

**University of Peloponnese
Faculty of Social and Political Relations
Department of Political Studies and International Relations**

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**The «Ethnie» and the «Imaginative Geographies» of
the State of Israel: The policy that reveals a creeping
annexation of the Palestinian land**

Eleni Domba

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**Πρόγραμμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών
«MA in Mediterranean Studies»**

**Η «Εθνότητα» και οι «Φαντασιακές Γεωγραφίες» του
Κράτους του Ισραήλ: Η πολιτική που αποκαλύπτει
μια υφέρπουσα προσάρτηση της Παλαιστινιακής γης**

Ελένη Δόμπα

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Abstract

The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has multiple dimensions. Following a certain policy, the Israelis are trying to lead the Palestinians to flee and to annex their land in the state of Israel. The annexation of these territories is necessary for Israelis to enable them to maintain their identity as a nation. Alongside the settlements and the barrier, Israelis have created a broader expansionary policy based on movements that emphasize other features that highlight the status of their nation as an *ethnie*. This policy is based on the framework of an imaginary geography which characterizes the cultural and historical construct they have created around the relationship of the nation with the land of Palestine and codes and rules of Orientalism to establish the pretext of “security”. The present study focuses on these data on the basis of the views of Anthony Smith for the *Ethnie* and of Edward Said on Orientalism and *Imaginative Geographies*.

Keywords: Ethnies, Imaginative Geographies, Zionism, Immigration, Israel’s Policy

Η «Εθνότητα» και οι «Φαντασιακές Γεωγραφίες» του Κράτους του Ισραήλ: Η πολιτική που αποκαλύπτει μια υφέρπουσα προσάρτηση της Παλαιστινιακής γης

Περίληψη

Η σύγκρουση μεταξύ Ισραηλινών και Παλαιστίνιων έχει πολλαπλές διαστάσεις. Ακολουθώντας μια συγκεκριμένη πολιτική, οι Ισραηλινοί προσπαθούν να οδηγήσουν τους Παλαιστίνιους σε φυγή και να προσαρτήσουν τη γη τους στο κράτος του Ισραήλ. Η προσάρτηση των εδαφών αυτών είναι αναγκαία για τους Ισραηλινούς, ώστε να μπορέσουν να διατηρήσουν την ταυτότητά τους ως έθνος. Παράλληλα με τους εποικισμούς και το τείχος, οι Ισραηλινοί έχουν δημιουργήσει μια ευρύτερη επεκτατική πολιτική που βασίζεται σε κινήσεις που δίνουν έμφαση σε άλλα χαρακτηριστικά που αναδεικνύουν την κατάσταση του έθνους τους ως *εθνότητα*. Η πολιτική αυτή βασίζεται στο πλαίσιο μιας φαντασιακής γεωγραφίας η οποία χαρακτηρίζει την πολιτιστική και ιστορική δομή που έχουν δημιουργήσει γύρω από τη σχέση του έθνους με τη γη της Παλαιστίνης και κώδικες και κανόνες του Οριενταλισμού ώστε να αποδείξουν το πρόσχημα της "ασφάλειας". Η παρούσα μελέτη επικεντρώνεται σε αυτά τα δεδομένα με βάση τις απόψεις του Anthony Smith περί της *Εθνότητας* και του Edward Said ως προς τον Οριενταλισμό και τις *Φαντασιακές Γεωγραφίες*.

Keywords: Εθνότητες, Φαντασιακές Γεωγραφίες, Σιωνισμός, Μετανάστευση, Πολιτική του Ισραήλ

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Israel's policy has been criticized and condemned by many institutions such as the United Nations, the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. Especially the settlement under the international law is characterized as a war crime. It differs from the concept of immigration because this is an organized and systematic transfer of population into occupied territory.

One of the tools used by the state of Israel from the moment of its foundation in order to consolidate its own positions and create *fait accompli*, making the previous UN resolutions inapplicable, is the settlement in the Palestinian territories. This policy has created fierce clashes between Israelis and Palestinians.

The issue of the settlement policy is the topic of this study. In particular, the ideological and theoretical characteristics of the settlement policy of Israel against the Palestinians will be considered on the basis of the theories of Antony Smith and Edward Said. The selection of these two theorists took place in relation to the commonalities they present and their involvement, through their work, in the settlement policy and the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

In particular, the main research question of this study is how Israel's actions indicate the underlying annexation that takes place with a focus on the settlements, as well as how the theories of Antony Smith and Edward Said are applied in the case of Israel.

This study has a different approach to the expansionist policy of Israel: Referring to the struggle of Zionists to establish a state for the Jewish people it continues to the policy followed by Israel from the beginning till nowadays. It investigates the question of how this policy reveals a creeping annexation of the Palestinian land. It argues that there is a dynamic, ongoing change of the landscape. In various ways, findings indicate that Israeli policy through the spatial planning, the ethnic discrimination and the territorial control over the occupied territories leads to the annexation of the land which is intended for the Palestinian people. The approach through the theories of Smith and Said offer to this study a different perspective regarding the examined issue.

The structure has been formed in four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. The second chapter presents the aspects of the theories of Anthony Smith and Edward Said and the third chapter presents the historical narrative of the conflict and the expansionist policy of Israel focusing on the settlements. The fourth chapter presents the conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER 2

THEORIES

2.1 Anthony Smith: Nationalism and Ethnies

Anthony Smith opposed to the widespread view that nations are the products of the past two centuries (Smith, 1999: 151-153).

Anthony Smith attempted to introduce a new interpretation of the origin and nature of the nation and nationalism. It should be noted that Smith was a student of Gellner (Delanty & Kumar, 2006:157). Although he initially accepted the theories of his teacher, after a further review of the modernist interpretation, Smith realized that the concept of culture was not dealt adequately in the modernist theory and was insufficient for the comprehensive theoretical description of nation and nationalism (Smith, 1995:4).

Smith suggested that the “nation” comes from the “nations”, that is the collective form of the community in pre-modern societies, in which the traditions were still strong, and their cohesion was preserved as of a conscious social entity, which in the process of modernization has brought to the nation and nationalism much of the culture and especially of emotion and feelings of antiquity (Smith, 1989:344).

In particular, Smith argued that if not all, then some nations, although new, come from a pre-existing ethnic core, referring to ethnic pre-modernist communities. This discussion refers to the ethnic pre-modernist communities, as ancient and archetypical (Malesevic, 2007:565). According to Smith, the nationalists had understood that in order for the nation to survive in the modern world, no matter how much new it is, it has to achieve it at two levels: the socio-political and cultural-psychological, and the reason for the existence of any nation, among others, is the cultivation of its unique cultural values (Smith, 1996:451). Its ethnic individuality remains a *sine qua non* of the nation, and this means common myths of origin, common historical memories, unique cultural characteristics and a sense of diversity, if not selection, namely the existence of elements that characterized the ethnic communities of the pre-modern age. The modernist nation must not only preserve, but

also to cultivate these elements in order not to become invisible. Another aspect of the antiquity of the modernist nations is associated with their placement in space. The nations are where they are because of their supposed long-standing relationship with a particular piece of land. Hence, nations have deep roots (Smith, 1992:438).

Smith does not contest the fact that nations, as they are known today, are formations of modern times. His basic assumption, however, is that the modern nation consists of an eponymous human population that shares a historical territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common rights and obligations for all its members. In particular, he considers that modern nations date back to very ancient cultural groups - ancestors, which he calls ethnies. Ethnies determine the boundaries, within which, modern nations can be created and are characterized by a series of more permanent cultural properties, such as memory, values, myths and symbolisms (Guibernau & Hutchinson, 2004:1). Memory is essential to the collective identity and the myth to the collective purpose. Since for both the modern nation and the ethnie, the collective identity and collective purpose are necessary, memories and myths are necessary.

Smith's primary concern is to describe the characteristics of the ethnies, to explore the similarities and differences between nations and ethnies and to detect whether or not there is a causal link between the existence of pre-existing ethnies and the development of the modern nation (Hutchinson, 2004:109-110).

Smith considers as the essential characteristics of an ethnie its collective/common name, common origin myth/heritage/common history, a distinctive common culture, a relationship with a particular territory and a sense of solidarity that stems mainly from the elite (Smith, 1989:344-345; Isiksal, 2002:3; Smith, 1999:13; Lane, 2005:293; Conversi, 1995:73-74). The creation of a sense of belonging help in the transition from a nomadic to a rural lifestyle that creates nostalgia, the periodicity of rural life, through which traditions are formed, the confrontation with external enemies that exacerbates solidarity and the role of religion and priesthood as guardians (Smith, 1996:449).

The role of religion acts as a catalyst for the state of Israel. Israel is a predominantly Jewish state, the influence of which is not confined to the inhabitants within its borders, but also to all Jews around the world. The global influence and expansion of the Jewish element is in stark contrast to the Arab minority in Palestine.

The Jewish element is therefore intertwined with the Israeli identity by creating an indissoluble link between national identity and religion and between the state and religion (Smootha, 1997).

With the focus on Zionism, which is a predominantly nationalist movement, Israel continues its colonial policy and there is no expectation for changes due to its foundations. Stopping the expansion of Israel means denying the “historical right” in the land of Palestine, and therefore, simply the religious approach of the matter does not allow the majority of Jews to approach the conflict with the Palestinians differently. Accepting any right or oppression of the Palestinians, Jews deconstruct the foundations of the identity they have built up. Instead, as a basic Zionist principle and as a right for the above reasons, they are entitled to apply an expansionary policy by destroying everything (Yiftachel, 2012: 100).

The sense of belonging to an ethnies, therefore, contains the elements of discrimination from the foreigners and the uniqueness compared to them, but also performs an internal function since it provides the group with the necessary sense of continuity, composition, self-support and faith. Nationalism is defined in this context as the tendency to resist and preserve the ethnic group in the face of external threats and internal corrosion (Smith, 1993:53).

