Exchanging Territories for Peace

A Macrosociological Approach[*]

The most outstanding feature of the removal of Israeli settlements from the Sinai Peninsula, especially from the town of Yamit, was the prevailing confusion, disorientation, and uncertainty affecting all parties involved. Up to the last minute before the removal, the government of Israel postponed decisions and contravened previous positions. Furthermore, several of the Sinai settler-evacuees' questions remained unanswered. Should they have resisted the evacuation? What form and quantity of compensation for evacuating the settlements should have been demanded? Should there have been negotiations with the government, and if so, how should they have been conducted? Should they have enlisted the aid of external groups, such as various elements of the Movement to Stop the Withdrawal (MSW) in Sinai and the mass media? Should they have employed violence? If so, of what type and to what extent? Finally, how should the settlers have behaved once evacuation was underway?

[*] From Baruch Kimmerling, "Peace for Territories: A Macro-Sociological Analysis of the Concept of Peace in Zionist Ideology," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 23, no. 3 (1987): 13–34.

For the first time in the history of the modern state of Israel, the Israeli armed forces, which could not deny that the public political debate had pervaded its ranks, became directly involved in a serious internal political controversy. No one doubted that the armed forces would carry out orders from those in political authority, but nevertheless, uncertainty prevailed as to the precise intentions of those orders and the extent to which the military was to employ force, especially against active and armed resistance. Particularly important to the military was whether to reveal that the political controversy splitting the civilian public had seemingly divided the military to the same extent.

The MSW, which emerged from outside the settlers' ranks, comprised various factions that were unaware of the nature and boundaries of the proposed resistance and of the limits that the authorities would impose upon the application of force and pressure. The MSW also did not know how to recruit support without risking a political backlash, nor did it know how many active and potential supporters it required to transform the movement from a limited and relatively marginal group into a political power capable of threatening, and even implementing, civil rebellion.

Confusion apparently peaked in the general public. Except for narrow marginal sectors with well-formulated, extreme political views, the public was largely incapable of taking an unambiguous stand for or against the removal of settlements from Sinai. Moreover, certain opposition factions halfheartedly claimed that the government had other practical options and that a peace agreement with Egypt could have been attained without removing the settlements. None of the parties actively or passively involved in removing Sinai settlements appeared to be aware of the rules of the game or even of the game's ultimate objective. Sociologists call this situation anomie.[1]

This article attempts primarily to prove that anomie was provoked by two principal factors. The first was conflict between two key values in Israeli society and Zionist ideology. Israel aspired for peace with its Arab neighbors, but at the same time, had a powerful need for both Arab and universal recognition of the Zionist enterprise—in particular, the sanctity of settlement as a dominant component of the pragmatics of Zionism and the danger inherent in reversing any settlement processes. The second were problems and internal contradictions in the Israeli political culture related to the concept of peace itself. I first describe and analyze each component, then examine the components' mutual interaction.

Peace in Israel Political Culture

The Jewish social system in Palestine, subsequently Israel, has never truly experienced total peace, and the constant struggle between the society of immigrant-settlers and the Arabs has been subject to drastic fluctuations in patterns, intensity, and significance. I have elsewhere distinguished between the chronic and extended manifestations of this conflict and its periodic active outbreaks, which have taken the form of riots (in 1921, 1929, and 1936–39) or full-scale warfare (in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982).[2] Most participants in the conflict—the Israelis, Palestinians, Arab states, and even the entire Muslim world and its allies—have tended to perceive it as insoluble, not only because of its duration, but also because of several factors. All parties emphasize the cultural and religious gaps between the Jewish and Arab societies. Many perceive the conflict as being based on incompatible interests, in that both parties want the entire territory of Palestine, at least in the long run; it is considered unlikely that either would settle for the existence of two mutually exclusive entities, one Arab Palestinian and the other Jewish Israeli.[3] The conflict is also perceived as being zero-sum, that is, one side's gains necessarily result in the other's losses, so that from the Zionist point of view all acts of nation building are considered directly connected with the Jewish-Arab conflict. Finally, both Israel and the Arab countries consider war to be the natural state of affairs, with peace—or even the "threat" of peace—considered a crisis situation.[4]

Despite the above factors, or perhaps because of them, peace and aspirations for peace remained a central motif of Zionist ideology and an integral part of Israeli society's collective self-image. The aspirations stemmed from several complementary sources. Virtually all schools of Zionism were perceived as bearing a social revolution with a deep moral message, intended not only for the nation of Israel, but for all mankind.[5] This universal dimension of Zionism could be expressed only in a situation of peace, including peace with those in the surrounding Arab environment; without the Arabs within, alongside, or surrounding Jewish society, doubt was cast upon the very legitimacy of the Zionist enterprise.[6] Two conditions are necessary for the Zionist enterprise to succeed: Most of world Jewry must be gathered within the Jewish state, and the Arabs must accept this society's existence. Because of these conditions, a second source of aspirations for peace was the belief that if peace were not imminent, the Zionist enterprise would face constant danger of physical destruction or political annihilation. However,

Israelis pragmatically recognized that the Zionist enterprise could not be completed unless a situation of peace prevailed, for not all of Diaspora Jewry would immigrate to Israel if such a move would threaten one's survival. Anxiety would deter personal or collective destiny, ideological motivation, or any combination of the two.

