THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE NARRATIVE STALEMATE: CONFLICT, IDENTITY AND

THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN ADOLESCENCE

VOLUME ONE

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BY

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ABSTRACT

Assuming a cultural psychology approach to the study of life-course development and a narrative approach to the study of identity, this dissertation examined adolescent identity development in the context of political conflict. From 2003 to 2006, fieldwork was conducted in two American-based programs for intergroup contact between Palestinian and Israeli youth, as well as in community field sites in Israel and the Palestinian territories. Out of approximately 450 youth observed and informally assessed in these field settings, a sample of 45 youth was recruited for intensive life-story interviews. Narratives of youth revealed considerable conformity to master narratives of collective identity, although youth challenged certain thematic elements as well. In particular, the narrative tone and form of individual life stories closely paralleled that of the ingroup master narrative. The content of these narratives revealed great psychological distance from one another along the lines of social identity, which may be characteristic of the context of conflict in which identities become polarized as a consequence of perceived existential threat. The experience of intergroup contact, although intended to elicit a process of identity *recategorization* among youth, in which a decrease in the salience of ingroup identity occurs, ultimately served to accentuate ingroup social identity and to contribute to the convergence of individual life stories with master narratives that reproduce the conflict. Findings suggest that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be characterized as a stalemate of master narratives which are reproduced by youth, regardless of attempts at identity intervention. Findings also suggest the importance of a cultural approach to both the study of adolescence and to research and practice in intergroup contact. Implications of the study for theorizing the relationship among youth, culture, and social change are discussed.

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A NOTE ON GEOGRAPHIC TERMINOLOGY

Upon meeting most Palestinians for the first time, many Americans may be surprised by their response to a very basic question: "Where are you from?" The response is invariably "Palestine." I have heard a number of my Palestinian colleagues and research participants indicate that the response of the American—assuming he or she is neither Jewish nor Arab—is typically one of two possibilities. Either the American asks genuinely, as if having simply misheard, "Pakistan?" Or, alternatively, rather quizzically, the American may reply, "Where is Palestine?," recognizing that the geographic term sounds quite familiar and must be *near* Israel, yet somehow still uncertain of its precise location in world geography.

As I will discuss in greater depth in Chapter 3, this naming of Palestine as a geographic locale is a far more complex issue, particularly when Israelis and Palestinians enter into situations of contact, than may at first appear. The question of the naïve American—"Where is Palestine?"—perhaps offers a precise summary statement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself, as the establishment of actual borders for these two states (one as yet emerging) really represents the crux of the problem.

Throughout this text, I have chosen to use the term "Palestine," as opposed to "the Palestinian territories" or more specifically the territories "West Bank" or "East Jerusalem" (whose status as a "Palestinian territory" remains contested in some circles), to refer to those regions internationally recognized as under Israeli military occupation since the Six-Day War of 1967, thus falling inside of what is considered the "Green Line." (Territorially, this does indeed include East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.) The use of *Palestine* is

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deliberate in that it legitimizes the Palestinian aspiration of national statehood in these territories (and the recognition by the United Nations and other international bodies that such desire for sovereignty is justified, legitimate, and ultimately necessary for a sustainable peace in the Middle East), the borders of which remain undetermined as of 2006. It is worth noting also that a Palestinian Declaration of Independence was formally proclaimed in November of 1988 (with implied borders that recognized the State of Israel in its pre-1967 form) and that the State of Palestine, though not formally recognized by the United Nations or the United States, is recognized by a significant number of countries, including India, Russia, China, Turkey, and nearly all countries in Africa and the Middle East. (Palestine does indeed have "observer status" at the United Nations, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO].)

My use of this geographic term is thus meant to accord equal legitimacy to the two narrative perspectives on the region—that there are indeed "nations" called "Israel" and "Palestine." In my use of this terminology, I refer *very concretely* to the occupied territories *and not to any part of what is internationally recognized by the United Nations as the State of Israel.* I do acknowledge, however, that when Palestinians refer to Palestine they often refer to the British mandate of Palestine, which includes present-day Israel, to describe the entirety of what *was* Palestine. I will refer to that territory when speaking in historical terms as "mandate Palestine."

It is my hope that my decision to use such terminology accords an adequate measure of recognition without the suggestion that I myself am aligned with the ideology of one group over another. In fact, it is my conviction that the use of such terminology ought to possess the opposite effect of securing my status as a legitimate "stranger" in the Holy Land, possessing no aspirations for political expression and simply a documenter of a basic empirical reality:

the reality of conflict and its impact on the course of individual lives. It should be clear from this brief note on terminology that I believe my own role in telling this particular story and in selecting a particular lexicon with which to tell it must be transparent. A responsible cultural psychologist is *reflexive* about his own identity in conducting his research. For this reason, I devote considerable attention in Chapter 2 to the issue of reflexivity about my role as a social scientist in a contentious zone of conflict for which I, in fact, possessed remarkably few preconceptions, but to which I of course came to feel deeply connected.

"...The decisive impulses which determine the direction of social evolution do not originate with [poets and thinkers] at all, but with the much more compact, mutually antagonistic social groups which stand behind them, polarized into antagonistic trends. This wave-like rhythm in the change of the *Zeitgeist* is merely due to the fact that—according to the prevailing conditions—now one, and then the other pole succeeds in rallying an active youth which, then, carries the 'intermediary' generations and in particular the socially unattached individuals along."

—Karl Mannheim (1928), "The Problem of Generations," p. 317

"...We ought not to create new distinctions between people; we ought not to raise fresh barriers, we should rather make the old disappear. ...Universal brotherhood is not even a beautiful dream. Conflict is essential to man's highest efforts."

—Theodore Herzl (1896/1997), "The Jewish State," p. 223

"...In the period between puberty and adulthood, the resources of tradition fuse with new inner resources to create something potentially new: a new person; and with this new person a new generation, and with that, a new era."

—Erik Erikson (1958), *Young Man Luther*, p. 20

PROLOGUE

I awake to the sounds of roosters and cows rising above the remote-controlled air conditioning unit somehow affixed in the top corner of the wall in Daniel's[1] room. As is the case in almost all of the families who graciously host me, he has given up his room for me. Even in situations where a bedroom has two beds, as is the case in Mohammed's room in East Jerusalem, I am always given my own room with complete privacy. Such is the common custom of both Israelis and Palestinians in the realm of hospitality. "Hospitality is part of our culture," as many Palestinians have said to me, as if, to my horror, I have failed to cloak my surprise as the stereotypes I have of Palestinians disintegrate, and my Palestinian friend, subject, or colleague feels obligated to suggest that perhaps the image of "Palestinian as terrorist" is not completely authentic.

This morning, though, I am in Israel, in the home of a Jewish Israeli family living on a *moshav*, a cooperative farming community in which, unlike the socialist *kibbutz*, the land is owned by the state but families retain their own income. As I arrived in their home on a prior trip six months earlier, it was the eve of the Palestinian election in the wake of Arafat's unexpected death, and I had only just arrived from a week deep in the heart of the West Bank. Daniel's father, a sharp and foreboding man, exceedingly masculine in the fashion of the Israeli "warrior"—the face of a new Jewish identity as the Fighter—asks me the requisite probing questions I receive as I traverse between these two entirely disparate worlds with the speed of a rat furiously trying to find his way out of the maze. He is sizing me up, of course,

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[1] The names of all individuals (research participants, their family members, and most of my colleagues) appear as pseudonyms.

trying to get a picture of me and where I stand on the conflict, in not-so-indirect ways. Over

time, I realize I have satisfied his need for trust and security in whatever of my own identity I

have communicated through my somewhat cautious replies to his queries. It is an experience

I have come to expect, and it is the source of considerable exhaustion as I visit with families

at the end of sometimes excruciatingly long days of travel throughout the region.

This morning I am too cold, having unsuccessfully tried to maneuver the air

conditioner in the middle of the night. But I am also haunted by a horrible dream which I

recorded immediately into my field diary, beside me in bed, the ink on yesterday's notes still

fresh:

> I am standing at a checkpoint. Suddenly I see a young man, bearded, wrapped in a
> *kafiya*[2] I didn't recognize, running toward us. He is strapped with explosives and
> detonates them as he arrives. In a moment of terrible panic, I run from the checkpoint
> but can get no more than a few steps. He detonates, but nothing happens. We are all
> suddenly frozen in space and time.

It is my third trip to the region, and the *intifada* continues. But my dream is primed not by my

everyday experience, during which I allow denial and rationalization to overpower the fear

and anxiety I might experience spending any time at all in this region. (The use of these

defense mechanisms suggests there is a part of me that has adopted the preferred coping

method of most Israelis during this latest rise of violence.) My dream, rather, is primed by the

last evening I spent with Gal, one of my research subjects, and his father, Eli, on their nearby

kibbutz.

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[2] The *kafiya* is the black and white head covering symbolic of Palestinian nationalism. It
resided famously on Yasser Arafat's head throughout his life. Though it is almost never worn by
young Palestinian men in this same fashion, it is typically worn around the shoulders or, in smaller
form, as a scarf.

In narrating his life story, Gal, a 15-year-old Jewish boy with a tall, lanky frame and absent-minded disposition, referred to the day he and his father witnessed a suicide bombing on a bus they were traveling just behind. His method of "casual insertion" of the incident into his life story nearly caused me to leap out of my seat, as few of the youth I have come to interview have flirted so closely with disaster. Yet, for now, I retained my composure and prompted Gal to tell me about his experience in detail. To hear him tell the story, no matter how deeply I probed, was to absorb some thickly repressed experiential collage, in which he recalled almost nothing except the nearby restaurant where his father instructed him to take refuge as he went to the aid of victims. No doubt such a recollection was tied to a post-traumatic reaction in which Gal had "stored" parts of the memory out of his immediate consciousness. I had the good fortune of spending the evening with Gal and his father, Eli, an amiable, intelligent, and pragmatic chain-smoker whose face itself narrated a particular story, with its deeply cut lines. In the typical light Israeli dinner, Eli prepared a salad of tomatoes, cucumbers, and onions with olive oil, bread, and omelets for each of us.

"So how was Gal in the interview?" he asked, as virtually all parents ask of me following an interview, wanting to ensure that their child has proven himself a worthy repository of interesting data. Tonight I am generally disappointed with the interview, mainly because Gal is the kind of adolescent boy who seems to have minimal desire to integrate his life experiences into a coherent narrative, as if he is not quite ready for the emotional and cognitive challenge that such an act entails. Thus our interview is not as rich as I would like, but of course I cannot share this with his father and instead practice the skill of "protective fabrication" that my work in this part of the world has come to command—out of a need for safety more than mere politeness.

"He told you the story of the suicide bombing, right?"

I assured him he had, though of course I was curious to hear Eli's version of the same event. Fortunately, I did not even need to ask for it.

> We were driving in our car in front of a bus when suddenly the explosion happened. We thought it was a flat tire or something. I got out of the car and saw the shrapnel. Then I realized what had happened. It was like a scene out of hell. There were bodies everywhere. I had Gal run to a nearby restaurant, to get out of the place. I went on the bus and saw what happened. I couldn't resist. It's strange, I guess, but I had to see. I now know what it looks like in hell. I'll never forget that experience.

Eli's description and Gal's post-traumatic memory lapse replay in my mind as I lay in bed that cold morning on the moshav, the sound of cows and chickens clearly audible as they awaken from their own slumbers. Having wandered safely and without significant concern throughout the region, and having interviewed few Jewish Israeli youth whose life stories contained such close encounters as Gal's, I suppose I had become a bit complacent psychologically. All of that had changed by this morning, and the vivid imagery of my nightmare at the checkpoint haunted me as I prepared to face my host family on this, my final morning with them.

After Daniel's mother prepares me a miniature version of the Israeli breakfast—an omelet, a light salad of tomato and cucumber, delicious yogurt and cheese made right here on the moshav, bread, and a cup of Nescafe—we head to the bus station where I am to take a coach bus to Netanya to meet a colleague. Our goodbyes are not filled with strong sentiments. Unlike with Daniel's father, I feel I have failed to win the approval of his mother. Her constant quizzing of my research and its intentions reveals a level of anxiety in her, perhaps enhanced by my "outsider," non-Jewish identity. But I despise emotional goodbyes anyway, and so am perfectly comfortable with our icy parting.

I generally avoid the inner-city buses of Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem, which have been the main targets of suicide bombers. But coach buses, I rationalize, have never been a

target, and Daniel's mother insists this is the best means of transit to Netanya. But this morning I feel particularly ill at ease to make the trip. I disguise my reluctance, though, and make my way into the station.

I enter the bus station through a makeshift metal detector, monitored by a security guard who looks the part. I undergo a highly cursory search, even though I have multiple pieces of luggage. The guard has detected my American accent, and therefore I fail to fit the right "profile" for a would-be bomber. After a 30-minute wait for the right bus, I board, choosing to sit near the front. As each person boards, I look at them carefully, sizing them up one by one, trying to discern whether they have the potential to be a bomber. I feel relieved as we leave the station, having decided that none of the passengers seem sufficiently "sketchy" to blow themselves up. To my horror, the bus stops ten minutes out of the station to pick up more passengers. Another ten people to size up, and this time they do not all meet my criteria for benign threat. Needless to say I spend the next hour, including several more unanticipated roadside pick-ups, on the brink of a full-fledged panic attack. It is not a feeling I am used to, but it gives me a clear sense of the experiential possibilities of daily life in Israel—the real dangers of basic existence in a state under constant threat.

Six months earlier, I am in Ramallah, the cosmopolitan Palestinian capital city. I meet up with Khalid at his office. Khalid has become a good friend and colleague of mine, having agreed to host me sight unseen the first time I had come to Ramallah. Though he is in fact my age, he has the appearance of an older, more experienced man, with his stocky build, great height, dark goatee, and receding hairline. We meet at his office just off of the famous Rukab Street, a major thoroughfare in downtown Ramallah named for the celebrated homemade ice cream shop. Walking down the streets of Ramallah with Khalid typically takes about triple the amount of time it would take me walking alone, as he seems to know pretty

much every other person on this bustling boulevard and, in Palestinian custom, stops to greet each one of them. He takes me that evening to an engagement party for a friend. Again consistent with custom, the sexes are separated, and only men are present at this party. I spend a good deal of time conversing with Khalid's many friends and acquaintances, including Ibrahim, who I quickly learn is from Jenin.

