Chapter 1 : Democracy - Oxford Islamic Studies Online

T his chapter has two goals. The first is to identify economic and political trends and issues that could shape Palestinian politics in the next 5 years and beyond. The second is to assess the.

The organization was alternating then between militant and moderate strategies, both of which were shaped by ideology, goals, past experience and external influences. The early strategy, which the PLO adopted following its radicalization by the fedayeen, was quite militant and was based on a type of guerrilla warfare, sometimes referred to as a "peoples? It was also perceived as the only means of achieving the "total liberation" of Palestine and the return of all displaced Palestinians to their homes in the territories occupied by Israel. In , however, a year after the Arab-Israeli war, resolutions were taken during the 12th Palestine National Council PNC meeting to modify certain aspects of the "all-or-nothing policy. Diplomacy became an alternative to militancy, as long as it offered hope of success. This last one suggested two alternatives or forms: This article will focus on the PLO evolution within the last two phases. The proposal called for the creation of a non-sectarian secular state in which all Jewish residents who had come to Palestine prior to would become citizens. By making this albeit- unrealistic concession, the PLO was able to dissociate itself from the popular policies of the traditional Palestinian and Pan-Arab elites of the early s. They called, for instance, for a political settlement based on the concept of a Palestinian political entity or state coexisting with Israel. Later, such views were to gradually influence the PLO to pursue a program that would appeal to people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In the wake of the October war, pro-PLO elements, as well as the Communists, became active in West Bank politics, presenting a serious challenge to the pro-Jordanian and traditional elite. Indeed, the creation of the Palestine National Front PNF in August , within a well-defined pro-PLO platform, played a crucial role in increasing PLO influence in the occupied territories and served as a means by which Palestinians there could organize themselves against Israeli occupation. Specifically, its platform promised that its activities would be "inseparable" from those of the "Palestine National Movement [as] represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization. Eventually, some PLO leaders, as well as many inhabitants of the occupied territories, recognized the need to "adjust" their policies and to adopt new ones which would lead to a political settlement with Israel. The PLO had, of course, to redefine its strategy and tactics to meet regional and other international changes. It will be remembered that Kissinger had proposed a bilateral step-by-step plan that presented the PLO leadership with the dilemma of having to choose between maintaining its commitment to its traditional revolutionary policy, or working together with the Arab states in order not to be "shut out" of a settlement that would ignore Palestinian claims. As a result, the PLO grew "dangerously dependent" on the Arab states, particularly during the Arab feeling of euphoria after the war. Its new program called for the creation of a sulta wataniyeh national authority in any part of Palestine to be liberated by armed struggle. It was the direct result of both the war and the Rabat Arab Summit Conference which recognized the PLO as "the sole and only representative" of the Palestinian people, in exchange for which the PLO accepted the moderating influence of the Arab states. The Sulta Wataniyeh By introducing, in , the concept of sulta wataniyeh as an interim solution, the PLO indirectly accepted diplomacy as a means for achieving its goals. The revolutionaries, led by the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine PFLP , decided to establish a Rejectionist Front and to continue the policy of militancy and armed struggle as the only method of dealing with Israel. While Fatah aligned itself more closely with the moderate Arab states, the opposition aligned itself with the more radical ones. Undeterred by the Rejectionists, Fatah and its allies in the PLO accepted the principle of participating in the Geneva Conference, if invited as an independent party. To enhance its regional and international prestige, the PLO sent out signals expressing readiness to accept compromise as a means of achieving a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. With the adoption of this moderate stance, the PLO was transforming itself into a new [political] force in the Middle East, that could not be ignored. In the longer term, however, the PLO became caught between a struggle for "a liberationist strategy," on the one hand, and

"a territorial search for statehood," on the other. The latter forced the PLO to shift its attention from the diaspora to the occupied territories. Unlike the 12th PNC, which called vaguely for an "independent and fighting national authority on every part of Palestinian land to be liberated," the 13th PNC called more clearly and explicitly for the creation of a dawla wataniyeh a national state "on soil of the [Palestinian] homeland. Again, for tactical reasons, the proposal was considered to be only an intermediate solution to the conflict. Obviously, the PLO leadership was still concerned about the problem of unity and its desire to continue supporting the Palestinians, both in the diaspora and the occupied territories. But it was understood the PLO would accept the two-state solution and would be willing to participate in the Geneva Conference, on condition it be accepted on an equal footing with Israel. The victory of Menachem Begin and his Likud coalition in the Israeli elections of was a setback, for, as long as the Likud was in power in Israel, the Palestinian issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict remained on hold. The PLO was either ignored or was actively opposed by Israel and its allies, especially the United States, and Israeli strategy, at the time, was to break up the Arab alliance against it. These developments deprived the PLO of its military option in dealing with Israel, shifted its interest to diplomacy, and refocused its attention on the occupied territories rather than on the whole of Palestine. Following its expulsion from Beirut, the PLO was forced to seek defensive policies that would preserve its political status as representative and spokesman of the Palestinian people. Furthermore, the PLO leadership had something else to worry about during this period. In the s, for instance, several peace plans were proposed, calling for the formulation of new policies on the part of the PLO. Among these were the Brezhnev peace plan, the Fahad plan, the Fez plan, and the Ronald Reagan peace plan. The PLO particularly favored the Fez plan. This was an advanced version of the Saudi one, presented at the 16th PNC meeting in which, in short, sought the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza. The PLO leadership was considering options that would give it a role in future peace negotiations with Israel. Naturally, the opposition of both the Likud government in Israel and that of the United States to PLO involvement in any future negotiations made the search for a political solution untimely. However, in the late s, while the PLO was trying to survive politically, the unfolding of events in the occupied territories was to rescue it from a growing paralysis and a desperate situation. It was the Intifada that would ultimately succeed in changing the political picture of the Palestinian conflict with Israel and would make other changes possible. For instance, in July , Jordan made the decision to formally relinquish its claim to the West Bank. This decision strengthened the PLO? This new legitimacy enabled the PLO to act independently and ultimately influence Israel? Moreover, the Intifada increased the popular appeal of the Islamic fundamentalists in the occupied territories. In response to these new developments, in November , the PLO presented its peace strategy and declared the establishment of the independent State of Palestine. It accepted UN resolutions , and as the bases for negotiating a political settlement with Israel. On December 13, , Arafat renounced terrorism and accepted the right of Israel to exist alongside Palestine. In so doing, the PLO totally renounced its previous goals and strategies and was, therefore, considered a candidate in peace negotiations. Other changes on the international and regional scenes helped accelerate the process of peace in the region. Most important was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War which forced many in the Arab world to conclude that they no longer had a patron to support their opposition to Israel. Concomitantly, US influence in the region was enhanced, as it felt comfortable pressing for peace in the Middle East, especially following the Gulf War against Iraq. Subsequent developments revealed a general awareness of the necessity of PLO participation in future negotiations. However, with the coming to power in June of the right-wing Netanyahu government, the possibility of a lasting peace has become much more elusive. The PLO, for its part, is still committed to peace and coexistence with Israel within the context of a negotiated settlement that will lead to the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Allin, Erika and Abdul Aziz Said. Changing Perceptions and Political Attitudes. Two Decades of Change. The Palestinian in the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Forschungsinstitute der Deutschen Gesellschaft, August Ideology, Structure and Strategy. Lynne Rienner Publishers, The Middle East Institute, Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, Institute for Palestine Studies, Policy towards Palestine

and Israel since Toward a Democratic State in Palestine. Rise and Decline of Traditional Leadership. Historical Reversals and the Uprising. Regional Repercussions of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict. Options and Scenarios for Peace. University of Texas Press, PLO Research Center, , pp. Articles, excerpts, and translations may not be reproduced in any form without written permission. The Palestine-Israel Journal gratefully acknowledges the support of the European Union for the maintenance and development of the website.

Chapter 2 : The Middle East in : the impact of regional trends on U.S. strategic planning - JH Libraries

The Jewish colonial state that was once Palestine must eventually become a democratic state of all its people, so it may again be the place where Christians, Jews and Muslims used to live in peace, before a European master race ideology brutalized a nation.

