attacks. In 2009, an overwhelming 80.0% of the Jewish population in Israel agrees with the statement that "Despite Israel's desire for peace, the Arabs have repeatedly imposed war" (Halperin, Oran & Bar-Tal, 2010). Another indicative fact of the image of Israel simply responding to external attacks is seen in surveys on the morality of the Israeli Defense Forces: in September 2018, the statement "The IDF is the most moral army in the world" was supported by 86% of the Jewish respondents.

The fact that this victimization is shared by the Palestinians may also be inferred from this survey, given that, in contraposition, 76% of the Arabs in Israel were opposed to said statement. Palestinians have a deep sense of weakness, frailty and inferiority which is imprinted in their identity as a nation, thus creating a culture of "poor and oppressed people" (Tzoreff, 2010, p. 74). Said culture of humiliation is enhanced by the national narrative which portrays them, on the one side, as conquered people following the 1948 'catastrophe' (*Nakba*) and the 1967 defeat (*Naksa*), and on the other side, as 'second-class citizens' due to the treatment of Arabs in the State of Israel (*ibid.*; Auerbach, 2010). This sense of inferiority was highly exploited by Hamas in the run-up and aftermath of the 2006 elections. Thus, both nations shape their identity in opposition to the other, as their victims.

The second element defining their identity in opposition to the other side is the process of 'religiosity outbidding' (Abu, 2008), this is, the process of legitimizing one's claims

based on a greater religious right to the land. Both sides try to prove that their demands are “more sacred” than the other’s. For instance, Reuven Merhav, former Director-General for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, and a member of the Israeli delegation during the Camp David Summit, blatantly rejected the connection between the Palestinians and, indeed, the Muslims, and Jerusalem, stating that the Qu’ran does not mention Jerusalem even once, whilst the Bible references it over eight hundred times (Sher, 2006). This thought was echoed by Gilead Sher, Chief of Staff and Policy Coordinator to Ehud Barak and senior negotiator during the Camp David Summit, before the President of Egypt Hosni Mubarak: “This is the holiest place to the Jewish people, and it was so for over 600 years before the Al Aqsa mosque was ever built [...] For Muslims, it is only in third place in terms of significance, and they turn to the Mecca when they pray” (*ibid.*, p. 205). Indeed, this is a narrative still propagated by Jewish authors. An example of this is the claim made by Jewish author and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel, who in 2010 published in the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* full-page ads asserting that Jerusalem “is mentioned more than six hundred times in Scripture – and not a single time in the Qur’an” (Nusseibeh, 2012, p. 8).

In contraposition, Palestinians allege that Jerusalem is not the third holiest city of Islam, but one of Islam’s three holy cities, and the Al Aqsa mosque is indeed referred to in the Qur’an, in the *Surat al-Isra* (17:1). Moreover, many claim that whilst Jerusalem may be mentioned in the Bible, it is not mentioned once in the Torah, which is the most central sacred text (*ibid.*). This approach of religiosity outbidding was also adopted by Yasser Arafat during the Camp David Summit: “The Temple Mount? The remains of the two temples? Where did they get that? There is no such thing. The Temple Mount is not sacred to the Jews; see the ruling of the Chief Rabbi, who said that Jews are not allowed on the Mount, proving that for the Jews the Mount is defiled, not holy” (Yatom, 2005). Moreover, Palestinians view themselves as representing the whole Muslim community in its defense of the sacred land (Hanieh, 2001; Sher, 2006; Tzoreff, 2010), as Arafat made clear during the Camp David Summit (Sher, 2006, p. 84). Thus, they base their religious superiority on both religious premises and a quantitative criterion, as representing all the nations comprised in the Muslim world and not merely the inhabitants of a land.

Finally, Israeli and Palestinian narratives are formed through secularity outbidding (Abu, 2008). Secularity outbidding refers to the process of secularization of one’s own claims.

Whilst referring to the religious superiority of each side's claims, both Israeli and Palestinian leaders portray themselves as rational actors in opposition to the irrational character of the other side. There is a widespread feeling within the Israeli society that the Jewish people are the only ones effectively contributing to the resolution of the conflict (Magal, Bat-Tal, Oren & Halperin, 2013), whilst the Palestinians irrationally reject unprecedented concessions made by the Israelis. This was publicly stated in the Likud platform in 2009: "There is no evidence that the Palestinians are ready to accept even the minimal demands that are demanded of any Israeli leader. They have rejected unprecedented concessions that we, the Israelis, proposed eight years ago, and their stance has neither changed nor been moderated to date" (*ibid*, p. 36). This line of thought has also been echoed by Israeli authors such as former Minister of Foreign Affairs Ben Ami, who claimed the following: "The leader of a supposedly secular national movement shaped along the lines of the Third World movements of national liberation of the 1960s, Arafat remained nonetheless immersed in the religious imagery of his early years as a member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo" (Ben Ami, 2006, p. 257). Thus, Israelis base their narrative as that of a completely rational actor whose situation is caused by the Palestinian theological approach to the conflict.

The Palestinian version of the Camp David Summit published by Akram Hanieh, a Palestinian journalist and member of the Palestinian Delegation during the summit, portrays this same process on the other side. He describes the Israeli position on Jerusalem as follows: "For the deliberations on Jerusalem, Barak, his ministers, and the members of his delegation assumed the garb of the most extreme fundamentalist Jews. Suddenly, secularists began talking a religious line avoided even by some Israeli rabbis. Suddenly, allowing Jews to pray in the Haram al-Sharif became an essential Israeli demand" (Hanieh, 2001, p. 83). Thus, he describes Arafat's "tireless" efforts to fight "the Israeli myths with historical facts and specific references to international law" (*ibid.*, p. 86). It is consequently evident that the Palestinians, too, tried to portray an image of themselves pursuing rational motives whilst the Israelis were blocked by their own theological barriers.

In conclusion, not only do both sides form their identity on the same premises, this is, secular and religious nationalism, but they also conform their identity in opposition to the other's. This is why a recognition of the other side's legitimacy is inherently perceived

as a threat to one's own legitimacy. Going back to the definitions offered at the beginning of the chapter, an identity-based dispute is that where the recognition of the other's existence is perceived as a threat to one's own existence. Thus, this chapter has explained why the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is inherently identity-based, where the parties compete over non-material elements or sacred values and, consequently, a constructivist approach is required for any resolution to be viable. The following chapter will analyze how these sacred values are concreted in the core obstacles to the agreement, in order to analyze how sacred values affect the resolution of the present conflict and, consequently, how they are to be addressed in future negotiations.

B. THE ROLE OF NATIONAL NARRATIVES IN THE PERPETUATION OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

The identitarian nature of the conflict is not, as studied in the precedent chapter, the cause of the conflict – which remains a conflict over territory – but rather the character it has acquired throughout the years on the basis of confronting national narratives. Nonetheless, whilst not marking the beginnings of the conflict, it has undoubtedly served to perpetuate it in a manner that has turned it into the foremost Protracted Social Conflict, defined by Azar as that where “communities are deprived of satisfaction of their basic needs on the basis of the communal identity” (Azar, 1990, p. 12). The present chapter will analyse the mechanisms through which national narratives have served to perpetuate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It will assert that the cognitive biases created by these narratives serve to perpetuate the conflict in two different ways: by creating a collective mindset which is favourable to war and by enhancing the sacredness of the conflicting values.

There is wide consensus regarding the fact that national narratives serve to amend one’s perception of reality. Individuals are not capable to define complex issues on terms which are entirely designed by them (Wade-Benzoni et al, 2000), but rather require of certain standards in order to process the vast amounts of information they obtain. These standards are provided by the institutions through norms and national narratives which create the prism through which citizens interpret their goals and strategies (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2010). This is done through the creation of cognitive biases whereby individuals themselves select and process the information in a distorted manner so that the information perceived is coherent with the narrative it has been taught.

First of all, narratives lead to the selective collection of information, in a way that society members will search and absorb information which is consistent with the narrative and will disregard that which is not. They create expectations for what information a person will receive, and consequently lead said person to direct its attention to specific kinds of messages and data. However, even when receiving contradictory or ambiguous information, narratives serve to define the manner in which said information is going to be encoded and processed by individuals, creating a set of biases by which individuals will interpret it in a manner which is coherent with the national narrative (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006).