Though I had never been there, the image of Jenin weighed heavily in my consciousness, as it was the site of a major Israeli incursion during this intifada and the subject of a very powerful film called *Arna's Children*. The film chronicles the lives of several young Palestinian boys, from their childhood days in a theater in the refugee camp to their gradual ascendance into the ranks of the Palestinian resistance movement in Jenin. Ultimately, all but two die as "martyrs." It was the first time I really understood the genesis of what some would label a "terrorist," and others, a "freedom fighter."

I ask Ibrahim whether he was in Jenin at the time of the invasion (referred to by Palestinians as "the massacre"). He confesses that he was, and as he does, his eyes water and his whole face grows tense. I realize I should let sleeping dogs lie, and I stop the conversation with an expression of empathy and genuine concern for his family.

As the night comes to an end, Khalid and I seek a ride to his nearby village. It is a cold winter night, bone-chilling and very dark. We make our way down the bumpy, poorly maintained road, until we are forced to come to an abrupt stop behind a truck that has suddenly stopped in the middle of the road. I ask Khalid what is happening, as scores of Israeli soldiers come running from the truck, flashing lights into our car, pointing their guns at us, and shouting. "It's a traveling checkpoint," he says. "They just decide they want to set up a checkpoint, and they do it." It is 10:30 at night, the road is quiet, the night is calm. But no longer for me.

I have certainly experienced checkpoints before, time and time again, as I travel throughout Palestine and between Palestine and Israel; they are, after all, ubiquitous. Although the frustrations of waiting at these checkpoints and dealing with the harsh words of a young Israeli soldier relishing in a moment of previously unknown extraordinary power over other lives—*despite* my American passport—has somewhat desensitized me to the experience of the checkpoint, I am not fully prepared for the range of emotions that are about to engulf me.

Khalid tells me in a quiet but confident voice, "They want us to get out of the car." Naturally, we comply, as anyone would do when a gun and bright light are staring you down. Waiting on the sidewalk, I am shaking with a mixture of cold and fear of our unknown fate. I am, after all, in the middle of a war zone—albeit a "low-grade" war that has gone on in some varying degree since long before 1948.

I hear dogs howling in the distance. I look around to the many hills, and the bright lights of the nearby Jewish settlement perched on top of one of them. The sidewalk is accompanied by a major cliff, so there is no escape if we need to. The soldiers will not look me in the eyes. I try to make eye contact. I want to know what they think and feel about all of this, and I want them to see the fear in my eyes, to know I have never been through something like this before. But their eyes never venture anywhere near ours, even when Khalid asks them permission to smoke a cigarette. The eyes will reveal too much of their own stories, I think to myself.

We stand in the cold, in solidarity with others, for an entire hour. My fear subsides, and feelings of helplessness—they could do anything they want to me—and powerlessness emerge. These feelings naturally beget frustration and anger. After an hour, the soldiers return, throw all of our IDs to the ground, again without eye contact, and give us permission

to leave. The whole experience leaves me with a great deal of anger and disgust. I can only imagine what kind of impression this leads to among Palestinians over time. At one point as we stood on the sidewalk, Khalid turns to me and says, "Don't worry, this happens all the time."

If indeed Palestinians endure with relative consistency the misery of this experience at the hands of soldiers—in many cases perhaps the only Jews or Israelis that they come into contact with at all—how might the emotional response I had develop in them over time? Despite his reassurance that this kind of thing happens "all the time," and his attempts to display a kind of desensitization and resilience, Khalid tosses and turns throughout the night in the bed next to mine. At one point, he wakes screaming. The next morning, he is off to work as usual, one of the most known, respected, and admired men on the streets of downtown Ramallah, the previous night's experience just one of many encounters with Israeli soldiers that infuse his life story.

These two stories, brief excerpts in the narrative of my encounter with Israel and Palestine, painfully demonstrate the emotional and experiential impact of the conflict on individual lives. A pure "stranger" to the conflict is forced to empathize deeply with both experiences, while readily discerning the stalemate that both kinds of encounters establish. The fear of attack motivates a system of symbolic interactions, rooted in the power imbalance inherent in prolonged military occupation of the "defeated" by the "victor," which serves to instill the frustration, anger, and powerlessness that themselves motivate a desire for "revenge," a need to reverse the relationship. The most educated and insightful among the populace of both groups will readily acknowledge the dynamics of cyclical antagonism these encounters naturally foster, but many continue to justify maintenance of the status quo

through a regression to the foolish issue of who made the first move, as if the pernicious conflict could be reduced to a game of chess.

To return for a moment to my own empathy, my inevitable identification—experientially if not always ideologically—with both Israelis and Palestinians, how exactly are these experiences so comparable? To travel on a road or on a bus, unencumbered by the fear of imminent death—is this not a basic existential "right"? If only Gal's life story were complete without the repression of his traumatic witnessing. And yet, the feeling is only subtly different on the "other" side. Is it not also fear of imminent death—at the hands of a soldier, the only Jew a Palestinian has ever known—that frames the symbolic encounter of the checkpoint? On the bus, it is the Israeli citizen who is powerless, a slave to the possibility of attack. At the checkpoint, and throughout Palestine on the roads and in homes, Palestinians are subject to the same unpredictability—the same overwhelming sense of vulnerability—in their life stories. Will their home be invaded by Israeli soldiers in search of "militants"? Will they witness the death of a loved one, carelessly throwing stones at a tank, at the gun of a soldier? Will the image of the cruel soldier, who refuses to look them in the eyes, forever frame the picture of a Jew in their own life story?

To experience the reality of the conflict and to open oneself up to its painful possibilities is to witness firsthand the "narrative stalemate" that the two groups have entered into, with its clear potential for infinite cycles of escalation. This stalemate is not unique to this particular phase of the conflict—the second Palestinian intifada. The conflict itself is rooted in a competition between two clashing national narratives that emerged out of the uncertainty and contestation of Palestine following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and during the British mandate. Both groups require security and the mutual acknowledgment of identity (Christie, 1997), but the behaviors of each side to the other render both needs

unattainable. Gal, Daniel, Mohammed, and all of the youth of Israel and Palestine must navigate the inevitable polarization of "life politics" (Giddens, 1991) that a conflict such as this creates. How can any life story embody empathy to the "enemy" while simultaneously conforming to a master narrative of collective identity? How might exposure to the reality of daily life on the "other side," as I myself was privileged to access, impact the identity of an individual, whose task in times and places of conflict is to traverse polarizing discourses that maintain a conflict across a generation to construct a coherent narrative of self?

As the site at which the conditions that maintain a society are reproduced, the time of youth is a critical life-course moment not just for its individual experiential content but for its window into the course of an entire culture. In a context in which stories that support a master narrative of polarized identity—such as the stories of Gal and Khalid—abound in the daily experience of youth, is there any hope at all for conflict amelioration?

CHAPTER ONE

CONFLICT, IDENTITY, AND

THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF ADOLESCENCE

"...In the social jungle of human existence, there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity."

—Erik Erikson (1968), *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, p. 130

In 1948, a nation emerged from the ashes of the Holocaust. The sandy shores, fertile soil, and mountainous beauty of their original homeland once again welcomed them. For the Jews, there was at last a beacon of light at the end of the darkest of nights. This brave group of men and women—survivors of perhaps the single greatest tragedy in human history—took an underdeveloped land to new heights in the twentieth century, becoming a model for democracy and economic ascendance in a region known for exotic habits, the ways of an old world, and tired cultural institutions impervious to social and economic evolution.

The founders of this modern nation gave legitimacy to a cultural identity on the brink of extinction. This historical moment marked the end of a seemingly endless diaspora and its accompanying minority permanence in nations across the world. But this audacious and courageous act of national self-determination was not met with open arms. Rather, decades of rejection, persecution, and attempts at expulsion by neighboring peoples have echoed the horrific imagery of collective struggle against an unmerciful enemy in Europe. The response of neighbors to this new nation has solidified the firm belief in the need for a protective shield from the rest of the world, who would only enable their eventual annihilation. An offensive

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defense, then, has been the only means of securing the safety and sustenance of an endlessly persecuted and oppressed cultural identity.

In 1948, a peaceful people welcomed with open arms the victims of a terrible tragedy in a distant land, to a place where people of multiple faiths lived in social harmony. They shared their land, their food, their customs, only to be assaulted in a violent attack on the principles of a pluralistic society. These newcomers, it seemed, were determined to create a nation all for themselves, unwilling to share political authority over a diverse group of individuals and a unique assemblage of cultural identities. Resisting foreign attempts to split their homeland in two, this inherently peaceful people did what they could only think to do: they turned to their neighbors, whose cultures shared a similar language, heritage, and way of life. They, with the help of these neighbors, met the aggressive act of such a political demand with a decidedly aggressive response: the declaration of war. For them, there was no other way to preserve and protect their homeland, united in its historical importance to three religious faiths.

So began decades of struggle for recognition of the legitimacy of their own cultural identity. Owing to inferior military strategy and a general lack of international support for their cause, this people of simplicity and peace have lived under occupation since 1948, losing life after life to the brutality of military rule and the complete absence of freedom. Stuck in an indefinite limbo, this people has struggled and resisted for generations, resorting to desperation only after countless failed attempts at peaceful protest against occupation. So their struggle continues, infusing the daily experience of all and crystallizing the group's desperate attempts to preserve a national identity and fight the oppressive impact of impotence at the fate of the aggressor.

These are the stories of the Israelis and the Palestinians—historical narratives of collective struggle that bear a striking resemblance in their focus on oppression and suffering. They are the stories of threatened identities, of people who fear the extinction of their cultures precisely because of such attempts at eradication. In a tiny piece of land that is so central to the history not only of three faiths but of all of Western civilization, these disparate but parallel interpretations of collective historical narrative create a polarizing discourse that frames the experience of Israelis and Palestinians across the life course. It would seem that a reconciliation or, at the very least, a moderation of this discourse is necessary for any sustainable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But how is a reconciliation of such narratives possible?

To understand the process by which discursive transformations in a culture may occur, we need to understand how it is that this discourse impacts individual lives. More specifically, how does this context of human development, founded upon disparate narratives of collective identity and national struggle, impact the individual identity formation process? Examination of this question, which fuses sociological and psychological levels of analysis, provides a window into the ways in which individuals do or do not appropriate "master" narratives of identity as they form their own life stories, revealing the connection between individual identity and a given social structure.

This dissertation examines the cultural psychology of adolescence through the investigation of a key developmental process of direct relevance to the social reproduction of conflict: identity. But cultural psychology is ultimately concerned not with the universality of developmental processes, although as a field of inquiry it certainly acknowledges the potential of human universals—the notion of "universalism without uniformity" (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993). Thus this study is ultimately concerned with the cultural *specificity* of

identity, attempting to articulate a theoretical model grounded in the empirical reality of human development in the social context of intractable political conflict. The ultimate aim of this inquiry is to specify a taxonomy of identity that represents the authentic life-course experience of adolescence in times and places of pervasive conflict. In this way, a concern with both the general and the specific, a culture and an individual, a social system and a particular psyche, frame the investigation and provide it with its interdisciplinary character.

Most concretely, I will address three specific research questions, two of which are rooted decidedly in empirical observation and one of which is largely theoretical but nonetheless vital to any investigation of the relationship between the individual and the social reproduction of a culture. First, *what is unique about adolescent identity development in the social context of conflict generally, and in the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular?* This question is ultimately concerned with the elaboration of a general theoretical model from which we might understand what has become a central process of human development in late modernity (Giddens, 1991). An interest in theory development suggests the possibility of cross-cultural application, although I make no claims to the radical generalizability of such a framework as yet. Rather, I argue that the full elaboration and explanation of processes of human development requires first and foremost *description* (see McAdams, 1995b), and description as a cultural psychologist is itself an endeavor that consumes substantial time prior to coming upon any grand conclusions. This study itself, the product of three years of field research, is far from complete and rather has the potential to consume decades of analysis. But, owing to the significance of the problem at hand, expediency is called for, and the arrival of a useful theoretical model in the context of conflict in general, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular, cannot come too soon for those of us who work directly with the affected.

In positing a context-specific theory of identity development, I argue that conflict as a state of *existence* fundamental to the ecology of development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), rooted in and characterizing the nature of intergroup relations in a society (as is the case inside of Israel proper) or between closely connected societies (as in the case of Israel and Palestine), creates an automatic discursive framework for the development of *polarized identities*. The process by which individuals come to infuse their life-story narratives with polarizing ideology, entirely opposed to the possibility of peaceful coexistence with the "other," is, as I have suggested, rooted in *discourse*. In assuming this position, I do not necessarily intend to privilege the "concept" of discourse over the idea of *culture*, as some have attempted to do in the social sciences (e.g., Foucault, 1978), as I do not believe in the futility of a concept of culture but rather see culture as a legitimate and enduring concept through which to comprehend meaning (see Shweder, 2003). I do, however, want to link culture to individual identity formation through the concept of *narrative*, and thus need to specify the discursive elements to which those socialized in the context of conflict are exposed. It is through the construction of life-story narratives that individuals develop their identities (McAdams, 1990, 1993, 1995b, 1996, 2001), and it is during adolescence that the ideological setting of the individual life story is established (McAdams, 1990, 1993, 1996). The construction of a life story in the context of conflict is, I will argue, unique in precisely this developmental moment. Conflict, characterized by the *competition of identities*, commands identification with polarizing ideology among youth in order to maintain the "fight" and to preserve the fragile, threatened collective identity.

Examining the life stories of Israeli and Palestinian youth, this study develops a theory of identity formation centering precisely on this notion: that conflict inevitably commands identity polarization. But going a step further, what is the limit of this

"inevitability"? How pervasive and all-consuming is the grip of conflict on individual identity development? At a moment of life-course plasticity such as adolescence, can the cycle be broken, the ideological setting re-positioned, the life story forever altered, the master narrative ultimately re-scripted?