Smith also refers to the function of the “driving myths” that may be dynastic, communal, or religious and contribute to the coherence of the ethnies. As already mentioned, the memory is needed for the collective identity and the myth for the collective purpose. Even the landscape where each ethnies lives, can contribute to the formation and maintenance of its special features (Smith, 1993:51). As example, Smith writes: «Certainly, the case of ancient Israel gives us cause to reflect both on the definitional quandary of nationalism, and on the relationship between human communities like the ethnic group or the nation and the historical contexts in which beliefs and attachments to them have been formed» (Smith, 1998:169).

On the subject of the myth, Smith highlights the crucial role of the myth of the common descent and not the very common decent as a fact (Smith, 1993:50). However, the form of the myth can also contain what Smith described as common historical memories. Myths that refer to political formation, liberation, expatriation and selection of the people use specific historical events as a starting point, which are then reinterpreted and reprocessed (Smith, 1993:50). Similarly, the connection to a

territorial area also has a mythical and subjective connotation, since the important for the ethnic identity is more the ties to the land and the associations it creates, and less the fact of staying in it or possessing it (Smith, 1989:353; Smith, 1993:51).

Smith particularly, focuses on the myth that says that the Jews are the people chosen by God. On this myth, the Jews have established not only their expansion, but also their survival. The myth is indeed their means of protection and at the same time the motivation for their expansion. This means that it acts just like nationalism, it has the same effect although not in the same straightforward way. Especially in the case of the Jews, this helps them to maintain their identity and it is one of their basic survival causes. It constituted the motivation for the creation of their ethnies (Cauthen, 2004: 22-23).

Smith has also devised the term “ethnoscapes”, to indicate the special symbolic meaning of certain landscapes, such as Alsace-Lorraine, Sudetenland, Kosovo and Palestine, in the establishment of the identity and mythology of certain national collectives (Smith, 2009:38). And he notes: «But, for a piece of territory to become a ‘homeland’, it must be both ‘associated’ and ‘recognized’: felt by the community to belong to it, as they to the territory, and acknowledged by outsiders as rightfully belonging to the community which claims that territory. Herein lies part of the tragedy of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: in a dual association and dual recognition with a single piece of historic territory» (Smith, 1988:29).

2.2 Edward Said: Imaginative Geographies

Because of Said’s Palestinian origin, it could be said that his views are biased especially on theories related to East and West. Undoubtedly, Said criticizes the Israeli policy and is considered as the most important representative of the Palestinian struggle in the US where he lived. As he said he did not hesitate to state his close relationship with an extremely unpopular cause. The fact is that because of this attitude, he has received threats against his life and his family and a fire that was set at his office at Columbia in 1985 (Marrouchi, 2004:70, Wright, 2003).

The Arab-Israeli war of 1967 led Said to political activism and the redefinition of his Palestinian identity (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 2002:3). When the Israeli Prime

Minister Golda Meir made the notorious statement in 1969 that “there are no Palestinians”, Said decided to articulate through his writings the story of loss and deprivation experienced by Palestinians, which asserted their presence (Karmi, 2003:16). Apart from this challenge, at a time when the Palestinians experienced much less sympathy in Europe and America than today, Said took an active part in political and other processes that, in his opinion, would make it possible to achieve peace. Member of the Palestinian National Council from 1977 to 1991 (a period during which the Council was in exile), Said supported the idea of coexistence between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs (Marrouchi, 2004:70; Yi, 2011:110). In an article in the New York Times Magazine, he even extended this view by supporting the idea of a transnational state, since, according to him, the Israeli Jews and Palestinians are irrevocably connected and this cannot be changed by pulling people back into separate borders or states: « The question, I believe, is not how to devise means for persisting in trying to separate them but to see whether it is possible for them to live together as fairly and peacefully as possible» (Said, 1999).

Since his resignation from the Palestinian National Council in 1991, Said has become one of the harshest critics of Arafat and the PLO accusing them of lack of credibility and moral authority (Said, 1996:3-4). In fact, he was one of the few who disagreed with the Oslo Peace Treaty in 1993: «Subsequent events and agreements have proved my views correct, although I wish that I had been wrong. When it was announced, I considered the Oslo Declaration to be an instrument of capitulation, and when I was invited by President Clinton's office to attend the White House ceremony, I refused, saying that for all Palestinians September 13 ought to be a day of mourning. Since that signing, the record speaks for itself. Of course we have failed as a people in our struggle to restore our rights. Israel has maintained its settlements and very partially redeployed its army. It controls land, water, security, and foreign policy for the Palestinian "selfrule" authority. But what made the American peace process and its celebrations so vulgar and distasteful was that all along the Palestinian leadership has pretended that it won a great victory, and that its deal with Israel gave us real independence. When Israel still has the right to control exits and entrances to Gaza and Jericho, when it must approve all laws passed and appointments made, we can hardly speak of independence. How much more dignified and admirable it would have been to admit defeat and ask the Palestinian people to rally in order to try to

rebuild from the ruins» (Said, 1996:xxix-xxx).

The very life of Edward Said is a testimony that dividing lines between abstract and vague categories like East and West cannot be set so easily. He is a Palestinian nationalist who studied and is a professor in the US, he writes as an “Easterner” but in order to eliminate the division, he is a radical critic of the western cultural tradition and also expresses his criticism with the analytical tools of this tradition (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 2002:5-6).

The basic position of Said’s work is that the conceptual category of the “East” was constructed in the western thought and imagination as a counterweight to the category “West”, within the conceptual framework that created colonialism and Eurocentrism (Farris, 2010:266). A series of evaluative positions on primitivism, underdevelopment, backwardness, irrationalism, sexism and mainly undifferentiated nature and static societies of the East, were formed gradually, taking their final form in the 19th century with the progressive colonization of the region and the simultaneous formation of a great narrative concerning the superiority of the Western civilization (Said, 1992:3; Macfie, 2007:78). The course of this reasoning is, according to the author, very long and directly interwoven with the course of Western self-consciousness. However, it acquired a universal scope in the colonial 19th century, since during the same period, several scientific areas and disciplines were formed, and the oriental studies became part of the same chain with the statutory conditions of the modern scientific thought (Said, 2003:86-87).

According to Said, the constitution of scientific knowledge took place mainly by the British and French environments because of the contact of these countries with the Near East (Said, 1994:15). Moreover, Orientalism soon exceeded the strict boundaries of science and became a way for the West to see the East. When the center of the financial and political leadership moved to the United States in the 20th century, new versions of Orientalism emerged.

For Said, Orientalism contains the three separate but interrelated meanings. First, it is an academic discipline, developed in the 19th century and mainly dealt with the collection and analysis of texts from eastern languages, and includes all those (historians, philologists, sociologists, anthropologists and others) who teach, write or research the East. Second, it is a way of thinking which is based on an ontological and epistemological distinction between East and West. Third, it is an institution and a

mechanism that during colonialism had the power to dominate, to reorganize and to exercise power in the East. Said, following the French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault, calls this set a “discourse”, a system that produces truths about the East (Vega, n.d.:126-127).

The main feature of this discourse on Orientalism, according to Said, is that it bisects the human reality in contradictions like “we” and “they” (West - East) constructing generalizing and still images of the “other”, which contradict the image of “us”: «Its premises are simple: the Arab is a lecherous, deceitful, murderous, irrational, larcenous, and utterly reprehensible subhuman, whereas the Jew (to his credit, Uris is totally uncompromising in his portrayals) is noble, intelligent, understanding, courageous, and-above all-deserving of Palestine» (Said, 1985:55).

Based on the theory of structuralism, Said argues that the members of this binary opposition (West - East) acquire meaning and existence only through their relationship, which means that they cannot become perceived by themselves (e.g., the Western rationality as a concept is perceived only as the opposite of the eastern irrationalism). Therefore, concepts such as East and West are not natural categories, but historically and culturally constructed (Vega, n.d:130-131). Thus, a stronger political and technological culture like the western, constructed a discourse, which Israel uses too, on a weaker, like the east, as a means of control and subjugation of the latter creating unhistorical representations and stereotypes, such as the “mysterious East”, the “irrational and fanatical Arabs”, the “corrupt despotism”, the “mystical religiosity”, which demonstrate the inferiority of the “other” (Al Mahfedi, 2011:5; Pappé, 2006:15-16).

In this twofold opposition Israel’s history is based to characterize Palestinians as “terrorist”: «Take Abba Eban-liberal, humane, judicious. In his introduction to the Israeli Kahan Commission Report, published as a book in the West, he praises the "meticulous" analysis that, in a sense, exonerates Israel: yet in so doing he now here mentions such things as the explicitly fascist nature of Israel's chief allies, the Lebanese Phalanges, or the fact-which doesn't speak for itself-that the Palestinians in Lebanon were not ipso facto" terrorists," as the Report has it, but were there because they had been driven out of Palestine in pursuit of an admitted policy of expulsion» (Said, 1984:33-34).

The reality of course is different. Despite the attempts to associate the

Palestinians and the Islamic movement in the effort to imply acts of terrorism, it was understood that the claims made related to the injustices of Israel, and therefore were legal and fair. The Or Commission argued that there would have been signs of radical responses if they were inciting a revolution, but this clearly was not proved, and all the stereotypes regarding the “terrorist” actions of the Palestinians were shattered (Peled & Navot, 2005: 19).

It is important to note that Said does not attack the Orientalism discourse in order to provide his own authentic picture of the East. For Said, there is no “true East” which can be described objectively. The East as a meaning changes its content according to the political, social and cultural factors in each historical period.

As noted by Said, “the East is an integral part of the European civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents this part culturally and even ideologically as an academic discourse category with supporting institutions, vocabulary, academic production, imagery, doctrines and even own colonial bureaucracies and colonial aesthetic styles” (Said, 2003: 2).