Consequently, national narratives, generally driven by institutional actors, serve to define collective lines of reasoning and cognitive biases that shape society's perception of the World. Nonetheless, the society, whilst being influenced by these schemas, also has an important role in defining the values and consequently the actions of the institutions. Some authors have described actors operating in identitarian conflicts as "devoted actors", as opposed to "rational actors", defining the former as those who are willing to make extreme sacrifices based on a moral evaluation of "appropriateness" rather than an instrumental cost-benefit calculus of the risks of failure and potential benefits in case of success (Ginges & Atran, 2013; Bennis, Medin, & Bartels, 2010; Atran & Axelrod, 2007). Indeed, investigations in moral psychology and neuroimaging have shown that decision-making is linked to "gut-feelings" and the involvement of emotional brain systems when decisions are considered to have a moral value based on social conventions and norms (Haidt & Kesebir 2010; Anderson et al. 1999; Moll et al., 2002; Koelsche et al., 2015). Thus, leaders themselves are influenced by pre-existing national narratives and the collective memory which is predominant amongst the population.

Other authors believe that political leaders' approach to values is different to that of the general public (Putnam, 1988; Landman, 2010; Shamir & Shikaki, 2010). Policy-makers are bound by the influence of accountability and, because they are directly accountable for the consequences of their policies, their decision-making processes are characterized by a deeper analysis and consideration of alternatives (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999; Lerner & Tetlock, 2003; Fiske & Tetlock, 1997; Landman, 2010). Nonetheless, precisely due to said accountability, cognitive biases amongst the population have a notable influence in decision-making even amongst non-devoted or rational actors. It is, after all, public opinion which provides the governments with legitimacy. When a political decision violates what is considered through conventional wisdom as a moral mandate, society devalues the ruling system (Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Mullen, 2002; Bauman & Skitka, 2009). As will be analysed later, when society feels that "protected" or "sacred values" are compromised by leaders, they will express "moral outrage" and vilify whoever proposed the compromise, a sentiment which is often accompanied with an ardent support for punishment of said leader (McGraw & Tetlock, 2005).

Consequently, national narratives which are usually propagated by Governments – as well as other actors such as the media – serve to perpetuate biases amongst the population which serve to favour the prolongation of conflicts whilst, at the same time, said societal

biases limit decision-maker's possibilities to work towards any kind of peace agreement, when said agreement requires a concession of any kind. This vicious cycle leads to political conflicts transforming into "protracted conflicts". We will thus analyse the two ways in which the biases created by these narratives influence Israeli and Palestinian societies' attitude towards war and peace in two different ways.

Peace beliefs

The first consequence of national narratives in both sides of the conflict refers to society's belief in the possibility of peace on the basis of its depiction of the intention of the other side. Public surveys indicate that since the *Second Intifada* the Jewish population in Israel sharply lost faith in the possibility of reaching a peace agreement, falling from 67% in 1997 to 25% in 2007 (Ben-Meir, 2008). In another study (Bagno-Moldavsky & Ben-Meir, 2014), when asked about the cause of their scepticism, 34% of the Jewish Israelis blamed the "recalcitrance of the Palestinian Authority" and 7% blamed the internal split between the Palestinian political leadership, whilst half of the respondents attributed said attitude to the fact that "the gap between the two parties is too large". Only 9% blamed the "lack of flexibility on behalf of the Israeli government". These answers portray the Israeli perception of Palestinians as the "other", with a clear-cut differentiation between the two societies. Moreover, the fact that 34% of the population blamed solely the Palestinian authorities is a strong indicator of the deligitimization of Palestinian claims and governors which has taken place amongst the Israeli public and which is mirrored by the Palestinians in their perception of Israelis.

For instance, there is solid evidence that the image of the Arabs as a united nation aiming to destroy Israel has increased since the beginning of the Century. In this sense, the Joint Israeli-Palestinian Poll found in 2006 that an overwhelming percentage of 78% of respondents agreed with the statement that "The Muslims in the region will never accept the existence of the state of Israel". This negative imaging is due to the aforementioned mechanisms of self-victimization, religious outbidding and secular outbidding. The three mechanisms which lead to the failure of Camp David, combined with a sense of moral superiority (Halperin, Oren & Bar-Tal, 2010), are also reflected amongst the population, leading to the vilification and the attribution of characteristics of irrationality to the other party to the conflict. National narratives which enhance said image, for instance, through school textbooks and the media, favour mistrust between the parties in several ways.

First of all, they sharpen group differences because they describe the opponent in derogatory terms whilst glorifying one's own group (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006). Indeed, several experiments have proven that the levels of both hatred and fear of the other party are high amongst the population (Halperin, Oren & Bar-Tal, 2010). Secondly, they justify harming the other side given that they see themselves as the victims and the others as the perpetrators (Salomon, 2004). A clear example of this may be found in Ehud Olmert's speech of 17 January 2009, following the Gaza War:

Israel, which withdrew from the Gaza Strip down to the last millimetre at the end of 2005 [...] found itself under a barrage of missiles. Hamas violently took control of the Gaza Strip and [...] placed its military system in crowded residential neighbourhoods [...] while making the Palestinian population a hostage to its terrorist activities, with the understanding that Israel – as a country with high moral standards – would not act [...] We do not hate you [Palestinian citizens], we did not want and do not want to harm you. We wanted to defend our children, their parents, their families. We feel the pain of every Palestinian child and family member who fell victim to the cruel reality created by Hamas, which transformed you into victims.

In a similar line, Golda Meir stated: “We can forgive you for killing our sons. But we will never forgive you for making us kill yours” (Halperin, Oren & Bar-Tal, 2010). Thus, the parties portray themselves as a victim who has no choice other than defend itself from the perpetrator.

Similarly, Palestinians perceive Israeli attempts for negotiations as a prescribed solution that Israel generously provides – that they are not negotiating as equals. Thus, it is seen as yet another means to exploit Palestinian weaknesses in favour of Israeli interests. This feeling generates great resistance to negotiations and, consequently, to any peace agreement amongst the Palestinian population. The perception of inferior treatment may be inferred from the words that Ahmed Yassin, leader of Hamas, made when commenting the Arab Peace Initiative, insisting that any initiative generated by Arabs anywhere is an expression of defeat: “they [Israel] stole, murdered, and expelled – so let them propose the solutions and “we” will decide whether to accept them or not” (Tzoreff, 2010, p. 72).

Furthermore, both societies depict the opposing leaders as unwilling or unable to sign an agreement. During Yasser Arafat's mandate – Nobel Prize winner and probably the Palestinian leader who has made the most moves towards an agreement since the beginning of the conflict – surveys indicated that 70% of Israeli respondents held that Arafat lacked the desire or the capability to sign an agreement which would end the conflict, even if Israel agreed to all of his demands (Peace Index, May 2001). This was the result of the Israeli Government's characterization of the leader as "irrelevant" given his unwillingness to put an end to the conflict (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2010). Similarly, Hamas leaders constantly repeat in their rhetoric that Israel is misleading and deceiving the Palestinians and have no intention of ever fulfilling any of its obligations (Tzoreff, 2010), drinking from Palestinian feelings of defeatism and fears of exploitation.

In sum, national narratives are a powerful tool to mobilize the population by enhancing one's own morality whilst picturing the other side as cruel and untrustworthy. This leads to a sense of mistrust of the other and, consequently, a lesser desire for a peaceful solution, as they believe that the terms agreed upon will not be respected. Therefore, the national narratives used by Israelis and Palestinians lead to the creation of a social mindset which is more prone to war in general terms, supporting the perpetuation of the conflict instead of the negotiation of a solution.

Sacred values

The second way in which national narratives favour the perpetuation of identitarian conflicts is through the enhancement of sacred values, in that they are often used to capture and express moral values shared by society (Kaplan et al., 2016; Nelson, 2013; Mar and Oatley, 2008). In a conflict over identity, parties cultivate their own narrative in order to strengthen the national ethos, so that the narrative does not tolerate any questioning of its force or validity (Auerbach, 2010). Thus, the core of this narrative (what Auerbach terms "metanarrative") becomes what a wide range of authors have described as "sacred values" (Atran, 2003; Atran & Axelrod, 2008; Tetlock, 2003) or "protected values" (Baron and Spranca, 1997; Landman, 2010).

Sacred values may be defined as "moral imperatives that seem to drive behaviour independently of any concrete material goal" (Atran & Axelrod, 2008, p. 226). A value will be sacred when it is perceived as defining one's identity, thus becoming a concretion of a person's identity (Auerbach, 2010). Examples of sacred values are those held by

suicide bombers, who are willing to sacrifice their lives with no direct material benefit deriving from their act.