The second question with which this research is concerned is thus simply put: *What impact can an "identity intervention" have on Israeli and Palestinian youth?* If "youth," understood here as a *social* stage in the life course rather than any biologically derived moment, is always and everywhere the moment in the life course in which the social order is reproduced, as I believe it is, then can an intervention designed to radically alter the sense of self through the breakdown of stereotypes about the other indeed "work"? What impact does the experience of *intergroup contact*, as social psychologists have long referred to such encounters (e.g., Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998), have on the construction of the life story and, thus, the identity of an individual?

Integrating my own observations with the life stories of youth, collected over three years of fieldwork in coexistence programs in the United States and longitudinal follow-up fieldwork in Israel and Palestine, I will argue that such experiences do indeed offer a moment of identity intervention through the exposure to alternative ideological discourses. But, I will demonstrate that the "effect" of such programs on identity formation is severely constrained by the structural reality of conflict. In this constraint, we witness the limits of agency in human development, as youth struggle to integrate the experience of contact into a coherent life story that is acceptable in the context of their societies.

As the impact of participation in such programs will suggest, the context of conflict severely limits the extent to which individual life stories are easily malleable, the variability and plasticity of their ideological contents inflexible. In elaborating on this finding, I will

propose an explanation that is rooted precisely in the conditions of conflict, in which

narratives of collective identity are perceived as threatened and thus the "need for identity" is

essentially unmet (Christie, 1997; see also Pettigrew, 2003). In such a context, I will argue,

social structure—including the structural violence that maintains a conflict such as that

between Israel and Palestine (Christie, 1997)—supercedes the possibility of life-story

transformations, hence aiding in the social reproduction of the conflict across generations.

These findings, I will argue, reveal the limitations of the idea of *cosmopolitanism* (Appiah,

2006) as a universal strategy for cultivating harmonious intergroup relations within

multicultural societies and between societies that encounter one another through processes of

globalization.

From this finding naturally stems the third research problem I will address in this

dissertation. In an attempt to explore the broad implications of this study and its general

approach, I will develop an account of the ways in which youth identity formation is itself

connected to the reproduction of conflict across generations. A necessarily "superordinate"

concern, this question will allow me to more adequately theorize the relationship between an

individual and a culture, between the desire of individuals for peace and security and the

needs of an existing social order to reproduce itself and the conditions by which it possesses

power. Such a concern is obviously the topic for another extensive work, but the failure to

address it on some however minute and therefore deficient scale would compromise my

integrity as a cultural psychologist, whose task it is to cultivate an interdisciplinary approach

to the study of the mental life.

The cultural psychology of adolescence is, as I will suggest, not an existing body of

knowledge that can somehow be documented and therefore provided with some sense of

transhistorical "essence." Rather, I view the cultural psychology of adolescence as an

approach. As epistemology, it specifies a pathway to studying youth in the twenty-first century. Social change, I argue, necessitates it. In the context of a globalizing world, in which cultures come ever increasingly into contact (Arnett, 2002), and narratives of collective identities become threatened and de-stabilized (Pettigrew, 2003), the human life course can no longer be considered a static ladder of "ages and stages," on which individuals blindly stumble from step to step. The dynamism of the life course increases exponentially in the context of globalization, and the approach of cultural psychology—with its interdisciplinarity, its openness to methodological pluralism, and its epistemology of "universalism with uniformity" (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993; Shweder et al., 1998)—is perhaps the only paradigm sufficiently flexible to accommodate an investigation of the shifting life course. My approach in this dissertation, which I term the cultural psychology of adolescence, applies the paradigm of cultural psychology to the life-course moment of adolescence—that frequently bemoaned (in our culture) point of transition between the unconcerned ethos of childhood and the role-infused demands of adulthood. It is to a more thorough detail of this approach, which forms the key epistemology guiding every aspect of this work, that I now turn.

THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF ADOLESCENCE

The cultural psychology of adolescence, an approach which specifies both an epistemology for theory-building and a methodology for empirical inquiry, relies on the fusion of two interdisciplinary social science paradigms. The life course theory of human development, well-articulated by sociologist Glen Elder (1974, 1979, 1980, 1995, 1998) in a number of works, identifies the significance of historical context in the experiential trajectory of individual lives. As Elder (1998) argues, "the life course of individuals is embedded in and shaped by the historical times and places they experience over their lifetime" (p. 3). Elder and

other scholars in the field (e.g., Cohler, in press; Settersten, 1999) have investigated human development with particular sensitivity to changes in historical context. In many cases, this kind of inquiry relies on cohort analysis or examination of generation effects (e.g., Cohler, in press; see also Kertzer, 1983; Neugarten, 1979; Ryder, 1965; Shanahan, 2000). Examination of a particular cohort of individuals in a specific period of the life course represents an example of research in the life-course tradition, as the interplay between the individual and his or her location in an historical time and place are considered.

From life course theory, the cultural psychology of adolescence recognizes first and foremost that, as a basic axiom, *history matters*. History matters both for individual lives and for the life course as a "unit" of analysis. "Adolescence" as a *life-course characterization* of an individual or a group does not reflect some inherent biological reality, although that this life-course moment may be accompanied by major biological and cognitive change in our own Western conception is without question (see Keating, 2004; Susman & Rogol, 2004). As opposed to making some kind of awkward and slippery distinction between concepts like "adolescence" and "youth," the former referring to some "genuine" biological stage and the latter to a socially constructed period of the life course, I argue that such terms are entirely linked in popular lexicon and ought to be used interchangeably (cf. Keniston, 1971, 1972).

What must be understood instead is that adolescence as a life-course moment is infused with cultural and historical relativity, that its experiential qualities are not inherently transhistorical, but that it is nonetheless *always and everywhere the psychological site of social reproduction*. That adolescence is accompanied by "storm and stress" in the modern and postmodern West (Arnett, 1999; Blos, 1962; A. Freud, 1958; Hall, 1904) simply attests to the openness of our current social systems to rapid change and the looseness of our ideological commitments from one generation to the next (e.g., Mead, 1970). Globalization

naturally deploys a Western life course throughout the world, as it seems the best suited for rapid economic development, and with that deployment comes perhaps an increasingly uniform "adolescence" (Arnett, 2002). Cultural psychology leads us to a general concern with this question: Are culturally diverse experiences of *adolescing* converging into a master narrative?

Such a grand question is of course not the focus of this research, but what cultural psychology as its own paradigm, distinct but of course related to life course theory, offers for an epistemology of investigating adolescence is essential to articulate. Cultural psychology, once envisioned by Wilhem Wundt (1916) as a parallel intellectual endeavor to laboratory-based "scientific" psychology, has enjoyed a resurgence following the universalizing discourse of psychology in the twentieth century, from psychoanalysis to behaviorism and the cognitive "revolution." As an interdisciplinary field of inquiry, cultural psychology has seen the emergence of several intellectual architects, including psychologist Michael Cole (e.g., Cole & Scribner, 1974; Cole, 1996) and anthropologist Richard Shweder (e.g., Shweder, 1991, 2003; Shweder & LeVine, 1984; Stigler, Shweder, & Herdt, 1990). Shweder (2003) summarizes the intellectual concerns and aims of cultural psychology:

> A major aim of the discipline is to document variations in modes of (and ideals for) normal psychological functioning across cultural communities. Cultural psychology assumes nonuniformity of mentalities across time and space. The discipline seeks to document the protean cultural aspects of human psychological nature. It can be defined as the study of the distinctive mentalities of particular peoples.... (p. 27)

Embedded within the metatheory of cultural psychology is an assumption of psychic pluralism and cultural developmentalism (Shweder, 2003). That is, inquiry in the tradition of cultural psychology assumes *difference* rather than *sameness—particularity* rather than *universality*—in the study of the individual mental life and human development. Operating on a principle of "existential uncertainty" (Shweder, 1990), cultural psychology assumes as its

mission the documentation of human diversity in the realm of the psychological. In this way, its concerns are grounded in an understanding of the diverse specificity of lived experience, *as it occurs at a particular place and time*. Human activity does not exist outside the realm of time and space, thus the search for universal properties of psychological experience is futile. Cultural psychology shifts the epistemological frame from a quest for the discovery of universal properties to the documentation of human psychological diversity.

The history of the scientific study of adolescence, with its origins in the work of G. Stanley Hall and key psychoanalytic thinkers (e.g., Blos, 1962; A. Freud, 1958), demonstrates a reliance on the principle of "psychic unity" which has so plagued the field of general psychology (Shweder, 1990). But this history omits an important figure—that of Margaret Mead, with her classic counter-study of adolescence documented in *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928/2001). This work has become so ingrained in the canon of Western scholarly literature, it needs no introduction. Its role, though, as the precursor to a full-fledged paradigm for studying adolescence—what I am calling the cultural psychology of adolescence—must be rightfully acknowledged. In keeping with Mead's view of adolescence as a stage of human development the contents of which are socially determined, the cultural psychology of adolescence views this "stage" as a *socially constructed moment in the life course.* Yet social constructionism need not inevitably lead us down a dark intellectual pathway of postmodern skepticism in the existence of reality or the possibility of knowing anything at all. Rather, a recognition of the cultural psychology of adolescence only mandates our commitment to a global view of the life course as temporally and geographically varied as climates and topographies themselves.

The commitment to a cultural psychology approach thus specifies a particular methodological approach: that of field research. The concerns of a laboratory setting are not

the concerns of a natural cultural setting, for they seek to omit the "noise" so politely dubbed "error variance" with which a real, uncontrolled setting is replete. But, in its preference for the *divergence* rather than the *convergence* of psychological "realities," cultural psychology wants precisely to enter into the world of this noise, to dissect it, and to describe its complexity. Thus, as I detail in Chapter 2, my approach has relied entirely on fieldwork. The goal of this fieldwork has been to unearth the complexities of identity development among adolescents in the context of conflict, exposing the points of convergence and divergence with traditional Western conceptions of "identity" and "adolescence."

THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY

At the epicenter of the intellectual concerns of the cultural psychology of adolescence is the problem of identity. The problem of identity possesses perhaps the most potential intellectual breadth of any social scientific concern, as it knows few disciplinary boundaries and has traversed itself, if sometimes disparately, through the minds of great philosophers, psychologists, and sociologists. Enlightenment thought in the West, as its progressivism and focus on the possibilities of human liberty gave way to a discourse on identity that privileged the power of the individual, permeates the conception of identity that has evolved in the intellectual tradition of which I am a product. Yet identity as something descriptive of a human experiential phenomenon is, perhaps, transhistorical and transcultural. The problem of identity is not merely the problem of intrapsychic self-discovery, nor is it the problem solely of group identification. It is, rather, a synthesis of the two (e.g., Erikson, 1959), and in this synthesis identity becomes a superordinate psychosocial construct which enables the examination of a culture through the lens of individual lives.

In articulating my own position on identity, I will argue that it is precisely the superordinate nature of identity as representative of some psychological experience—always

embedded in a cultural and historical context—that makes it an ideal psychological construct for the work of cultural psychology. I do not intend to privilege identity, as if no other constructs or phenomena merit attention in cultural psychology in general and the cultural psychology of adolescence in particular. Rather, I suggest that identity possesses the necessary flexibility as a construct to easily lend itself to cultural analysis. Its recent resurgence as a cross-disciplinary topic for intellectual examination is no accident in my mind, and my elaboration of the problem of identity will, I hope, illuminate why.

The Story of Identity

The story of the history of identity as a social science construct is one told from a number of vantage points, sometimes intersecting, often told in isolation. It is a story with which we are increasingly consumed as scholars, social scientists, and casual observers of a contemporary postindustrial world. A renewal of scholarly interest in identity is linked to the needs of a new generation of social scientists to describe and explain the shifting character of human development in the context of globalization (Arnett, 2002; Kinnvall, 2004; Rattansi & Phoenix, 1997/2005; United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2004), foreshadowed by Erikson's (1959, 1963) account of the demands of industrialization on the concerns of psychology. It is the task of a new generation of social scientists to recontextualize human psychology and increase the salience of psychological science in a postmodern, global context (see Gergen, 2001). Identity, it seems, is a useful point of entry for such work precisely because it is one of the few constructs in the social sciences that, for the moment, would seem to captivate the intellectual community sufficiently to motivate the occasional abandonment of disciplinary tribalism.

Once relegated only to psychology and sociology, identity has become a concern in anthropology (e.g., Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998), history (e.g., Suny, 2001),

and political science (e.g., Gutmann, 2003). It has undergone a significant renewal of interest in psychology (e.g., Schachter, 2004), sociology (e.g., Giddens, 1991), and approaches that link psychology and sociology (e.g., Côté & Levine, 2002). That identity and conceptions of "selfhood" vary according to cultural (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Shweder & Bourne, 1984; Spiro, 1993) and historical context (Baumeister, 1986, 1987) naturally informs our current examination of identity and imbues it with the dynamism and complexity it inevitably embodies as an intellectual problem.

The story of identity is linked to the larger concerns with individualism and concepts of a unified, independent self that can be traced to the early modern period (Baumeister, 1987), the narrative of the Enlightenment, and the philosophical inquiries of formidable Western intellectuals such as John Locke (1690/1998) and David Hume (1739/2000), among others. Its story in psychology begins with William James, the father of American psychology. In his two-volume magnum opus, James (1890) defines the sense of personal identity as the "consciousness of personal sameness" (p. 331). For James, identity represents a cognitive synthesis of "a present self and a self of yesterday" (p. 332). James views the self as both "subject" and "object" in his classic "I/me" distinction. The "Me" is an "empirical self"—the image of self projected outward in material, social, and spiritual forms. But this projection is not aimlessly thrust into the world, creating non-agentic forms of behavior and interaction. Rather, the Me is an object of the I—the "pure Ego." In contemporary parlance, the I *is* identity in its superordinate organizational function and cognitive character. Unlike the Me, the I is not readily available in empirical terms, since it "exists" in the mind of the individual "thinker."