Essentially, Said did not deny the existence of the East in natural-geographical or sociological terms or even better, in practical and pragmatic terms. He argued, however, that this is a minor problem or at least of secondary importance.

The cultural, semi-real and semi-fantastic geography of the East, in this sense, is of crucial and paramount importance for both the construction of knowledge and the existence of the geographical entity of the East, which owes and radiates the will of those who built it, not only as a natural geography or geomorphology, but primarily as a unity that arises essentially in the service of the West, is made by it, used and directed by it (Fields, 2011:182; Daniels, 2011:183).

Of the practices that will be described in the next chapter, it is understood that the land of Palestine suffers a series of violations. Houses are demolished, farms are destroyed and this is not an isolated phenomenon but has become a routine for both the perpetrators and the victims. It is clear that such violations are part of the Jews claim over the land of Palestine, in an attempt to create their own landscapes by creating their own representations in relation to the land. This practice is an “imaginative geography”, according to Said (Fields, 2012: 269).

Despite the physical and often brutal implementation, the imaginary geography bears great ideological background and is a process that is often applied by

groups that have territorial claims to justify their actions in the light of “having the right” to act in this way. They invent a theoretical framework through imaginary geography to claim lands belonging to others. This happens in Palestine. The Israelis and the settlers have translated their territorial claims in geographical imaginary visions and are trying to fulfill them in every way. One such example is the attempt of Israelis to change the law on property against the Palestinians and to control the land which they consider belongs to them (Fields, 2012: 269).

Either by using the law or other practices, the Israelis are trying to transfer the ownership of the land from the Palestinians to them. But, by configuring and using the legal instruments in their favor, they leave no room for resistance to the Palestinians apart from the use of force. And of course, the Israeli generations that follow believe in fact that these territories are their own since they found this situation, without investigating the way that these were acquired. And so, the Zionist imaginary geography, which has its roots in the 19th century and earlier, is implemented to the land of the Palestinians both by force and by law (Fields, 2012: 270)

Therefore, geography is not only a truth out there waiting to be discovered, but also a way of analysis, production and eventually use and consumption of the subject supposedly studied as in the case of Jerusalem: «As for geography, or geography as I want to use the word, as a socially constructed and maintained sense of place, a great deal of attention has been paid by modern scholars and critics to the extraordinary constitutive role of space in human affairs [...]The same applies to Jerusalem, a city, an idea, an entire history, and of course a specifiable geographical locale often typified by a photograph of the Dome of the Rock, the city walls, and the surrounding houses seen from the Mount of Olives; it too is over determined when it comes to memory, as well as all sorts of invented histories and traditions, all of them emanating from it, but most of them in conflict with each other. This conflict is intensified by Jerusalem's mythological-as opposed to actual geographical-location, in which landscape, buildings, streets, and the like are overlain and, I would say, even covered entirely with symbolic associations totally obscuring the existential reality of what as a city and real place Jerusalem is» (Said, 2000:180).

The result of the expansion of Israel, at least legally according to the Israeli law and by redefining the borders, is for a large part of the Palestinian land to belong to them. The territorial control, however, leads to control in other areas from

transportation to investment, through other practices, such as the economic crunch, the decline of the population of Palestine and to an even greater oppression by Israel (Yiftachel, 2012: 106).

This is evident by the fact that the settlers, who are Jews, enjoy a special status and more rights than the Palestinians. What is particularly important is that the Israeli policy towards the Palestinians, despite the fact that it is superficially legitimate, it has received major condemnation but nevertheless, the state of Israel continues to be considered democratic by the world (Yiftachel, 2000).

The term Orientalism means many different but nonetheless interdependent things, according to Said. West and East are more ideas made by people, possibilities in conditions chosen by themselves, rather inevitable and eternal benchmarks or cardinal points. Certainly geography includes astronomy, climatology and geology etc., which are areas of knowledge and research subjects that hardly anyone would call fantastic. But certainly, geography is not only that. Geography, according to Said, is not only the geomorphology or the physical geography of a region, but contains interests, judgments and responses, ideas and evaluations, the production of impressions and representations and perspectives of preserving and reproducing existing values that are in line with these natural places such as the South, the North, the East, the West, etc.: «Palestine/Israel is no ordinary bit of geography: it is more saturated in religious, historical, and cultural significance than any place on earth. It is also now the place where two peoples, whether they like it or not, live inextricably linked lives, tied together by history, war, daily contact, and suffering. To speak in grandiose geopolitical terms or to speak mindlessly about "separating" them is nothing less than to provide prescriptions for more violence and degradation» (Said, 1996:163-164).

Furthermore, the Zionists made sure since the 19th century to show Palestine as a country without inhabitants and to communicate the message that even if there were some people there, they did not care for it. The people who lived there didn't show the proper respect and the Zionists had to take it, since, due to their characteristic as the chosen people, they would give the respect it should have (Smith, 2012: 23).

2.3 Remarks

Smith differentiated himself from the theory of nationalism, nations and modernity and raises the issue of the ethnies. The ethnie is a kind of cultural community that emphasizes the role of myths of origin and historical memories and becomes recognizable under one or more cultural differences, such as religion, customs, language or institutions. These communities are doubly historical, not only because the historical memory is essential for their continuity but also because they are themselves products of specific historical forces, and therefore exposed to the historical change and decay.

Six characteristics constitute the ethnie: the shared name, the myth of common descent, common historical memories, one or more differentiating elements of a common culture, the ties to a specific “homeland”, the sense of solidarity that links significant portions of the population. The greater the degree to which the given population has or shares these characteristics and the more they are, the more it approaches the ideal type of the ethnie. Where there is a combination of all these elements, it is obvious that this is an ethnie based on a historical culture, which has a sense of common identity. Such ethnie should be clearly distinguished from race, with the concept of the social group that shares unique, hereditary, biological characteristics, which supposedly determine its mental traits.

On the other hand, Said refers to orientalism, meaning the long tradition of prejudice that comes from Central Europe, which is identified with the “West” against the Asian countries and cultures especially, and also Africa. According to this prejudice, all countries and cultures of the above areas, despite the huge differences between them, in a completely leveling, schematically and arbitrarily polarizing manner are represented and called the “East”. The main characteristic of this disadvantaged view of the “East” is a series of stereotypes such as the dangerousness of the Arabs.

The “West” and “East” are the two poles of the “West – East” contradiction, in which one pole, the “West”, defines itself as the dominant and on this position derives the right to define the other, even as inferior, that holds the disadvantaged position.

This bipolar relationship of the “West – East” or “We” and “They”, derived from the Eurocentric thought, is not neutral politically because it is used to not

include the voices of people of the “East”, that is the subordinate people, and it produces defensive excuses for the dominance of the “Other” through the media of the era and perpetuates the notions of “difference” and “strangeness” of the “East”.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

3.1 Brief History of the State of Israel

The history of the Jewish people goes back in 2000 BC when Hebrews (Semitic people) headed by Abraham passed through Canaan¹. In 1300 BC, other Hebrew tribes under the leadership of Moses on their return from Egypt fought with Canaanites for the possession of land. Under the commands of King David, the Israelites, four centuries later, united the Hebrew nation. During the Roman Empire, Canaan was renamed to Palestine² and all of Judea and Jerusalem were destroyed in 70 AD. Over the years many Jews were expelled and immigrate to Western Europe. Even if they immigrated away from their homeland, during the years, Jews faced rejections, repression, and pogroms (Willson, 2002). In 1516, Palestine came under the rule of the Ottoman Empire till World War I when Great Britain conquered the area and entrusted with the Mandate for Palestine by the League of Nations in 1922.

Theodore Herzl, published *The Jewish State* in 1896. The pamphlet was influenced by 19th century European nationalism and its vision was the creation of an independent and autonomous Jewish nation-state. In 1897, Herzl founded the World Zionist Organization to restore the Jewish National Home in Palestine and to establish the State of Israel. That was the reason why Palestine was flooded with thousands of Jews who immigrated at times (Penslar, 2005). It should be noted that Palestine was a colony of the British initially and for this reason the British viewed the movement of Jews in it with displeasure at first. But very quickly the attitude of the British changed. In 1916, Zionist leaders met with British authorities asking for creation of an autonomous Jewish settlement in Palestine. In 1917 with the Balfour Declaration³, the British supported the creation of the new state and allowed in this way the unhindered

¹ Canaan is the Biblical name for Palestine.

² The Roman Emperor Hadrian, in 135 AD, renamed the “Provincia Judea” to “Provincia Syria Palaestina”. The Arab pronunciation of the Roman word “Palaestina” is “Falastin” and it is used till nowadays by the Arabs (Palestinefacts.org, 2011).

³ A letter of Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour to Baron Rothschild, a leading figure in Britain’s Jewish community to inform him about the cabinet’s sympathy regarding the Zionist aspirations.

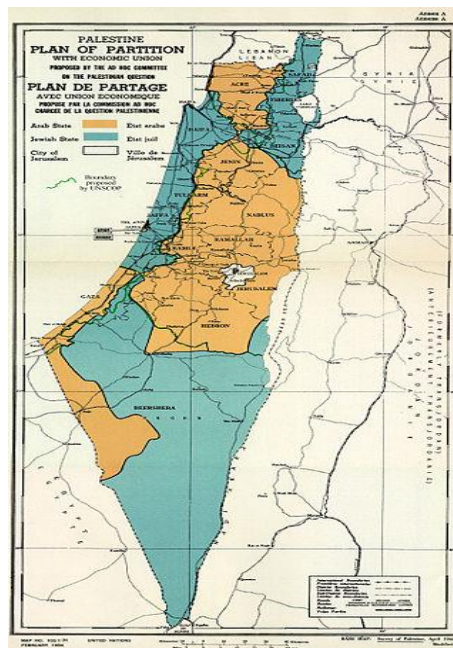
movement of the Jews in it.