Zionist Israeli cultural creations, such as literature and poetry, were consistently replete with both externally and internally directed messages of Israel's quest for peace, especially before the Six-Day War in 1967, although the trend continued for a time afterward. Political or overall social objectives contrasting with this ideology of peace were thrust to the periphery. Casting Israel as a seeker of peace and its enemies as opponents of peace— surely not an original Israeli invention—became an integral part of conflict management, for both foreign and domestic purposes. The political perception that these tactics created, even though it was only partially supported by reality, successfully gained long-term acceptance in most of the Western world—Israeli society's principal reference group—and among most of the Israeli political community. Most of the Israeli public sincerely believed that Israel desired peace, though they did not always agree regarding the methods to use or the sacrifices to be made to attain such peace.

At times in Zionist history, Israelis had hoped and even believed that peace, or at least Arab acceptance of the existence of the Jewish political entity in their region, was either imminent or had been attained de facto. On January 3, 1919, Chaim Weizmann and Emir Faysal ibn Hussein signed an agreement that the Zionists interpreted as the Arabs relinquishing their designs on Palestine as a separate component of a future, greater Arab state, and recognizing the Jewish political entity's exclusive rights to that region. For several years afterward, the Zionist movement considered this agreement the basis for Arab consent to the coexistence of the two nations in the region.

Following the 1948 war, Israel signed ceasefire agreements with most of the Arab states involved in the confrontation. The preamble to each of these agreements included a paragraph declaring the agreement to be temporary and valid only until peace had been established between the state of Israel and the relevant Arab state. At the time, Israeli leaders considered the termination of war with the Arabs to be a close, attainable possibility.

Approximately one year before the 1973 war, the ceasefire lines between Israel and Egypt, Syria, and the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan enjoyed relative quiet. No active hostility took place, although political, psycho-

logical, and economic warfare against Israel did not cease. This situation, considered in light of Israel's own powerful self-image, led Moshe Dayan, the minister of defense, to his often-stated conclusion that a de facto peace prevailed between Israel and its Arab neighbors. I emphasize, however, that this conception was unusual; the conflict was generally viewed as defying simple or imminent solutions.

Routinization of Aspirations for Peace

In 1966, Yehoshafat Harkabi, the former head of Israeli military intelligence and an expert in Arab perceptions of the Israel-Arab conflict, wrote the following:

> Obviously, we yearn for peace in the near future. However, willingly or otherwise, Israel must prepare for and adjust to the possibility that the conflict will be an extended one. Turning points, unforeseen phenomena and dramatic events may indeed develop . . . but these cannot be predicted in advance; hence we cannot rely upon them.[7]

Harkabi went on to call for the political socialization of Israeli society, especially the youth, according to this approach. He claimed that a world order anticipating peace at any moment had consistently proven to be a false prophecy, potentially counterproductive to Israeli society. Israeli society's routinization of the conflict was vital to its perseverance. Such routinization meant continuing a normal life and maintaining a social structure not permanently on the alert, either psychologically or militarily, for an extended and seemingly interminable struggle. Society was thus obligated to absorb everything pertaining to conflict management as a permanent societal feature, a destiny, or a natural social phenomenon. Just as a society had gaps among its various social strata, such as disagreements among religious and nonreligious groups, so too did it have periodic wars and constant conflict with its environment, as Dayan stated above. Just as persons died from air pollution and traffic accidents, the results of technological developments, so too did persons die in battle or in the perpetual small-scale war involving Israel. Investing in social resources and emotional energy could help reduce the damage, but the phenomenon could not be eliminated altogether.

Another aspect of this process is the routinization of aspirations for peace, stemming from five perceptions commonly accepted in Israel. First,

the desire for peace with all Arab states is a national objective and lofty ideal of the Israeli collectivity.[8] Second, the Arabs as countries, nations, and cultures are perceived as unwilling to accept the existence of Israel in the region because of cultural or religious differences, perceptions of their own interests, or a combination of these factors, and therefore seek Israel's annihilation. Third, Israel cannot control the conflict; at most it may intensify it through initiated activity and strong reactions to Arab provocation, but it cannot diminish the conflict, much less resolve it.[9] Attaining peace thus does not depend on Israel, which cannot influence the situation as long as it remains a Zionist state—that is, the potential homeland of all or most of the world's Jews. Fourth, peace will arrive in the nebulous or Utopian future. It may result from processes and developments taking place in the Arab world as it undergoes modernization and comes to understand the advantage of having the Zionist enterprise in the region. Alternatively, the Arabs may realize that annihilating Israel is impossible, that the conflict only causes material and social damage, and therefore find it more worthwhile to accept Israel's existence. Peace may also result from some indescribable process—a miracle.[10] Fifth, though peace remains a desired objective, Israel's military-strategic conception is based upon a "mini-max" approach that accords security a greater value than any other objective, including peace. This implies that attitudes toward peace or any concessions made in its name must be measured against the perceived contributions to security. If peace lowers the level of security, then it is not worthwhile. Peace may only be agreed to and strived for if it neither diminishes nor endangers security.[11]

The routinization of the quest for peace enabled Israeli society to live with itself and the prevailing situation of conflict. Thus, Israel could continue to invest in conflict management and other overall internal and external social objectives while ritually and declaratively devoting efforts toward peace-oriented activities. Keeping this in mind, one can avoid the moot question of whether Israel could have obtained a peace agreement with the Arab states from 1949–67.

The Incommensurable Values

Many of the abovementioned perceptions changed following the Six-Day War in 1967, as Israel gained control of the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. At least during the immediate postwar period, Israelis believed that the Arabs' military debacle was so decisive

and their losses of territory so unacceptable to them that they finally would be forced to realize that they could not destroy Israel militarily. Hence, the Arabs would have no choice but to recognize Israel's existence. Israel's defense minister announced that he was "awaiting a telephone call" from Jordan's King Hussein.