Erik Erikson: Identity's Pioneer

No one came to emphasize the concept and term "identity" as significantly as Erik

Erikson, who popularized the notion of an "identity crisis" in youth at a time when youth

rebellion in American culture was rapidly becoming a foregone conclusion. Greatly

influenced both by William James and Sigmund and Anna Freud, Erikson (1958, 1959, 1968)

viewed identity formation as "an *evolving configuration*" involving internal synthesis and

integration of biological, social, and psychological forces within an individual. Infusing

psychoanalytic concepts like identification (e.g., Freud, 1921/1959) with cultural and

historical sensibility, Erikson constructed a theory of development across the life cycle that

would inspire a generation of discourse—scholarly and otherwise—on the "tasks" and

"crises" of development. Erikson, like so many developmental psychologists before and after

him (e.g., Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget & Inhelder, 1966), sought to articulate a universal

hierarchical framework of development that could account for human change over time. It is

particularly the aspiration for a universal, stage-based model of development that lacks

resonance in the context of a new discourse on human development that privileges the long-

neglected role of culture (e.g., Cole, 1996; Stigler, Shweder, & Herdt, 1990) and the ways in

which lives are not always lived in perfect linearity (Shanahan, 2000).

Erikson's theory perhaps suffers from the kind of search for a universal

developmental sequence that was common to a particular era in psychological theorizing—a

"modern" era in which faith in science and the notion of genuine human *progress* had not

been eroded by a late modern sensibility (Gergen, 2001). Yet what is remarkable about his

theory is that, owing to its interdisciplinarity and his desire to avoid a lucid operational

definition of identity, its relevance persists as a general framework for understanding identity

as a basic process of human development. It is perhaps also that the problem of identity he so

eloquently introduced as a link between a society and the development of its members—

marginalized as it was for so long in psychology and relegated to a single serious line of

paradigmatic empirical work (i.e., the "identity status" paradigm [Marcia, 1966])—returns to

our concerns now precisely because the concerns which caused Erikson to prioritize identity

have only magnified.

For Erikson, industrialization naturally threatened the social reproduction of societies

through processes of rapid and radical institutional transformation that altered the ideological

landscape for youth and challenged the identities of a previous generation (cf. Mead, 1970).

As a stage of life, youth became increasingly problematic, the challenge of identity ever more

amplified with the veritable explosion of life's possibilities. In arguing for the renewed

relevance of an Eriksonian perspective on identity, and youth in general, I will posit that

political conflict in the contemporary world represents a collision of narratives that is

intimately linked to processes of globalization and the need for ontological security that it

begets (Giddens, 1991). But to understand my own position, one must grasp the weight of its

intellectual heritage, so much of which resides in Erikson's foundational texts.

In 1950, Erikson published *Childhood and Society*, a seminal volume that would

mark the infusion of a cultural perspective into psychoanalysis—from a psychoanalyst rather

than from an anthropologist (cf. Malinowski, 1927)—and the concise statement of a theory of

psycho*social* development (to broaden Freud's [1917/1966] theory of psycho*sexual*

development). Erikson's work, particularly with *Young Man Luther* (1958), also continued

Freud's method of case history (e.g., Freud, 1905/1963) and psychobiography (e.g., Freud,

1910/1961) and expanded the psychoanalytic view of development to occur *across* the entire

life cycle, rather than being focused almost exclusively on childhood. The chapter in which

his theory is fully explicated signals the grandiosity of his task at hand in its title alone: "Eight Ages of Man."

While the "age" with which we are presently concerned—adolescence—occurs fifth in sequence in Erikson's formulation, it has its origins in the earliest days of the life cycle. The establishment of basic trust through the maternal relationship "forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity which will later combine a sense of being 'all right,' of being oneself, and of becoming what other people trust one will become" (Erikson, 1963, p. 249). The precise point in the life cycle at which these processes occur is of less concern to us than their mere occurrence. That individuals are embedded in a particular historical moment, at a particular geographic location that imbues their experience with some cultural meaning and some semblance of a social structure, with its own idiosyncratic order and available roles into which an individual may step, is the foregone conclusion of the anthropologist and the historically minded sociologist. In contextualizing the life cycle to a generation of psychologists, we are indebted to Erikson, however discarded his work came to be to those who could not tolerate the frightening possibility of his anti-reductionism.

But in *Childhood and Society,* Erikson does more than just ascribe some much-needed primacy to history and culture in psychological development. He posits a notion of identity as the link between society and the psychological life of an individual. The great "crisis" of his many enumerated "crises" is clearly the identity crisis, to which he would devote another seminal volume, *Identity: Youth and Crisis,* some 18 years later. But across his work, the thesis he first articulates in *Childhood and Society* does not waver. Let us consider some of the more "concrete" elaborations of the concept of identity in Erikson's writings.

In *Childhood and Society,* Erikson (1963) defines ego identity as "the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others..." (p. 261). It is, in other words, the cognition of personal and social symbiosis: one perceives oneself as others perceive him. Of course, this initial definition feels not entirely satisfactory. The linking of identity with a "higher" sense of cognition is reiterated in other writings as this "awareness" of "selfsameness and continuity" (Erikson, 1959, p. 22). But identity forms in a sociohistorical context, and the second part of Erikson's definition—the *social* side of identity—is quite relevant to the work of this dissertation. In outlining the components of identity, Erikson (1959) argues that identity refers to "a conscious *sense of individual identity*" as well as "a maintenance of an inner *solidarity* with a group's ideals and identity" (italics in original, p. 109). In order to understand the full embellishment of an identity, beyond what Erikson would term its "ego" functions but what we would prefer to dub its purely "cognitive" features, we must theorize the formation of *social identity*—that part of identity which, as Erikson argued, contains an awareness of an individual's location within the solidarity of a particular group. The significance of this side of identity to our current project should not surprise the reader in the slightest, as we are most concerned with the ways in which group conflict contributes to the exceptionality of identity formation in the youth of Israel and Palestine, whose allegiances to a group solidarity are perhaps psychologically *necessary* and yet contribute to the reproduction of the conflict.

The Construct of Identity, Post-Erikson

In order to appreciate the place of this dissertation and my own theoretical stance on identity, the brief historical narrative of identity's place in the social sciences must be, if only superficially, completed. Erikson identified as a psychoanalyst but was highly critical of the

increasingly reductionistic, nomothetic leanings of American empirical psychology. In his

conclusion to the second edition of *Childhood and Society*, Erikson (1963) speaks of

psychology's "humanistic crisis" (p. 419), foreshadowing the seeming intractability of

profound metatheoretical, epistemological, and methodological polarization in the field:

> For in the use of reason lies the eternal temptation to do with human data in
> experiment and argument what the child does with them in play: namely, to reduce
> them to a size and an order in which they seem manageable. Thus human data are
> treated as if the human being were an animal, or a machine, or a statistical item.
> Much naïve sense of power can be derived from the fact that, properly approached,
> the human being up to a point is all of these things, and under certain conditions can
> be reduced to being nothing but their facsimiles. But the attempt to make man more
> exploitable by reducing him to a simpler model of himself cannot lead to an
> essentially human psychology. (p. 419)

In this statement, Erikson reveals his own methodological critique of the emerging scientific

psychology in the United States—one which ultimately abandoned his native field of

psychoanalysis for its particular metatheoretical problems. We see in this statement Erikson's

commitment to a psychological approach to identity that is grounded in a deeply humanistic,

idiographic approach to human psychology—an approach that preserves the *variability* which

characterizes the reality of human development when observed in the absence of

reductionism. It is an approach quite in line with cultural psychology and its emphasis on

meaning-in-context.

In psychology, the field of identity studies was without question inspired by

Erikson's elaborate, if sometimes unwieldy and vague, theoretical formulation. Yet there is a

way in which, though his writings certainly created the impetus for an identity discourse in

psychology, James Marcia's (1966) adaptation of Erikson's theory proved to set the

intellectual agenda for identity research for decades over and above Erikson (for reviews see

Côté & Levine, 2002; Schwartz, 2001). Marcia's (1966) framework emerged as an adaptation

of Erikson's theory that was more epistemologically and methodologically amenable to

American psychology's penchant for clearly operationalized, empirically "sound" constructs. His categorization of identity "status" provided a language that would come to dominate the field of identity studies within psychology. Most theoretical accounts of identity have sought to extend his framework in various ways (e.g., Berzonsky, 1989; Grotevant, 1987). But Marcia's categorical approach to identity through the concept of *status* suggests, even nominally, a lack of dynamism. As Schwartz (2001) notes, most critics of the identity status paradigm argue that it is more useful in efforts at character typology than elaboration of developmental process (e.g., Côté & Levine, 1988).

Since the time of Erikson, the literature on identity within psychology has been prolific, with theoretical and empirical accounts of identity *status* (e.g., Marcia, 1966, 1980), identity *process* (e.g., Grotevant, 1987), identity *style* (e.g., Berzonsky, 1989), identity *capital* (e.g., Côté, 1996; Côté & Levine, 2002), identity *configuration* (Schachter, 2004, 2005), and other neo-Eriksonian formulations (e.g., Côté, 1993; Waterman, 1984) (for a comprehensive review, see Schwartz, 2001). Though most of these formulations are culturally and historically bound in their emphasis on Western notions of personhood, there is an increasing emphasis on the cultural variability of identity (e.g., Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Schachter, 2005).

Many of these paradigmatic accounts of identity, including Erikson's original, offer a host of useful vocabularies for our own examination of identity in the context of conflict. Concepts like "foreclosure" (e.g., Marcia, 1966), we will come to see, illuminate and demystify some of the unique identity-related processes in the context of conflict. Perspectives such as that of Baumeister and Muraven (1996), who argue that identity is best understood as *adaptation* to a particular developmental context, refreshingly restore a concept of history and culture to contemporary identity discourse in psychology. In formulating

identity as adaptation, they seek to retain a notion of agency while recognizing the salience of

context (cf. Côté & Levine, 2002; Levine, 2005).

The "developmental social psychology" perspective posited by Adams and Marshall

(1996) is also particularly useful in the primacy it affords context in the process of identity

development. Identity, they argue, embodies both an *individual* and a *social* function, with

underlying processes of *differentiation* (e.g., the development of autonomy and uniqueness)

and *integration* (e.g., the involvement and connection with others). The balance between

these basic self-processes will necessarily vary across contexts of development—a point,

which will eventually become quite apparent, highly relevant to our concern with the

developmental context of conflict.

A third and final sophisticated conception of identity is Schachter's (2004, 2005)

recently articulated notion of identity *configuration*. The concept of "configuration," an

overlooked conceptualization of identity in Erikson's original writings, suggests a far greater

complexity to identity than notions of "status" and "style" have. Schachter (2005) posits that

identity configurations represent the ways in which *structurally* individuals piece together the

multiple elements of their identities into a meaningful whole. In this way, he views identity in

an Eriksonian lens not merely as the traditional "sense of sameness and continuity." Rather,

he suggests that Erikson (1968), in his articulation of the concept of configuration, possessed

a much more flexible notion of identity structure. The concept of configuration, Schachter

(2005) argues, is particularly useful for its ability to contribute to a contextually based

cultural psychology and to bridge historical discourses of identity itself (i.e., premodern,

modern, and postmodern).

The Cultural Psychology of Identity

My own preferred paradigm is highly influenced by the work of Erikson and the post-Eriksonians, but it accords primacy to the concept of *narrative*, thereby a part of the larger intellectual project associated with narrative identity (e.g., Cohler, 1982; McAdams, 1990; McAdams, Josselson, & Lieblich, 2006). The paradigm utilized in this dissertation extracts from Erikson's original framework those elements that possess a kind of universal conceptual salience, such as notions of ideology and identification which transcend the boundaries of culture in *process* if not in *content*. But in positing a cultural psychology of identity, with a focus on identity and political conflict, I will export only certain seemingly transcultural concepts, while articulating the cultural specificity of identity itself. In this way, this paradigm recognizes the cultural nature of human development and cognition (Cole & Scribner, 1974; D'Andrade, 1981, 1990; Jahoda, 1993; Rogoff, 2003; Shore, 1996; Strauss & Quinn, 1997), while simultaneously arguing that complete abandonment of Western intellectual concepts is unwarranted.

A cultural psychology of identity necessarily traces its lineage to Erikson, as it was without question Erikson who left the indelible stamp of culture on both psychoanalysis and developmental psychology (e.g., Erikson, 1963). Yet more than a mere adaptation of Erikson's formulation is necessary, for we require greater specificity in considering the *process* of identity development in cultural context. From Erikson's theory, the most enduring element of identity as a developmental process is, for our particular considerations in this dissertation, the concept of *ideology*. The advantage of appropriating and further elaborating upon Erikson's concept of ideology lies precisely in its ability to, as a construct, transcend the cognitive and social dimensions of human development.

Identity, we will come to appreciate, is best understood as emblematic of *ideology,*

cognitively developed and manifested in and through narrative, and strengthened and

solidified in social practice. This definition of identity satisfies the need of cultural

psychology to consider both *sameness* and *difference* in the sense that it acknowledges a

universal developmental process that is by no means, as will be demonstrated with lucidity in

this dissertation, uniform. My particular homage to Erikson, then, will lie in the primacy I

accord ideology in identity. But in exploring the social and cognitive processes through

which identities develop, I will endeavor to exemplify a kind of epistemology I have labeled

the "cultural psychology of adolescence," if only to demonstrate its utility to the problems of

culture and human development that proliferate the concerns of a global world context.

Identity as Narrative and Ideology in Social Practice

Identity is not, as should be entirely clear by now, a private psychological matter.

Again, its *utility value* for those of us interested in the cultural psychology of adolescence is

so significant precisely for its ability to transcend the boundaries of culture and psyche,

studied so often in isolation, as if human life were characterized by so clean a

compartmentalization of the developmental ecology. The question, then, is how does identity

develop both *cognitively* and *socially*, for this dissertation is concerned not just with some

static "baseline" of adolescent identity in the context of conflict. Rather, our concerns center

on the dynamism of identity, its cognitive and social *becoming*, its qualities as *practice*

(Holland et al., 1998) and *activity* (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004) in historical circumstance.

Thus we must be foremost concerned with identity as it develops in social interaction, as this

consideration contextualizes identity fully.