Sacred values have proven to have a strong negative impact on negotiations, given that the parties believe that any trade-off concerning these values are a strike at the core of their own identity. Thus, to the extent that conflicts involve people's core values and beliefs, the parties to a conflict will be more emotional and less able to think in an integratively complex fashion in negotiations (Tetlock et al, 1997). They are enforced in disproportionate measures, and so the desire of peace is subordinated to the protection of these identitarian matters (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981). This attitude towards negotiations becomes even stronger when the sacred values are linked to religion. Studies in neuroimaging have supported this by proving that religious thinking is associated with greater activity in brain areas related to pain perception and negative feelings like disgust, as well as feelings of reward, thus provoking more positive and negative emotions in religious subjects (Harris et al., 2009).

Consequently, actors are not willing to make trade-offs which are generally perceived as “rational” – this is, trade-offs that may maximize the parties' material benefits – when it requires sacrificing in full or in part what they perceive as a protected value. Said intrinsic characteristic to identitarian conflicts completely distorts generally accepted rationality-based rules for negotiations.

Not only are actors not willing to sacrifice these values, but a wide range of studies have proven that when this kind of trade-off is as much as proposed, people will be less willing to make any further compromises (Atran & Axelrod, 2008). Thus, said approach is not only ineffective but also counterproductive. As an example, family is perceived as a sacred value to most civilizations. If an individual were to be offered a large sum of money in exchange for a family member, it would generally be perceived as extremely offensive and break all ties between the proponent and the recipient (*idem.*).

The negative effect of these trade-offs may have two variants: moral outrage and moral cleansing (Tetlock et al., 2000; McGraw, Schwartz & Tetlock, 2012; McGraw & Tetlock, 2005; Rai & Fiske, 2011; Bauman & Skitka, 2009, amongst others). Moral outrage refers to the anger and disgust generated by said proposals. It has been linked to lower thresholds for making concessions to value violators and enthusiastic support for punishment of the

violator (Tetlock et al., 2000). Moral cleansing refers to the sentiment of need to react upon violation and reaffirm their position as a means to reaffirm its threatened identity, thus polarizing the parties' claims (*idem.*).

Sacred values in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Any peace agreement regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will necessarily involve compromise over both material issues, such as water access or security, and symbolic issues, this is, those whose importance derive from their perception as sacred. It is no surprise given the above that the latter have been the main obstacles in prior attempts of peace negotiations. There exist three main issues regarding sacred values: recognition of the State of Israel, recognition of the right of return of Palestinian refugees and sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem and, particularly, the Temple Mount.

According to the latest polls, 83% of the Jewish population in Israel believe that “the Palestinians must recognize Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people before peace talks with them can be revived” (Peace Index, August 2018). Similarly, in his speech at Bar-Ilan University in 2009, President Netanyahu stated that “the simple truth is that the root of the conflict has been and remains the refusal to recognize the right of the Jewish People to its own state in its historical homeland” (Rød-Larsen, Laiq & Aidan, 2014, p. 555). It is thus clear that Palestinian recognition of Israel – despite not being a material necessity given the international recognition of the State – is a prerequisite for any peace agreement, with the Israelis not willing to accept any mutually beneficial agreement that would require sacrificing this claim. Nonetheless, 59% of the Palestinian respondents opposed mutual recognition in any scenario (Joint Israeli Palestinian Poll, 2014), given that recognition would threaten in itself the Palestinian identity, which finds its concretion in said land.

Similarly, recognition of the right of return is core to Palestinian identity, for whom any compromise on the matter would mean rendering decades of struggle meaningless (Landman, 2010; Friedman, 2004; Peled & Rouahana, 2004). However, for Israel, acknowledging its responsibility regarding the situation of the refugees after the independence war and their right of return would threaten its national narrative, as well as presenting an existential threat: the fact that millions of Palestinians could enter the country would undermine its character as a Jewish state and, consequently, directly attack its identity (Landman, 2010; Friedman, 2004; Zakay, Klar & Sharvit, 2002). Thus, 77%

of Jewish Israelis oppose a peace deal involving recognition of responsibility for the “nakba”, whilst interestingly only 52% would reject any deal which would involve materially absorbing refugees within the Palestinian state (Peace Index, August 2018). The symbolic aspect of mere recognition of responsibility for the refugees is thus predominant over the practical matters it entails, this is, the subsequent absorption of the refugees in the country.

The final sacred value is the city of Jerusalem and, specifically, the Temple Mount, where the Al-Aqsa Mosque stands today. Temple Mount (al-Quds or the Holy in Arabic) is the third holiest city of Islam after Mecca and Medina, given that it was on the Temple Mount that the Prophet Mohammed rose to heaven according to Muslim tradition. Some thinkers extend the sacredness of this piece of land to the whole of Jerusalem, and even the whole land of Israel because the “surroundings” of the Al-Aqsa Mosque were blessed by Allah (Quran, 17:1), thus also becoming a key factor for denial of Israel’s right to exist. Palestinian Mufti Ikrima Sabri, who had been appointed by Arafat, stated during the Camp David Summit: “There is no room for compromise on our right to Jerusalem because our presence there is a decision of God, not a human decision” (Reiter, 2010, p. 248), reflecting the consideration of the city as a protected value.

For Judaism, Jerusalem is the holiest site on Earth, and the Temple Mount, where Abraham’s sacrifice took place, is considered to be the centre of the World. It is the place of residence the *shekhina* (presence of God) in the First and Second Temples, which were the center of Jewish tradition for approximately 1,000 years. In fact, one of the names of the city of Jerusalem – Zion – gives name to the nationalist movement of Zionism (Reiter, 2010). In an interview conducted with a former IDF Lieutenant-Colonel, when asked about the importance of Jerusalem for Judaism, he responded: “Jerusalem is the core of our identity, it is where we come from. The Jewish community was offered a State in Uganda and Argentina, but we chose to settle here only because of Jerusalem” (Anonymous, Personal Interview, February 2019).

Holy sites themselves present intrinsic characteristics which obstruct negotiations and favour conflict over the land (Hassner, 2009). First of all, they are indivisible. In the present case, the exact same area is holy to both religions – as well as Christianity – and consequently admits no territorial compromise. Currently Jerusalem is under Israeli sovereignty, with the old city being divided into four different quarters (the Jewish, the

Arab, the Christian and the Armenian) and with the Jordanians having *de jure* control over the Temple Mount area. However, no agreement will ever admit division over sovereignty of the Temple Mount, given that the Al-Aqsa Mosque is built directly on top of the area where the Temple of Solomon is considered to stand.

The second element defining holy sites is centrality: sacred places are central to one's religion and identity and consequently, the more central a site is to a religion, the more it is perceived as uniquely rigid and indivisible (Barkan & Barkey, 2014). Finally, holy sites have a shared element of vulnerability. Precisely because of its centrality, its unique symbolic value makes an attack on the site an attack to a whole community's core. Attacks are consequently highly harmful and require a low cost for the perpetrator. This makes the sites extremely vulnerable to aggressions, and parties will disproportionately protect these sites over non-sacred areas.

Given the importance of these three issues for both sides of the conflict, any agreement between the parties would require compromise over every one of them. However, a deal which involves a concession over any of these is perceived by society as a taboo trade-off and will be vehemently rejected by the population. Indeed, when security or water benefits, or even large parts of land, were offered by the Israeli representatives in the Camp David negotiations in turn for concessions regarding refugee's right of return or sovereignty over Jerusalem, Palestinian representatives left the negotiation table in disgust.

To this extent, a study conducted in 2003 with representative samples of Palestinian members of Hamas, Palestinian refugees and Jewish Israeli settlers found that amongst all three groups support for violent responses and emotional outrage were most present amongst moral-absolutists when "taboo trade-offs", or trade-offs involving sacred values, were proposed. Moreover, these responses were heightened when a material incentive was added to the proposed deal (Ginges, Atran, Medin & Shikaki, 2003). Rational common sense applied to peace negotiations would lead to the conclusion that when a material incentive is added to an existing proposal, the party who is benefitted by the incentive should be more inclined to accept the offer. However, it has been shown that under the exact same conditions in a proposal, when said kind of benefit is proposed people are less willing to accept the offer and will react more strongly against it.