Soon, however, it became evident that not all parties involved were ready to accept a simple exchange of the captured territories for peace agreements. Israel's dual assumption was that its proven absolute military superiority would lead the Arabs to conclude they must recognize Israel, and that Israel's control of large Arab-populated territories and military proximity to regions vital to the Arab states—the Suez Canal, Damascus, and key Jordanian territories and populations—was unbearable for the affected states in particular and the Arab world in general, and would thus lead the Arabs to negotiate with Israel. These assumptions proved incorrect.[12] The first signs of this appeared as early as February 1969, when Egypt initiated the War of Attrition along the Suez Canal. The results of the war were unclear, for neither side overcame the other. At the same time, Palestinians increased their small-scale attacks against Israel's urban population as Fatah—the newly consolidated main political arm of the Palestine Liberation Organization—began to increase its notoriety in Israel and throughout the world. In March 1969, Hussein announced the establishment of a joint Jordanian-Syrian "eastern front" command, along with military coordination efforts with Egypt, hinting at the possibility of a war of attrition.

Israel's control of vast Arab territories did not diminish the conflict's intensity, and the situation became even more complex with the emergence of the Palestinian Arabs as participants. For about nineteen years, the vast majority of the original Arab population of Palestine had lived under Jordanian rule. Jordan, the only Arab state to consider the Palestinians to be citizens rather than refugees, attempted to involve them in the Jordanian national economic, social, and—to a partial extent—political systems. Israel's subsequent control of territories where large numbers of Palestinians lived initiated the accelerated process of their de-Jordanization and subsequent re-Palestinization.[13] Increasingly vocal Palestinian Arab demands, issued independently of those voiced in their host countries, were accompanied by guerilla warfare within the occupied territories and Israel, as well as by acts of terrorism abroad. These developments intensified the image of the conflict as a zero-sum struggle between parties with mutually exclusive interests.

Institutionalization of Territories

At the same time, an internal process of a totally different nature began to take place within Israeli society. Since its inception, the Zionist movement has yearned for and sought the return of Jews to the "land of their forefathers," and this focus upon obviously sensitive territorial objectives was a key means to mobilize Jews to immigrate to Zion. Patterns of land ownership by Arabs led the Jewish political community in Palestine, with the exception of the new city of Jerusalem, to establish itself in areas with only peripheral territorial symbolism to the Arabs, such as the Mediterranean coastal plain and the Jezareel and Jordan valleys. Although the penetration of Zionist settlements into the central hill regions, the core of the original Land of Israel, had been minor and sporadic, it was full of religious symbolism, as these regions constituted the infrastructure of national Zionist symbols. Hence, Israel's control of them after 1967 aroused powerful sentiments, and not only among the religious strata of Israeli society. Despite his saying he awaited a telephone call from Hussein, Dayan declared that "we have not returned to [biblical towns] Anatot and Shilo merely to abandon them forever." Israel immediately annexed the old city of Jerusalem, and as time passed, the size of the area that both the government and public of Israel were willing to bargain in exchange for peace or some other political accommodation gradually decreased.

The reduction in the size of the land that Israel was willing to part with did not result solely from the territories' national and religious symbolism. Occupying the territories also seemed to reduce Israel's military vulnerability, for the borders of the state, which extended past the ceasefire lines established in 1949, were long and convoluted, making Israel highly vulnerable from both a tactical and strategic point of view. Moreover, the continued institutionalization of the occupied regions intensified class and economic interests, and had several effects.

The Mizrahi Jews—that is, Jewish immigrants from North Africa and Asia—underwent upward social mobilization as a single unit. Prior to 1967, this group had occupied the lower strata of the Israeli social system. After the Six-Day War, adding the Arab residents of the occupied territories to the labor force immediately moved the Mizrahi Jews to the intermediate strata. The Mizrahi Jews also enjoyed occupational mobility as a result, with their former jobs assumed by Arab workers. Meanwhile, the territories were gradually settled by Jews, partially because of government ini-

tiatives—as in the case of Yamit—and partially because of private efforts, which occasionally contrasted with declared government policy. The occupied territories became a sort of frontier zone for the social system,[14] due to a combination of perceptions of Israel's strategic military interests, sentiment toward the territories, and the economic interests of the entire social systems and various strata within it. The influx of hundreds of thousands of unskilled workers from the occupied territories into Israel's economy added unprecedented dimensions to its fifteen-year-long postwar boom.[15] Finally, the territories themselves provided Israel with numerous important natural resources, such as water from the Golan Heights, vast quantities of oil and minerals from the Sinai Peninsula, tourist attractions such as the winter resorts along the eastern Sinai coast, the Gulf of Aqaba, the Gulf of Suez, and Mount Hermon, and a potential land reserve.