The problem of identity for our present purpose is best understood as, first and

foremost, a problem of *narrative*, and, secondarily but no less significantly, a problem of

ideology. In conceptualizing identity as such, it becomes imbued with both *personal* and

social meaning. The concept of narrative illuminates the *cognitive process and (momentary)*

outcome of identity formation; it specifies the precise cognitive mechanism by which selves

form at levels of superordinate systemic function in the organism. Structurally, then, identity

takes on a narrative form. Ideology, by contrast, specifies the *content* of the narrative and is

most relevant to our specific interest in both the cultural psychology of adolescence and the

social psychology of conflict. While the concept of narrative characterizes identity as

universally as language is to human existence, albeit with varying forms of self-conscious

construction, ideology is a component of narrative identity development that is uniquely

salient to our concerns of youth and conflict, as will be more fully explicated in this

dissertation.

But in limiting a conception of identity operationally to solely notions of narrative

and ideology, we only *suggest* a social mechanism. To fully socialize identity as a construct

of personal and collective meaning, we must recognize identity not solely as some kind of

outcome, clearly identifiable, reified by the observations of a social scientist. Rather, we must

come to view identity as a *process* of human development. Only then can we come to grasp

the full relation between self and society, person and environment, the individual and his

cultural surround. Thus, I will define identity most concretely in this dissertation as *the sense*

of self, understood in its earliest stages during adolescence through the commitment to a set

of ideologies, made manifest in a personal narrative constructed and reconstructed across

the life course, and scripted in and through social interaction and social practice. A visual

schematic of this model of identity, which integrates traditional conceptions of both *personal*

and *social* identity, is presented in Figure 1.1. I will elaborate on each of the three primary

components of this definition—narrative, ideology, and social practice—in order to provide

the reader with a richer appreciation of this definition of identity.
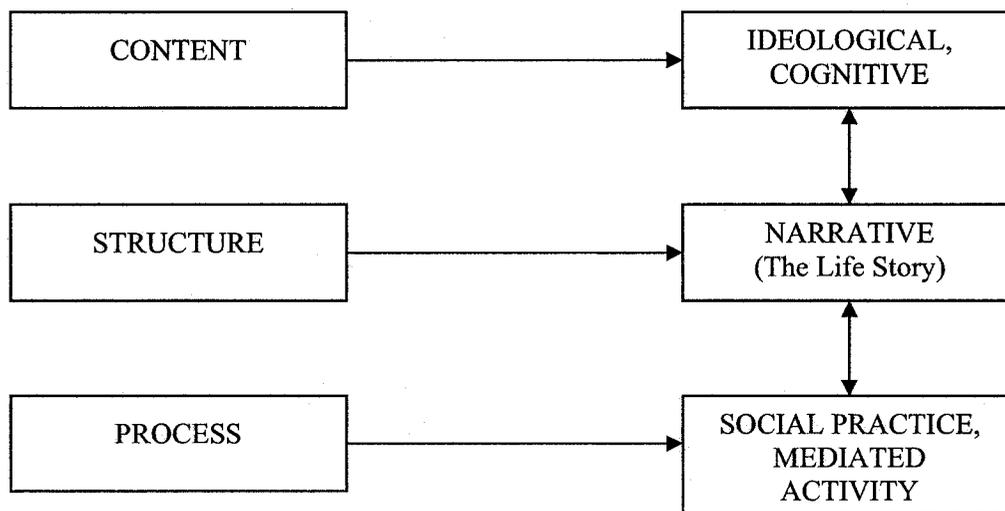
Figure 1.1. An Integrated Model of Personal and Social Identity

Identity and Narrative

The narrative approach to identity focuses on the *mechanism* by which processes of

psychosocial synthesis and person-culture integration occur across the life course. In the

narrative approach, human development is characterized by the construction of a personal

narrative across the life course that provides meaning and integrative function to the

individual (Cohler, 1982). It is through the construction of personal narrative that the life

course achieves its *coherence*, its continuity in social, cultural, and historical time (Cohler,

1982). To fully know a person, we must know more than just her "traits" or "personal

concerns"; we must know her *identity* (McAdams, 1995b). And we come to know identity

only through encountering the life-story narrative that she has constructed (McAdams,

1995b). In this way, identity—understood as a *life story*—represents the "third level" of personality beyond traits and personal concerns (McAdams, 1995b, 1996, 2001). And in assessing this third level—all too often overlooked in personality and social psychology—we come to understand the *meaning* that a life possesses, both for an individual and in his relation to some particular social and cultural ecology.

Narrative is the gateway to meaning in understanding individual lives (Bruner, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988), always in states of formation, never fully *completed*. And it is in meaning that we come to humanize the science of psychology, for in the examination of meaning we come to an authentic representation of human experience as fully lived. It is through the process of "selfing"—a "unifying, integrative, synthesizing process" involving the organization of experience into a life-story narrative (McAdams, 1997, p. 56)—that James' notion of "I" as the "knower" is realized. And selfing as an enduring integrative process, whether it culminates in the construction of a fully articulated self-narrative or not, provides unity and purpose to the life course in the wake of radical multiplicity (McAdams, 1997).

The concept of identity as narrative provides a much-needed anchor for conceptualizing the self in postmodernity, not for its sometimes seeming regression to a modernist standard of epistemological certainty (as if to reify the notion of self), but for its ability to endure *in spite of* the multiplicity of postmodernity (McAdams, 1997). Rather than allowing ourselves to drift into a more philosophical consideration of identity as narrative— our purpose here is too connected to real human problems to allow time for such an exercise—it is useful only to state that what is most valuable about identity as a social science construct is its endurance in historical and cultural epistemological space. That identities exist and endure as indices of human development attests to the significance of both individual and

group consciousness. But identity as narrative may be especially useful in the context of competing discourses created by a globalized, postmodern world because identity becomes increasingly a *reflexive* project (Giddens, 1991). That is, exposure to a proliferation of discourses, which of course is the consequence of the increasing *connectedness* which accompanies globalization, creates new narrative demands on the organism. No longer can identity proceed along the clearest of lines between generations, for it is no longer a single "local" discourse to which an individual is exposed (Arnett, 2002). Rather, local and global discourses compete for primacy in the identity formation process of an individual. In this historical context, of which Israeli and Palestinian youth are just as much a part as American youth, having ready access to the mechanisms by which discourses are deployed (e.g., television, the internet), the construction of a narrative of identity becomes more explicit, more vital to the individual's quest for meaning and ideological location than (perhaps) ever before. A narrative perspective on identity is thus descriptive of a certain historical reality that globalization, with its transmission of new and sometimes contradictory discourses, secures for the development of an individual.

It should be clear that problematizing identity as narrative elucidates its quality as a superordinate construct of human development and consciousness. But perhaps even more significantly, in linking identity and narrative in an individual, we link an individual life story to a particular *cultural* and *historical* narrative of a group. That is, if identity takes its *form* as a life story, with particular *ideological* content, then it stands to reason that an individual identity is given meaning and coherence only in its engagement with a *discourse* available in a particular social ecology. The stories of a culture—stories of national identity, struggle, suffering, and resilience—become the stories of an individual as he constructs his own personal narrative, fusing elements of daily experience (themselves dependent on his

particular social identity and its status in a larger social order) with the experience of a collective to which he perceives some affinity. The degree of this affinity will vary as a function of the relative perception of *collective identity threat* and hence the perception of a need to affiliate with the group at all costs. The perception of identity threat is at its extreme in the context of conflict, when it is the legitimacy of identities that is at stake, and so we might expect certain processes and qualities of narrative identity to be quite distinct (or at least *accentuated* and *amplified* in social and psychological space) in the context of conflict. The emergence of a "popular mind" (Le Bon, 1895/1969) or the manifestation of some "herd instinct" (Freud, 1921/1959) is not the inevitable outcome of social identity development. Rather, the extent to which individuals develop social identities that adhere to a master narrative of group identity and ideology varies with the ecology of development and, more specifically, the perception of group identity threat in that ecology.

Ideology and Identity

As already suggested, ideology, though its role is intrinsic to identity in perhaps all contexts to varying degrees, assumes a significant role in the process of personal narrative construction in conflict. Before we can develop this thesis and grasp its veracity, we must step back and examine what precisely we mean by "ideology," for it is an elusive and ill-defined term throughout the social and human sciences. To begin, let us briefly return to Erikson, who argued for the primacy of ideology in identity formation.

In *Young Man Luther* (1958), Erikson's analysis of young Luther's life reveals identity as primarily connected to processes of ideological identification that are themselves connected to the intergenerational transmission and social reproduction of a culture. It is precisely because young Luther, as part of his own identity crisis, rejected the ideology of a day that a new history of European culture was written. Thus Erikson's analysis connects

processes of individual identity formation—in the form of ideological identification—to larger sociohistorical movements. Luther's ideological rebellion is tied to his struggle to form an identity that would fulfill the basic function of psychological security:

> To be adult means among other things to see one's own life in continuous perspective, both in retrospect and in prospect. By accepting some definition as to who he is, usually on the basis of a function in an economy, a place in the sequence of generations, and a status in the structure of society, the adult is able to selectively reconstruct his past in such a way that, step for step, it seems to have planned him, or better, he seems to have planned for *it*. (Erikson, 1958, pp. 111-112)

To have an identity, then, and to have successfully traversed adolescence, is to conceive a cognition of self that integrates past and future, personal and social (including location and *personal meaning* in economic, historical, and structural context) with *coherence* and *continuity*. We can see the origins of a narrative theory of identity, never articulated by Erikson, in these concepts of meaning, coherence, and continuity.

Erikson (1968), somewhat notorious for avoiding attempts at conceptual precision by way of definition, viewed ideology very broadly as "a system of ideas that provides a convincing world image" (p. 31). Ideology, in the Eriksonian formulation, is "the social institution which is the guardian of identity" (Erikson, 1968, p. 133). In his life-story theory of identity, McAdams (1990) also prefers a broad conceptualization of ideology as an abstract system of social and political beliefs. This general view of ideology seems quite appropriate when considering the connection between ideology and identity, as other conceptions have tended toward a de-emphasis of individual agency when considering ideology (e.g., Althusser, 1971; Marx, 1932/1978; cf. Mannheim, 1936). For our purposes, endorsing this rather flexible notion of ideology is useful, but because ideology is so central to the theory of *identity polarization* that will be developed in this dissertation, we require a bit more precision.

In a kind of backward way, then, let us first consider the *function* of ideology in identity development. First and foremost, identity as a life story can be said to demonstrate a particular *ideological setting*, which is largely determined in adolescence (McAdams, 1990, 1993, 2001). This ideological setting can be highly determinative of the emerging narrative, still not fully sketched in adolescence, and its connection to a master narrative of group identity. Functionally, then, ideology is central to the construction of meaning that a personal narrative creates by contextualizing a life story in relation to the ideas and beliefs of an era and a particular generation (see Mannheim, 1936)—be they political or broadly cultural.

The ideological setting of a life story sets the stage for its production across the life course, and with such determinative power, contains the ability to either reproduce or reconstruct an entire ideological system within an individual. And with this reproduction or repudiation within an individual, the subsistence of a whole cultural narrative is either strengthened or weakened. This salient role for ideology in identity is not, I believe, an exaggeration. It reveals the vulnerability of master narratives of identity and ideology in the construction of personal narratives and the deep connection between personal and social identity. To remind us of the fragility of local narratives, we need only recall that we live in an era of globalization, in which a number of ideologies are now readily accessible to individuals as they form their identities (see Gergen, 1991; Giddens, 1991; Lifton, 1993). The challenge of identity is the challenge of navigating these ideologies to establish a setting for the life story and, thus, a reflexively constructed sense of personal identity that will serve as a guide for thought, feeling, and behavior.

It should be clear, then, that my conception of ideology requires psychological, social, and discursive considerations. Fortunately, such an interdisciplinary perspective has already been well-articulated in the work of van Dijk (1998). A scholar of discourse studies,

van Dijk's uniquely cogent theory of ideology integrates the cognitive and social components of ideology which are its primary structural features and argues that it is in *discourse* that ideology is produced and reproduced. Ideologies, he argues, are socially shared ideas, existing in *individual cognition*, serving particular societal functions, and reproduced in discourse. And so the ideological setting of a life story—the ideological identifications that infuse an identity at a pivotal moment—specifies a particular set of cognitions assumed by an individual, incorporated into her story only through the power of discourse itself, and always in the interests of some group concern.

The stories of a group, then, are always infused with some ideological perspective beyond simply the events that they describe. Central to this ideology is a group's stance toward some *other* group, be that group a rival of equal status, a subordinate group, or an oppressor. In this way, identity is constructed always *in reference to some other*, and nowhere is this "social fact" more apparent than in the context of group conflict. Before we theorize the specificity of identity in such a context—that of conflict—we must deal with the third operational component of identity: social practice.

Identity in Practice

The foundations of a perspective on identity that emphasizes *practice* and *activity* can be located in the work of two major social scientists: George Herbert Mead and Lev Vygotsky. Following Baldwin (1897), Cooley (1902), and others, George Herbert Mead's legacy of "social behaviorism" developed and crystallized the Chicago School of sociology that came to be known as *symbolic interactionism* (see Blumer, 1969; Goffman, 1959, 1967; Strauss, 1959/1997; Stryker, 1980). Mead's (1934) theory of the self reveals its development in the process of social interaction:

> The self is not so much a substance as a process in which the conversation of gestures has been internalized within an organic form. ...The organization of the social act has been imported into the organism and becomes then the mind of the individual. (p. 178)

For Mead, self and mind are united in the process of the social act. Minds and selves develop in the social act as they reproduce the conditions of society. Through social interaction—the "conversation of gestures"—the significant symbolic gestures necessary for successful participation in a community are internalized. He says, "...Selves are constituted by or in terms of the social process, and are individual reflections of it..." (p. 201).

Fundamental to Mead's (1934) theory of self-development, then, is the notion of interaction. The interaction, he posits, is incredibly powerful in its effect on the self. The self emerges only as it recognizes itself as an *object* to another:

> [An individual] becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitudes of other individuals toward himself within a social environment or context of experience and behavior in which both he and they are involved. The importance of what we term "communication" lies in the fact that it provides a form of behavior in which the organism or the individual may become an object to himself. (p. 138)

In other words, self-development is socially mediated and occurs as individuals come to see themselves as objects to others in ongoing social intercourse. Identities are performed *for others* but also created in the performative social interaction itself.