Every Israeli government since has refused to seriously entertain the notion of a genuinely independent and viable Palestinian state alongside the state of Israel. The two-state solution nonetheless continues to be the solution-of-choice of governments. It provides a perfect vehicle for endless conflict management. Negotiations over negotiations or merely holding out slim prospects of negotiations lead nowhere but can be dragged on indefinitely, which is the point. Indeed, it is a trap in which the Palestinian Authority is caught, since disavowing the two-state solution casts it as the intransigent party. One cannot be in a political struggle without an end-game, and in our case it must address two key processes: For that dual political process to succeed â€" the first most urgent for Palestinians, the second most important to sell to, or impose upon, Jewish Israelis â€" we need a plan, a vision of the future, and an effective strategy for getting there. This is the challenge before us, and it is urgent and crucial. Justice does not prevail by magic. Unless it is empowered politically, it remains a vague and far-off aspiration. Worse â€" and this seems to be happening â€" activists and supporters will simply drift off to other urgent causes if there is no movement or prospect of success. Mobilization over time requires movement, direction and strategy, and only a political end-game provides that. Over the past year I have been engaged with a number of Israeli Jews and Palestinians over the formulation of a one-state program. Within a constitutional democracy in which all citizens enjoy a common citizenship, one common parliament and thoroughly equal civil rights, constitutional protection would also be granted to national, ethnic or religious collectivities desiring to retain their various identities and cultural lives if they so choose. Such an approach, acceptable to most Palestinians, addresses a key concern of Jewish Israelis: Parliament, under the Constitution, will have no power to pass laws discriminating against any community. But return is only part of the story. Where would they return to? Their homes and communities were demolished years ago. Well, according to the Palestinian geographer Salman Abu-Sitta , 85 per cent of the lands taken from the Palestinians in are still available for resettlement. Although more than villages, towns and urban areas were systematically demolished following the Nakba, their agricultural lands still exist, incorporated now into Israeli kibbutzim and other rural ventures. Other lands lie under public parks and forests. So refugees could actually return, if not to their former homes, at least to the parts of the country where they originated. This ties into yet another issue: A project run partly by the Israeli-Palestinian organization Zochrot has young Palestinian planners and architects designing modern communities for the refugees in the areas they left â€" new communities with economic infrastructure and integrated with other segments of the society. That, together with lands redistribution, financial compensation, and equal access to education, training and the economy, bolstered by affirmative action, would enable the refugees, like other Palestinians, to achieve economic parity with Israelis within a fairly short time. We must keep in mind the resources Palestinian enjoy: Even in this most difficult of issues, practical, just and workable solutions exist. Having said that, we cannot ignore the fundamental reality that two national groups â€" Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews â€" inhabit the country. Nor can we ignore the fact that the majority will be Palestinians. The prospect that Jews will live as a minority community contradicts perhaps the fundamental principle of Zionism: Jewish Israelis would certainly prefer a non-democratic Jewish state over a non-Jewish democratic state. Our program must wrestle with this dilemma. Providing constitutional recognition and protection of the collective rights of Jewish Israelis, enabling them to maintain their community within the framework of a democratic state, addresses their concerns about their security as a minority while dismantling structures of privilege and domination. But here we hit up against Palestinian resistance. While the vast majority of Palestinians recognize the permanent presence of Jewish Israelis, to be forced to acknowledge them as a

national group places Palestinians in a position of having to legitimize settler colonialism in its Zionist form, which is a bridge too far. Attracting primarily the younger generation and the more secular middle classes, an inclusive civil society would take root as a shared national life becomes routinized through common citizenship and political life, collective experiences arising out of daily life, civil marriage, integrated communities and schools for those who choose them , shared languages, a common media, common holidays and symbols that arose from shared national existence, etc. We aspire not merely to a new political entity but to a new society. Decolonization does not end the moment one people ceases dominating the others. Indeed, that is the moment it begins. It then continues until all forms of domination â€" economic and cultural as well as political and legal â€" are rooted out. Decolonization requires a country to be completely reimagined and reinvented so as to be as egalitarian, inclusive and sustainable as possible. This means, of course, restoring to the expelled, excluded and oppressed their rights, properties actual or through compensation , identities and social position. Only then can the third process, reconciliation, be pursued. Yet we recognize that the majority of both the Palestinian and Jewish Israeli populations are not secular: Still, we believe that most people will accept a liberal democracy if we make it palatable, if we build in progressive elements but not rub their faces in them. First, it specifies that the authority to govern and pass laws emanates from the electorate, the people; what is left unsaid is that religious law halakhah, sharia, ecclesiastical law may continue to pertain within its religious communities â€" no one will ban religious marriages, for example â€" but will accompany, not displace, civil law where people choose to observe it. And second, there will be no official state-sponsored religion or religious authority. It cannot exist in a vacuum. Sovereignty and borders, refugees, water, security, trade and economic development, tourism and the environment â€" these are only a few of the issues that are regional in scope. We envision a country that will join forces with all progressive forces in the Arab world struggling for democracy, social justice and egalitarian societies free from tyranny and foreign domination. Although this may sound utopian at a time when the region is in a melt-down, the resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict will eliminate a major source of polarization and militarization in the region, thus releasing positive forces of development and conflict resolution. These are the main issues at stake, in our view, and I believe the approach we lay out here has great potential in bridging the deep differences and mistrust between our peoples. Our overall program, prefaced by a Preamble that sets out the historical context and being strategized by our members, is as follows. It is not a new idea. In the wake of the Oslo accord and other historical developments, the PLO shifted its support to the two-state solution as the basis for a future peace, a vision endorsed by all the Palestinian parties represented in the Israeli Knesset as well. This history clearly indicates that the only way to bring peace and reconciliation to Palestinians and Israelis is through the decolonizing historical Palestine based on granting equal rights, upon the full implementation of the Palestinian right of return and on the creation of a mechanism for rectifying past injustices. This is the urgent need of the moment. As a result, several organizations and individuals have reintroduced the one-state idea over the past decade with models varying from bi-nationalism to a liberal, secular democracy. They are all united, however, in the belief that a substantially just political settlement can today only be achieved through the creation of a single state â€" a democratic state to replace the single apartheid state Israel has already imposed on the entire country. The basic principles of liberation offered by the PLO in its charter still form an important element in the vision of those now engaged in formulating and advancing the one-state solution. There is a strong consensus among us that only decolonization and the rectification of past sins, in particular the right of Palestinian refugees to return to a democratic country, can bring equality, self-determination, reconciliation, prosperity, peace and justice to the land. In it we seek to garner support from both Palestinians and Jewish Israelis for our joint struggle for this vision. This is the only way we will end the ongoing the ongoing colonization, racism and hatred that are destroying our lives, to prevent and reverse the takeover of Palestinian land and its burial under settlements. Only an inclusive democratic state, thoroughly decolonized, will provide for a future for all our children, a future of peace, justice and equality in all of historic Palestine. One Democratic State shall be established between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River as one country