The Jewish immigration continued and increased significantly in the coming years (Kapitan, 1995). The Palestinians have not been able to follow the transformation process into a nation like other peoples, because their land was given to the European Jews with the Balfour Declaration. In turn, the loss of sovereignty led to the loss of the power control mechanisms which are used to create a national identity (Shabaneh, 2010).

Between 1936 -1939, the Arabs rose up with arms against the British and to a lesser extent they attacked on Jewish settlements. After World War II, the control over Palestine was undertaken by the UN and the General Assembly on the 29th of November 1947, adopted the Resolution 181 for the partition of Palestine (Figure 1.1) into a Jewish and an Arab state, and the conversion of Jerusalem to an open city with a special international status (Un.org, 1947; Newman, 1989).

Figure 3.1

UN Resolution 181-The Partition Plan for Palestine



Source: Un.org, 1947

This was also the beginning of the protest of the Arabs against the Jews. One day before the end of the British Mandate in the area (May 19, 1948), the supreme Jewish council proclaimed the independence of Israel, appointed Chaim Weizmann as

the President and the Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion as the Prime Minister (Landau, 2003).

The so-called “Six-Day War” in 1967 was important for the subsequent developments. In this war Israel made numerous attacks (in Jordan, Egypt and Syria), claiming that it was for defensive reasons against the attacks they were expecting to face by them. After the attacks, Israel occupies the areas from the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, to the West Bank and the Golan Heights.

Another important moment was the war of “Yom Kippur” in 1973, when again, the Egypt-Syrian forces suddenly attacked Israel on the day of the holiest religious feast of the Jews, this time successfully (Israel was saved by American intervention) (Akesson, 2014; Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006).

In 1977, Egypt began peace negotiations with Israel in Jerusalem and in 1979 they signed the Camp David agreement according to which Egypt recognized the state of Israel while Israel withdrew from Sinai. The Israeli side promised to further pursue talks with the Palestinians. But, instead of doing that, the Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Begin initiated a new policy of expansion through settlements: a policy that was not only maintained but its expansion is planned, regardless of the reaction and the consequences suffered by the Palestinians.

In 1993 and the Oslo agreement, it was considered that the conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis would resolve due to geopolitical conditions. The United States had established their reputation as a stabilizing factor since the end of the Cold War and the defeat of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, while PLO⁴ and Jordan, because of their support to Hussein, wanted to reform their public image (Zanotti, 2010). In 1994 Jordan was the second Arab country, after Egypt, to sign a peace accord with Israel.

The efforts made for peace and agreement between the Israelis and the Arabs did not bring the expected results. After the Oslo Agreement in 1993, activism on behalf of the Palestinians took another form of action with many supporters. Since the Israelis used the violence of the Palestinians as their main argument to describe their own movements as actions to ensure safety, the peaceful assertion of the Palestinian claims was decided and the resistance to the intentions and plans of the Israelis. The settlements were characterized and criticized by a large portion of the world, from

⁴ The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was formed in 1964

activists to scholars.

However, the Palestinian response encountered significant problems such as the lack of a single leadership. Another issue raised was that of skepticism towards non-violent actions. Much of Palestinians believes that the support and financing of these actions is nothing more than an attempt of the West to weaken and degrade the Palestinian resistance movement (Richter-Devroe, 2012; Curtis, 2012).

The activities of Hamas contribute to this belief. Military means for Hamas are the only defense policy against the Israeli occupation strategy (Takeyh, 2006). As these actions continue, so will the military operations of the organization, which is committed to stop only after the end of occupation. Hamas's action is the creation of the occupation alone and without this, there would be no reason to exist despite that Israel, with the US help, has characterized this action as terrorism (Sen, 2015; Valassopoulos, 2014).

3.2 Zionism

Zionism can be defined as a political movement with its origins in the 19th century and includes elements of the Jewish nationalism. The basic ideological principle of Zionism is that Judaism is more than a religion. According to Zionism, all Jews around the world constitute a nation. But, Zionism was created to face an additional fact beyond the establishment of a homeland to the Jews and this was the anti-Semitism that had prevailed. Of course, the issue of a common and own homeland for all Jews was the dominant feature of the emergence of Zionism (Prior, 1999).

The Zionist movement was established in 1897 by Theodore Herzl. As already mentioned, the main purpose was to establish a state for the Jews, a country that would not only gather the Jews from around the world, but would also constitute the place where they could be protected. The land of Palestine was selected because of the references in the sacred texts⁵. From the beginning, the Jews wanted to ensure that there would be no reactions by the Palestinians already living in Palestine, and often

⁵ In 1905, a delegation of the Federation of American Zionists rejected the British offer of a homeland in Uganda.

used the view that it was a place where no one had lived and was meant for the Jews, a people wandering through the centuries without a country⁶. This view introduced the questioning of the existence of the Palestinians from the beginning (Mast & El-Zabri, 2015; Bard, 2012).

In order to consolidate its relationship with Palestine, Zionism used Jerusalem from the beginning as a means of proving that it was Israel's land (*Eretz Israel*) and therefore it belonged to them. But the political influences that the movement of Zionism had accepted should also be noted and especially from nationalism and other ideologies that supported colonialism. This was a widely accepted tactic in Europe that was used by its peoples to expand to places beyond the continent (Shimoni, 1995).

The use of European methods and policies and also the fact that there should be a solution for the Jews, who were scattered throughout Europe, made the West to accept the solution of a new state⁷. Furthermore, the claim of the Jews was recognized as fair from Europe because of the persecutions the Jews had suffered and supporting them was considered reasonable. The Holocaust played an important role in this, in which millions of Jews found horrible deaths, and this strengthened the support in favor of their claims (Johnson, 1998).

The revisionist movement of Zionism led by Vladimir Jabotinsky was also important. The leader recognized the existence of the Palestinians but justified the "immorality" of reclaiming the land of Palestine with the view that the Arabs have held several territorial lands and therefore could grant this to the Jews who were stateless (Afsai, 2015).

The term revisionist was acquired by the movement due to the expansion of the borders it sought for the state of the Jews. In particular, it supported that the borders should reach up to the eastern outskirts of the Jordan River. In the decades that followed, from the 20s to the 30s, the revisionist movement expressed clearly the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, which the Labor Zionists hadn't done so directly. The revisionist movement also advocated the necessity to use military force.

⁶ "A land without a people for a people without a land" was a slogan of Zionists

⁷ The product of the efforts of Zionists concerning the recognition of the legitimacy of a Jewish national homeland in documents: The Balfour Declaration (1917), the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine (1922), the Peel Commission Report (1937), and the UN Partition Plan (1947)

One product of the movement was the “Betar” movement, consisting of youth, and also the ETZEL (National Military Organization). These formed the basis for the creation of the Herut - Liberty Party. Evolution of this party was the Likud, the party that was established for decades in the government of Israel (Shindler, 1995).

A new explosion of religious Zionism came after the “Six-Day War” in 1967 and the “Yom Kippur War” in 1973. Religious Zionist speech enjoyed great recovery because of the redefinition of its ideas for two main reasons. The first was the change of the economic policy of Israel, which chose the neoliberal economic model by introducing reforms, which changed the character of Israel, while increasing the already existing social and economic gaps further growing the population of the poor. The second reason was the crisis experienced by the Zionists after the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin in 1995 when the killer was linked to the cycles of religious Zionism (Hellinger & Loudin, 2012).

The religious and nationalist parties have adopted a tough stance regarding the issue of the Palestinians and the borders of the Israeli state. The alliance with Likud took place in this context. This cooperation was essential for the confrontation with the Labor Party that wanted to conclude an agreement with territorial concessions in favor to the Palestinians despite the fact that it agreed with the policy of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. Such a view, however, met the intense opposition of Likud and the religious-nationalist parties. In 1977 Likud replaced the Labor Party in the government of Israel held for decades. The exchange of power between the two parties followed and a common government that was the result of not reaching autonomy for either of the two parties (Moscovich, 2009).

To consolidate their conviction that the land of Palestine belongs to them, as already mentioned, the Zionists created myths that refer to their ancestral land. The principal myth, upon which the Zionists were based, was that of the elite people of God, through which people and nations will disseminate throughout the world (Garaudy, 1996). The Zionists have created a tradition whereby they are persecuted and hunted for centuries and now have fled to their ancestral lands from which they were expelled by the Romans. The reality is that the Jews were never expelled from Palestine to such a degree, from their memorable historical home, as stressed by their Zionist leader Herzl (1896), but some of them left when they became Christians and lived alongside Palestinians (Thompson, 2013). In this context the Holocaust was

used, which, according to the Zionist interpretation, six million Jews died because they had no army and neither the power of a State. Another method used by Zionists with the settlement of Jews, was the use of thousands of names on the streets and in public places which came from the history with Jewish signs, giving the impression that the colonies created were nothing more than the return of the natives. This tactic was completely opposite to that used by other colonialists that created colonies and gave names derived from their homeland (Troen, 2007).

Zionism could not carry out the settlement of Jews in Palestine without the help of the British and their imperialist and expansionist policy (Mathew, 2013). After World War I Britain was given a mandate for Palestine. For the Zionist movement that opportunity was the appropriate to establish a Jewish state. The British facilitated the administrative organization and the national separation of Arabs and Jews, allowing the Zionists to intervene in the educational system by promoting their own views (Bar-gal, 1993).

3.3 Waves of Immigration

The Zionists used their regular immigrations to Palestine as a way to drive away the Palestinians from the area by increasing their population. Their aim was to create a state with as many Jews in it and as few Palestinians (Hariharan, 2014).

The rise of the Third Reich and its ten-year domination led a large number of Jews who lived in Germany and Austria to immigrate in order to survive. Some of them managed to find refuge in some countries, but this did not mean their salvation since the Nazis conquered these countries and exterminated the Jews who had fled there (Edelheit, 2000).