Thus, when a claim is infused with a sense of “sacredness”, actors are willing to make extreme sacrifices in order to protect these claims. This completely distorts traditional negotiation systems, given the presumption of rationality on which they operate. These values have been created and perpetuated in Israeli and Palestinian societies throughout the years, through factors such as collective memory and social wisdom. Nonetheless, national narratives serve to reinforce these values, as they are used by leaders in order to prepare the younger generations to fight and even sacrifice their lives in order to protect them (Auerbach, 2010). At the same time, by exalting the attributes of glory and sacrifice in the protection of these values, they incline societal attitude towards acceptance of war rather than search for peace. Thus, national narratives in the Israeli and Palestinian societies create two content-related clusters of beliefs that, combined with negative emotions towards the opposing group, represent immense obstacles to conflict resolution (Halperin, Oren & Bar-Tal, 2010), leading to a widespread perception of the conflict as intractable and admitting no solution.

C. FIRST STEPS TOWARDS THE RESOLUTION OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

At the present moment, it is this essay's stance that no solution is possible given that any potential agreement would require both parties to compromise on matters that represent sacred values and current leaders continue to apply the aforementioned mechanisms which serve to perpetuate the conflict. Nonetheless, the conception of "sacredness" of a value is by no means immovable, but rather depends on society's perception of the issue. The present chapter will attempt to establish the guidelines for said perception to shift towards a peace-oriented attitude and the steps that must be taken for any future negotiation to turn fruitful.

Pseudo-sacred values: reframing perceptions

Certain authors consider that in a world of scarce resources, no value is ever sacred but rather pseudo-sacred – there is always some room for a trade-off given that no actor whatsoever is capable of allocating all of its resources to the protection of a single value (Thompson & González, 1997; Hoffman et al., 1999; Ginges, 2003; Bazerman, Tenbrunsel & Wade-Benzoni, 2008). When different values conflict with each other, trade-offs necessarily take place on a daily basis.

Moreover, sacred values can and have changed throughout the years as they are particularly open to interpretation. For instance, claims for "The Land" can refer to the whole land of Israel or Palestine, only to the land of Jerusalem or only to the area of the Temple Mount. The interpretability of the scope of "The Land" became clear when the Israelis interpreted it as including Gaza and the West Bank after its independence, and creatively reinterpreted it to justify abandoning its claims on Gaza (Atran & Axelrod, 2008). Some Israelis also considered the Sinai Peninsula a protected value and this feeling was neutralized after Israeli withdrawal from the area (Landman, 2010).

If Palestinians were to interpret this concept as referring solely to the Arab quarter, the values over the city of Jerusalem would no longer be conflicting. Similarly, if they were to infuse a widespread interpretation of "jihad" as the inner mental struggle for the preservation of faith, rather than the physical combat against external enemies, the war-prone society would most likely be more favourable to peaceful solutions. Though this may seem idealistic, it would not be the first time it happened: Saudi Arabia reframed the

concept of “jihad” in a manner that it would justify the prior praise and subsequent contempt the authorities showed towards Bin Laden during and after the Afghanistan war (Atran & Axelrod, 2008).

The question that necessarily follows is under what conditions these values transform in a manner which allows for their trading. Some authors believe this to be impossible, given the broadness of the division that both sides interpretations have acquired (Bar-On, 2006; Rotberg, 2006; Scham, Salem & Pogrud, 2005). Nonetheless, there is also a wide range of researchers who are slightly more optimistic, asserting that under certain circumstances, said values can be reframed in order to allow for peaceful solutions (Axan & Axelrod, 2008; Auerbach, 2010; Bar-On & Adwan, 2006). This essay will argue that two conditions must converge in order for this to happen: it must be perceived as a legitimate transformation under societal moral frameworks and the trade-off cannot be perceived as an attack by those transforming them.

Legitimate transformations

According to Atran and Axelrod (2008), taboo trade-offs are admissible only when allowed on the basis of the overarching moral frame that determines society’s morality, this is, when a society’s guiding principles hold two different sacred values and determine that one must cede in favour of the other. Thus, in order to allow for these trade-offs, said frame must be shifted so that it encompasses said arrangement.

However, in order for this to happen, the masses must be prepared to abandon the illusion that the values are infinitely important (Tetlock, 2003). At this point, we must recall three aspects touched upon in previous sections. First of all, masses have abandoned conditions that were held as sacred in the past, and it is consequently not impossible for it to happen. Secondly, when individuals perceive that their core values are being attacked, they display moral outrage and show enthusiastic support to punish the perpetrators, who are not only the enemies who attack them but also the elites who concede. Finally, there exists a reciprocal relation in the creation and transformation of values between the population and the elites, and national narratives set by preceding elites and the media greatly influence both actors.

It is from these three factors that we may derive that no solution is accessible nowadays, even if the elites were willing to reach an agreement – a circumstance which does not

take place either – given that the population perceives the issues at stake as absolute sacred values. However, this does not mean that the current scenario is immovable, but rather that it requires a progressive transformation in a manner that society does not feel that its values are being directly attacked.

Concrete values may change in time through two different means: *de facto* precedents and hypothetical precedents (Landman, 2010). *De facto* precedents are those that come from above, this is, the Government decides to take a specific action by giving up on a protected issue and, over time, society becomes accustomed to the *statu quo* without considering said issue as central to their identity. These precedents have proven effective in the past. For instance, the two changes in societal attitude towards the sacredness of the land – this is, over Gaza and Sinai – came about after effective withdrawal from both territories by the authorities (Landman, 2010; Atran & Axelrod, 2008). However, it is often a difficult step for leaders to take, given the initial public opposition it generally entails and the threat of support for punishment of the leader (generally, at the polls) who brings about said “attack” to national identity.

The hypothetical precedent is consequently a much slower process but probably the most feasible one at the current stage. Hypothetical precedents are those whereby the disconnection between the physical element of the issue (for example, the land or the material return of refugees) and the symbolic element (the sacredness of the former) takes place by introducing this idea in the public discourse. Given the initial public opposition that the introduction of these ideas entails, it must be done gradually in a manner that society itself becomes used to debating about it and thus accept the idea that the value does not have an absolute character, but rather may be limited at some instances (Bar-Tal, Landman, Magal & Rosler, 2009). It may be done through several instruments: international organization’s communications, the media and government rhetoric.

For instance, after Ehud Barak merely proposed the possibility of making concessions regarding Jerusalem during the Camp David Summit, Israeli attitude towards this taboo idea softened. Although it was initially taken with radical opposition, a public debate followed regarding the scope of compromise over Jerusalem and the percentage of supporters for a potential compromise grew steadily among the public (Ben-Meir & Shaked, 2007).

However, these changes need not be drastic proposals for negotiation. Leaders can reshape social perceptions gradually through progressive changes in national narratives, in a manner that they allow for overlaps with the other side's own narrative, bridging both sides narratives (Auerbach, 2010). Negotiation theory asserts that in order for negotiations to be fruitful, the issue at stake must be decomposed so that different aspects of the issue can be negotiated separately, so that the red lines may be appropriately identified and worked upon. This also applies to public debate. For instance, if the debate were to analyse differently the significance and consequences of the recognition of the right of return, the possibility of financial compensations and the absorption of refugees in Israeli territory, the debate would probably turn more rational and emotional elements would be removed or mitigated in the discussion (Landman, 2010).

Auerbach (2010) differentiates between “national narratives” and “metanarratives”. The former are societal or governmental constructs and may consequently be modified. The latter are much more entrenched in society and consequently admit no or very little modifications. By modifying national narratives, which serve to fortify metanarratives, society may come to terms with what elements of the conflict are really core to their identity and are consequently sacred values, and which ones are merely interests. Although these interests are very strong and not easily disposable, their disposal would not be taboo.

A good starting point would be excluding outmoded claims which both parties still hold though conscious that they are far-reaching. For example, Article 32 of the CIRM refers to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, notorious anti-Semitic records created by the Russian Czarist police. Similarly, Israeli leaders still refer to the old Zionist slogan that Palestine was “a Land without People for a People without Land”, despite there being over a million refugees who fled from this land. Leaders to both parties have privately acknowledged that these claims may not be historically accurate (Atran & Axelrod, 2008), but have not abandoned them. Abandoning these claims may be a subtle way to begin the process of transformation of societal attitudes towards the conflict.