belonging to all its citizens, who will enjoy equal rights, freedom and security. No State law, institution or practices may discriminate among its citizens on the basis of national or social origin, color, gender, language, religion or political opinion, property, sexual orientation or other status. All mechanisms of governance, law enforcement and security shall be thoroughly integrated on the basis of individual merit, including the military and internal security and police forces. The IDF and other Israeli security and police forces will be replaced by newly constituted national forces. Within the framework of a single democratic state, the Constitution will also protect the collective rights of Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews to freedom of association â€" national, ethnic, religious, class or gender â€" within the framework of a common state and democracy. Constitutional guarantees will ensure that all languages, arts and culture can flourish and develop freely. All citizens shall have equal rights to use their own dress, languages and customs, to freely express their cultural heritage, and to maintain such cultural institutions as universities, museums, theatres, newspapers and all other forms of communication. No group or collectivity will have any privileges, nor will any group, party or collectivity have the ability to leverage any control or domination over others. Parliament will not have the authority to enact any laws that discriminate against any community under the Constitution. Right of Return of Restoration and of Reintegration into Society. Restoring the rights of the Palestinians will be done while respecting the rights and protections of all citizens under the law. Normal procedures of obtaining citizenship will be extended to others choosing to immigrate to the country. Constructing a Shared Civil Society. The State shall nurture a vital civil society in which common educational institutions, civil institutions such as marriage, and both the Arabic and Hebrew languages will be official languages. The State will not establish or accord special privilege to any religion, but shall provide for the free practice of all religions. Economy and Economic Justice. Our vision seeks to achieve justice, and this includes social and economic justice. Economic policy must address the decades of exploitation and discrimination which have sown deep socioeconomic gaps among the people living in the land. A State seeking justice must develop a creative and long-term redistributive economic policy to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to attain education, productive employment, economic security and a dignified standard of living. Decolonization, Restoration and Reconciliation. The liberation of Palestinians and the creation of a genuinely equal and inclusive society entails more than just a political settlement or new governmental arrangements. It requires a process of thorough decolonization, a reimagining and reinventing of the country in a way that fundamentally alters relations of domination. The State shall uphold international law and seek the peaceful resolution of conflicts through negotiation and collective security in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The State will sign and ratify all international treaties on human rights and its people shall reject racism and promote social, cultural and political rights as set out in relevant United Nations covenants. Our Role in the Region. The ODS Campaign will join forces with all progressive forces in the Arab world struggling for democracy, social justice and egalitarian societies free from tyranny and foreign domination. In particular, the State shall seek democracy and freedom in a Middle East that respects its many communities, religions, traditions and ideologies, yet strives for equality, freedom of thought and innovation. Achieving a just political settlement in Palestine, followed by a thorough process of decolonization, will contribute measurably to these efforts. On a global level, the ODS Campaign views itself as part of the progressive forces striving for an alternative global order that is just, egalitarian, inclusive, pluralistic and sustainable, one in which exploitation, racism, repression, wars, imperialism and colonialism give way to respect for human dignity, human rights, freedom, a just distribution of wealth, equal access to resources and a sustainable environment.

Chapter 3 : 2 Tikkun perspectives on Gaza, Israel and Palestine | Tikkun Magazine

Palestine: Moving toward a democratic state? Muhammad Muslih; Iran: Can the Islamic Republic survive? Mark J. Gasiorowski; Iraqi: Another Saddam on the horizon.

Some writers of this period maintained that the principles of social action are rational and that they change as society changes. Other modernist thinkers argued further that human society constitutes its own judge and master, and its own interest should reign supreme. From about until the early s, two lines of thought regarding the proper bases of government coexisted in the Middle East. Supporters of the first advocated the principles of secularism and constitutional democracy, including representative government based on broad political participation. Following the dissolution of the Ottoman state, this principle was advanced by leaders of political groups and national liberation movements; it seemed to have reached its logical end with the establishment of quasi-constitutional systems in a number of Arab countries on the model of Western-style democracies. Experimentation with democracy was not, however, a happy experience. Rigged elections, puppet governments, arbitrary arrests, and rubber-stamp parliaments raised serious doubts about the ability of the Arabs to create and tolerate democratic institutions and practices. Following a second line of thought were those who believed that Islamic law and institutions should be the basis of political and social organization. For most of this school, the ideal was to live in the inherited Islamic framework and to preserve the continuity of the Islamic tradition. This contrasts in many ways with the thinking of the advocates of democratic reform, most of whom accepted Islam as a body of principles but believed that secular norms of nationalism and liberal democracy were best suited to the reorganization and regulation of Arab society and politics. Following the Arab-Israeli War of and especially with the advent of revolutionary regimes in key Arab states Egypt, Syria, and Iraq , the balance of political thought tilted decisively in favor of the radicalism of the revolutionary state. The new ways of thought and action were embodied in a form of nationalism that expressed social reform in the idiom of Arab socialism and that expressed foreign policy in the language of anticolonialism and positive neutrality. In the s and s, many secularists as well as Islamists were engaged in attempts to prove that Islam and socialism were compatible, and that the pursuit of Arab unity was more important than the pursuit of democracy and pluralism. In North Africa and in the Arab East, the principle of Arab unity held first place, on the grounds that socialism, freedom, and the liberation of Palestine could not be achieved without it. In the s and s, the unrest generated by war and civil strife in some Arab countries, the failure of Arab governments to stand up to Israel, the rising discontent with socioeconomic performance, and the unchecked growth of the power of the state brought about a change in the scale of political life: The movement for the revival of Islam as the only valid basis for social and political life was perhaps the most significant aspect of this change. With the rise of Islamic political movements in the s and s, writers and activists formulated diverse ideas about social and political organization. We shall deal in a general way with three of them—the rejectionist, moderate, and liberal Islamic perspectives—because they are broadly representative of certain attitudes and positions with respect to the notion of democracy. However, we should neither impose a false unity on the ideas of a particular category nor view the categories as mutually exclusive, particularly because the works of many of the writers have evolved over several decades. The Rejectionist Islamic View. He maintained that the backwardness in Muslim countries arose from the neglect of the true principles of Islam. While this perspective remained common throughout the s and s among various groups calling for the establishment of an Islamic state, the number of thinkers adopting an outright rejectionist stance toward democracy—generally the most radical Islamists—has diminished in recent years. Many Islamist groups, including most factions of the Muslim Brotherhood, have moderated their stance on democracy. Nonetheless, much contemporary scholarship has questioned whether this or that Islamic thinker who has claimed the mantle of democracy merely exploits the popularity of the term for political opportunity or cloaks more radical stances in moderate language. The Moderate Islamic View. Three concepts are central to the moderate Islamic understanding of

democracy: Critical here is the extent to which the people can be involved in determining what is good and what is not good for them. Theoretically speaking, this can be resolved by means of mutual consultation through the representative organs of the state, but regardless of the extent of consultation, just rule is a sine qua non for the promotion of the public interest. First, they are based on factional interests and therefore cannot promote real political equality, unity, and freedom. Because wealth, and therefore power, are concentrated in the hands of a few, ultimate authority is vested in a small elite. Second, liberal democracies are based on human reason, and regardless of how people may try to perfect the political and social order, reason still suffers from the limitations that God has imposed on humans. This connection prevents tyranny because it resolves ideological conflicts and unifies Muslim actions. He defends this strategy as necessitated by the exceptional circumstances of the present, where Muslims are unable to establish Islamic rule directly and where the choice is not between Islamic and non-Islamic rule, but between dictatorship and democracy. Muslims must actively pursue the even partial implementation of Islamic laws and values in order to serve mankind. In those countries in which Muslims form the majority, Islamic movements will benefit from working with other groups to topple dictatorships that stand in the way of the realization of respect for human rights, security, and freedom of expression, essential bases for preparing the way for the longer-term goal of establishing an Islamic government. In those countries where Muslims are minorities, they should work to transform the values of their society in order to secure their freedom of worship and belief. The development of a moderate Islamic discourse has influenced some of the most prominent Islamist thinkers. The former is a comprehensive system of values, while the latter is a means. Only in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy has Islam flourished. The Liberal Islamic View. According to the Islamic liberals, the challenge in coping with worldly matters is to enter social transactions and relations on a basis that allows for adaptation to changing conditions. The liberal Islamic view is, however, distinguished by its emphasis on the importance of a plurality of positions and the freedom of thought for the emergence and proper functioning of a democratic system. The often-cited verse 2: There is inequality in matters of faith, but that is something that should be left to God. These approaches are unified by a willingness to forego the literal interpretation of scriptures when it is believed to harm the interests of Muslims. The Iranian thinker Abdolkarim Soroush b. He argues that reason, freedom, and democracy are universal, primary values that cannot be constrained by religious or political dictates. Going further than moderate Islamic thinkers, Islamic liberals affirm not just the possibility of the coexistence of religion and democracy but the necessity of the constant examination of religious understanding, which can only be done in a democratic context. Religion needs freedom and tolerance to flourish. Soroush maintains that religious democracy is thus more demanding and substantive than secular democracy, because whereas the latter removes matters of faith and belief from the realm of politics, the former necessitates the constant engagement with and renewal of understandings of faith and belief. One finds within these three Islamic trends distinct, though not necessarily conflicting, elements of modernity and tradition that echo the thoughts of nineteenth-century Islamic writers. They show the point at which certain ideas about political organization have entered contemporary Arab intellectual discourse. They also illustrate intellectual attempts to restructure Islamic society and politics, on the basis of an inherited Islamic past that is believed to contrast with Western political traditions, on the basis of the selective appropriation of modern democratic thought made to conform to Islamic values and law, or on the basis of a theory of liberal norms that becomes the basis for a reinterpretation of Islamic thought. Bibliography Abou El Fadl, Khaled, et al. Islam and the Challenge of Democracy. Princeton University Press, Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn. Stanford University Press, Based largely on research in Egypt and Iran, details how and under what conditions social movements in Muslim majority contexts can democratize religious discourse. 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studies and critical assessments by reformers and opposition figures from the region. Oxford University Press, Two leading experts examine the status of democracy in six countries and conclude that Islamic resurgence and democratization have in several cases been complementary forces. Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia. A social anthropologist adduces evidence of a civil democratic public in the most populous Muslim-majority country. Collection of essays exploring contemporary attempts to establish civil, pluralist, and democratic political forms that preserve Islamic values in various countries. Islam, Democracy, and Religious Modernism in Iran, â€" A study of the writings of seven Iranian intellectuals on democracy and modernity. A collection of original writings from across the Muslim world on such topics as democracy, the rights of women and non-Muslims, and freedom of thought. A collection of key writings by proponents of the modernist Islamic movement. Islam, Democracy, the State, and the West: A Round Table with Dr. University Press of Florida, Comprehensive study of the classical and medieval foundations of moderate and democratic discourses of contemporary Islamic thinkers. Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase. Social Justice in Islam. Translated from the Arabic by John B. Hardie and Hamid Algar. Islamic Publications International, Translation of the treatise by a major ideologue of the Islamist movement. Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of Abdolkarim Soroush. Translated and edited by Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri. Translation of essays written in Persian between and by one of the most important Iranian advocates of democratic and liberal governance. A Democrat Within Islamism.