Though for our purposes Mead's (1934) original theory of the self is sufficient in articulating a significant role for social interaction in the development of identity, it is worth reiterating that his perspective has generated a proliferation of work in the symbolic interactionist tradition (e.g., Blumer, 1969; Dunn, 1997; Fine, 1993; Goffman, 1959, 1967; Strauss, 1959/1997). It is also worth noting that, within sociology, the Iowa School of symbolic interactionism has also contributed to the study of identity and social interaction,

with a focus on structural processes (e.g., McCall, 1987; McCall & Simmons, 1966; Stryker, 1980, 1987, 1991).

If symbolic interactionism, particularly in Mead's (1934) original formulation, specifies a particular process of self-development in social interaction, then derivatives of Vygotsky's (1978) theories of development that emphasize the role of *activity* and *language* provide insight into the potential *psychological content* of these processes. Though he never spoke of identity *per se*, Vygotsky's general approach to development as connected to *mediated action* in and through symbolic tools such as language is quite applicable to the study of identity. In their attempt to link Vygotsky's approach to Erikson's theory of identity, Penuel and Wertsch (1995) suggest that Vygotsky's notion of "inner speech" parallels Erikson's "sense" of sameness and continuity in an individual that forms the basis of identity. It is not difficult to see the connection here between Vygotsky and a narrative approach: the act of narrating one's life story necessarily involves the transformation of inner speech to what Vygotsky called "social speech," thereby offering an expression of identity.

As Penuel and Wertsch (1995) note, Vygotsky emphasized the role of cultural "tools" in development. If we apply this basic notion to identity, we must understand that "cultural and historical resources for identity formation are integral as empowering and constraining tools for identity formation" (p. 90). Again thinking in terms of our own narrative approach, we must consider such resources in *discourse*. The cultural and historical resources with which youth engage when constructing their identities are at base *narrative* resources that have the potential to infuse both inner and social speech. It is this inner speech that constructs personal identity as it is internally "sensed"; it is through social speech that identity is expressed, risked, and ultimately reformulated. Thus there is a dynamic interplay between the

individual and the social, the mind and culture, and this interplay cannot be overlooked when examining human development in context.

This dynamic interplay is also recognized in conceptions of a "dialogical self" (e.g., Hermans, 2001, 2002; Hermans, Kempen, & van Loon, 1992; Holland et al., 1998), influenced by both Vygotsky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981). In their "practice theory" of identity, Holland et al. (1998) argue that selves are constructed through discourse and practice. They introduce the notion of "figured worlds" to refer to symbolically saturated "social encounters in which participants' positions matter" (p. 41). The essence of their perspective is that identity is rooted in social practice, which involves processes of culturally meaningful semiotic mediation (see also Andacht & Michel, 2005; Shaw, 1994).

Like Vygotsky, for those who emphasize practice or activity, agency is retained (Holland et al., 1998). In fact, it is precisely in the power of *activity* that possibilities for identity transformation, and with that cultural transformation, may occur. Stetsenko and Arievitch (2004) apply the work of Vygotsky and Leontiev to the study of the self, arguing that the self is "endowed with the capacity to generate new cycles of practice" and facilitates the ability of individuals to "contribute to meaningfully changing the world" (p. 475). Cultural-historical activity theory—the perspective of Soviet psychologists such as Vygotsky and Leontiev—posits that human development is linked to "material social practices that, on the one hand, produce and engender social interactions and human subjectivity, and, on the other hand, are themselves reciprocally produced by these interactions and subjectivity" (p. 476). Thus self and society are linked in a cyclically reproduced pattern of activity that both produces and is reproduced by individual selves. But expanding this "canonical" version of activity theory, Stetsenko and Arievitch (2004) seek to emphasize individual agency and the transactional nature of human development by arguing that the self represents a "leading

activity": "[The self is] a process of real-life activity that most explicitly positions individuals to meaningfully contribute to the ongoing social collaborative practices in the world" (p. 493). The self, then, is the key to social change in this formulation in its ability to alter social practice: "…The self appears as an activity and instrument of transforming the world, as an instrument of social change" (p. 494).

In positing human activity as the primary force in shaping both individual and cultural development, then the possibility of self-transformation in impacting larger cultural structures becomes clear. Through agency, selves can develop that either resist or reproduce the social order, and in this act collectively alter a cultural landscape and an ideological "apparatus" (Althusser, 1971). But we must be careful to recognize once again the cultural variability of human development (Rogoff, 2003), and with that recognition to acknowledge the possible limits of human agency in identity development. How does the context of conflict enable or restrict forms of agency in the life course through the discourse it creates, through its intrinsic polarization of ideology, and through its seeming delight in reproducing a social structure that maintains the conditions of conflict?

CONFLICT AND IDENTITY POLARIZATION

With a grasp on the problem of identity in general, and the particular theoretical perspective on identity that will be utilized and further developed in this dissertation, we must finally return to the developmental ecology of conflict, with its prodigious implications for the contextual specificity of identity formation. Conflict is characterized by a competition for both resources (e.g., Wasserstein, 2003) and for the legitimacy of identities (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998), realized in irreconcilable, negatively interdependent (Kelman, 1999) ideologies (or "societal beliefs"; see Bar-Tal, 1998a, 2000). As I have already suggested, group identities have their basis in a collectivity of *personal* identities (cf. Brewer, 2001), revealing

that the transmission of ideological perspectives which prolong conflict across generations has its origin in processes of individual socialization and development. Identity, thus, is a window into the course of conflict, as it is through the ideological identifications of youth that the polarized identities characterizing conflict are either reproduced or resisted.

It is precisely in *identity polarization* that ideological identification—and hence the entire enterprise of life-story construction—becomes unique in the context of conflict. The socialization context of individuals always exposes them to a spectrum of political and social ideology. In different cultures and historical eras, the content at the poles of these spectra will necessarily vary according to the needs and idiosyncrasies of an existing social order. In most cases, and particularly in cases of peace and social harmony, individuals who identify with the poles of the ideological spectrum constitute the vast minority of members of a given society. These individuals are marginalized; they are considered extremists, ideologues, or revolutionaries. Rarely are they taken with the seriousness necessary to effect social change in and of themselves. They become powerful only when the existing social order is not acceptable to the majority of a society's members. In peaceful and acceptable circumstances, though, these individuals exist on the periphery of a well-functioning social order and do little to harm the generally accepted status quo.

Cases in which significant competition between groups in a society, or across neighboring and interacting societies, exists create a greater likelihood of *ideological polarization*. When there are significant threats to the social order, or to the legitimacy of a collective identity, what is considered extremism in a peaceful, harmonious society becomes normative. The polarization of political attitudes, particularly toward the outgroup (one's "enemy"), is an essential feature of identity self-defense in the context of existential threat. Polarization helps to maintain distance from the outgroup and to cultivate psychological

distance in the minds of ingroup members. Members of the outgroup are viewed in universalistic terms and represented in threatening stereotypes. Whenever there is a threat to existing power relations, we find a higher likelihood of polarization. It is to the advantage of those in power to maintain a high degree of polarization in the discourse of a society, as the conflict between groups secures their continued power.

Conflicts are maintained over time by facilitating the identification with polarizing ideology among youth. The nature of the personal identity formation process, in which youth actively seek out an ideology which will provide structure and meaning to their life stories, provides the ideal (and, in fact, necessary) moment for the reproduction of the polarizing narrative that maintains conflict. Individuals who have internalized the polarizing ideology embedded within the political discourse of their ingroup display a high degree of *identity polarization.*

Identity polarization refers, then, to the degree of internalized ideological extremism present and apparent in political and social cognition. Identity polarization represents the degree of asymmetrical political cognition between individual members of groups in conflict. Its levels within individuals are significant for the safety, security, and sustainability of societies, as extremism in thought breeds extremism in behavior. Particularly in regions in which extremism in behavior assumes a "normative" quality (i.e., it becomes part of the behavioral repertoire of a culture), the path from cognitive to behavioral extremism is likely to be a short one.

But to posit only a theory of identity polarization is to deplete identity with its social dynamism. This dissertation is concerned with more than the assessment of a simple "baseline" measure of identity, although the elaboration of a theory of identity polarization is of course an empirical necessity. If we view adolescence as inherently a process of *becoming*

an adult, of immersing oneself into a larger social ecology, with its specific social structure and set of roles, then we must consider adolescence—and in this case the *cultural psychology* of adolescence—as a *process*. We must study youth with just as much sensitivity to its transience and whimsical evolution—of which I mean not to suggest some kind of patronizing immaturity but only the *plasticity* of identity-in-formation—as to its larger place in history and society. As such, this dissertation goes further in its exploration of identities in conflict to examine the impact of social interaction on the construction of the life story over time.

Contact and Identity

As stated, our concerns are with youth identity *in formation* and in response to a specific "intervention": a moment of intensive contact between Israeli and Palestinian youth. For our introductory purposes to the question of how such an intervention impacts the life stories of youth, it is sufficient to say only a few words about the social psychology of contact for groups in conflict.

First, tempting though it may be to conceive it as such, contact does not inevitably produce harmony between groups by debunking the stereotypes that create prejudice. Only under certain conditions can contact really accomplish that end, including the rare condition (in naturalistic settings) of equal status between groups (Allport, 1954). In fact, since conflict is connected to intergroup *competition*, the challenge of contact is to foster intergroup cooperation (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). The question for social psychology is *how* intergroup contact can be "effective" in reducing conflict (for reviews, see Brewer & Kramer, 1985; Messick & Mackie, 1989; Pettigrew, 1998; Prentice & Miller, 1999; Tajfel, 1982b).

For our purposes, as we have already characterized the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a *competition of identities*—a "narrative stalemate"—the place of identity in intergroup contact is key. What role does identity assume in the process of contact? Does identity "change" as a consequence of contact? Two particular theories in the social psychology of conflict and intergroup relations bear upon this focus: social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) and common ingroup identity theory (e.g., Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993), itself a derivative of the former (see Brewer, 1996).

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory focuses on the primacy of social identity—understood as "those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 16; see also Brewer, 2001)—in intergroup behavior. Social identity theory as a social psychological paradigm emerged from the "Bristol School" studies of Henri Tajfel, Joseph Turner, and their colleagues in the 1970's. These studies, published in a number of edited volumes (e.g., Tajfel, 1978, 1981, 1982a), argue that social identity is a primary motivational force in human behavior and demonstrate its power empirically. In general, social identity theory posits that our affiliation with some group—no matter how "minimal" the conditions of affiliation (Tajfel, 1978)—determines our behavior. When salient, social identity trumps what is individually unique in a motivational repertoire; it trumps our sense of *personal* identity. Studies have demonstrated that awareness of one's social or national identity occurs at a very young age (e.g., Nesdale & Flesser, 2001), and with that awareness, feelings of group solidarity (Tajfel, Nemeth, Jahoda, Campbell, & Johnson, 1970).

Conceptualizing this position in our narrative framework, social identity predicts that contact between groups in conflict will prime the master narrative of ingroup identity (e.g.,

the stories which began this chapter), which will supercede the identity of the individual in intergroup behavior. An ingroup member's position toward members of the outgroup is entirely predicated on his identity *as a member of that particular ingroup*—his social identity. Initially, the function of this process was considered to be connected to self-esteem enhancement (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986); identifying with a group increases an individual's self-esteem (see also Phinney, 1991; Phinney & Chavira, 1992). Succeeding conceptual revisions of the theory have suggested the inherent *cognitive* function of categorization itself as an explanation of the process of social identity salience (e.g., Brewer, 1991; Turner, 1982, 1987). The prejudice that fuels conflict may be less connected to negative attitudes toward the outgroup than to a desire for ingroup solidarity and preference (Brewer, 1999)—a desire to *have* and to *express* one's affiliation with a particular social identity.

Social identity theory suggests that when Israeli and Palestinian youth come together, given that their social identities are already rendered salient as a natural consequence of conflict itself (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998), they will come together not as individuals but as *representatives of their respective social identities*, presenting the narratives of these groups (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004a, 2004b; Nadler, 2004; Salomon, 2004; Suleiman, 2004a, 2004b). Contact accentuates already well-accentuated social identities, identified as highly differentiated from one another, and thus, at face value, would seem "ineffective" with regard to any possibility of conflict reduction. A social identity approach suggests that contact *inherently* increases the salience of social identity, thus perhaps *enhancing* the polarization that already infuses the life-story narratives of youth.

The social identity perspective is supported by other social psychological research focusing on group decision-making and attitudes. The phenomenon of "group-induced

attitudinal polarization" has been well-documented (e.g., Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969;

Myers, 1975; Myers, 1978; for review see Isenberg, 1986). Group behavior is characterized

by social comparison and attempts at persuasive argumentation, which are likely to produce

polarization in attitudes (Isenberg, 1986). Thus the attitudes that form the core of an Israeli or

Palestinian identity, founded on a mutual perception of existential threat, are likely to become

further polarized as a consequence of social interaction. Yet there are other social

psychological perspectives that would suggest that groups in conflict can transcend the

polarity of an ingroup-outgroup distinction (e.g., Sherif et al., 1961). It is to a derivative of

this perspective—that it is possible to reduce intergroup conflict through the introduction of

superordinate tasks (Sherif, 1958)—that we now turn.

Common Ingroup Identity Theory

Common ingroup identity theory, developed by Gaertner, Dovidio, and their

colleagues in a number of laboratory studies (Gaertner et al., 1993; Gaertner & Dovidio,

2000; Gaertner, Dovidio, & Bachman, 1996; Gaertner, Dovidio, Nier, Ward, & Banker, 1999;

Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, & Bachman, 1996), recognizes the validity of social identity theory,

its claims having been well-verified empirically. However, in a seemingly more optimistic

vein, they argue that the *transcendence* of social identity is not only necessary for intergroup

cooperation, it can be fostered in intergroup contact encounters by establishing certain

conditions. In name, common ingroup identity theory is relatively self-explanatory. Its thesis

is, simply put, that it is possible to construct a new, common group identity that supplements

(i.e., does not eradicate or necessarily reduce in salience) social identity in such a way as to

transcend the elements of it that instill prejudice between groups. When groups in conflict

come together, their social identities are accentuated, as they approach the encounter as a

member of their particular group. But, the convergence of these two groups, though they

reproduce the relations and conditions of the conflict itself in their own small microsystem, creates a new group. If it is possible to instill this new, third group with a common identity, one that is superordinate to the unyielding ideology of a social identity in a state of defense, then the reduction of intergroup conflict is possible—at least for these individuals.