Similarly, differentiating actors in attributing responsibility aids to identify actors and de-vilify the opposing party in a manner that it is not perceived as a united enemy. For example, in 2008 rockets were sent from the Gaza Strip to Israel. Israeli authorities blamed both Fateh and Hamas for the attack, despite the fact that Hamas has control over

the Gaza Strip and Fateh had little leverage over its actions (Atran & Axelrod, 2008). Contrarily, in March 2019, when two rockets were launched against Tel Aviv for the first time since the 2014 Gaza War, Israel not only did not blame the Palestinians as a whole, but publicly declared that the attack had been accidentally perpetrated by individual Hamas militants and retaliated in its response. Acts such as these, whereby responsibility is concretely attributed to those who take upon the action, avoids the perception of Palestinians as a united nation aiming to destroy the Jewish nation (Kubovich et al., 2019).

This differentiation between the different elements to an issue may also be done by non-government actors. Take, for instance, the task undertaken by the organization *Ir Amim* (“city of nations”) to show the public the separation that already exists in practice between East and West Jerusalem in order to promote differentiation amongst the elements of negotiation amongst the public through tours, campaigns and seminars (Landman, 2010). However, the work of *Ir Amim* is entirely exceptional, with few organizations attempting to do this, much less regarding Palestinian right of return (Zakay, Klar & Sharvit, 2002; Landman, 2010).

Once this differentiation is made, scholars support in virtual unanimity that by incorporating the other side’s point of view into one’s own narratives society becomes readier to embrace agreements which were seen as taboo. Again, this may be done through the media or through the authorities. A key element in creating and institutionalizing narratives is through education, given that the beliefs presented in school textbooks reach to all of the younger generations of society and are considered express truth or fact (Bar-Tal & Salomon, 2006).

Attempts to united points of view through joint history textbooks have proven useful in the past. Examples where historians from rivalling countries have worked together to publish joint history books have been Japan and China, regarding the Nanking Massacre, or France and Germany, regarding European history (Auerbach, 2010). Indeed, an attempt to do so was made by Professors Dan Bar-On from Ben-Gurion University and Sami Adwan from Bethlehem University whereby the different narratives were incorporated and contradictions between them were signalled out, such as the “the 1929 pogroms” (as known by the Israelis) versus “the 1929 revolt” (as termed by the

Palestinian) or “the War of Independence” versus “the *Nakba*”. However, the authorities by both sides rejected the books.

United history books are thus an effective way to bridge the gaps between societies in conflict but are generally not a feasible option in conflict resolution, but rather in post-conflict reconciliation. Nonetheless, it is possible for the authorities to incorporate some of the contradictions to their own textbooks. The approval by the Israeli education ministry of a textbook for Arabs in Israel that described Israel’s 1948 War of Independence as a “catastrophe” for many Palestinians a decade ago could be a first step towards this (Atran & Axelrod, 2008), but it would require Jewish children in Israel to study from these books in order for Israeli perception to shift towards a peace-driven society.

Trust building

As was explained in the precedent chapter, there is currently widespread pessimism regarding the opposing party’s willingness to reach an agreement, on the one hand, and comply with its terms, on the other. Moreover, the feeling that the parties want to attack the other side’s core values has a backlash effect regarding society’s disposition to possible solutions. The combination of these two factors leads to a greater support for the perpetuation of the conflict, given that there is no incentive to reach a peace agreement. The only way to break this cycle is by making both sides acknowledge that the other is sincerely willing to reach an agreement and does not intend to attack their identity or their community.

In order to do this, the parties must feel that their values are being recognized by the other. To this end, both parties must acknowledge, or at least stop denying, the other’s rights and claims, starting by acknowledging the other’s religious rights to the land. For instance, the claim made by Mufti Ikrima Sabri stating that the Temple Mount was never there has been adopted by the Palestinian Ministry of Information and fills Palestinian textbooks and broadcasts as part of a revisionist history and has begun a movement of denial of the Jewish connection to the site (Reiter, 2008). Similarly, former Director-General for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Reuven Merhav, denied Muslim connection to Jerusalem as a whole by stating that it does not appear in the Quran (Sher, 2006), and Israeli population often echoes the fact that Jerusalem is only the third holiest city to

Muslims whilst it is the centre of the world for Jews. Thus, both parties acknowledge their own values as sacred but fail to appreciate the sacredness of the other's values.

These claims do not lead to any gains, given that they will never convince the opposing party of what is said, whilst they do polarize both societies. Contrarily, there is great evidence that support for violence decreases when adversaries make symbolic gestures that show recognition of the other's core values (Atran & Axelrod; Atran, Axelrod & Davis, 2007; Ginges et al., 2007). For instance, Atran, Axelrod and Davis (2007, p. 1040) report that a senior member of the National Security Council admitted that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon told him regarding the removal of settlers from Gaza "that he realized only afterwards that he should have made a symbolic concession and called them Zionist heroes making yet another sacrifice" instead of blaming them for wasting too much money and endangering soldiers' lives.

In an interview to current Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu conducted by Scott Atran, when asked if he would consider accepting a two-state solution following the 1967 borders if all major Palestinian factions were to recognize the right of the Jewish people to an independent state in the region, he answered: "OK, but the Palestinians would have to show that they sincerely mean it, change their textbooks and anti-Semitic characterizations". From this response we can extract two conclusions. First of all, symbolic concessions prior to negotiations favour leader's disposition towards an agreement. Secondly, a symbolic concession does not suffice if it is perceived as insincere. Thus, in order for negotiations to begin, some symbolic gestures must take place in order to ensure public support for the negotiations, whilst, as will be explained below, a range of symbolic concessions must be done during the negotiations themselves, prior to any material proposals.

Negotiating sacred values

Only once a structural change in society's view on sacred values and its perception of the opposing party takes place may the negotiations begin in order for them to be fruitful. Common negotiation wisdom has led negotiators to attempt to abandon sacred values completely during the negotiations or leave the protected issues to be negotiated last (Argo & Ginges, 2015). However, this has proven unfruitful in past negotiations, with the Camp David Summits becoming a corner stone for those who defend the opposite strategy, this is, negotiating the most delicate issues first. When issues are of such

importance for both parties, they will be aware of the threat throughout the negotiations and will therefore influence the proceedings even when it is not officially being negotiated by actively engaging in claims of sacred values to prevent impasse (Atran & Axelrod, 2008; Argos & Ginges, 2015; Gibson, 2011).

To this extent, Fraser (1995) establishes a continuum between two types of demands for social justice: recognition and redistribution. The former are based on socio-economic injustice whilst the latter arise out of cultural injustice stemming from identity (Nagar & Shamir, 2013). In order for a negotiation to be fruitful, both of these demands must be met. Thus, every negotiation involving ideological issues requires the parties to go through three different phases: first of all, recognition; secondly, pardon; and finally, only once both symbolic demands are met, material benefits (Bar-Siman-Tov, 2010).

Recognition

Recognition refers to acknowledgment of the other side's values. It is essential at this stage that the parties show respect towards their counterpart by treating them as equals and recognizing their protected values. During the Camp David negotiations, one of the motives that led to their break-up was precisely the Palestinian belief that they were treated with inferiority given the perceived partiality that the mediators, in said occasion President Clinton, showed towards the Israelis (*ibid.*). According to the Palestinian version of the negotiations, Israel (with United States support) tried to maximise its achievements whilst completely ignoring the position of the Palestinians as partners to the peace process (Hanieh, 2001). This is, from their point of view, the one and only reason for the failure of the Camp David Summit.

There are two means to mutually recognize values: one negative and one positive. The negative means refers to refraining from monetizing said values. Proposals cannot include trades which involve renouncing to a sacred value in return for a material benefit. In contrast, "pure deals", this is, those which do not mix the sacred and the profane through the monetization of values are perceived to have greater legitimacy (Landman, 2010). Thus, elements to an issue must be separated as explained above, and material demands must be differentiated from symbolic or sacred demands. Once this differentiation is made, material demands must be approached through material incentives whereas symbolic demands may only be met through "tragic trade-offs", which involve sacrificing one sacred value in exchange for protection of another (Tetlock, 2003; Tetlock et al.,

2000; Argos & Ginges, 2015; Landman, 2010). These deals confront a lesser degree of opposition, as they can be framed as necessary or heroic (Atran & Axelrod, 2008; Argos & Ginges, 2015).