Chapter 4 : A Democratic State: In Palestine, and the United States - Media Monitors Network (MMN)

Jeff Halper reports on the work of the One Democratic State Campaign, a working group of Palestinians and Israeli Jews who have formulated a strategy for implementing a single multi-cultural.

Click to email this to a friend Opens in new window No. Ninety years ago at the San Remo Conference following World War I April , the Supreme Council of the Principal Allied Powers determined the allocation of the Middle Eastern territories of the defeated Ottoman Empire and decided to incorporate the Balfour Declaration supporting a Jewish national home in Palestine into the British Mandate for the territory, a move which confirmed international recognition of the right of Jewish self-determination. The language adopted at San Remo was a triumph for Zionism, which saw a national solution to the problem of the Jews. And this home was to be in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews. Jewish self-determination was part of a process that ended up decolonizing the Middle East in an effort that led to Arab as well as Jewish independence. Repeated recent associations of Israel with colonialism â€" an ahistorical canard that erases the millennia-long association of Jews with the Land of Israel as an indigenous people â€" ignores the benefit that Zionism actually brought to the Arabs through the process of decolonization. The British Peel Commission Report of was quite clear on this. Indeed, it was the return of the Jews to the Land of Israel that gave critical mass to a distinct and unique Palestinian identity as well. The Jews have been brought back into history through the establishment of the State of Israel. This was accomplished with the aid of international institutions which recognized the justice and importance of Jewish national self-determination. These institutions accepted the validity of Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jews. Today, those who deny the Jewish right to national self-determination, more than 60 years after the founding of Israel, engage in a new kind of anti-Semitism. In his June 14, , address at Bar-Ilan University in which he accepted the principle of a demilitarized Palestinian state, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu repeatedly emphasized an important Israeli requirement for a final peace agreement: Palestinian recognition of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people. For Netanyahu, this was not a precondition for negotiations. It actually has long historical roots which, unfortunately, have been forgotten in much of the public discourse on the Arab-Israeli conflict. For that reason, it is critical to reemphasize the international, legal, and historical foundations of this idea in order to challenge the current discourse of delegitimization and restore the idea of Jewish self-determination as an internationally-accepted norm. While some have viewed the mandate system as a continuation of British and French colonialism, the mandates were temporary by design and eventually gave way to Arab and Jewish independence. Indeed, the mandate system could be viewed essentially as a move toward decolonization U. Ironically, the peace process of recent decades, which revived the idea of a two-state solution which would allow the fulfillment of both Jewish and Palestinian self-determination, has also resurrected the idea of a one-state solution â€" a move which in time would bring about an Arab majority in the land, thus ending Jewish self-determination. Beyond the great injustice this would bring upon the Jewish people, it would most certainly not bring about peace. Those truly concerned with peace and stability should support self-determination for both peoples in two states, since in the Middle East a one-state solution would only bring death and destruction. The Lead-Up to San remo By the time the San Remo Conference convened in April , the Allies had already made some progress regarding the disposition of Ottoman territorial possessions. The British had become convinced of the desirability of a post-war British Palestine, but still needed to convince the French, since this contradicted the terms of the Sykes-Picot Agreement of which determined that Palestine was to be under international control. The best way for the British to gain French support was first to convince them to support a Jewish national home in Palestine, which was achieved in June French acquiescence to British rule in Palestine was a result of the realities brought about by British military successes in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire and Palestine in particular â€" in which the French played practically no role at all. The significance of what transpired at San Remo on April , , has not always

received the attention it deserves, for in a sense, it was at San Remo that Israel was born. The British, led by Lloyd George and Lord Curzon, were keen to have the mandate for Palestine awarded to Great Britain, and to include the language of the Balfour Declaration in the treaty with Turkey. The French, however, were not enthusiastic, despite what the British perceived to have been prior agreement on the issue. Furthermore, the French wanted some recognition of their role as a custodian and protector of Christian holy sites, which the Balfour Declaration did not mention. Lloyd George, however, would hear nothing of a French presence. A draft of the article was put before the Supreme Council on April 24 and it was officially approved on April In the end, the British had carried the day. The San Remo language gave detailed content to the general provisions regarding the mandate system as formulated in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations noted above. The operative paragraph reads: First, it established recognition by the Great Powers of the principle of Jewish national self-determination. As such, it was a triumph for Zionism, which saw a national solution to the problem of the Jews, as opposed to other proposed solutions, such as assimilation. The language is a verbatim repetition of the Balfour Declaration, with one significant change. Back in , three months after his declaration was issued, Lord Balfour confessed: The League of Nations Mandate for Palestine is a key document that underscores the international legitimacy of the right of Jewish self-determination in the Land of Israel, or Palestine. The second recital is the repetition of the Balfour Declaration as changed at San Remo, where Britain is charged with actually carrying out the intent of the Declaration. This effort led to Jewish as well as Arab independence. Repeated recent associations of Israel with colonialism â€" an ahistorical canard that erases the millennia-long association of Jews with the Land of Israel as an indigenous people â€" ignores the benefit even if ironic that Zionism actually brought to the Arabs through the process of decolonization. The British Peel Commission Report of was quite clear on this: The fact that the Balfour Declaration was issued in order to enlist Jewish support for the Allies and the fact that this support was forthcoming are not sufficiently appreciated in Palestine. If the Turks and their German allies had won the War, it is improbable that all the Arab countries, except Palestine, would now have become or be about to become independent states. If Jewish national self-determination had not been fulfilled, it is debatable if an entirely separate Palestinian nation would have emerged. The Syrian delegate raised this issue during the UN debate on the partition plan: Palestine used to be a Syrian province. Geographical, historical, racial and religious links exist there. The Partition of Palestine and the Admission of Israel to the United Nations If there were some lingering doubts in the international community about the wisdom of a Jewish state, the German Nazi horrors of the Holocaust made abundantly clear its absolute necessity. The tally was 33 votes in favor, 13 against, 10 abstentions, and one absent. At the time, the idea of a Jewish nation-state was internationally accepted, even taken for granted. Jews were referred to in national terms â€" not just religious â€" throughout the UN document, as are Arabs. Israel is both a Jewish nation-state and a democratic state. This was neither an impossible feat nor a contradiction in terms to the framers of the partition resolution, who stipulated that both the Jewish and Arab states in partitioned Palestine would have to be democratic and protect the rights of the national minority in their respective states. As Alexander Yakobson and Amnon Rubinstein write, Even nations that do not maintain even a semblance of democracy are universally recognized as entitled to national independence, and even in such cases not in fact wholly exceptional in the Middle East no one claims that the very idea of national independence is an undemocratic one. Jordan and Egypt did not allow Jews to remain in the territory they captured, which had been allotted to the Arab state authorized by the UN to come into existence in Palestine. It naturally gave expression to the Jewish majority by using Jewish symbols in the national flag and seal, and in national culture and the designation of Saturday as the day of rest. This is no different from the many democracies that give expression to the Christian identity of their majority populations. For example, several states have Christian crosses in their flags: Pakistan and Turkey make use of the Islamic crescent in their flags, while India uses a religious symbol in its flag. The Denial of the Legitimacy of Jewish Self-Determination is Anti-Semitic Not only is Jewish self-determination a right recognized by the international community for nearly a century, it has been defined as such by the European Union and the U.