Hawks and Doves

All of the above factors intensively changed the Israeli perception of the role and value of peace. Until the Six-Day War, peace was considered a lofty ideal, apparently unattainable at a price that most in the Israeli sociopolitical system would accept. After 1967, however, different conceptions began to develop regarding the possibility of obtaining peace as agreements promoted an absence of belligerence in varying degrees, in exchange for some, most, or all of the occupied territories.[16] Furthermore, differences of opinion arose as to whether the benefits of peace were worth the costs of changes affecting sentiment (e.g., concessions involving sites or areas considered holy), security, the economy, and social factors. The cleavages within Israeli society—right wing versus left wing, religious versus nonreligious, Jews versus Arabs, Ashkenazi versus Mizrahi, and the like[17]—were joined by a split between doves and hawks on the issue of peace, a distinction that partially overlapped with the other cleavages.[18]

The terminology of hawks and doves is borrowed from U.S. political culture. In Israel, the doves tended to believe that a peace agreement—or at least an agreement guaranteeing long-term periods of relative non-belligerence and tranquility—was indeed attainable in exchange for all or most of the territories Israel had occupied since 1967. The doves claimed that, even if there was no immediate possibility of obtaining such an agreement, Israel must refrain from taking steps that would prevent or hamper its attainment. For them, peace was of utmost importance, and Israel's control

of vast Arab territories and populations was immoral and perhaps practically impossible. The doves did not wish to see Israel transformed into a binational state with a large Arab minority (according to various calculations, this minority will likely become a small majority by the year 2010),[19] whether or not the Arabs from the occupied territories were accorded full civil and political rights, such as the right to vote and to be elected to the Knesset. Thus was created a demographic left, as opposed to a social left, as well a demographic right.[20]

The hawks' position was predicated primarily on Israel's right to the entire Land of Israel promised in the Bible and various claims that the territories had necessary strategic defense value. The hawks had no consistent response to Israel's demographic problem;[21] instead, they drew upon a basic assumption of Zionism that the majority of world Jewry would one day reside in Israel, at which time the relative ratio of Israeli Jews to Palestinian Arabs would become inconsequential. In addition, the hawks doubted that a genuine peace with the Arabs was possible, even in exchange for major concessions.[22]

Both approaches proved to be problematic. For one, each view expressed desires that could not be substantiated empirically. The doves could not prove that, in return for all or part of the occupied territories, the Arabs would consent to a peace agreement and recognize Israel's right to exist. The hawks could not provide for the maintenance of the basic Jewish character of the state of Israel. This led to a reversal of sorts: Social groups that upheld universalist, humanistic, and democratic approaches employed the particularistic goal of preserving Israel's Jewish character, whereas those with a national-particularistic outlook were bound prima facie by universalistic claims that Jews and Arabs could coexist.

Moreover, virtually no consensus existed among the hawks or the doves with respect to the concrete elements of their respective conceptions. The hawks were divided in their attitudes toward authority and obedience to government decisions and democracy. Whether the entire Land of Israel was to include all of the territories conquered in 1967, or only Judea and Samaria—that is, Jordan's West Bank—and the Golan Heights, remained unclear. The hawks also faced the problem of deciding which attitude to adopt toward peace. Should a concrete and reasonable Arab offer of a peace agreement in exchange for territories be refused? If not, which concessions would be considered permissible, and which territories should be defended? International actors affected the issue, as for many years, Israelis had expressed

anxiety that their country could face pressure from abroad—primarily economic pressure from the United States—and not be able to withstand it. Israel had already experienced considerable political pressure. Although many Israelis feared such effects from the outside, some more dovish groups actually hoped for it, especially those who had despaired that Israel's political situation would change through internal social processes only.

The hawks maintained so-called price lists with which to trade off values in response to several questions. How much democracy should be sacrificed to hold on to the territories? What were the locations and extent of territories that could be relinquished under different conditions of economic and political pressure? Which territories demanded confrontation with the Israeli government and the collectivity's rules? What should be the nature and intensity of such a confrontation, and which means should be employed? On the whole, the hawks remained more consistently homogeneous than did the doves, who were divided among themselves as to the locations and extent of territories to be traded for peace and the nature of desired security arrangements—that is, how much peace should be negotiated, and with whom. The doves' price lists were even more varied than were the hawks', leading fringe elements of the two camps to meet in the middle of the polarity and create an intermediate category, the dove-hawks, the most obvious manifestation of which was the Allon Plan. This plan posited that the Jewish military and settlement presence should be established in areas not densely populated by Arabs and of strategic defense significance, such as the Jordan Valley. This plan also opposed future de jure annexation of these territories to the state of Israel.

With respect to trading territories for peace, the main difficulty facing the two camps, and all of the Israeli social system, was that the values to be traded were incommensurable. Territory or land is a real, material object that can be quantified, evaluated, compared, and even sold on the market. Peace is a largely abstract and esoteric concept, dependent on experience and culture, elusive and difficult to control. In the context of international relations, one can hold on to territory by overpowering one's rival, but both sides must cooperate to keep peace. Even groups demanding the exchange of territories for peace generally formulated their ideas in relative terms, such as that of taking a calculated risk. This situation made it difficult to create a trade proposal that a broad cross section of Israeli society would accept in valuing peace over the location and amount of territory exchanged for it.

Another difficulty arose for the doves' claim that peace equaled security, which contrasted with the hawks' call for strategic depth. Moreover, although the Arab states, especially Egypt, began to discuss peace as part of their political strategies for securing the return of territories, particularly after the 1973 war, the hawks declared that no similarity whatsoever existed between Israeli and Arab conceptions of peace. Their view was further reinforced by the traditional Arab conception that the Middle East would see peace, and not specifically peace between Israel and the Arabs, when the "legitimate rights" of the Palestinian Arabs were restored, a phrase inviting a broad and highly flexible interpretation.