Tragic trade-offs can involve sacrificing one's own value in exchange for the counterpart doing so with its own or sacrificing one's own value in order to protect another held by the same party (Landman, 2010). The former requires the trade-off to be seen as symmetrical, this is, the value which is sacrificed must be perceived as equally important as the one which is forfeited by the other party. This, of course, demands a prior effort in raising awareness about the other's values through the aforementioned mechanisms so that society understands the importance of the gesture.

The latter works on the basis that there is a necessity for the values to take place, this is, that one of the two values has to be necessarily forfeited. This is done through the framing of the compromise as a national moral dilemma (*ibid.*). Studies have found that when two values are presented as clashing in a way that both cannot live together, individuals are more willing to compromise (Baron & Leshner, 2000). For instance, a study presented Israeli Jews with a situation whereby if they did not agree on a compromise for a two-state solution, the international community would force them to implement a bi-national. Given that this solution would mean the end of Israel as a Jewish State, thus attacking one of their core values, respondents were more willing to compromise regarding other sacred values (Gayer, Landman, Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2009). This idea was also reflected in the manifesto of the centrist political party Kadima, which was founded by Ariel Sharon and was later led by Ehud Olmert. The manifesto holds as its overarching principle that, despite the Jewish having a national right to the whole *Eretz Yisrael*, maintaining Israel's existence as a National Jewish state requires necessitates that they accept that the end of the conflict will require a two-state solution, thus relinquishing part of the "sacred" land (Ehrenberg & Peled, 2016).

The positive means to show respect for sacred values, thus facilitating negotiations, is through symbolic concessions. Studies have shown that opposition to compromise is lowered when symbolic concessions are added to proposed trade-offs. For instance, a study proposed three different deals to three different groups involved in the conflict: Jewish settlers, Palestinian students and Palestinian refugees. Then, it added material incentives, on the one hand, and symbolic concessions, on the other, to the pre-existing

peace deals. It found that whilst material incentives were seen as violations of sacred values, symbolic concessions of no apparent material benefit opened the way to compromise (Atran, Axelrod & Davis, 2007).

One of the three core issues to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the recognition of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, relies entirely on a symbolic concession, the recognition of one of the core values of the Israeli Jews. Similarly, sovereignty over Jerusalem has a large component of recognition of both side's links to the land. The recognition of the right of return, on the other hand, is four-fold: it involves recognizing the suffering of the Palestinians, recognizing their right to return to the land where the State of Israel stands, recognizing Israeli responsibility in their suffering, and materially absorbing the refugees. Out of these four aspects of the demand, only the absorption of refugees has material effects. The rest are merely symbolic, given that the demand is met with the act of recognition in itself, whilst the third symbolic element, recognition of Israeli responsibility is also intimately linked to the second stage of ideological negotiations: the pardon.

Pardon

The prototypical symbolic concession in all ideological conflicts is the apology. For example, Israel and the World Jewish Congress refused to take direct compensation from Germany for the property of murdered Jews despite its critical economic situation until it publicly declared remorse for the murder and suffering of the Jews under German control (Lustick, 2006).

Akram Hanieh, then close advisor to Yasser Arafat, defined the refugee committee as “the greatest failure of the Summit” (Hanieh, 2001, p. 82), due to the fact that the discussions focused mainly on the past, the justice for the Palestinian *Nakba*, rather than on the actual solution to the current issue. The main point of concern was in fact Israeli representatives' unwillingness to accept primary responsibility for the refugee situation. However, when Ehud Barak expressed readiness to publicly express regret for the suffering of the refugees who were forced to flee after the “War of Independence”, and to admit shared responsibility (though not full responsibility), Palestinian representatives have been reported to have downplayed their demands, notwithstanding the subsequent change of leadership in both parties which led to the definitive break-down of the negotiations (Lustick, 2006).

This is not to say that symbolic concessions (recognition and pardon) are always enough in themselves, but rather that they represent a necessary step in order to allow for negotiations over material issues to take place. When Musa Abu Marzouk was asked whether he would accept a peace deal without granting a right of return but including an apology for the suffering of the refugees, he replied: “Yes, an apology is important, but only as a beginning” (Atran & Axelrod, 2008, p. 234). In a similar tone, as explained above, when Benjamin Netanyahu was asked to consider accepting a two-state solution where all major Palestinian factions were to recognize their right to an independent Jewish state, he answered: “OK, but the Palestinians would have to show that they sincerely mean it, change their textbooks and anti-Semitic characterizations, and then allow some border adjustments so that Ben Gurion [Airport] would be out of range of shoulder-fired missiles” (*ibid.*).

Studies amongst Palestinian civilians have shed the same results. In a study conducted in 2013, most interviewees considered recognition to be essential in any agreement but insufficient, as concrete implementation would be needed. However, the majority also acknowledged that they were aware that the extent of the implementation would have to be limited, this is, not all refugees would be able to return to Israel (Nagar & Shamir, 2013). Nonetheless, in a poll conducted in 2003, whilst most of the respondents also stated that there could be no agreement without recognizing the right of return, only 10% of the respondents expressed a wish to actually live in the State of Israel (*ibid.*). This proves that, at least at the time, the right of return, whilst having both symbolic and material elements, primarily had a symbolic importance for Palestinians.

Material benefits

Material benefits can only be addressed once symbolic demands are met, in order to prevent the backlash effect of monetization of sacred values. This allows to negotiate material trade-offs separately so that sacred values are respected, and the negotiations are allowed to continue. The main material issues which have been brought up in previous negotiations are those related with land, refugee return, security and access to water.

The land may be perceived as a mixed demand, given that the territory in itself has both symbolic and concrete elements attached to it. Nonetheless, with the exception of Jerusalem, territorial compromises have been agreed upon in the past and are largely subject to negotiations, thus not representing in its majority a sacred value. The issue

regarding Palestinian refugees, however, can be clearly differentiated and discussed separately once the symbolic aspects are agreed upon.

The matters regarding security and water access are generally perceived as merely material and as having no symbolic elements attached to them. Security refers primarily to the closeness of Israel to the numerous enemy states that surrounds it, as well as protection from the potential menace of Palestinian terrorist groups not respecting the agreed terms. Water access, on the other hand, refers to the distribution of water along all of the territories. In the aforementioned 2013 survey, all but one of the interviewees referred to the concrete aspects of the matter, seeking alternative solutions such as desalination. Despite the Palestinian interviewees referring to “equal” solutions, they did not establish any symbolic links to the matter. Similarly, most interviewees proposed specific solutions to the matter of security, such as strategic presence of Israeli forces outside the Green Line or an international presence in the Jordan Rift Valley (Nagar & Shamir, 2013).

Thus, once the aforementioned stages of conflict negotiation are overcome, the parties will approach the issues in a pragmatic manner, seeking to maximize their benefits. This consequently allows for the application of traditional realist rationality-based approaches to conflict resolution when material benefits are discussed.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one which may be clearly categorized as an identitarian conflict, meaning that actors' decision-making processes are not based on a utilitarian cost-benefit calculus. Said identitarian approach reflects a hybridization of religion and nationalism, whereby both elements jointly conform Palestinian and Israeli identities. Consequently, traditional realist approaches which have been applied in prior negotiations by the intervening parties do not adequately address the issue, as they work on the assumption that the actors make their decisions in a rational manner.

Both Palestinian and Israeli identities are formed in contraposition to that of the other and are directly confronted in the issues at stake, particularly regarding the recognition of the State of Israel, the right of return of Palestinian refugees and sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. This creates a link between the disputed physical elements, such as the land, and the core of the parties' identity. Said link is exacerbated by leaders through national narratives and by the population itself in a manner that perpetuates the conflict through the decrease in peace beliefs and the enhancement of sacred values.

Sacred values represent a significant obstacle to conflict resolution due to their characteristics and individual's reactions to their violation. They are characterized by their indivisibility, their centrality and their vulnerability, which make an agreement between the parties extremely difficult. Moreover, given their centrality, trade-offs which are based on material incentives – as dictated by traditional realist approaches – lead to a backlash effect whereby the parties polarize their positions and display moral outrage.

Resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not possible at the current stage, given the national ethos which exists amongst both societies, and any potential resolution requires a transformation of said ethos. This may be done through *de facto* precedents – this is, actions taken by the authorities to change the *statu quo* – or hypothetical precedents, through the incorporation of the controversial issues into the public debate.

In order to create a rational public debate, the disputed matters must be decomposed so that each of their elements can be analysed separately attending to their nature and characteristics. Once this is done, opposing narratives can be integrated into one's own narrative, so that values are not interpreted as absolute but rather jointly considered.