State Department in recent years, and the rejection of that right has officially been declared to be anti-Semitism. This definition was adopted verbatim by the U. State Department in March The fact that Israel is a Jewish state did not add to or, for that matter, hinder its acceptance as a legitimate state among the family of nations. It is legitimate because it meets these criteria. The State of Israel is the legitimate expression of Jewish self-determination. This is in keeping with universal human rights, including the right to self-determination. While there are those who deny Jewish self-determination by claiming that the Jews are only a religion, this is not the position historically shared by the international community. This is because the Jews have a history of attachment to the Land of Israel and a constant yearning for a return to it, whether it is physical and contemporary, or metaphysical and anchored in messianic times. Most Israelis would claim they are members of the Jewish people, but are not religiously observant Jews. As Ruth Gavison admits, the relationship between Jews and Judaism is a unique one, since [n]o other people has its own specific religion. The Arab peoples, for example, comprise Christians, Muslims, and Druze. While there was a time when the French were mostly Catholics or former Catholics, they still waged religious wars with the Huguenots, and today a large number of Frenchmen are Muslim. At the same time, no other religion has a specific nationality of its own: This distinction is not merely the result of secularization: Judaism, at least from a historical perspective, has never differentiated between the people and the religion. Nor was there any belated development that altered this unique fact: Social stereotyping never allowed an individual to be a part of the Jewish people while at the same time a member of another religion; nor could one be an observant Jew without belonging to the Jewish people. Thoughts on Root Causes The legitimacy of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people seemed unassailable when the UN Partition Plan was approved in and the State of Israel was admitted to the United Nations the following year. What has happened to change that? Supporters of Israel continue to be baffled by the constant barrage of media attacks on Israel, no matter what Israel does. In addition, clear acts of self-defense when attacked from these areas: Lebanon and Gaza , and defending a legal blockade against Turkish blockade runners , receive little sympathy from self-righteous pundits and government officials. The article itself suggests that Israelis read Jews care more about money than about peace. This is because the American idea of freedom revolves around the right of the individual to be free from tyranny â€" foreign and domestic â€" while the founders of Israel, heirs to a European legacy of nationalism, conceived of freedom as the collective rights of a certain nation or people â€" in this case, the Jewish people. Daniel Gordis writes that while America has inspired much of the Israeli project, each country had a different founding ethos. Said and his followers have been enormously successful. They then play an insidious psychological role in forming and weighting the discourse against Israel. Daniel Hannan, a British Conservative Party member of the European Parliament, pointed out during an address in Jerusalem in early that Israel, by its very existence, challenges the intellectual basis of European integration, which seeks to supplant the old national ideal on the European continent with the European Union. In contrast, Israel, which was resurrected after 2, years, is the embodiment of the national ideal. If Israel was right to re-establish itself, Hannan concludes, and the national ideal is correct, then some in Europe might feel challenged that their multinational alternative was a mistake, explaining their need to attack Israel and undermine its legitimacy. Identity is by definition self-defining. The Jews define themselves as a people and overwhelmingly support the embodiment of Jewish self-determination as manifested in the State of Israel. Just as there can be a Palestinian state, since the Palestinians choose a unique identity, there can be a Jewish state. Affirming the right of the Jewish people to a nation-state, however, is not only important in the context of the Arab-Israeli peace process. It is critical for countering the forces that need to delegitimize the Jewish state for their own internal political reasons.

Chapter 5 : Short Papers Archive Toward Civil Society in the Middle East?

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Print The war did much more than register the defeat of three regular Arab armies, only this time without any of the alleged mitigating circumstances of such as underequipped forces or foreign tutelage , or the unabashed external colonial interventions of The war demonstrated the fundamental vacuity of the Arab existential threat to Israel and the limits of post-independence Arab military power, amateurish and incompetent at best, criminally negligent at worst. The real uncertainty was the extent of victory and exactly where to draw the lineâ€"at the Jordan River or the tip of Mt Hermon. The new regional superpower was now poised on the mouth of the Suez Canal and at the outskirts of Damascus. Jerusalem and its holiest of sites was taken in two days, and the Jordan River was once again the scene of a mass Palestinian exodusâ€"some , people including many who had already been dispossessed in the war moving to new and interminable exile in the East Bank. Sinai may have been returned to Egypt intact, but elsewhere the physical terrain has been altered beyond recognition. The basic facts generated by the war have proved largely immune to the challenges of the past decades, from the peacemaking of Oslo in to the popular eruptions of the two intifadas, to the successive Gaza wars. And as Israel sinks further into its ethnic and nationalistâ€"religious retrenchment today, there is little reason to believe that the near future will produce any significant progress toward a positive change. Over fifty years, the consequences of the war have branched out and multiplied in various directions. However, a few of its ramifications stand out and may be worth considering in some detail. Perhaps the most immediate and visible product of the war was its impact on Palestinian national consciousness and on the role and standing of the Palestinian people in their longstanding struggle over the land. A central paradox of is that by defeating the Arabs, Israel resurrected the Palestinians. The war revived the concussed post Palestinian national movement and transported it from being a relatively marginal element to center stage. The March battle of Karameh in which Fatah guerillas took a stand against an Israel Defense Forces incursion across the Jordan River seemed to epitomize the shift from failed regular confrontations to successful guerila warfare. Indeed, even the name of the locale where the battle took place, Karameh, which means dignity in Arabic, appeared to atone for the humiliation of the Arab defeat the preceding June. Largely lost to the Palestinian and Arab public consciousness at the time was the fact that the battle was mostly won by regular Jordanian artillery rather than any adept guerila tactics. One consequence was a premature rush toward concepts of popular armed struggle and a proliferation of armed groups that soon found themselves in bloodier and more sustained confrontation with the host Arab countriesâ€"first in Jordan and then in Lebanon. All that was yet to come. In the immediate wake of , the Palestinian national movement, with Fatah at its helm, seemed to defy the Arab defeat and to promise a new revolutionary era, beyond the post-colonial Arab authoritarian and military regimes and bound in spirit to the popular struggle of other nations such as in Algeria and Vietnam. Indeed, it could be argued that given the imbalance of power with Israel and its American ally , the post attempt to create an independent Palestinian actor was an uncertain and risky enterprise from the start. The Struggle Continues Today, the Palestinians may have lost much of their ability to act independently. Even before United Nations Security Council Resolution was passed in November , the main Arab states had collectively moved from outright rejectionism to a more nuanced and flexible politicalâ€"diplomatic stance. Nasser also encouraged those countries with strong relations with the West such as Saudi Arabia to use their good offices to influence Western capitals in favor of an Israeli withdrawal. Khartoum thus gave a green light to what was the most important Arab shift since Qualified acceptance took the place of outright rejection: The rest was negotiable. The war also did something else. By unifying all the territory of Mandatory Palestine under Israeli rule for the first time, it reversed the post de facto partition of Palestine and undid the last vestiges of the Partition Plan map. The interregnum between the truce and the war had established a basis for partition, albeit along substantially different demarcation lines than that envisaged by the UN. In many ways, the past fifty years