Despite the problems aroused by the concept of peace, it remains a key symbol in Israeli society, which so urgently needs recognition and legitimacy by the international community, including the Arabs, and a measure of internal legitimacy in the context of the Israel-Arab conflict. When Egyptian president Anwar Sadat dramatically appeared in Jerusalem and proposed peace, the Israelis found they could not refuse his offer, even though its implications clashed with several other key values of Zionist ideology.[23]

Settlements and Anxiety over the Reversibility of Zionism

Since the beginning of the Zionist enterprise, Jewish immigrant settlers in Palestine have encountered local residents who considered the land their own, though conceptions of collective political and social identity among the Arabs was unconsolidated at first, and would not develop until later. Facing increasing opposition to modern Jewish settlement in Palestine, the Zionist enterprise found itself lacking the political strength or colonial-military power to support settlement and nation building consistently and unambiguously, and sought them to attain their declared objectives.

Zionism represented a combined political, economic, and social approach to creating a territorial base for a Jewish polity through purchasing land and creating facts related to settlement, such as the presence of Jewish settlers upon the land acquired.[24] This nation-building strategy, coupled with promoting immigration, was such a central theme of Zionism that it ultimately became one of the movement's chief symbols. It fostered a virtually total identification of Zionism itself, as a social, political, and cultural movement, with the means for its realization: the accumulation of territory and the creation of settlements upon this territory. One school of Zionist thought, the Revisionist Movement, accorded only marginal importance

to such settlement, focusing more on the desire for international political recognition (a charter) and simultaneous and immediate sovereignty over most of the territory defined as the Land of Israel. This group, however, had little political clout and remained permanently opposed to the Zionist leadership, who saw no possibility of accumulating international and local political and social power without creating settlements in Mandatory Palestine. This policy was expressed concisely in the slogan "each additional dunum increases our strength." *

Until the Zionist movement attained actual sovereignty, it realized its territorial aspirations by acquiring land, primarily through national institutions such as the Jewish National Fund. The ownership of this land was secured by prohibiting its sale not only to non-Jews, but also to the private Jewish sector, lest it be resold to non-Jews. Thus, the concepts of public ownership of land, the constant accumulation of publicly owned land, and the attempt to render it irreversible became key components of Zionist practice. The prevailing conflict, lack of sovereignty, and constant political weakness led to a mechanism complementing land accumulation and reinforcing its irreversibility: presence, that is, of Jewish settlements on public land.

As with ownership, presence had a dual significance in Zionist thought. Ideologically, establishing various types of settlements, especially rural frontier settlements, was perceived as the heart of the nation-building process. Tactically, presence by settlement was a tool to manage the conflict with the Arabs and was important to ensuring the irreversibility of ownership of the territories. Presence also helped determine the physical and political boundaries of the collectivity. Eventually, these aspects of ideology and tactics merged, and the concept of settlement was "sanctified" within the "official secular religion" of the collectivity (Bellah, 1980).[25]

The combination of ownership and presence became the functional equivalent of political sovereignty, as the system worked much like a sovereign nation in both domestic and foreign affairs.[26] Even when the Jewish polity eventually achieved sovereignty, it was not recognized by the surrounding Arabs, and so the conflict persisted, albeit in different forms. The collectivity remained loyal to the concept that, despite the achievement of sovereignty, high levels of control should be maintained over all territories.

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* The most common measure of land area in the Middle East, 4.5 *dunums* equals approximately one acre.

This was manifested in the following three components of territorial control: ownership, as obtained through nationalizing 95 percent of all of the country's land; presence, as expressed in the compulsive tendency to ensure Jewish settlement in all areas, or at least prevent Arab presence in them; and sovereignty itself.[27]

The concepts were rooted in an even more basic concern: anxiety over the possible reversibility of the Zionist enterprise. Such anxiety arose from a perception that the settlement enterprise was an entity in which each point of settlement constituted part of a whole, and the process could move only in the direction of increasing control over territories through intensified presence. Decreasing control was thought to initiate the dissolution of the Zionist enterprise, in a manner similar to the domino theory of the fall of nations. Thus, the Israelis did not allow the residents of two Maronite villages, Bir'im and Ikrit, to return to some of the lands taken by Israel in the 1948 war because they did not wish to set a precedent of returning territory to enemy control.[28] Anxiety increased following the conquest during the 1948 war of some parts of Palestine beyond the borders allocated to the Jewish state by the United Nations resolution of November 29, 1947. Whereas before the war, the Jewish entity gained control of lands by buying them, the new areas were acquired through conquest by force, giving rise to vocal Arab claims.

In sum, all manifestations of Zionist settlement—cities, kibbutzim, *moshavim,* and *moshavot*—constituted an integral, sacrosanct part of Zionist ideology. This sanctity increased with the Jewish-Arab conflict, primarily because of anxiety over the possible reversibility of Zionist settlement. In this context, dismantling or removing an Israeli settlement might be perceived as a threat to the Zionist enterprise as a whole.

Internal struggles among Israel's hawks and doves engendered widespread domestic and external support for the claim that no Jewish settlement should be uprooted, and that Israel must pay any price, or at least a high price, to prevent this from happening. Between 1967 and 1977, struggles within the political center led to the formulation of a map of territories not to be returned under any circumstances.[29] During that decade, settlements were established in the Sinai Peninsula, including the town of Yamit (because of pressure by Dayan), to restrain the collectivity from possibly conceding the territory later. Two types of settlements, military and civilian, were set up. The former, established by Nahal soldiers, were an intermediate stage; liquid points of settlement based on strategic and se-

curity considerations, they could be dismantled without arousing anxiety over reversibility or demobilized and transformed into a civilian presence, considered irreversible. Later, the overall strategy of the Gush Emunim movement[30] followed this trend, establishing various types of settlements under the assumption that the Israeli political and social system could not concede territories with a Jewish presence.