There was also a large number of Jews who were Germans. Seeing the rise of the Third Reich in their country, some of them immigrated in the 30s in Palestine. This immigration took place under an agreement between Germany and the authorities of Palestine known as the *Haavar Agreement* (Transport). Part of the deal was also the transfer of the assets of Jews in Palestine through procedures that set aside the obstacles created by the German legislation (Yisraeli, 1972).

In 1941, the United States established more stringent conditions for entry to

their country realizing that the mass slaughter of Jews would lead many of them to their country. The pretext they used to prohibit the entry was that of national security. The Jews, however, had to face the regulations on immigration of Great Britain. But some of them managed to find a way to get into Palestine bypassing the legislation. This migration went down in history as *Aliya Bet*. This was not the first British ban on immigration to Palestine. Europe's indifference to the future of the Jews and their fate was also evident from the Bermuda Conference in April 1943 where the question of their salvation from the Nazis was not treated with due importance (Wyman, 1984).

Until the establishment of the State of Israel, there were significant obstacles and restrictions on immigration of Jews to Palestine, hindering the effort of several of these to enter it (Neuman, 1999). Those who attempted to illegally entry faced imprisonment, a tactic that Britain strongly used during the period from 1945 to 1948 that led several Jews in concentration camps in Cyprus (Kochavi, 1998).

The stable and lawful immigration of the Jews officially began after the establishment of the State of Israel. According to the Law of Return (1950), every Jew all over the world has the right to settle in Israel (Jewishvirtuallibrary.org, 2015). Over the next years, about 140,000 Holocaust survivors were repatriated to Israel (Lustick, 2011; Gaub & Kistemaker, 2013). Aliyah goes on till nowadays numbering 26,500 new immigrants in 2014 and was characterized as a record-breaking aliyah (Shamee, 2014). In 2015, immigration hit a 12-year high as 30,000 new Olims⁸ came in Israel (Forman, 2015).

⁸ Olims:Immigrants in Hebrew

Figure 3.3

Aliyah incurred since the establishment of the State of Israel
and the Rescue Operations until today

Main Immigration Waves and Rescue Operations	
Aliyah	
The First Aliyah	1882-1903
The Second Aliyah	1904-1914
The Third Aliyah	1919-1923
The Fourth Aliyah	1924-1929
The Fifth Aliyah	1929-1939
Rescue Operations	
Operation Magic Carpet	1949
Operation Ezra & Nechemia	1951
Vietnamese Boat People in Israel	1975
Operations Moses & Joshua	1985
Operation Solomon	1991
Sudanese Refugees in Israel	2000s

Source: Jewishvirtuallibrary.org, 2015

3.4 Settlements

The State of Israel was established by the Jewish people and its establishment conditions were unique. The State of Israel confronted some unique challenges, especially with the reaction of the Arab population to which it responded by creating colonies. The majority of the leaders of Israel regarded the colonies as the only way for Israel to gain regional power and economic advantage (Izydorczyk, 2002).

Despite the international condemnations that Israel had to face and regardless of the political party in power, the Israeli settlements have been increasing and expanding in recent decades showing that it is the basic policy of Israel against the Palestinians despite the fact that a small part of the Israelis disagrees with this policy (Richman, 2010:20).

The figures regarding the settlements of Israel by various organizations until 2008 are impressive. There are already 121 Israeli settlements illegally built on land occupied in 1967. The settlements have been declared illegal under international law and have been convicted by resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (B 'tselem, 2015).

There are about 462,000 settlers. The 191,000 of them are in settlements around Jerusalem and 271,400 are scattered in the West Bank. In the past two decades, the population of the settlements is increasing by 4-6% per year, compared with an increase of the Israeli population as a whole, which stands at 1.5% (B'tselem, 2015). It is expected that about 385,000 settlers will settle in 80 settlements between the Wall and the Green Line (OCHA, 2008).

The settlements started in 1967 and the Israeli governments have established colonies in Palestinian areas in order to consolidate their domination, to secure the control of the areas and prevent the creation of a Palestinian state, and also to reduce the number of the Palestinians in the area (Forman, 2009:680). Originally the term “settlement” was used to describe any development action of the Jews in Israel. But now it refers only to residential complexes built by Jews in strategic areas of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, in the occupied territories of 1967, to house Jewish immigrants mainly from other states (Rabinowitz, 2001:66).

Settlements are linked to each other and to Israel by an extensive network of bypass roads. All bypass roads have on each side a security zone, which is not allowed any kind of construction. These security zones have led to great loss of arable or privately owned Palestinian land. Palestinians are not allowed to use these roads and many people refer to it as a peculiar system of apartheid (Rabinowitz, 2001: 66).

The settlers often resort to violent attacks against Palestinians and their property. In this way, they consider that they “legitimize” their settlements and that they will further expand their land (Fields, 2012:269).

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 80%-90% of the cases of violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians and their property are often closed by the Israeli police without prosecution, a fact that implies police cover up and support. In the first eight months of 2008 there were a total of 112 injured by settler attacks and the majority of incidents took place in Hebron (OCHA, 2008).

Settlements in Israel were supported and promoted by a certain elite, that of religious Zionism in the 1970s, mainly through the *Gush Emumin* movement. The action of this movement started with the formulation of a new code of life by a prophet. The doctrine it called upon was transmitted to the students who disseminated

it among the masses until some form of organization of believers became necessary (Sprinzak et al., 2002:64). The new faith had to be adjusted to its environment, either by upsetting the vested interests or through amendments to the original doctrine, in order to mitigate the hostility and suspicion. When a significant number of people or even the entire population embraces the new doctrine, the ongoing cultural transformation would allow a more harmonious adjustment of culture to the conditions that formed the starting point of the movement. Finally, in the post-movement phase, the movement would be established as a dominant religion or dominant political party, and a new stable equilibrium would be achieved. The Gush Emunim movement (Bloc of the Faithful) developed in Israel was this sort of a movement.

The Gush Emunim began as a spontaneous, loosely organized extra-parliamentary pressure group on the sidelines of the political system and developed into a well-organized and functionally differentiated network of related institutions that were fully integrated in the current national sovereign establishment. The element that allowed this transformation of Gush Emunim from a zealous religious group into an established semi-secular political party was that it managed to express a new sense of purpose and meaning in a situation of chaos and despair (Sprinzak, 2000:215).

The framework for the sub-culture from which the Gush Emunim emerged was developed in 1973 with the establishment of a state religious school system under the control of the National Religious Party. Almost all the leaders and supporters of the movement came from these religious schools (*yeshivot*) of secondary education, which combined secular with religious education. All the founding leaders of the movement members had graduated from the higher educational institution *Yeshivat Merkaz Harav*, which they attended after completing their military service, and were students of the late *Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook*, who considered himself the interpreter of his father's teachings of (Pedahzur & McCarthy, 2015:448; Sprinzak, 1987:195; Taub, 2007:290; Weissbrod, 1982:269; Jones, 1997:31).

Kook was not the right candidate for the position of the charismatic leader of the movement. He was difficult to understand, and often was unable to articulate his thoughts. However, his ideas, particularly as these were amended and denatured under the context of Israel's politics, offered a new faith that motivated his young fans (Sprinzak, 1987: 202).

Although the Gush Emunim movement never developed a comprehensive ideology, it preached a kind of neo-Zionism, a reviving return to the historical vision of Zionism that had been damaged with the establishment of the State of Israel (Schnell & Arnon, 2011:175). The alteration of the once sacred doctrines by secularism necessitated the reinterpretation in accordance with the new data. It was the duty of the Jews to “liberate” the land of their ancestors from end to end. This purpose was facilitated by tactics like the spreading of songs from the Gush Emunim concerning the return to the home land:

*We return to our home, to fields of blood and glory.
The mountain has become a legend and its warriors, lions.
Etzion, Etzion, our mountain of light and Sabbath,
Your memory lives in our hearts; you will never fall again*
(Schnell & Arnon, 2011:179).

To fulfill these historically enforced aspirations, the Jews had to salvage from their past everything that was great, heroic and good. The territories annexed in the wars of June 1967 and October 1973, were found, in this way, at the core of the movement’s goals. This meant no withdrawal from the occupied areas, and no sacrifice of any part of the Sacred Land, which practically, since the planned settlement up to the 1960s, was nothing more than a theoretical plan (Pedahzur & McCarthy, 2015:447; Waterman, 1985:200; Feige, 2013:109).

The event that allowed the Gush Emunim to increase its political impact was the ambiguous and morally controversial war of October 1973, which spread doubt and anxiety among the inhabitants of Israel and led to a confidence crisis towards the government (Sprinzak, 1986:3-4; Efrat, 1994:141; Lesch, 1987:501). The liberal Labor Party, which had dominated the political scene of the country almost from the beginnings of the State of Israel, had to confront the severe refutation of the opposing conservative segment (Sprinzak, 1991:65-66). Within this climate of confusion and general discomfort, the Gush Emunim began to actively protest.

As a newcomer to the political scene, the movement was not limited by the incumbent rules of the political class. Its leaders believed that it was their duty to operate outside the legal system (Sprinzak, 1995:30). Democracy was acceptable if it welcomed the appropriate Zionist context. To achieve these objectives, the Gush Emunim drew up an organized plan of protest against the withdrawal of the settlers

from the occupied territories and the conclusion of agreements with Israel's enemies (Duncan, 1982:53). With demonstrations that included mass rallies and marches, the movement opposed the Camp David Accords (Sprinzak, 1987:197-198; Shindler, 2001:105-106).

The movement to stop the departure from Sinai received considerable dimensions, by organizing marches and attempting to create settlements in the occupied desert. When the government announced the plans to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, the followers of Gush Emunim entered the abandoned houses of the region and opposed the efforts to be removed by force (Deckwitz, 2012:19-20). When the danger became evident that the majority of the Jews would aggressively react to such tactics, who considered that the pact with Egypt was a first step towards the safety and peace, the Gush Emunim launched a policy of "victimization" designed to ensure that the future settlements in the occupied West Bank, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip would not be abandoned. Besides, the settlement was the main strategy for the retention of the Occupied Territories, as well as a fundamental principle of the ideology of Gush Emunim (Pedahzur & Ranstorp, 2001:19; Feige, 2002:124; Weissbrod, 1996:89-90).