CONCLUSION: THE QUESTIONS OF A PARADIGM

Can Israeli and Palestinian youth, whose polarized ideologies are connected to the fight for narrative legitimacy that characterizes their collective aggressive engagement, somehow cultivate a superordinate, common identity that recognizes their mutual fate? If so, do youth indeed possess the power to transform the discourse of a culture through resistance, or are the limits of agency in the context of conflict insurmountable? Can the stories of youth be rescripted to reduce the inherent polarization of ideology, and with this revision of the core of a personal narrative and its ideological course, the reduction of conflict through a repudiation of master narratives of collective identity?

These are the fundamental questions that have guided my work over the past three years and continue to consume my analytic endeavors as I work with these youth and observe the challenges of their growth. They are the foundational questions of any responsible cultural psychologist engaging with the battlefield of polarized ecologies of development in a metacontext of globalization, with all of its tensions for the purity of national identity, reified in the modern era (Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990; Suny, 2001), now challenged in late modernity (Giddens, 1991; Kinnvall, 2004). It is the task of a new science of human development, one in which the ideology of "scientism," with its distorted metatheory of the purity of knowledge, has been supplanted with an ideology of epistemological relativity, to chart the challenges of globalization for a new generation. The cultural psychology of adolescence, with its paradigmatic recognition of "universalism without the uniformity"

(Shweder & Sullivan, 1993; Shweder et al., 1998), possesses just the necessary epistemological flexibility to avoid the trappings of a radically relativistic postmodern paradigm. In specifying the diversity of lived experience, such an approach aims to contribute to the ever-expansive field of cultural consciousness, in which an understanding of our own daily realities can be contrasted with exponential others, and in that contrast, we can come to realize our own challenges through the broad lens of, at base, some common human consciousness.

It should come as no surprise, then, that this project is meant to offer more than simply the charting of some particularity in life-course development, through an examination of the narratives of Israeli and Palestinian youth over time, thereby making a contribution to developmental psychology or life-course sociology. Nor is my aim to solely express some kind of thesis about the social psychology of either intergroup contact or political conflict more generally, thereby making a contribution to social or political psychology. Finally, I would never be so bold as to attempt to make a significant contribution to the study of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a major concern of public policy or international relations, for there I would be far outreaching my own (loose) disciplinary bounds. Historians and political scientists who have devoted their careers to the study of this conflict would surely be disappointed with my analysis, if for no other reason than I have insufficient space to accommodate any review of the vast historical and political perspectives which would satisfy their desire to be acknowledged. The casual reader who may have some personal interest in this conflict will also, I suspect, be quite disappointed, if she has even bothered to read the entirety of what has become a lengthy introduction, for my desire to accomplish something more significant than the mere description or fascinating account of the "anecdotes" I have

come to collect in my fieldwork will cause me to be annoyingly analytic and interpretive, thereby using language that will only frustrate such an audience.

In case it has not become abundantly clear, my aim is a bit more lofty than making any of the aforementioned contributions, and a bit immodestly so. In this study, I wish to offer a particular paradigm for the study of youth in the context of globalization—that which I am calling the "cultural psychology of adolescence," borrowing conceptually and nominally from Shweder in particular. I view this paradigm and its discoveries in this particular project as offering a challenge to scholars of globalization who would argue for the primacy of youth in directing social change. I wish to say little more about this point, as it will be developed throughout the dissertation. But what a cultural psychology of adolescence can reveal, I will argue, is the diversity of the life course in all of its historical contextuality, bound to structural and symbolic forces far beyond the power of any one individual or even, in some cases, any group of individuals. In problematizing the power of youth to effect social change, I seek only to demonstrate the vitality of a paradigm for its analytic ability to illuminate contextual variability and thereby contribute to a social science of human development sensitive to the human conditions of late modernity.

CHAPTER TWO

A "STRANGER" IN THE HOLY LAND:

DOING THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF ADOLESCENCE

"...The stranger is near and far *at the same time*, as in any relationship based on merely universal human similarities. Between these two factors of nearness and distance, however, a peculiar tension arises, since the consciousness of having only the absolutely general in common has exactly the effect of putting a special emphasis on that which is not common. For a stranger to the country, the city, the race, and so on, what is stressed is again nothing individual, but alien origin, a quality which he has, or could have, in common with many other strangers. For this reason strangers are not really perceived as individuals, but as strangers of a certain type. Their remoteness is no less general than their nearness."

—Georg Simmel (1908/1971, p. 148), "The Stranger"

As is customary in dissertations of this kind, this second chapter will address most concretely exactly what it was I *did*, what my specific activities were as a researcher, to address the rather elaborate and ambitious theoretical questions I put forth in Chapter 1. But this chapter cannot simply offer an account of detached research activity, for such is not the story of this project. In any project such as this, in which cultural psychology serves as a guiding paradigm and field research as a guiding method, the reflexivity of the researcher is essential (Myerhoff & Ruby, 1992; Tedlock, 1991). The interpretive work necessary in any research endeavor that relies heavily on fieldwork and ethnography must be considered through the lens of the researcher. Reflexivity thus requires a clear statement of positionality from the researcher—a reflective narrative of his or her own identity and its connection to the research.

I began this chapter with a lengthy quote from Simmel's classic piece on "The Stranger" precisely for this reason: I interpret my own role in this work as one of a "stranger" in Simmel's formulation. I do not lay claims to a kind of detached "objectivity" as a

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consequence, but I do believe my initial position as a "pure" outsider afforded the luxury of not having my own identity interject excessively in interpretive practice. That my experience as a researcher of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has influenced my own life story, and hence my identity, goes without saying. In this way, my identity did indeed come to interject itself in sometimes beneficial and other times problematic ways. My intention is to be as entirely reflexive and forthright on these matters as possible, for I believe it is only through the audacity and risk of genuine reflexivity that qualitative work achieves credibility.

So I wish to address in a most direct way, and perhaps at times to an unnecessary degree, the question of my own role in this project. Though I may have perhaps begun this work as a classic "participant observer," it cannot be denied that I eventually became an "observing participant" (Tedlock, 1991), and thus what I offer as a product in this dissertation is the narrative of a researcher himself. Alternatively, it may be considered an act of reflexive analysis, but it is without question the account of my own process of *narrative engagement* with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Were I to assume another analytic role—that of, for example, the classic detached fieldworker, who records but whose presence (and influence) is erased by the conventions of "scientific" practice—I would surely gamble with both the authenticity and the credibility of this dissertation. Such a betrayal would, I feel, accomplish a most undesirable end, yet one which plagues a number of otherwise influential works on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, whose authors are chastised for their unwillingness to fully acknowledge the impact of their own identity on the research: dismissal. I hope that this work can be considered a serious and accurate account of Israeli and Palestinian youth and their role in the larger process of cultural antagonism and political conflict. To this end, I must offer a complete account of my own position in *their* world, and how this position came to bear on my analytic and interpretive practice as a researcher.

Expanding upon Simmel's notion of the stranger, Cressey (1927/1983) argues that the role of the stranger in research requires (a) a delicate balance of proximity and distance to the group or groups under study in the researcher's perceived identity, and (b) the establishment of "prestige" vis-à-vis the groups under investigation. As I will discuss at greater length, I believe my position as an American of Christian religious heritage, coupled with my gender and my occupational status as a psychologist and a researcher, enabled me to conform precisely to this role of the stranger. That the assortment of social identity labels that could be ascribed to me—American, Christian, Male, Psychologist, Researcher, Student— came to imbue my role with a distinct "strangeness" is most certainly an advantage in a context replete with identity politics. I have come across accounts on this very topic in which the variation in just a few of these labels (e.g., "Jewish" instead of "Christian," "Female" instead of "Male") yields an investigator quite different data (and access to data) than my own (e.g., Miller, 2005). Palestinians are quite cautious, for example, in their dialogues with foreigners who are Jewish. Though I have known a number of Jewish Americans to be frustrated with the conflation between their own identity and that of a Jewish Israeli, one must understand that the Arabic word used to describe Israelis is most typically *Yehud* ("Jew"), just as it was in the time long before a State of Israel existed. To a Palestinian, "Israeli" *means* "Jew," so a Jew who happens not to live in Israel is to be just as distrusted, to express a general rule of Palestinian interaction with foreigners, as a Jew living in Israel. To deny this aspect of Palestinian interactional culture, as the United States has frequently done in appointing Jewish Americans as senior envoys and negotiators, is naïve at best and culturally insensitive at worst. My own collection of social identities seemed to me to allow me to occupy a kind of liminal identity space in the larger context of the conflict, yet one

fortunately accorded some measure of both the "balance" and "prestige" that Cressey

suggests constitutes the role of the "stranger."

As Simmel argued, the "objectivity" afforded the stranger can lead to a

"confessional" attitude among the research participants: in viewing me as a figure of some

prestige *outside of* the group, a kind of honesty in data becomes possible that a member of the

cultural ingroup may not be able to secure. For example, a taxi driver in Palestine once

argued passionately for the incompetence of his own people: "Arabs are lazy and stupid.... I

would have preferred to be a Jew." These sentiments echoed those of a young Jewish Israeli I

befriended (briefly) on one of my initial journeys from Tel Aviv to Haifa:

> Arabs are savages. In every country that's Arab, all you see is violence, laziness,
> stupidity. The Palestinians, if there is such a thing, are just rejects from other Arab
> countries, so they're the worst.

It is doubtful, were I to occupy any social identity other than the specific one that I happen to,

that I would receive such sentiments from either Israelis or Palestinians.

Yet my position as an American—a citizen of a nation that has played a particular

role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—cannot be considered one of moral "neutrality."

Rather than imposing some differentially "negative" (i.e., among Palestinians) or "positive"

(i.e., among Israelis) inflection on my status as a stranger, however, I believe that both groups

came to view me as someone to "win over." It has long been argued that the United States

represents the only possible mediator in this conflict, and I believe my American identity

actually enhanced my prestige in this way. Yet I am not so naïve as to suggest that my

research subjects came to view me *comprehensively* beyond my own social identity. I believe

what I came to represent for them—the youth in particular—was the face of the Western,

global culture, so dominated by American cultural discourse (e.g., language), artifact (e.g.,

media), and practice (e.g., consumerism and style). Each interview, then, must be considered

in light of my role as a representative of this global culture. As youth confided in me their stories, I believe their intended audience extended far beyond me. I believe they recognized in me a figure who could disseminate their stories. So their narratives were carefully constructed with an eye toward a larger, global *audience*. As I present and interpret these narratives, I attempt to maintain this reflection of positionality in mind. That my interview data is supplemented by observational and ethnographic data helps to reveal the complications and contradictions in the life stories of youth, illuminating the complexity of identity development in the context of conflict.

In this chapter, I detail the methods of my investigation. I begin with an overview of the qualitative methods employed, as well as my own research philosophy for projects that examine the cultural psychology of adolescence. The second and more extensive section of this chapter presents in chronological form the narrative of my research practice as a cultural psychologist, from the origins of my interest and design to my extensive travels in fieldwork. In this narrative, the design of the project and the numerous details regarding sites of fieldwork, characteristics of interviewees, and other concrete elements of the project will emerge.

THE DISCOVERY OF CULTURE-SPECIFIC THEORY:

A METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

Let me be clear from the start about the methods of this study. To say that this study constitutes, in its totality, an "ethnography" betrays the traditional methodological meaning of that term, as exemplified in certain "classic" texts (e.g., Evans-Pritchard, 1937/1976; Malinowski, 1929; Mead, 1928/2001), regardless of its recent fashionable use in fields outside of anthropology. "True" ethnography, as Shweder (1996) argues, consists of a far more ambitious project concerning the conceptual mapping of a moral community, or

"culture," than I have attempted in this study. Yet in my quest to describe a particular social ecology "thickly" (Geertz, 1973)—be it the coexistence programs or the Israeli and Palestinian homes and communities in which I conducted fieldwork—I have appropriated the methods of ethnography, being intermittently a participant observer and an observing participant (Tedlock, 1991). The valuable observational data that this role offered provides a richness to my interpretive capability. The narratives of youth considered in their most isolated forms serve only to reify discourse—and a constructed discourse at that—in a place where acontextual considerations of discourse can steer one down dangerous interpretive pathways. The ability to fuse observational and narrative data is a major strength of this study in my estimation, and I will take every opportunity to highlight this as I present my findings in Chapters 3 and 4.

I resist the temptation to construct this study as an "ethnography" precisely because I believe that methodological identity is both inaccurate and, in fact, somewhat constraining. Cultural psychology, with is interdisciplinary metatheory, resists methodological convention in favor of the epistemological liberation associated with the ability to borrow from the entire social science "toolkit." The methodology of this study thus exploits ethnographic techniques, such as participant observation, while employing a broader qualitative, field-centered framework.

Methodologically, I view this study as consumed with the case-based, idiographically sensitive project of a narratively informed psychology (e.g., Mishler, 1996). It is narrative that anchors the approach of my fieldwork, and hence it is to the presentations and constructions of self and psychological complexity provided by cultural "actors" that I look for data-driven insights. In the tradition of qualitative sociology, I seek to "discover" theory through the ways in which "social facts" (Durkheim, 1895/1982) lodge within individual

consciousness and serve to organize and negotiate the continuities and disruptions of human development. Such an endeavor requires a methodological approach that treats individual cases as units of analysis in their own right, so my fieldwork is grounded in the systematic observation of individuals, with sensitivity to their cultural and historical locations. This observation fuses a number of techniques used in traditional ethnography—including an attempt to gain insight into the cultural conditions of modes of thinking, doing, and being. A focus on narrative, with its window into the structure of cognition and the psychological integration of emotion, cognition, and behavior or social practice, allows just such insights to be credible.