When Values Collide

On November 9, 1977, addressing the Egyptian National Assembly, Sadat declared that he planned to go to Jerusalem and reach a peace agreement with Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin immediately transmitted a message through the American embassy in Cairo inviting Sadat to Jerusalem. At the same time, Sadat spoke to the Egyptian people in a radio broadcast, calling for "no more wars, no more bloodshed, and no more threats." On November 19, ten days after Sadat's declaration, the Egyptian president's plane landed in Israel; he addressed the Knesset the following day. This dramatic gesture has been termed a "diplomatic surprise,"[31] the equivalent of a strategic military surprise, such as Operation Barbarossa, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, or the Egyptian-Syrian attack on Israel in 1973, and it received unprecedented coverage in the media both inside and outside Israel.[32] It also shattered many components of the Israeli belief system, if only temporarily. Sadat himself recognized his tactics were seeking to break down what he called "psychological barriers":

> I realized that we were about to be caught up in a terrible vicious circle, precisely like the one we'd lived through over the last thirty years. And the root cause was none other than that very psychological barrier. By a psychological barrier, I mean that huge wall of suspicion, fear, hate and misunderstanding that has for so long existed between Israel and the Arabs. It made each side simply unwilling to believe the other.[33]

Polls taken before and after Sadat's visit point to radical changes in Israeli public opinion regarding relations between Jews and Arabs in general, and between Israel and Egypt in particular. In March 1970 only 8 percent of Israelis believed that the Arab states wanted peace with Israel, but during Sadat's visit, this figure surpassed 80 percent, with 95 percent believing

that at least Egypt wanted peace. The figures for this issue fluctuate with each specific event affecting relations between the Arabs and Israel, but they never dropped below 40 percent during the period of the Sinai evacuation (1980–1982).[34]

More deeply, Israel's sociopolitical system changed after Sadat's visit, the ensuing negotiations with Egypt, the Camp David accords, and Israeli withdrawal from the territories specified in the Israel-Egypt peace treaty. For the Israelis, the idea of peace with the Arabs was transformed from a distant, Utopian dream to a real, concrete historical possibility, even though Israel and Egypt clearly differed in their conceptions of the essence and form that peace should have taken and its ultimate political results, which were primarily territorial. Despite the absence of a public consensus on the extent of the transformation, the new situation demanded that Israelis update their beliefs as to which trade-offs of peace for territory they considered acceptable. Among Israel's social groups and strata, views had ranged between two extreme poles. One pole to offer only peace for peace, based on the assumption that Israel should not pay for peace with any territory or security property because its opponents required peace as much as Israel did. The other pole demanded that all territories conquered in the 1967 war, with the possible exception of East Jerusalem, be returned in exchange for genuine peace.

This updating of Israelis' peace price list had two main features. First, most Israelis were willing to trade a greater amount of territory and strategic security property than they had been before Israeli-Egyptian negotiations began. Even during the initial stages, however, no concrete results and prices for peace were stipulated. The first Israeli sector to pay a price for implementing the peace agreements was the military, especially the Israeli air force, which lost several important air bases in Sinai and area used for maneuvers and training. Concessions affecting the oil fields harmed Israel's economy, though this did not constitute a concrete price for most of Israel's residents. However, the dismantling of settlements in Sinai, especially the Yamit region, described vividly by the news media, made clear the price of peace. The so-called trauma of Yamit would remain with the Israelis for many years afterward; the hawks hoped that this would prevent Israel from making additional territorial concessions.

Second, the price of peace increased also because of growing internal struggles. These struggles led to new political movements, such as Peace Now, the demonstrations of which attracted entire strata of the population that had never before been politically active. The movement was es-

tablished to encourage the government to make sufficient concessions to attain a peace treaty, and thus countered the MSW. In contrast, groups such as the Land of Israel Movement, Gush Emunim, and others formed a broad, hawkish coalition to block withdrawal from Sinai and even to prevent the attainment of peace.

The government was the most important actor in this complex situation; its behavior and decisions largely reflected developments in the overall sociopolitical system and influenced its reactions. Begin was identified with an inflexible national ideology, and so his response to the Egyptian offer of peace, declaring that "all is open to negotiation," perhaps constituted the decisive factor in securing major changes in Israeli public opinion and a readiness to pay for peace with territory. Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, known for his assertion that the coastal strip along the Gulf of Sinai up to Sharm-al-Sheikh could never be returned to Arab control, even in exchange for peace, apparently changed his mind and urged the government to relinquish the entire Sinai Peninsula.[35]

Even as peace between Israel and Egypt became more possible, the problems associated with the concept of peace discussed earlier were still largely apparent, as was the concept's clash with others, such as territoriality, settlement, and reversibility. The clash, in fact, may have intensified. Between Sadat's visit and the final stages of implementing Israel's agreement with Egypt, the possibility of concluding the endless war and attaining legitimation from the largest of the neighboring Arab states achieved salience and unprecedented weight with both the government and public. Egypt itself promised that other Arab countries would follow its lead. Even the problem of trusting the enemy—as expressed by Israel's chief of staff on November 15, 1977, when he warned that Egypt's suggestions may well constitute a diversionary tactic preceding a military surprise attack like the one that occurred on Yom Kippur in 1973—was cast aside for the chance of obtaining legitimation. When it came time to pay the debt agreed to at Camp David, however, anomie intensified within the Israeli government and extended to the periphery.