Moreover, the authorities and the media must use a rhetoric which breaks the current pessimism regarding the other side's intentions and reliability, in order to build trust in the leaders for future negotiations.

Only once the national ethos allows for the population to support necessary compromises may negotiations begin. These negotiations must go through three stages, with the first two having merely symbolic value and the third one attending to concrete material matters. The first stage is recognition of the other's values, which is done, first of all, by not monetizing them and, secondly, by offering symbolic concessions which show regard for these values. At this stage, recognition of the State of Israel as a Jewish nation-state, on the one hand, and recognition of the suffering and the abstract right to return of the Palestinians, on the other, are necessary. The second stage is the pardon or apology for the sufferings caused by each of the parties and the acknowledgment of responsibility, particularly regarding the refugee situation created by the 1948 war. Once these two symbolic aspects are covered, the parties may discuss the material benefits as a third stage according to traditional realist rules for negotiation.

This essay does not intend to offer a holistic solution for the conflict, but rather the guidelines that must be followed in order for negotiations to be facilitated in the future. Further research should be done regarding the concrete symbolic demands of the parties, and the ability to attend to those demands by the other. Moreover, research should be done as to what parts of both narratives may be bridged and the techniques which may be used in order to do so. In any case, no solution will be feasible as long as the governments continue to distance themselves from one another and reinforce their positions through their rhetoric, as they have been doing for the past two decades.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Articles

Abu, O. (2008). Nationalism, Religion and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process. *40th Annual Conference of the Northeastern Political Science Association*.

Anderson, S.W., Bechara, A., Damasio, H., Tranel, D., & Damasio, A.R. (1999). Impairment of social and moral behavior related to early damage in human prefrontal cortex. *Natural Neuroscience*, 2, 1032–1037.

Argo, N. & Ginges, J. (2015). Beyond impasse: Addressing sacred values in international political negotiations. In M. Galluccio (Ed.), *Handbook of international negotiation: Interpersonal, intercultural, and diplomatic perspectives*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 311-327.

Asad, T. (2003). *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Atran, S. (2007). Sacred values, terrorism and the limits of rational choice. In: J. McMillan (ed.), *In the same light as slavery: Building a global antiterrorist consensus, Institute for National Strategic Studies*. Washington, DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University Press.

Atran, S. (2016). The Devoted Actor: Unconditional Commitment and Intractable Conflict across Cultures. *Current Anthropology*, 57(13), 192-203.

Atran, S. & Axelrod, R. (2008). Reframing sacred values. *Negotiation Journal* 24(3), 221-246.

Atran, S., Axelrod, R. & Davis, R. (2007). Sacred barriers to conflict resolution. *Science*, 317.

Axelrod, R. & Hamilton, W. (1981). The evolution of cooperation. *Science*, 211.

Auerbach, Y. (2010). National Narratives in a Conflict of Identity. In: Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (ed.) *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Israel and The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies.

Azar, E.E. (1990). *The Management of Protracted Social Conflicts: Theory and Cases*. Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing.

Bagno-Moldavsky, O. & Ben-Meir, Y. (2014). Who in Israel is Ready for a Peace Agreement with the Palestinians? *Strategic Assessment*, 7(1), 47-56.

Barkan, E. & Barkey, K. (2014). *Choreographies of Shared Sacred Sites: Religion, Politics, and Conflict Resolution*. New York City, NY: Columbia University Press.

- Baron, J. & Leshner, S. (2000). How Serious Are Expressions of Protected Values? *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 6(3), 183-194.
- Baron, J. & Spranca, M. (1997). Protected values. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 70(1), 1–16.
- Bar-On, M. (2006). Conflicting Narratives or Narratives of a Conflict. In R.I. Rotberg (ed.), *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 142-173.
- Bar-on, D. and Adwan, S. (2006). The Psychology of Better Dialogue Between Two Separate but Interdependent Narratives. In R. I. Rotberg (ed.), *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 205-224.
- Bar-Siman-Tov, Y. (2010). Introduction: Barriers to conflict. In Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (ed.) *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Israel and The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies.
- Bar-Tal, D. (2007). Sociopsychological Foundations of Intractable Conflicts. *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 50(11), 1430-1453.
- Bar-Tal, D. & Halperin, E. (2009). Overcoming Psychological Barriers to Peace Process: The Influence of Beliefs About Losses. In M. Mikulincer & P.R. Shaver (eds.), *Prosocial Motives, Emotions and Behaviors: The Better Angels of Our Nature*, American Psychological Association Press, 431-448.
- Bar-Tal, D., Landman, S., Magal, T. & Rosler, N. (2009). Societal-Psychological Dynamics of Evolvement of Repertoire Supporting Peace Making: A Conceptual Framework. Paper presented at the Small Group Meeting of the European Association of Social Psychology: *Resolving Societal Conflicts and Building Peace: Socio-Psychological Dynamics*, Jerusalem, Israel.
- Bar-Tal, D., & Salomon, G. (2006). Israeli-Jewish Narratives of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Evolvement, Contents, Functions and Consequences. In R.I. Rotberg (Ed.). *Israeli and Palestinian narratives of conflict: History's Double Helix*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Bauman, C. & Skitka, L. (2009). Moral Disagreement and Procedural Justice: Moral Mandates as Constraints to Voice Effects. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 61(1), 40-49.
- Bazerman, M., Tenbrunsel, A. & Wade-Benzoni, K. (2008). When ‘Sacred’ Issues Are at Stake. *Negotiation Journal*, 24(1), 113-117.
- Ben Ami, S. (2006) *Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Ben-Rafael, E. & Peres, Y. (2005). Is Israel One? Religion, Nationalism and Multiculturalism Confounded. In E. Ben-Rafael & Y. Gorny (eds.) *Jewish Identities in a Changing World*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Ben Meir, Y. & Shaked, D. (2007). *The People Speak: Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2005-2007*. Memorandum No. 90. Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies.
- DiMaggio, P.J. & Powell, W.W. (1983). The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields. *American sociological review*, 48 (2): 147-160.
- Drori, Z. (2015) The 'Religionizing' of the Israel Defence Force: its Impact on Military Culture and Professionalism. *Res Militaris*, 5(1).
- Dwyer, S. (1999). Reconciliation for Realists. *Ethics and International Affairs*, 13(1), 81-98.
- Ehrenberg, J. & Peled, Y. (2016). *Israel and Palestine: Alternative Perspectives on Statehood*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Fiske, A. P. & Tetlock, P. E. (1997). Taboo Tradeoffs: Reactions to Transactions That Transgress the Spheres of Justice. *Political Psychology*, 18(2), 255-297.
- Fisher, R. & Ury, W. (1981). *Getting to yes: negotiating agreement without giving in*. New York: Penguin.
- Fraser, N. (1995). Recognition or Redistribution? A Critical Reading of Iris Young's Justice and the Politics of Difference. *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 3(2), 166-180.
- Friedman, A. (2004). Unraveling the Right of Return. *Refuge*, 21(2), 62-69.
- Gayer, C., Landman, S., Halperin, E. & Bar-Tal, D. (2009). Overcoming Psychological Barriers to Peaceful Conflict Resolution: The Role of Arguments About Losses. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 53, 951- 975.
- Gibson, K. (2011). Making Sense of the Sacred. *Negotiation Journal*, 27(4), 477.
- Ginges, J. & Atran, S. (2013). Sacred values and cultural conflict. In: M.J. Gelfand, C. Chiu & Y. Hong (eds.) *Advances in Culture and Psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ginges, J., Atran, S., Medin, D. & Shikaki, K. (2007). Sacred bounds on rational resolution of violent political conflict. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science of the United States of America*, 104(18),7357-7360
- Goodin, R. (1980). Making moral incentives pay, *Policy Sciences*, 12.