have been a struggle to return to partition in one form or another. The war erased the boundaries between Palestinians and Israelis, and developments since have only aggravated the prospects for such a separation. But the perpetuation of the post occupation and the spread of Israeli annexation-ism will not automatically lead Israel to a one-state dilemma where the choice will be between offering equal rights for the Palestinians in the territories or apartheid, as some have supposed. The fact is that as an increasingly sham democracy, Israel can continue to play between the lines of legality: The Israeli right, active, dynamic, and determined, will continue to press for various forms of annexation. The West or rather some of it will continue to complain, liberal and enlightened circles will continue to protest, the Russians, Chinese and Indians will continue to trade and do business, the Trump White House will stand aloof, and the U. Congress will continue to punish the victims. Conversely, however, the Palestinians will not go away. The fact is that Israel cannot but appear as an aggressor given the imbalance of power between the two sides. Part of why it has lost sympathy is because since it has been fighting against peoples not armies. Unless one side is totally beaten into submission and surrender as in World War II, the conflict is only liable to morph rather than cease altogether. The war looked pretty final at the time, but it merely redefined rather than ended the conflict. One hundred years after the Balfour Declaration, seventy years after the partition of Palestine, and a half-century after , the struggle over Palestine looks set to continue, and is likely to take on new forms. Some of it will replicate the familiar tropes of the past: But some of it is likely to take new directions, whether in terms of the emergence of new Palestinian and Arab forces, radical realignments within Israel itself, or a result of some unforeseeable changes on the world scene. Perhaps the best judgment on is that its ripples will continue to spread long after the passing of its initial shock. Worth noting are Tom Segev See Robert Bowker Palestinian Refugees: Mythology, Identity and the Search for Peace The descendants of Palestinians displaced by the war are now estimated at around one million people mostly in Jordan. Often forgotten is that another , Syrians and Palestinians were displaced from the Golan Heights and scores of Arab villages on the Heights were destroyed by Israel in the wake of the war. In , the UN estimated their descendants at , Note that Israeli settlement land appropriations far exceed the built-up areas. There are an additional 20, Israeli settlers on the Golan. See comprehensive figures in http: Ahmad Samih Khalidi is an academic visitor at St. He has been active in Palestinian politics and Track II activities for over thirty years, including as a senior advisor to Palestinian Authority presidents Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas. He is the co-author of Syria and Iran: Lessons from the Middle East.

In what respects will the current intifada 97 Muhammad Muslih is associate professor of political science and Middle Eastern studies and director of the international relations program at C.W.

Unfortunately, that unholy trio still wields power, but it represents minority control of a failing system which is bringing the world closer to major loss of social and environmental life. The democratic majority must take control from these seriously disturbed forces, and not just in Israel, before they bring further destruction not only to one state, but to civilization. Textbook behavior that is called insanity when practiced by individuals is more deadly when practiced by states. More than the middle east is threatened if America keeps repeating uncritical and costly support for the jewish state. Israel is armed with nuclear weapons and is founded on a cultural narrative of doom that sees all others as potential mass murderers of what is believed to be, in contradiction of science and logic, a jewish race. Hopefully, they can be disarmed by democratic power, but their continued denial of democracy unless it means perpetuation of their rule can only force more deadly measures. The Jewish colonial state that was once Palestine must eventually become a democratic state of all its people, so it may again be the place where Christians, Jews and Muslims used to live in peace, before a European master race ideology brutalized a nation. That ideology threatens to destroy much more in order to maintain a state and a system which will bring global disaster if we allow it to continue. But without democracy in the USA, chances of achieving it in Palestine may be impossible. It is the American government and American tax dollars that finance that racially pure state, that arm its military and support every murderous action it undertakes against a colonized people. And it must be understood that the overwhelming majority of Americans and their supposed representatives are not jewish. It is the responsibility of all, not simply jewish Americans, to put a stop to the immorality. More important than any of the dozens of minorities that claim membership in a separate race, tribe or ethnicity â€" an idea strengthened by identity group culture and the divide and rule politics of affirmative hyphenation â€" is the collective majority of American money and military power which perpetuates the apartheid state, destroys nations and regimes for its benefit, and creates the weapons with which Palestinians and others in the area are murdered. The hatred which this inspires is not subject to identity group hyphenation; it simply amounts to hatred for America and Americans. And it is the un-hyphenated American people, not one identity group, who must take responsibility to create substantial change before it is too late. The move to Boycott, Divest and Sanction has been invigorated by nations that not only criticized the slaughter in Gaza, but recalled ambassadors and threatened to sever diplomatic relations with Israel. Now, American labor unions, municipalities and other institutions must be pressured to stop investing in Israel , purchasing its stocks and bonds to finance its racial supremacy. When COSATU calls the situation in Palestine worse than what they experienced under apartheid, it is long past time for tolerance or excuses from any who consider themselves humanitarian supporters of social justice for all, and not just some. And that policy should be carried out against politicians who represent Israeli interests before those of the USA. They must be publicly identified and sanctioned, with no fear of the retaliatory name calling, political and financial pressure which will result. Whatever identity group may be claimed by some politicians, too often they perform for Israel with little regard even for their alleged group. When the governor of New York and the Mayor of Los Angeles shamefully parade in public as supporters of the slaughter in Gaza, they should not be regarded as friends of any Americans, no matter the ethnic or racial hyphenation they hide behind. It is their performance as Americans that is disgraceful, if not traitorous, when they do harm to this country in order to serve the interest of another. Our cultural diversity is a unique American strength, but when it is used as a weapon to advance immoral policy at the expense of the majority, it becomes a deadly weakness. All politicians must be identified as working for israel when that is what they are doing, and pressured to begin representing American interests, or be boycotted, divested and sanctioned out of office. This must be done now, with purpose and conviction and without fear. Anything less will not only mean

continued bloodshed and misery in the middle east, but the strong possibility that it will come home to all Americans, and without any safety or concern for those of us who try to hide behind our hyphenated Americanism. Did you like this article?

Chapter 7 : Short Papers Archive Applying the Definition of Civil Society

The Palestine-Israel Journal is a non-profit organization, founded in by Ziad AbuZayyad and Victor Cygielman, two prominent Palestinian and Israeli journalists, and was established concurrently with the first phases of the Oslo peace process to encourage dialogue between civil societies on both sides and broaden the base of support for the peace process.

Should They Be Registered? The registration of Palestinian political parties has proven a controversial issue and so far lacks consensus. Among Palestinians, the perception was that an aspect of their efforts towards state-building would entail the transformation of the political movements into registered political parties, with clear political, social, and civil responsibilities. Consequently, the issue of the registration of political parties was raised in limited Palestinian circles as part of the drive towards reform. That said, the registration of parties does not yet figure high on the list of priorities towards the achievement of reforms, as the main concern of the Palestinians remains the Israeli occupation and its direct impact on their life. Even the Palestinian factions themselves have expressed certain reservations regarding the issue of registration. Although the PLC did approve the general reading of the law, there was no follow-up and the whole issue was relegated to the backburners. A Controversial Issue As mentioned earlier, the political party law is a controversial issue and lacks consensus among Palestinians. At present, the Palestinians hold two divergent outlooks regarding the role of the political movements. One view holds that the political movements should focus on their national role until the Palestinian independent state is established. The other contends that it is time for political movements to have a social participatory role as part of Palestinian civil society. The latter view assumes that the registration of Palestinian political parties constitutes an element of a state, following the models of some other countries. In any case, the idea has generated a heated debate within Palestinian society at large and among the political factions themselves. Currently, the political movements are subject to the basic law of elections, but, to date, no specific law exists pertaining to the political parties. As for the institutions and organizations of Palestinian civil society, they seem to have a similar political role as the Palestinian factions of which they are extensions. Indeed, a look at the history of Palestinian civil society will show a noticeable influence of the macro-level political changes in the agenda of those organizations and institutions. According to Rema Hammami 2 and Manuel Hassassian, 3 Palestinian grass-roots efforts in the pre-Oslo era were more political and ideological, following the lines of the different political factions, and their main aim was to resist the Israeli occupation. In the aftermath of Oslo, dialogue became institutionalized mainly through non-governmental organizations NGOs. The shift occurred basically as a result of a general change in the role and the form of Palestinian civil society in the wake of the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority PNA. Following the war, Palestinians under Israeli occupation lacked basic services such as health, education, etc. The Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committee, for example, was established in with the purpose of providing health care to the Palestinian population, with its staff working on a totally voluntary basis. Therefore, political factions and their existing organizations tended to coordinate their efforts and initiatives towards resisting and ending the Israeli occupation. But it was the Intifada that ensured that such action was a recognizable aspect of organizational life in the occupied territories. One unique feature of the Intifada was that it led to the creation of relatively autonomous and organized social units with specific functional responsibilities, foremost among which were serving the population and shielding it from the shattering impact of the Israeli military measures. The peace process obliged the Palestinian NGOs to rethink their methods, and professionalism replaced their explicitly partisan frameworks. The political parties which opposed the Oslo agreement remained outside the Palestinian system and were not represented in the PLC, and meanwhile lost their grass-root support among Palestinian society. It was the Fateh movement which became the ruling and all-powerful party. At present, Palestinian society is struggling to end the new form of Israeli occupation and to build a civil society that can guarantee human rights and social security. The issues