Even those who trusted Sadat's sincerity felt somewhat anxious about the political instability that characterized developing countries, especially Arab countries. They feared that after Israel ceded territories and relinquished its presence in them, the Egyptian regime would suddenly change, almost certainly leading to Egypt reneging on its obligations to keep the peace. The remaining Arab states opposed the Egypt-Israel peace treaty, and a question

arose as to how long Egypt could remain in political, economic, and cultural isolation from the Arab world. Those supporting the peace treaty advanced two arguments. First, if Israel would not take calculated risks, it would never achieve peace. Second, instead of continuing to fight the process, the other Arab states might follow Egypt in negotiating for peace.

The problems and uncertainty connected with the politics of exchanging territory for peace were even more complex. Only a partial peace was being achieved in at least two respects. At that stage, Israel was at peace with only one Arab state, Egypt, and saw no reduction in hostilities with the other states or the Palestinians. The price Israel was asked to pay was also only partial. Moreover, the peace did not resemble the peace that prevails between France and Switzerland. The Egyptians themselves often clarified that the peace with Israel was only a first step toward the region's acceptance of Israel, which would be contingent upon Israel's future behavior and ability to integrate itself within the Arab Middle East construct.[36]

Thus, as Israel strove for a maximum normalization of relations with Egypt, including opening its borders to reciprocal tourism and the flow of goods and offering economic and political cooperation, the Egyptians stopped at a minimum level of openness, viewing peace with Israel as not only partial, but conditioned upon some solution to the Palestinian problem as well as Israel's ultimate ability to integrate itself culturally and politically with the region. Israel found this highly problematic. There were serious differences of opinion as to the best means of resolving the Palestinian problem and the call for Israel to integrate within the region—perhaps the most difficult of all of the political and territorial demands—affected both the basic identity of the Israeli collectivity and the distribution of power and control within the region.

Peace was therefore accompanied by anxiety over the acceleration of the Levantinization of Israeli society, which could undermine its Western rules and culture. The internal stratificational and political implications of integration with the Middle East, however, were no less complex. These stemmed from a covert assumption that integration would end the cultural and political predominance of Jews from Western countries and create a new ethnic balance within Israeli society. Israel's Eastern Jews would perhaps benefit from blurring Israeli society's Western image. Thus, a new, highly problematic, fundamental contradiction arose: The Israelis sought normal relations with the Arabs, but feared the long-term results. This situation effectively reversed accepted Zionist conceptions, as the Jews, once

envisioned as the pioneers of progress and modernization in the Middle East, now feared the Arabization of Israeli society.[37]

The Removal of Yamit

The case of the construction and removal of the town of Yamit dramatically illustrates many of the hypotheses proposed in this essay. The town provoked political controversy at its establishment, as preparations for settlement required the eviction of Bedouin tribes, who traditionally held rights to the region. Israel wished to construct a southern Mediterranean port city, establish a presence there, and thereby preclude returning the territory to Egypt or any other Arab claimant. Yamit itself was not intended to be the site of the future boundary of Israel, as the prevailing conception declared that urban settlements must not be situated in border regions. Hence, the plans for Yamit demanded that it be surrounded by a territorial hinterland of rural settlements constituting a buffer between Yamit's urban population and the intended border. According to Israeli sociomilitary doctrine, only rural settlements could fulfill an immediate security role. Yamit's primary purpose was to establish an Israeli presence in the region at large.

Jewish Israeli historiography records two traumatic incidents of urban evacuation: the flight of the Hebron Jewish community following the killing of Jewish residents in the 1929 riots, and the conquest of the old city of Jerusalem by the Arab Legion in 1948. In both cases, however, the enemy imposed evacuation, and Israelis took some comfort that, while both settlements were symbolically highly important. neither of the locations were integral to the Zionist settlement enterprise. Also, their populations largely belonged to the old non-Zionist *yishuv*. Therefore, one could contend that the evacuation did not signify the reversibility of the Zionist enterprise at that time.

The Camp David accords called for the return of the entire Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, but did not allude to the fate of the settlements there. For some time, Israelis were not certain whether Egypt would consent to having Israeli settlers on its territory, a potential source of conflict and of Israeli and Egyptian claims and counterclaims even after withdrawal. It was also unclear whether the Israeli collectivity in general would agree to withdraw, or whether the Sinai settlers would live in a region controlled by another nation, and if so, under what status.

When the withdrawal approached the final stage, Egypt indicated that it did not distinguish between evacuating the territory and removing its

Jewish settlers. The settlers were asked to pay the price of peace personally. Although they were assured generous material compensation for their property, they nonetheless lost their homes, and at least some of them bore emotional and psychological costs. As noted previously, many settlers of Yamit and Sinai were not motivated primarily by nationalism, but rather by quality of life, financial well-being, and the availability of relatively inexpensive housing. Still, they were initially hailed as pioneers; as in previous settlement ventures, the Zionist enterprise exploited a combination of collectivistic and ideological motivations and individual vested interests. Following the decision to remove the settlements, some settlers were prepared to pay the cost of peace, just as Israelis were generally prepared to pay the cost of war. Most of the bona fide settlers—unlike the outsiders recruited specifically to stop or at least protest the withdrawal—considered the removal merely a matter of bargaining. This caused the public to label them as extortionists or peace profiteers.