- Haidt J. & Kesebir, S. (2010). Morality. In: D. Gilbert & G. Lindzey (eds.) *Handbook of social psychology*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Halperin, E., Oren, N. & Bar-Tal, D. (2010). Socio-Psychological Barriers to Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: An Analysis of Jewish Israeli Society. In Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (ed.) *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Israel and The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies.
- Hanieh, A. (2001). The Camp David Papers. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 30(2), 75-97.
- Harris, S. et al. (2009). The neural correlates of religious and nonreligious belief. *PLoS One*, 4(10), 1-9.
- Hassner, R.E. (2009). *War on Sacred Grounds*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hoffman, A., Gillespie, J., Moore, D., Wade-Benzoni, K., Thompson, L. & Bazerman, M. (1999). A mixed-motive perspective on the economics versus environmental debate. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 42.
- Koelsch, S., Jacobs, A.M., Menninghaus, W., Liebal, K., Klann-Delius, G., von Scheve, C. & Gebauer, G. (2015). The quartet theory of human emotions: An integrative and neurofunctional model. *Physical Life Review*, 13(1), 1–27.
- Kubovich, Y., Khoury, J., Ben Zikri, A., Landau, N., Peleg, B. & Breiner, J. (2019, March). Israel Strikes 100 Targets in Gaza in Response to Rockets Fired at Tel Aviv. *Haaretz*. Retrieved from <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/rocket-alerts-blare-in-tel-aviv-1.7022326>
- Landman, S. (2010). Barriers to Peace: Protected Values in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (ed.) *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Israel and The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies.
- Latour, B. (1993). *We have Never Been Modern*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lerner, J. S. & Tetlock, P. E. (1999). Accounting for the Effects of Accountability. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(2), 255-275.
- Lerner, J. S. & Tetlock, P. E. (2003). Bridging Individual, Interpersonal, and Institutional Approaches to Judgment and Decision Making: The Impact of Accountability on Cognitive Bias. In S.L. Schneider & J. Shanteau (eds.) *Emerging Perspectives on Judgment and Decision Research*. Cambridge Series on Judgment and Decision Making. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 431-457.
- Lustick, I. (2006). Negotiating truth: The Holocaust, Lehavdil, and al-Nakba. *Journal of International Affairs*, 60, 51-80.

- Lybarger, L.D. (2007). *Identity and Religion in Palestine*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Magal, T., Oren, N., Bar-Tal, D. & Halperin, E. (2013). Psychological Legitimization – Views of the Israeli Occupation by Jews in Israel: Datan and Implications. In D. Bar-Tal & I. Schnell (eds.), *The Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip: Implications for the Occupying Society*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Mar, R.A. & Oatley, K. (2008). The function of fiction is the abstraction and simulation of social experience. *Perspective Psychology Science*, 3, 173–192.
- March, J.G. (1981). Decisions in organizations and theories of choice. In A. Van de Ven & W.F. Joyce (eds.), *Perspectives of Organizational Design and Behaviour*. New York: Wiley.
- McGraw, A.P., Schwartz, J.A. & Tetlock, P.E. (2005). From the Commercial to the Communal: Reframing Taboo Trade-offs in Religious and Pharmaceutical Marketing. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39 (1), 157-173.
- McGraw, A. P. & Tetlock, P. E. (2005). Taboo Tradeoffs, Relational Framing and the Acceptability of Exchanges. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(1), 2-15.
- Moll, J., de Oliveira-Souza, R., Eslinger, P.J., Bramati, I.E., Mourao-Miranda, J., Andreiuolo, P.A. & Pessoa, L. (2002). The neural correlates of moral sensitivity: a functional magnetic resonance imaging investigation of basic and moral emotions. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 22, 2730–2736.
- Nagar, R. & Shamir, J. (2013). Symbolic and Concrete Demands in Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 20 (2), 211-233.
- Neale, M.A. & Bazerman, M.H. (1991). Negotiator cognition and rationality: A behavioral decision theory perspective. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 51(2), 157-175.
- Nelson, K. (2003). Narrative and the emergence of a consciousness of self. In G. Fireman, T. McVay & O. Flanagan (eds.), *Narrative and Consciousness: Literature, Psychology, and the Brain*. New York: Oxford University Press, 17–36.
- Palthe, J. (2014). Regulative, Normative, and Cognitive Elements of Organizations: Implications for Managing Change. *Management and Organizational Studies*, 1(2), 59-64.
- Peled Y. & Rouhana, N. (2004). Transitional Justice and the Right of Return of the Palestinian Refugees. *Theoretical Inquiries in Law*, 5(2) 317-332.
- Putnam, R. D. (1988). Diplomacy and domestic politics: The logic of two-level games. *International Organization*, 42(3), 427-460.

- Rai, T.S. & Fiske, A.P. (2011). Moral psychology is relationship regulation: moral motives for unity, hierarchy, equality, and proportionality. *Psychology Review*, 118 (1), 57-75.
- Raiffa, H. (1981). *The art and science of negotiation*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Reiter, Y. (2008). *Jerusalem and Its Role in Islamic Solidarity*. Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Reiter, Y. (2010). Religion as a Barrier to Compromise in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. In: Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (ed.) *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Israel and The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies.
- Rød-Larsen, T., Laiq, N. & Aidan, F. (2014). *The Search for Peace in the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Compendium of Documents and Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rotberg, R. I. (ed.) (2006). *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Rothman, J. & Olson, M. (2001). From Interests to Identities: Towards a New Emphasis in Interactive Conflict Resolution. *Journal of Peace Research*, 38(3), 289-305. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/425002>
- Roy, S. (2004). Religious Nationalism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Examining Hamas and the Possibility of Reform. *Chicago Journal of International Law*, 5 (1), 251-270.
- Scham, P., Salem, W. & Pogrud, B. (eds.) (2005). *Shared Histories: A Palestinian Israeli Dialogue*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Shavit, A. (2001). The Day Peace Died: Interview with Shlomo Ben Ami, *Haaretz*.
- Scott, W. R. (1995). *Institutions and Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Shamir, J. & Shikaki, K. (2010). *Palestinian and Israeli public opinion: The public imperative in the second intifada*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Sher, G. (2006). *Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiations, 1999-2001: Within Reach*, Israeli History, Politics and Society. Routledge.
- Skitka, L. J. (2002). Do the Means Justify the Ends, Or Do the Ends Justify the Means? A Test of the Value Protection Model of Justice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 588–597.
- Skitka, L. J. & Mullen, E. (2002). Understanding Judgments of Fairness in a Real-World Political Context: A Test of the Value Protection Model of Justice Reasoning. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 1419–1429.

Swisher, C.E. (2004). *The Truth about Camp David: The Untold Story About the Collapse of the Middle East Peace Process*. New York, NY: Nation Books.

Tetlock, P.E. (2003). Thinking the unthinkable: sacred values and taboo cognitions. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 7(7), 320-324.

Tetlock, P.E. et al (2000). The Psychology of the Unthinkable: Taboo Trade-Offs, Forbidden Base Rates, and Heretical Counterfactuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78(5), 853-870.

Thompson, L.L. & Gonzalez, R. (1997). Environmental disputes: Competition for scarce resources and clashing of values. In: M.H. Bazerman, D.M. Messick, A.E. Tenbrunsel, & K.A. Wade-Benzoni (Eds.), *Environment, Ethics and Behavior*, 75-104. San Francisco: New Lexington Press.

Tzoreff, Y. (2010). Barriers to Resolution of the Conflict with Israel – The Palestinian Perspective. In: Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (ed.) *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Israel and The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies.

Varshney, A. (2003). Nationalism, ethnic conflict and rationality. *Perspectives on politics*, 1(1), 85-99.

Wade Benzoni, K.A. et al (2000). Barriers to Resolution in Ideologically Based Negotiations: The Role of Values and Institutions. *Academy of Management Review*, 27(1), 41-57.

Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics. *International Organization*, 46(2).

Yatom, D. (2005) Background, Process and Failure. In: S. Shamir & B. Maddy-Weitzman, *What Went Wrong?* Brighton, England: Sussex Academy Press.

Zakay, D., Klar, Y. & Sharvit, K. (2002). Jewish Israelis on the ‘Right of Return’. *Palestine-Israel Journal*, 9, 58-66.

Religious and political texts

Torah:

- Bamidbar 33:53
- Devarim 11:31

Quran: 17:1

Hamis Covenant (1988), *Avalon Project*, Yale Law University. Retrieved from: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp

Fateh's Constitution (2009), *Ariel Center for Policy Research*. Retrieved from: <http://www.acpr.org.il/resources/fatehconstitution.html>

Polls and surveys

Joint Israeli Palestinian Poll, June 2014.

Joint Israeli Palestinian Poll, 2006.

Peace Index, August 2018.

Peace Index, September 2018.

Peace Index, July 2017.

Peace Index, December 2015.

Peace Index, May 2001.

Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research & The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, July 2018.

Interviews

Anonymous (2019, February). Personal Interview.