related to social and civil society, which were always being postponed by the political groups and factions prior to the Oslo agreement, are once again being raised and brought forward for public debate. Palestinian society now finds itself struggling for dual rights: The Party Law - Conflicting Views The Palestinian party law, as part of Palestinian civil and human rights, might play a significant role in achieving democracy, stability and security for the Palestinians. As George Giacaman puts it: Without constitutional and legal guarantees, but more importantly, without the separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, rule of law, accountability and rotation in government, any expansion in the sphere of civil society will remain vulnerable. Each party will be obliged to have a clear political platform and hold elections. This will guarantee the democratic performance of each party through internal elections. Consequently, this will have an impact on the Palestinian civil society. Those political parties will help in institutionalizing the organizations of the civil society through their representations in the municipalities and the PLC. In an interview he told this writer: At the present time, party registration is not urgent because the political factions still have national goals that they need to accomplish. We have the basic election law and every Palestinian has the right to participate in the elections. At the end, the elections will produce the political parties. This is enough for the time being. Such groups do not agree with the Oslo agreement and do not wish to be part of the resulting system. Opposition factions can be more active when they are registered. Political parties are one of the most important elements of civil society. Therefore, political parties should be subject to laws and legislations to achieve democracy. Party registration will help in presenting clear political platforms and more defined programs. In this case, the internal matters of each party will be better organized to guarantee legality. Palestinian elections then will be based on the political platforms rather than tribal and kinship. Consequently, funding will have to be attained through activities and community work. Instead, the registration of political parties is embedded within the elections law of The law of elections pertaining to political parties is largely procedural. Parties are required to register at the Ministry of the Interior without any conditions expect the completion of an application request. No other requirements are made regarding constitution or source of funding. In general, the fact that the law of party registration has not been issued yet means that political factions will remain outside any legal framework. The conclusion whether the law of party registration is beneficial or not will require more Palestinian efforts and research. One thing is certain though, the absence of a law in relation to Palestinian factions has its disadvantages. As an example, the Central Election Commission is unable to find the means to audit the financial resources of the Palestinian factions that have participated in the elections. At present, the whole issue of party registration is not subject to any public debate, either by those in favor or by those opposed. Nevertheless, Palestinians concerned with the provision of a legal framework for the political parties should step forward and raise the issue within Palestinian civil society and its organizations. New Realities, Old Problems, London: I , Leiden and New York: Ibrahim Khraishi, interview, April 21, , Ramallah. Mohammed Hourani, interview, April 5, , Ramallah. Articles, excerpts, and translations may not be reproduced in any form without written permission. The Palestine-Israel Journal gratefully acknowledges the support of the European Union for the maintenance and development of the website.

Chapter 8 : Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People

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In a bid to undermine the efforts of the Arab reformist movement, the CUP secretly agreed to adopt the teaching of Arabic in primary and secondary schools and allow the Arab provinces a degree of autonomy. According to Palestinian historian Muhammad Y. Muslih, the CUP used the public disclosure of the offer as a pretext to end the negotiations. The movement expanded further with the addition of Shukri al-Quwatli and Muslim scholar and secondary school teacher Kamil al-Qassab of Damascus, and as a result of the merger between al-Fatat and al-Ikhwan al-Ashara Ten Brothers Society. The name of the Ten Brothers Society referred to the first ten sahaba companions of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. The members based outside of Beirut were not given an indication of the location from which the letters originated from with "The Desert" being named by al-Mihmisani as the address of origin. In March , the Beirut headquarters decided to adopt a flag for al-Fatat consisting of the colors white, black and green which symbolized the Arab-led caliphates of the Umayyads , the Abbasids and the Fatimids , respectively. Muhibb al-Din also notified al-Mihmisani that his party had begun establishing contacts with British officials. As a result, al-Fatat became devoted to Arab independence. Soon after initial meeting, Emir Faisal was sworn into the organization. The Damascus Protocol swayed Faisal into firmly supporting a revolt against the Ottomans. The former were privy to the identities of all the members of the organization, had the right to elect the secretary-general and treasurer, and had the right to withdraw confidence with a two-thirds vote from the central committee. As military governor, Rikabi maintained a relatively conciliatory approach with the European powers. Muslih considers that figure to be exaggerated. According to Darwaza, one faction, known as "the dissenters" al-rafidun , rejected European control in Syria per the Sykes–Picot Agreement and a Jewish homeland in Palestine per the Balfour Declaration. The third faction supported American supervision over Syria. Al-Fatat did not have an effective mechanism to enforce the decisions of its central committee. Most had advanced educations. Thus, many who sought employment in the new government understood that access was tied to membership in al-Fatat. The organization shifted from a secretive society with a rigid membership process to a virtual political patronage network whose membership rules were subsequently discarded. Its youth are therefore obliged to dedicate their lives to awakening it from this backwardness, and they must consider what will lead to its progress, so that it will attain the meaning of life and preserve is natural rights".

Chapter 9 : JPS Back Issues | The Institute for Palestine Studies

Nationhood and democracy have not unfolded in a social or political vacuum, but instead developed from pre-state Jewish traditions in Palestine and in Eastern Europe. Dowty elucidates a broad cluster of cultural, historical, and ideological tenets that have come to comprise the infrastructure of the contemporary political system.

Or visit our website at www. Copyright by the Council on Foreign Relations, Inc. Printed in the United States of America. This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form beyond that copying permitted by Sections and of the U. Copyright Law and excerpts by the reviewers for the public press , without written permission from the publisher. Few policymakers seem to comprehend the ideology behind so-called fundamentalist groups or the rationales behind their actions. While some analysts call it the successor to the Red Scare and have dubbed it the Green Menace, others contend that these groups are essentially social movements with a religious emphasis. The goal of the Muslim Politics Project, which began in , was to counter the misperceptions that prevail in influential circles and to present Islamic intellectual and political agendas in all their complexity and diversity. One of its several undertakings was to commission papers on Islamist foreign policy in order to better understand the international political attitudes and policies of various Islamist groups. This resulted in papers on the following movements: Each of these papers goes into detail not only about the movements themselves, but also about how they affect U. We believe that they provide insights on a topic that challenges policymakers and will help prevent future misunderstandings. However, this project could not have been completed without the guidance of the Studies staff, including Nancy Bodurtha, Rachel Bronson, Richard Murphy, and Barnett Rubin. Hilary Mathews provided initial editorial assistance, and Haleh Nazeri completed the editing and supervised the administrative and final production arrangements. Hamas is not a fundamentalist movement. Opposition to Oslo and subsequent Israeli-Palestinian agreements, violent attacks on Israeli targets, challenges to the Palestinian Authority PA , and anti-American polemics, all have fed the belief that Hamas is a militant movement on a collision course with the West and with the forces of moderation in the Arab world. This view must be reassessed. As the peace process moves forward with the signing of the Sharm el-Shaykh agreement between Israel and the PA in September , the foreign policy of Hamas becomes more important to understand because it may have a direct bearing on the Arab-Israeli peace process. The Palestinian territories and the Arab countries that neighbor Israel are at the heart of the peace process. Political developments in these areas also have a direct bearing on the policies of the Gulf governments. In addition, Hamas is a major voice of dissent against U. Hence, the future course of Hamas may promote or hinder peace and stability in the region. For many in the West, it is axiomatic that Hamas is a combative, ideological monolith that poses a direct threat not only to the peace process but also to Western interests in the region. American policymakers, like the public in general, see Hamas solely in terms of extremism and terrorism. While this is understandable in light of the violent actions of Hamas, it fails to take into account the diversity of the movement and the multiple and complex manifestations of its policies. Hamas should not be viewed as the monolithic enemy of America and the Middle East peace process. Its policies do not reduce to a rigid doctrine of religious reassertion. Equally important, Hamas proved that it can change and adapt to new developments. The dynamic of the peace process is placing tremendous strains on the movement. The pressures of the PA and of other parties involved in the peace process have added to these strains weakening the infrastructure of Hamas and forcing it to reevaluate its policies and its modes of action. This paper analyzes the foreign policy of Hamas and the diversity of its multiple manifestations. It also discusses the international ramifications of this policy and concludes by suggesting practical measures the United States can take to encourage the inclusion of Hamas in peacemaking and nation-building in Palestine. This paper assumes that a policy of inclusion will broaden the base of Palestinian support for the peace process. It will also encourage more moderation on the part of Hamas. It was in the early stage of the Palestinian intifada that erupted in December that the word hamas acquired a distinctive meaning--that of military [2] The Foreign