In 1976 the Amana organization was founded as an offshoot of Gush Emunim, to promote the settlement of the occupied territories. Despite the fact that many of the settlers that were used did not share Gush Emunim's ideology, they joined it because of the settlements (Newman, 1985:194-195).

The Labor government opposed all these actions. However, in 1977, the conservative Likud party assumed power, which agreed in many points with the aggressive ideology of Gush Emunim and had an alliance with the National Religious Party from which the Gush Emunim originally came. With a government of similar ideology in power, the foundations had been laid for the former opposition movement to join the establishment, which then gained access to many government ministers and members of the Israeli Parliament (Mnookin et al., 2006:313-314; Mnookin & Eiran, 2005:41; Ram, 2001:51; Ben-Zadok, 1987:339; Zeidan, 2006:231; Neidle, 2013:488; Billig, 2015:332). An inevitable consequence of the transformation of the movement into an establishment was the bureaucratization. The once loosely structured group was organized in sectors aimed at promoting arrangements and party activities, such as exercising lobbying behind closed doors. Gush Emunim gradually incorporated in

the formal institutional framework of the Israeli society and politics (Newman, 1981:35-36; Goldberg & Ben-Zadok, 1986:64-65).

It should be noted that the action of the Gush Emunim was described in many cases as terrorism, because of the extreme brutality used by the members of the movement (Cromer, 1988:350, Cromer, 1988:40; Peleg, 1997:236). An example is the three assassination attempts in the 80s against three Arab mayors of West Bank, the attack of 1983 against the Muslim college in Hebron and the attack of the Jewish doctor Baruch Goldstein in 1994 in Hebron's Cave of the Patriarchs that resulted in the death of 29 Muslims and the injury of more than 100 people (Sprinzak, 2000:210).

Similar to that of Gush Emunim was the activity of *Kach*, the first semi-fascist movement in Israel. *Kach* was established originally as the JDL in 1968 by the young rabbi Meir Kahane in New York and the primary aim of the movement was to protect the Jews in New York. The activity of the movement in New York included attacks against Russian diplomats, attacks on radio stations and a series of violent and illegal acts that sent several of its members in prison. In 1971, Kahane went to Israel and announced that his goal was to devote himself to education but in fact what he did was to transfer the action of the movement in Jerusalem now with Arabs as his main target (Sprinzak, 1985:16-17).

The emergence and development of Gush Emunim led Kahane to revise his policy in an attempt to establish himself in politics. Kahane focused on creating conditions that were so intolerable that would make the Arabs to leave the occupied territories. Kahane saw the departure of the Arabs as a continuation of the settlements. He started to instigate conflicts between the Arabs and the settlers of Gush Emunim originally aimed at the coexistence. A series of actions against the Arabs followed and his effort to be elected at the Parliament were finally successful in 1984 by exploiting the increasing hatred against the Arabs that started to materialize and which increased the support towards him (Sprinzak, 1985:19-20). From Gush Emunim, Kahane tried to establish an ideology and this is evident from the large number of books he wrote. His ideology was influenced by the revisionist Jabotinsky and the nationalist right-wing extremist Dr. Israel Eldad and he presented himself as the sole exponent of the "only authentic Jewish idea" (Sprinzak, 1985:3; Cromer, 1989:30). Kahane actually managed to create an ideology with the expulsion of the Arabs for the coming of the Messiah as its dominant element (Hanauer, 1995:253). In this way he managed to

ascribe a theological perspective to the violence: *“Thus, what was unique about Kahane, which sets him apart from all Jewish avengers, is the elevation of the mimetic desire into a politico-religious norm. To the ‘political Kahane’ the ‘fist in the face of the Gentile’ was not simply an act of revenge, an eye for eye. It is also not a suggestion for the application of massive retaliation in kind. It is kiddush hashem, a sacred obligation all the believers, and Jews in general, are told to respect and follow”* (Sprinzak, 1991:68).

However, while the Gush Emunim and Kahane constituted the elites in the promotion and support of the settlements, there were other elites that not only did not favored them but opposed to them by expressing their contrary view under harsh conditions.

Almost from the first years of its constitution as a state, there was always a minority in Israel, initially weak, but gradually increasing, which resists the war callings and develops a rich action at the level of the generation of theoretical and political ideas and at the level of dynamic activism, despite the fact that it is in an informal quarantine and there is an attempt to exclude it from the public discourse, which has started to be surpassed in recent years (Lebel, 2006:362-363; Hattis-Rolef, 1999).

In Israel militarism penetrates all levels of social life and is considered a value since early childhood. The dominant narrative that is being reproduced is that for every Israeli there is a deep trauma associated with the constant sense of threat, which is why the country should be in permanent alarm to defend itself (Levy, 2008:252-253). It is no coincidence, as paradoxical as it sounds, that the official standard name of the Israeli army is Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Most children come into contact with guns in their own home because their parents or older siblings are either soldiers or reservists. At carnivals the most common masquerade are the military uniforms, and children from kindergarten visit military units for tours. At the age of ten, students go on trips at the end of the school year to learn geometry through a military perspective, with a visit to the Golan Heights, where there is a special room for viewing old battles in three-dimensional images. The military service is compulsory for men (three years) and women (two years), while men are kept on standby for many years and each time they are called, for almost one month, to take part in an

operation or take further training. In this suffocating context, perhaps the most important aspect of the Israeli peace movement was the conscription refusal (Mitnick, 2016).

In the 1970s, a first group of high school graduates sent a letter to the then Prime Minister, Golda Meir, to express their refusal to serve in the occupied Arab territories (Peleg, 2000:240). This was the beginning of one of the most important peaceful organizations in Israel, the Peace Now, which emerged to the fore on the occasion of the Lebanon war. A year before the outbreak of war, 3,000 activists of the organization protested against the military activities of Israel, but in 1982, the largest peace protest in Israel's history took place with the participation of 120,000 protesters (Sprinzak, 2000:222-223). This movement was composed of people of different ideological and political positioning and its goals related to peace and human rights (Peleg, 2000:243-244).

The conscription deniers of 1987, during the first Intifada, marched in their footsteps and those of 2001 during the second Intifada. The most famous case is that of the daughter of a Mossad's senior officer, Omer Goldman, who was imprisoned for refusing conscription (Omer Goldman Quotes and Transcripts, 2016).

In 2002, the appearance of the open letter of the reservists who refused to serve in the occupied Palestinian territories caused quite a stir in the political scene of the country. Followed by the "letter of the pilots" with the signatures of 27 reservist pilots in September 2003 and in December the letter to the then Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, by 13 reservists of the elite commando unit, Sayeret Matkal. The conscription deniers that oppose to the military operations organized against Palestinians are dozens (Urquhart, 2003; Harel & Mualem, 2012).

Yesh Gvul ("There is a limit" in loose translation) was founded in 1982 during the Israeli invasion in Lebanon, with the main demand that "*every soldier has the right to refuse the orders of the black flag*" (a reference to the decision of the Israeli court in 1956 after the massacre at Kafr Kasem, not repeated).

There are other groups that support the total or partial refusal of military service, like the *Profil Hadash* (New Profile), which is opposed to the army as a mechanism in its entirety, the *Ometz LeSarev* (Courage to refuse) with members who had already served in the army, but refuse to go to the occupied territories, and the group *Shovrim Shtika* (Break the Silence) with members who publicly condemn what

they saw and did during their military service. The antimilitarist movement has a special value because it creates tremors in the most rigid institution of Israel. Certainly it has a large price for those who support and join it. It is a life decision really, since in addition to the prison sentences that can be imposed, its members are also excluded from working in the public sector and encounter major obstacles even in the private sector. In Israel, the military discharge papers are a prerequisite for almost everything (Helman, 2016).

There are also large organizations of pacifists that declare on a permanent basis the need for a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, organize caravans of solidarity to the affected areas of Palestine and protest against the war. One of these organizations, the *Gush Shalom* has developed a specific action, “The Bus of Peace” that carries flowers from Jerusalem to Gaza. While on route, it visits wounded Palestinians and injured soldiers of the Israeli army.

In Israel there is a mosaic of pro-Palestinian humanitarian organizations, NGOs and solidarity initiatives that express an alternative voice to the dominant narrative for years. Some of these groups are themed, like the “Women’s Coalition for Peace”, a radical feminist pacifist movement, the “Women in Black”, an international women’s organization against war, etc. (Helman, 2016).

In recent years, these organizations organized many symbolic reaction moves, such as the invasion to the airbase of Chazor, where the planes heading to Gaza take off, and to the Israeli Supreme Court, to protest against the “selective” administration of justice. The “Artists Against the War” initiative that professes anti-occupation ideas, presented artistic performances with anti-war content on July 22 in Rabin Square. In most of these cases the demonstrators were up against fanatical extremist groups. The right-wing ultranationalist task forces are a reality in the State of Israel and take action during large anti-war protests. With the slogan “*Make Gaza a cemetery*”, they even pursued the “dissident” protesters to their homes and hit them.

3.5 The Barrier

In 2002, Israel began the construction of the Barrier⁹ in the Jerusalem area, which is now completed. This Barrier has caused many reactions since it is argued that it violates basic human rights since it hinders the mobility of the Palestinians, their access to health and education services and living sources and in all their basic needs (Apartheid Wall, p. 1).