Like the outsiders who gathered in Yamit and its surrounding agricultural settlements during the final stages of the removal, a minority of the settlers considered the evacuation and withdrawal to be issues of ideology, values, and even of morality and religion. They declared the settled regions in Sinai and Yamit to be "an inseparable part of the Land of Israel," redefining Israel's borders to include the Jewish settlements. Anxiety over the possible reversibility of the settlement stemmed from an ulterior fear that withdrawal from Sinai would lead to withdrawal from the West Bank. Certain ideological opponents of the withdrawal attempted to sanctify the settlements and thereby make withdrawing from them a profaning of the sacred, or at least an anti-Zionist act. A few of Meir Kahane's supporters locked themselves in a bunker and threatened to "surrender their souls for the sanctity of God"—that is, commit suicide—if forced to evacuate. Thus, opponents of the withdrawal attempted to combine religious, national, and instrumental—that is, national security—symbols to recruit support and restrain decision makers in the government from removing the settlements. If successful, such efforts would have sabotaged the peace agreement immediately.

The government's decision to raze Yamit, in contrast to its decision regarding remote Ofira, which was handed over to Egypt in return for some symbolic compensation, is of particular importance. The reasons given for destroying Yamit down to its foundations included preventing Jewish settlers from hoping they could someday return, thus reducing the risk of cre-

ating a "myth of return." The decision also considered the justice of handing the area back to Egypt as it was when the Israelis took control of it. Apparently, however, the most significant reason was not expressed publicly, which was the emotional difficulty of giving a Jewish settlement to so-called strangers. Feelings of sheer vengeance also likely played a role, as the Syrian town of Kuneitra had similarly been destroyed by the Israeli army before its return following the ceasefire agreements of 1974.

Even sectors of the population that did not oppose withdrawal or enthusiastically supported it to obtain peace apparently found the removal of the settlements discomfiting. This feeling was intensified by the television coverage of the forced removal of the populace and the razing of Yamit. Only at this stage was the cost of peace tangibly recognized. The fear of reversibility, however, did not seem in the forefront of the public consciousness. Rather, many perceived peace as an opportunity to consolidate the Zionist enterprise in the West Bank territories, and its high price was made palpable even to some of the more hawkish Israelis. The Israeli war in Lebanon, which broke out a mere two months after the end of the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai—undoubtedly as part of Israel's plan to hold onto the West Bank—soon deflected the wider public's attention from the Sinai removal and engaged it in another painful, drawn-out affair.

Conclusions

The evacuation of Sinai and the Yamit region epitomized and intensified the complex problems that the Camp David accords posed for Israeli society. It is not surprising that Israel's sociopolitical system experienced a brief period of functional disability, which included difficulties in making decisions, implementing previous decisions, and recruiting political support from all active participants in this domestic struggle. Implementing the peace treaty, and especially evacuating Israeli settlements, aroused significant existential and identity crises in Israeli society and caused confrontations among key values. Making peace with an Arab state was a new experience for the Israeli system, which previously dealt mostly with conflict and war and therefore had come to excel in both military performance and devising institutional methods of conflict management. The Israeli system was unprepared emotionally for peace soon; peace had been perceived as highly priced—although the perception of which price would be fair differed from group to group—partial, conditional, and of doubtful permanence. Price

lists for peace included the exchange of tangible items, such as territory and oil, for abstract concepts, such as peace, security, and recognition, requiring difficult comparisons and assessments to quantify and equate territory and peace. This aroused and intensified public anxiety, which can be placed into the following two categories: political anxiety, as expressed in a fear that the system would be de-Zionized and decolonized; and cultural-primordial anxiety, as expressed over the call for "integration within the region, together with the Arabization of Israel,"[38] which constituted a long-term threat to Israel's collective identity and ethno-political structure.

Despite such fundamental problems, Israel honored the peace treaty, at least with respect to withdrawing from Sinai and the Yamit region, and meticulously adhered to the agreed timetable. No civil war broke out, and only limited violence occurred between the resisting evacuees and the forces evacuating them. The defined limits of the rules of the game were nearly met. The situation did not meet the dire expectations aroused by the mass media or the overt and covert threats of factions that opposed evacuation.

Several of the complex reasons for the turn of events are addressed in this paper, but four factors primarily ensured the successful implementation of the removal and prevention of major political upheaval, despite the anomie and confusion that prevailed during the extended period between the signing of the Camp David accords and the final withdrawal. First, the Egyptian proposal of peace and recognition of Israel—that is, the granting of legitimacy to Zionist settlement by a major participant in the conflict—was an offer that could not be refused. The transformation of peace from a Utopian concept to a real, concrete political process fundamentally altered the price lists for peace within the political center and among the public at large. Second, the main opponents of withdrawal—primarily Gush Emunim and the Land of Israel Movement—had difficulty applying power to the bearers of the primary symbols of Israeli nationalism, the Israeli Defense Force and the elected government, especially one so obviously nationalistic. Third, the difficulty of opposing withdrawal was compounded once the opponents recognized that their protest demonstrations did not attract a broad cross section of the public, even among those strata that were against or at least ambivalent about the evacuation. Fourth, the most decisive factor precluding effective opposition and an active public response was the government's firm decision to cease transmitting ambiguous messages and implement withdrawal. The government's response to Sadat and subsequent invitation to Jerusalem constituted a major breakthrough in Is-

raeli public opinion. The shift toward favoring concessions and flexibility resulted from messages originating in the government and reinforced by the rites of passage noted by Katz and Szecsko.[39] Similarly, public opinion that favored peace with Egypt influenced and encouraged the government to continue negotiations despite—or perhaps because of—the attendant crises and to sign the accords.

The four factors probably will continue to affect political situations in Israel similar to those engendered by the peace treaty with Egypt. One may assume, however, that the extent of opposition to any future territorial concessions will greatly increase in intensity. I assume this because the remaining occupied areas conform far more closely to the definition of core territories than did Sinai and the Yamit region, and because the population of Jewish settlers liable to be involved in any political moves is larger.