Policy of Hamas activism against Israel. The word hamas is an acronym for harakat al-muqawama al-islamiyya the Islamic Resistance movement. Hamas was established in Gaza in the fall of The s saw important changes in the structure and outlook of the Muslim Brotherhood, a society whose traditional leadership has emphasized societal reform and religious and moral education in the fight against Israeli occupation. Young and action-oriented brotherhood members began to challenge the approach of the traditional leadership. Their new approach may be summarized in one phrase--armed resistance against Israeli occupation. Hamas transmitted its message of armed resistance through an expanding network of mosques, student bodies, professional organizations, charitable societies, as well as underground cells and command centers. Ironically, Israel did not try to impede the growth of Islamist bodies both before and at the beginning of the intifada, motivated on the one hand by a desire to increase divisions in Pales[3] Muhammad Muslih tinian ranks and on the other by a policy aimed at creating a rival to the secular-nationalist PLO. In June , the PLO embarked on a peace strategy that in November culminated in the acceptance of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, not as a transitional stage but as a point final. Security Council Resolutions and as the bases for convening an international peace conference on the Middle East and the Palestine question, and called for the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Palestinians in these territories wanted an end to Israeli occupation and an Israeli recognition of their right to self-deter[4] The Foreign Policy of Hamas mination and statehood. This played into the hands of the Islamic camp, particularly Hamas. Thanks to its political activism, the movement almost doubled the size of its pre-Intifada constituency. Is Hamas a revolutionary movement? Is it a fundamentalist movement? The answers to these questions have a variety of implications for American foreign policy. First, they suggest that the United States may have to reevaluate its image of Hamas. Hamas is not necessarily anti-Western, anti-American, antipeace, or antidemocratic. In this case, the challenge is to better understand the reality of a principal Islamic movement. Second, recognizing the reality of Hamas counters the American image of a unified Islamic threat to the peace process. The politics of Hamas are marked by debate and by competing visions and interests. Understanding this diversity lessens the risk of creating self-fulfilling prophecies about the battle of radical Islam against a democratic, peace-loving West. Finally, de-emphasizing old assumptions about Hamas should encourage the United States to adopt a more imaginative policy toward the movement. As the peace process appears to be back on track, and as nation-building has become the vehicle for fulfilling Palestinian expectations, this may be the time for the United States to encourage the inclusion of Hamas in the twin process of peacemaking and nation-building. To begin, let us simply define revolution as a complete overthrow of the established political order in any society or state; a radical change in the existing pattern of socioeconomic relations; and a forcible substitution of a new form of government. If we accept this definition, there appears to be very little to suggest that Hamas is a revolutionary movement. First, Hamas neither challenged the PLO legitimacy nor sought to take its role in negotiations with re[5] Muhammad Muslih spect to the Palestine question. Moreover, Hamas did not aim at overturning the social system in which the PLO is rooted in Gaza and the West Bank, a system based on the exercise of patronage, the manipulation of primordial loyalties and allegiances, the support of security services, and a relatively small middle class composed largely of merchants, developers, and professionals. For example, Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, a leader and the main founder of Hamas, hails from a relatively prosperous middle-class land-owning family. Other prominent Hamas leaders, including Dr. Abd al-Aziz al-Rantisi, Dr. Musa Abu Marzuq, and Ibrahim Ghusha, also hail from middle-class origins. The following elements come to mind: Is Hamas a fundamentalist movement? To answer this question, it is best to begin with a simple fact: From Islam it derives its values, its concepts and its views of life, the universe and man; it appeals to Islam in all its actions; it resorts to Islam for guidance and directions. The attempt to answer this question must include the following points. There is the role of constructing a politicized religion; this takes the form of propagating a social code that is Islamic as well as nationalist. There is also the role of mobilizing and directing Palestinian public energy around a proactive form of resistance to Israeli occupation. These two roles are not neatly separated, and their forms of

expression, as well as the instruments of action used to perform them, do not constitute a single political type. In the realm of the social code, Hamas always has maintained that proper Islamic behavior would strengthen the Palestinian national struggle because going back to God would be the first and most important step along the true path of liberation. In , Shaykh Yasin received at his home in Gaza scores of Palestinians who sought his help to arbitrate problems and give counsel on a variety of personal and social issues. These Palestinians were from all walks of life, religious and nonreligious, poor and wealthy, educated and noneducated. There have always been Hamas leaders who believed in the possibility of political bargaining and of a conditional temporary arrangement with Israel, including Shaykh Yasin, Dr. In interviews with the press, Yasin put forward his theory of such an arrangement. The fact that a leader with religious credentials used such political language has the potential of giving popular legitimacy to the principle of permanent peace with Israel. Why did Hamas boycott the elections? To provide answers to these questions, three points are useful. Hamas did not want to legitimize the DOP. Second, perhaps Hamas leaders inside the Palestinian territories feared that the movement would perform poorly should it decide to take part in the elections. Their fear, if it really existed, was confirmed by the fact that the only Hamas member to win a seat on the Legislative Council was Imad al-Faluji, who won primarily because he was on the Fatah list, in addition to a Hamas supporter from the wealthy Masri family of Nablus, who won mainly because he was a person of high birth. This kind of authority is not necessarily predicated on the indi[9] Muhammad Muslih visibility of religion and politics, but it is based on the premise that the religious and political spheres do intersect and overlap according to context. As Dale Eickelman and James P. Their conception can be summarized in the following way. Without wishing to predicate the principle of participatory politics on a conception of democracy that is based solely on shura consultation , Shaykh Jamal Salim, a Hamas figure from Nablus, stressed that the shura system in Islam gives individuals the right of ijtihad independent judgment in a legal or theological question in matters that have to do with elections and personal freedoms. He also argued that Hamas only boycotts elections for a legislative council that has only executive powers, but would take part in elections for a council that would have wide-ranging powers, including the power to legislate. Another Hamas figure, Shaykh Jamal Mansur also from Nablus , stressed that participation in elections springs from a complicated relationship between shura and the interest of Hamas and the Palestinian masses. Religion and nationalism combine in the theory and practice of Hamas. Also, Hamas did not seek to inject divine injunctions into all political spheres. They also endorsed jihad and called for the establishment of an Islamic state in a liberated Palestine. But it is also equally true that Hamas engaged in tacit bargaining with Israel regarding a ceasefire following the release of Shaykh Yasin from Israeli jails in September and with the PA concerning the stabilization of the situation in the self-rule areas. This tacit bargaining brought about rules for a modus vivendi between Hamas and the PA, particularly in Gaza, where the PA exercises total control over all political forces. As will be shown later, Hamas did not exclude the possibility of coexistence with an enemy or a political rival, at least for an interim period. Third, the institutions of Hamas, including the mosques, the Islamic schools, the clinics, and the majlis al-shura consultation council are not components of sacred authority. Clearly, other variables related to capabilities have been decisive.