This Barrier extends along 680 - 1000 km and varies regionally. In some areas it consists of wire rope layers, patrol roads, paths of sand to reveal tracks, ditches, surveillance cameras, and an electric fence with a height of three meters and a width of 60 to 150 meters that includes a neutral zone from 30 to 100 meters sideways the Barrier. The Palestinians are prohibited from entering those areas. In other areas it consists of concrete walls, electric fences, cameras, sensors, gates and is patrolled by the Israeli army. In urban areas like Jerusalem the Wall consists of concrete slabs eight meters height with control towers, dead zones and a road next to the construction (CJPME, 2009: 1)

Israel claims that the Barrier is necessary for the safety of the Israelis inside the Green Line, but the real purpose is to annex large parts of the West Bank and to ensure that more than 50 settlements in the Occupied Areas, in which most of the Israeli settlers live, will be on the Israeli side (Trottier, 2007: 109-110).

With this Barrier, Jerusalem is completely isolated from the rest of the West Bank and over 500,000 Palestinians were isolated from their communities (United Nations, 2007). This situation implies serious damage to farmers, since the access to their land will be subject to restrictions inherent in the license system. Such a system results in long queues for the passage of the farmers themselves, hinders the passage of vehicles, etc. and changes the lives of farmers significantly, forcing the Palestinians to stop working on this land, which would give Israel the opportunity to declare it state ownership (UNDP, 2011/12:5).

Nonetheless, the Barrier seriously interferes with the daily life and movement of all Palestinians. In some areas, Palestinians must apply for permission from the Israeli army to travel to educational institutions, their work, clinics, their religious sites, markets, or to visit relatives living on the other side of the Barrier but within the

⁹ Barrier is the term used by the UN. Israel uses the term "Security fence"

Occupied Palestinian Territories (Trottier, 2007:112;). The Barrier surrounds Jerusalem and together with the settlements around it, it promotes its isolation from the West Bank. The Barrier runs through villages and neighborhoods, separating families, cutting social and economic ties and transforms the areas into ghettos, following the Zionist project that wants Jerusalem the capital of Israel. The construction of new settlements has started in the territories annexed illegally, in order to increase the number of Jewish settlers and change the demography of the city (United Nations, 2005:19-20).

3.6 Olive trees and Pines

The farming of olives is a key activity of the Palestinians for their living. The settlers do raids and uproot these olives, a practice that has intensified lately and is part of their strategy to complicate the lives of Palestinians, to evict them from their land and usurp them for the construction of more settlements for settlers (United Nations, 2008:1).

Olives are the basic means of survival for about 80,000 families in the West Bank (United Nations, 2012:1). Already for the construction of the Barrier, the Israeli forces have destroyed more than 800,000 olive trees (Kurancid, 2015). Even for the picking of olives, the Palestinians must give trench battles with Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers. The sale of the Palestinian olive oil is constantly obstructed in hundreds of Israeli checkpoints, while its transportation becomes unprofitable and costly due to the measures imposed by the Israeli occupation authorities to acquire harvesting and transport permits (Quinn, 2015).

The “olive war” declared by the settlers, setting forth the myth of the Bible for the “Promised Land” where there should not be any root of Palestinian olive trees, has alarmed not only Israeli citizens who do not hesitate to take the side of the Palestinian farmers in the olive harvest, but also many international activists from many countries of Europe, the US and Canada that go to the olive groves of the Palestinians and form “human shields” in front of the Jewish settlers (Chelala, 2015).

At the same time that Jewish settlers uproot and destroy the olive trees of the Palestinians, the Israelis plant pines. The rural landscape of Israel is overgrown with

pine trees. These trees are new to the area. There didn't exist there until the 30s. Pine trees first appeared in the Palestinian landscape in the early 30s by the Jewish National Fund in an effort to claim the land (KKL-LNF: 11). Until 1935, the JNF had planted 1.7 million trees over an area of over 1,750 hectares. Within 50 years, the JNF has planted over 260 million pine trees mostly on confiscated Palestinian land. All this was done in an attempt to hide the remains of Palestinian villages and their history and in the place of the uprooted olive trees, pine trees were planted (Atzmon, 2010).

Now, it is the turn of the Negev desert to turn into the forest. The JNF plans to plant one million trees and the forest to be formed will be called "GOD TV Forest". To this end, the Israeli authorities have ordered the demolition of the Bedouin village al-Araqib, which has not been recognized and is inhabited by hundreds of people for over 100 years. During 2010, the village has been demolished by Israeli bulldozers for eight times, but the locals do not leave and rebuild their makeshift houses. The "GOD TV" is a far-right evangelical channel that finances the campaign of the ethnic cleansing of the "Jewish National Fund" (JNF) in the Negev desert (Blumenthal, 2011).

3.7 Demolitions

The Israeli army regularly proceeds to the demolition of Palestinian houses that have been built in the West Bank without a permit. These demolitions are well connected with the ongoing rebuilding of Jewish settlements, and also reduce the possibility to create a Palestinian state in the West Bank, the viability of which is eroded further by each demolition.

In recent years, more than 3,000 houses were demolished in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and left about 29,000 Palestinians homeless. In the C areas, which constitute 60% of the West Bank, the Palestinians have to get permits for the construction or expansion of their homes from the Israeli authorities. In the period 2000-2007, 94% of the permit applications were not approved. Without the permits, the residents are constantly at risk of demolition of their homes by the Israeli authorities. Also, the Israeli authorities designate specific areas as state land, natural

parks, military training areas, etc., thus justifying the demolition of Palestinian homes (B'tselem, 2013:19). According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in 2013 they demolished 663 Palestinian homes and 1,103 people were left homeless, including 545 children. The demolition of private property is also a violation of the International Humanitarian Law (OCHA, 2013).

The demolition of the Palestinian houses is part of the wider policy used through settlement building. But while the destruction of farms and trees is made by the settlers, the demolition of the Palestinian houses is the work of the Israeli authorities exclusively, regardless of the fact that their land is then occupied by settlers.

The magnitude of the disaster caused by the demolitions is scary. In the occupied territories, from 1967 through 2013, about 24,813 homes have been demolished. The mandate for their demolition is given solely by the Israeli authorities for various reasons. Meanwhile, the Israeli authorities order the demolition of houses on the pretext that they are illegal and at the same time they themselves refuse to grant building permits (Fields, 2012: 282-283).

The way the Palestinians are persecuted and expelled is obvious if one takes into account the remaining space available to them, since the settlers build their houses at the location of their demolished homes. In the occupied East Jerusalem, of the total 9.18 km² only 13% is destined for the Palestinians and most of the area is already built. 35% of the area has been given to settlers, 22% has been designated as a green area and only 30% has remained without planning (Thill, 2014).

3.8 Water

The settlements are the main cause of inequalities in access to natural resources between Israelis and Palestinians. Many settlements are built mainly on Palestinian agricultural land that has been encroached by Israelis or over significant sources of water, such as water reserves in the West Bank, springs and wells. Israeli settlements in the West Bank consume internally, 280 liters of water per day/person compared to the 80 liters per day available to the Palestinians of which only the 60 liters are suitable for drinking. The World Health Organization recommends a minimum daily

intake of 100 liters, which means that the settlers use more than twice the required amount, and the Palestinians do not even reach the minimum amount (CESR; World Bank, 2009: v-vi).

3.9 Remarks

Israel and Palestine: a tragedy of two peoples struggling over the same land; An endless conflict. The revivals are frequent, the bloodshed and death of civilians a sad reality and the impossibility of finding a diplomatic solution, after so many decades, is almost shocking to the world. Issues such as the recognition and the national security of Israel, the status of Jerusalem and the occupied territories, the Palestinian refugees, the Israeli settlements and the allocation of natural resources still remain unresolved.

The role of Zionism has been crucial to the establishment of the State of Israel. Through determination, diplomacy and the waves of migration Zionism achieved the recreation of a state that had ceased to exist after 70 AD. Against all odds Zionism managed what many call 'A Miracle'. But the price for this achievement was and still is very high: a constant conflict causing daily the loss of lives of innocent people. The beginning of this conflict took place when in an attempt to find allies against the Ottomans during World War I the British promised the establishment of a state in the region to both the Jews and the Palestinians. Of course, at that time, the Palestinian Arabs in Palestine constituted over 85 per cent of the population. But with the gradual Jewish settlement throughout the course of the interwar period from 1922 to 1940, the population composition changed. The Holocaust and the reactions it created, forced Great Britain to change its stance on the issue of the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. The Arabs reacted strongly to this decision, since they considered that there may not be such a state in a region where they constituted the majority. So in 1947, and after a long diplomatic battle, the United Nations decided they should create two states in Palestine: an Israeli and a Palestinian.

The Arabs did not accept this decision and the first Arab-Israeli war took place in 1948. Israel won and occupied a number of Palestinian territories. This first occupation of territories led around one million Palestinian refugees to flee to the

West Bank of the Jordan, Gaza, Syria and Lebanon.

In 1987, and after various adventures and wars, the first major Palestinian uprising took place, the *Intifada*, which forced Israel to come to an impasse, since it essentially used its armed forces and caused a public outcry.

The Oslo Agreement in 1993 delivered some territories to the Palestinian administration, but left the four main problems of the Palestinian question unresolved: the territorial issue, the issue of Jerusalem, the issue of water and the issue of refugees. Failure to resolve these issues, led to new conflicts and the second great uprising, the *Second Intifada* (2000), which was crushed by the Israeli army. Since then there have been clashes between the Palestinian organization Hamas and the politico-military organization of Yasser Arafat's Fatah that left the Palestinians divided. Fatah and Hamas control different parts of Palestine, the West Bank and Gaza respectively. The situation today has remained the same, while Israel continues to colonize the area with its settlements.

The issue of illegal Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine is one of the core issues of the conflict. In flagrant violation of the International Law, the continued expansion of new and existing settlements from the successive Israeli governments has caused a major fracture between Israelis and Palestinians and now there is a reaction from international organizations for the non-compliance of Israel on earlier agreements and the blatant violations of the basic rights of the Palestinians.

Most of half a million Israeli Jews currently living in areas occupied by Israel after the 1967 war belong to various ideological groups. Their common point is that all of them have received active encouragement from the policy of Israeli governments with financial incentives and the full protection of the Israeli army to move to the settlements.

In a targeted way, the Israeli government uses the settlements and the settlers as a lever of pressure and violence in an attempt to force the Palestinians to leave their lands. A series of methods that violate the basic rights is used in connection with the settlement policy.

The Palestinian areas are violated for the establishment of settlements or forest areas with tree planting, with the sole goal to wipe out any Palestinian trace from the land. The settlers brutally attack the trees of the Palestinians in an attempt to deprive them of not only the only means of survival they have, but also to push them to leave

so that they will be able to encroach on these territories. The water embargo aims to eliminate everything the previous policies failed to. Without water, the Palestinians cannot sustain their plantations and therefore will be forced to leave.

The same goes for the demolition of houses. By building the protection wall, they have created a ghetto in which the Palestinians are obliged to live, either under the pretext of punishment or illegality, the homes of the Palestinians are demolished and replaced by settler homes. The Israeli authorities order the demolition of Palestinian houses suspected of terrorism even when there is no data to confirm this. As seen from the above, the settlements of the Israelis through various means, has led to the change of the geographical status in Palestine. It is clear that these practices constitute a situation of apartheid, despite the allegations to the contrary, under the pretext of security, since these reminiscent practices that were adopted in other regimes in the past and which the modern democratic world has rejected. This view is confirmed by the recent practice adopted for the boarding of the Palestinians in different buses. Under a pilot program that would last for three months, the Palestinians who worked in Israel would have to return home via the same crossing point to get the buses used by residents of Judea-Samaria. Thousands of Palestinians working in Israel would have to pass through four checkpoints to go to their place of work, and then through the same crossings to return home. Upon their return to the West Bank, the Palestinians had to take the Palestinian buses to go home and not the Israeli. This decision was taken at the request of the settlers who claimed that the Palestinians were filling the buses and they felt they were in danger. There was an attempt to adopt this measure in the past and is a practice similar to that applied in African apartheid. The measure was withdrawn after a global outcry. Nevertheless it is an indication that Israel is looking for more methods to exclude, oppress and subjugate the Palestinians.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

Smith's views, as much as those of Said, reflect the multiple aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict in Palestine. The modernist framework of nationalism clearly couldn't have affected neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians. The Israelis because, at the beginning of the formation of nationalism in Europe, they were moving from country to country, they were facing persecution and they were lacking of the key ingredients to establish a nation. Instead, they were carrying the very feature that nationalism denies: the religious. The same applies to the Palestinians who cannot consciously follow a construct of the West, nationalism. In the sense of collegiality of course and the horizontal partnership, both Jews and Palestinians can be understood as a nation, but it is assumed that they have the characteristics of the western construct.

Smith was the one who formulated the idea of the *ethnie* and this category includes both Israel and Palestine and their conflict over the land of Palestine. The story illustrates the long course in the history of both peoples. However, the modern nation that they are attempting to gain, especially the Israelis, draws its characteristics from the *ethnies* and these classify it more to the *ethnies* rather to the nations. One of these characteristics is the common myth of origin. Myths are one of the main arguments of the Israelis to prove that Palestine is their mother country. The myth of the mother land of Palestine also verifies the element of the bond with this territory. The culture of both Israelis and the settlers is clear and visible because of Judaism.

A key element in the identification of Israel as an *ethnie* is the sense of solidarity and the sense of belonging. Maintaining the solidarity requires the confrontation with external enemies and Israel has found them in the Palestinian people. The fact that the Palestinians have been living in the same land and that they even predated Israel, plays no part since, as rightly stressed by Said, the Palestinians as an Arab people of the East, are characterized based on stereotypes and therefore the persecution is imposed on them for various reasons. It is the aggressive Arabs who practice terrorism and in the name of safety, the Israelis, who are completely different from them and unique since they are God's chosen people, have to stay united in order to achieve their continuity and self-preservation.

As already mentioned, the myth of the origin of Israel is important for them. However, Israeli's actions are not limited in maintaining it but also in creating additional data with the ultimate aim of creating historical memories. The Israelis are trying to connect themselves with the land area of Palestine and rely upon the myth of the mother land to rewrite history and create historical memories in their favor. They are not limited in claiming that Palestine is their homeland, but are seeking to eliminate from it every trace and evidence revealing that there was ever a presence of the Palestinian people in the historic past. Therefore, apart from trying to drive away the Palestinians from Palestine, today they are attempting to persecute their history and to replace it with their own. For this reason they uproot the olive trees that have been there for hundreds of years and represent the continued existence of the Palestinians in their historical memory, and replace them with pine trees, a symbol that they consider their own, in order to replace the traces of the olives with their own trees, the history of the Palestinians with their own historical myth, and which the modern generations will perceive as their history. In this sense, Palestine is, as rightly classified by Smith, an ethnoscape. It is not a random geographical area. It is the one in which the Jewish people decided to create the nation of Israel and this cannot survive in the Israeli consciousness with the parallel existence of the Palestinians. As a chosen people, the Israelis have to survive. And to do this, their national identity must be maintained, which is entirely structured upon its relation to the land of Palestine. The Israeli mythology is based on this, which is sought to be turned into historical facts through a series of practices that not only lack moral dimension but could fairly be characterized as an ethnic cleansing in the case of Palestinians.

The practices used by Israelis to secure their presence in Palestine, and also to completely conquer it by expelling all Palestinian trace, is undoubtedly cruel, inhuman and remind us the practices of regimes throughout history that the global opinion and the history has criticized and rejected completely. In order to justify their practices against the Palestinians, the Israelis refer to the threat against their safety, since for them all Palestinians are potential Arab terrorists. They demolish the Palestinian houses as punishment for terrorist attacks against their settlers, even if the accused are retrospectively are proven innocent. They have raised a Barrier that breaks down all Palestinian communities because they fear attacks by Palestinian "terrorists". They cover the work of the settlers and the violent acts against

Palestinians with a cover of defense and force Palestinians to accept consecutive humiliating controls and to take separate buses because they are afraid to be close to them.

At the same time, the Israelis increasingly invade the land of the Palestinians with the ultimate goal their final exile, but this is done indirectly because of the international condemnation, and the image the Israelis are trying to give to the international community, which is also the public voice of the Israelis, is that they defend themselves against the “terrorists” Palestinians.

The Israelis use the discourse on Orientalism uniquely. As in Smith’s theory, they need this discrimination between themselves and the others to strengthen their national identity only that in this case, the distinction is between westerners and easterners. The Israelis are the westerners who defend themselves against the Palestinian terrorists since they are all regarded as Arabs in the West. The Arab then, the Palestinian is irrational and fanatical and thus inferior to the Israeli who has placed himself in the West and because of the negative characteristics of the other, he has the right, by all means, to defend himself. The context of orientalism used by Israelis to justify the acts of violence against Palestinians is a practice that is not related to the establishment of Israel, but an effort to preserve it and make the Palestinians disappear.

Said’s view may seem innocent at first. However, a deeper historical introspection might bring out the truth. Maybe there has been a tendency to support the Palestinians in recent years, which is also under debate, but some decades before, Europe, the West, not only wasn’t involved at all with the matter but indirectly adopted some of the practices of Israel. Not long ago, the Palestinians were not accepted in European countries because the State of Israel refused to give them passports, a practice that indirectly legitimized Israeli policy.

Clearly, then, the West made peace efforts and condemned the practices of Israel after the global outcry. But now we come to a new era where the rapid increase of terrorist attacks by the jihadists has again reserved the West towards the Arabs and allows Israel to throw the card of terrorism on the agenda again. Moreover, despite the international condemnation, to date the Israelis have not suffered any punishment that would force them to restrict their practices.

The stereotypes about the East do exist and there are still violent attacks

against the Israelis. Said doesn't ignore that who has also criticized the PLO for its corresponding actions. However, these stereotypes extend to the geography of Palestine. The myth that Israel has constructed as an ethnically homogeneous state, has become widely accepted since even the international response focuses on stopping the settlement expansion, but essentially has accepted the annexation of the territories to Israel of the settlements that already exist. The settlers are not asked to leave from the Palestinian land, they are requested to stop expanding, which of course will not be accepted since the same practice in the past has been legalized today, and it is anticipated that the same will happen in the future.

It should also be noted that the area of Palestine can no longer be seen only in the geographical context of which areas belong to Israel, which belong to the Palestinians and which to the settlers. It should be considered in conjunction with the interests that take place in the region and the production of impressions and representations, a game in which, as it seems, Israel dominates. Moreover, the fact of the good knowledge of control that Israel has is also obvious from the settlements issue. With economic and prosperity promises, along with the myth of the promised land, Israel has managed to turn the settlers to persecutors of Palestinians, thus allowing the official Israeli authorities to pretend a non-violent behavior. The settlers do in fact what Israel cannot do in order not to harm its international relations.

But everything takes place with the tolerance and support of the official Israeli state. The violations against the basic rights of the Palestinians are continuous and go unpunished since they are regarded as such but as defensive practices. The water embargo on the Palestinians is not mentioned as such, but that they are forced to engage in such tactics because the Palestinians steal water. They did not raise the Barrier to split the Palestinian territories, but because they had to defend themselves against the Palestinians. All their actions are justified by the alleged "aggressive" movement of the Palestinians. But their policy is clearly expansive, although this is not officially declared and is in fact a creeping annexation of the Palestinian territories in the State of Israel.

All the above are based on the specific view and ideology that Israelis have for the land of Palestine. The settlements are, both for themselves and for the settlers, a way to practically consolidate the idea that they themselves bear about the ancestral land. They have created, mentally and consciously, an imaginary geography of the

limits of their state based on their ancestral inheritance right and they are trying to establish this, through the creeping annexation of territories in various ways with the main objective to evacuate the landscape of their “own” land of all the traces of the Palestinian life.

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