The methodology for this study is thus best described as qualitative field research, relying upon both observational and narrative data. In this way, I seek to contribute to the paradigm shift in psychology that recognizes the vitality of engagement with a population that is inherent in qualitative work (Hoshmand & Martin, 1994; O'Neill, 2002; Rennie, Watson, & Monteiro, 2002; Walsh-Bowers, 2002; Way, 2005; Wertz, 1999). I borrow from the methodological repertoire of other disciplines as a result (e.g., sociology and anthropology), attempting to construct a coherent methodology for cultural psychology.

As a cultural psychologist, I seek not to delineate the entirety of a "custom complex" (Whiting & Child, 1953) as much as an account of how individual subjects of a culture negotiate the social facts that such a complex presents. My theoretical concern is grounded in an exploration of identity development in its cultural context, with a focus on how the discourse and practice of a culture leaves its blueprint in the narrative of an individual identity. It is precisely this interaction between person and culture that I wish to query, creatively combining a multiplicity of methods that can credibly be labeled "fieldwork."

Suggesting that my method be primarily ethnographic, then, somehow suggests a greater purpose than I myself claim in my work. I view my method in terms of classic field research—that conducted in both naturalistic settings (e.g., Whyte, 1943) and in the context of "natural experiments" (e.g., Sherif et al., 1961). It is not a method that is easily relegated to a particular discipline. It is social psychology meets sociology and anthropology, amidst the backdrop of developmental psychology. For cultural psychology, with its concern for the co-constitution of culture and mind, cannot readily dismiss units of analysis that are somehow "irrelevant" to the discipline. It is, by its very definition (Shweder, 1990), a transdisciplinary discipline, a paradigmatic experiment in epistemological pluralism.

For those who would critique a purely qualitative investigation of this kind, I would argue that if we are to take seriously cultural psychology's axiom against the assumption of uniformity of constructs across cultures (e.g., Shweder & Sullivan, 1993), any initial investigation in cultural psychology must employ qualitative methods to examine the cultural specificity of psychological phenomena. Qualitative methods provide a richness to psychological inquiry unparalleled by the use of aggregate quantitative methods. What they may lack in generalizability, they compensate for in the provision of idiographic specificity.

To understand identity and its basis in ideology, narrative, and social practice, a qualitative approach has been both ideal and necessary. My field method and approach has been informed largely by grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which focuses on the *discovery* rather than the *verification* of theory in research. Though their methodological paradigm was targeted toward sociologists, I believe it has significant interdisciplinary relevance. Research in cultural psychology, in fact, would seem to *require* such an epistemological approach in cases where little theoretical work has been conducted.

I have taken from grounded theory a number of general methodological strategies, which will become readily apparent in my chronological narrative of the project itself. For example, I entered the field only with a general theoretical approach to identity. I did not begin to collect life stories with some preconceived theory of *how* those stories would be thematically organized either within or across cultural groups. Rather, I allowed my theorizing to *follow* from the fieldwork itself and the data emerging from both observational and interview data. I also, as Glaser and Strauss suggest, found myself constantly in analysis during my "breaks" from fieldwork. I would then "test" the theories that were emerging as I returned to the field. (That I engaged in "episodic" fieldwork rather than a single, lengthy period of fieldwork facilitated this process of intermittent analysis.) In addition to this general relationship with my data, the recruitment of subjects was guided by the theories that emerged. This use of *theoretical* sampling, rather than *representative* sampling, spoke to the purpose of the research in *generating* rather than *verifying* theory.

I view cultural psychology as a methodologically "open" paradigm, and the pluralism that infuses its metatheory ought, I believe, to infuse its methodological practice. Yet I believe research undertaken in cultural psychology is necessarily multi-phasic. In the first phase of this research, where non-applicability of Western constructs must be assumed, a grounded theory, qualitative approach is necessary. This methodological strategy allows the researcher to observe the axioms of cultural psychology while beginning to generate culture-specific theories that can later be tested. In the second phase of research in cultural psychology, then, the hypotheses generated and the theories discovered in "phase one" can be examined with a larger, representative sample. A second phase might typically entail the creation of culturally salient surveys and/or experiments, administered across a larger sample and interpreted in more aggregate terms.

This study is necessarily located, methodologically speaking, in the first phase of research in cultural psychology. The theories that emerge from the data will, it is hoped, contribute to a more general theory of identity development in the context of conflict which can then be examined among a larger sample of youth. But, despite my support for a multi-phasic methodology for cultural psychology—one that can reliably utilize "mixed methods" (Tashakkori & Teddle, 2003)—I believe that the aim of cultural psychologists to *document* variability in mental life across communities of meaning-making ascribes primacy to a qualitative, fieldwork approach. The extension of such an approach, in a second phase of investigation, is valuable in its ability to satisfy the need in science for verification and "reliable" generalization to a larger population.

THE NARRATIVE OF A CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGIST: A CHRONOLOGY

In the remainder of this chapter I present a narrative of my own practice as a cultural psychologist. This presentation ambitiously attempts to interweave details of the technical elements of the study with features of my own personal narrative of engagement with this project, thereby exposing my own subjectivity as a researcher and the constantly negotiated emotional proximity and distance in my own positionality. To reiterate, I view this presentational technique as a necessity in reflexively informed qualitative research, but I also think it prudent when dealing with this particular subject matter—a topic of great passion, centered on the contestation of identities. That exposure of my own identity and my own preconceptions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is of the utmost necessity in the final presentation of my work has always been given. Because of my attempt to fuse personal narrative and technical methodological report in this chapter, I have chosen to employ a chronological account. I find it useful to consider the emergence of a problem in its historical context, and sensitivity to the relationship between a psychological phenomenon and its

historical positioning has always been of great concern to me. So I trust that the reader will appreciate such a chronology in the detail of my method.

The Origins of an Intellectual Concern: A Personal Narrative

Not surprisingly, upon describing my work to colleagues, friends, or acquaintances, their typical response is, if they do not know me, "Are you Jewish?" or, if they are savvy enough to discern I am not Jewish, "Are you Arab?" I even had a friend who, midway through the course of this research, had forgotten that I in fact am not Jewish, commenting to me on a Jewish holy day. My multiple travels to Israel had, it seems, confused him. So central has my own elusive identity been to this work.

My research participants are equally, if not more, inquisitive about my own identity. I encounter such questions because to look at me, one could speculate that I have some connection to the region. My features are Mediterranean, owing to my Italian roots, but I have neither Jewish nor Arab affiliation of any kind. The very fact that I am virtually *always* encountered with this question reveals the necessity of reflexivity in my work.

I value the revelation of both my personal identity, as revealed in what others come to know about my biography (Goffman, 1963), as well as my motivation to conduct such a research project—the two of which are entirely intertwined. For the second question I nearly universally encounter is "Why are you interested in this topic?" To trace the genesis of my intellectual concern with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, then, one must know something of my own biography.

To say that the environment of my own socialization was lacking in religious diversity is a significant understatement. A Catholic of Italian and distantly British origins, I found myself surrounded by Christians as a child in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. Diversity in my exposure to religion as a child existed only upon meeting Protestants, who

were plentiful where I grew up in the colonial town of Alexandria, Virginia. The Washington area public education system was notorious for having only a few quality schools, so most who could afford to sent their children to private religious schools. I began in an Episcopalian elementary and middle school, moving onto a Jesuit Catholic secondary school. What I can recall most when I consider my own socialization and its connection to my eventual intellectual interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the complete absence of any perspective at all.

For me as a child, "Israel" had some relevance to the Bible, as did "Palestine," and as far as I knew both represented the "Holy Land" in some way. Though naturally I could not locate either geographic locale in its contemporary form on a map, nor was I bothered by such an inability. Prior to university, I recall having a single Jewish friend in elementary school, naturally having no interest in our cultural or religious differences, only in whether he had the latest G.I. Joe action figures. I am often somewhat embarrassed by the religious exclusivity of my upbringing, particularly since by late adolescence I fashioned myself a person very "open" to (and increasingly interested in) cultural and religious diversity. Yet, finding myself a person relatively unconcerned with religion at all, I possessed little interest in topics that I interpreted as somehow religious in nature, like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (That the conflict itself has little to do with religion was a discovery I would not make for some time.)

As an undergraduate student of psychology at Georgetown, a place quite engaged in topics like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I generally avoided such discussions or considerations. At that time in my scholarly career, I viewed psychology as concerned with the problems of human development that were rooted in individual experience, not large-scale political conflicts. I narrowly pursued training in clinical and developmental

psychology, with some naively shallow interest in issues of culture. While my friends occasionally argued and protested, or entered into serious debates on the conflict, I generally withdrew. Of course, it was a different historical era in the course of the conflict: I entered Georgetown in 1994, one year after the historic signing of the Oslo accords just a few miles away from me. Not that I was at all aware of the post-Oslo culture in Israel and Palestine, with its great optimism and sense of possibility. Yet the culture of Georgetown sensitized me to cultural and religious diversity, despite its own Catholic heritage and majority of students on campus.

I began graduate study in clinical psychology in 1999 with an interest in studying the psychological functioning of ethnic and sexual minorities in the United States. It was not long before I realized that training in mainstream clinical psychology considered culture in highly insensitive and inappropriate ways, viewing the charting of "ethnic differences" along the lines of a "cookbook" of psychological adaptation as its main contribution. I was quite fortunate to, in the midst of my discontent, discover cultural psychology through the writings of Richard Shweder and his colleagues. After my fortunate meeting of Bertram Cohler in the process of seeking a clinical placement in a program for which he conducted supervision, the decision to seek formal training in cultural psychology and human development, rather than mainstream clinical psychology, was inevitable. It is important at this point in my biography to know the larger sociohistorical context within which my intellectual interests shifted and my lens became focused on Israel and Palestine.

The second Palestinian intifada erupted in 2000, coinciding roughly with my work on a study of urban African-American youth exposed to violence (Hammack, Richards, Luo, Edlynn, & Roy, 2004). As I witnessed the images of the intifada—the devastation of suicide bombings in cafes and bus stops, the Israeli tanks bulldozing Palestinian homes and entire

villages—I had a sort of "ethical" awakening as a researcher. I came to realize that, as I began to engage with cultural psychology as a student, research must be socially *relevant*. As I saw these images and followed the journalistic interpretations of these events, I realized the conflict made little sense to me. If it made little sense to me, if these analyses provided in the American media seemed to so vaguely contribute to my own knowledge of what this great tragedy in human interaction was really all about, then surely I was not alone.

I undertook a kind of self-education in the conflict which lasted a number of years (and of course continues today). I came to view my biography as incomplete in its lack of attention to significant international concerns such as this. And I came to re-situate my identity as a researcher and as a cultural psychologist directly with this intellectual agenda: to examine the psychological features that characterize human development in contexts of cultural conflict. I came to this problem not for its "negative" undertones. (A number of voices in my personal and professional past have often asked why I am not interested in the "positives" of human development.) Rather, I came to this problem for its ability to speak to an inherent (and unique) concern of cultural psychology with the complex, dynamic interrelationship of person and culture. But beyond just the relevance of such a problem for cultural psychology as a paradigm or a discipline, I was motivated to pursue this research for its large-scale social relevance. As a scholar with interdisciplinary interests and collaborative aspirations, I came to appreciate the possibility of such a study for its ability to contribute to a larger base of knowledge.

So, before I began this work, if someone were to engage me in a free association task, to the prompt "Palestinian," I would no doubt reply, enthusiastically, "Terrorist!" To the prompt "Israel," I would surely offer a response of this sort: "Bible" (a bit less enthusiastically perhaps). I have come to view the lack of knowledge and depth present in my

biography prior to this project as a great benefit. It allowed me to "discover" the conflict on my own terms, and the absence of any particular political perspective on the conflict in my own socialization surely solidified the authenticity of my status as a "stranger" in the Holy Land.

Since initiating this research and becoming fully enmeshed in it, my biography has of course been radically altered. Where I once possessed little affect around the topic of Israel and Palestine, I now find myself engaging in such conversations with great animation. I have come to view the information that Americans truly possess about this situation as extremely incomplete, in a way that only my immersion in the two cultures has been able to correct. Thus when I engage with friends and colleagues now about the conflict, I express a great passion that was once entirely absent. Most importantly, though, I believe I have come to genuinely "feel" with *both* Israelis and Palestinians. While I have gone through an ideological "rollercoaster" in my travels through the region, witnessing my own identifications and empathic responses, I believe I have come to appreciate and admire the aspirations of both peoples.

A brief example will illustrate the complexity of my own emotional response to the conflict. After my initial field trip to the region, I was literally overwhelmed emotionally at the sights and sounds of life in the occupied Palestinian territories. Traversing numerous military checkpoints, themselves highly problematic for the asymmetrical power relations they establish and reinforce, I found myself crossing from the first world (i.e., Israel) to the third world (i.e., Palestine) in a matter of minutes (or hours, depending on the mood of the soldiers). From nicely paved and well-lit roads to dirt roads strewn with trash and sewage, such a contrast cries for a "stranger" to sympathize with the social and economic plight of the Palestinians. But the hardships of daily life for Palestinians speak for themselves and require

little embellishment from me: lack of mobility, hazardous living conditions, unemployment, poverty, and so on. By contrast, I found daily life in Israel to be quite replicable to life in the United States or a European country, with the signs of economic development and success everywhere.

The *differential structure* of the two societies creates an inevitable power imbalance that necessarily instills sympathy for the Palestinians, who do not, after all, even have an independent sovereign state (that is universally recognized, with clearly defined borders). They are subjects of an occupying army and government. They do not possess, in the favored parlance of the current American administration, "freedom" in any sense resembling that of Europe, the United States, or Israel itself.

Yet my emotional response to the conflict was complicated by another factor: a great admiration for the success of Israel. The same sympathy I feel for the Palestinians pervades my emotional response to the plight of Jews before the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. The discrimination and genocide they faced in Europe is without question imprinted in the collective conscience of the Western world. So what is not so astonishing about Zionism as an ideology is its ethnocentric, "Orientalist" (Said, 1978) character (that is far too easy to identify), but rather its *great success*, for Israel does indeed represent a unique culture, with its own language and "ethos," and its own great accomplishments (Talmon, 1970). This, I believe, is quite laudable.

It is easy, I came to realize in my own process of ideological identification, to come to identify with Palestine over Israel. After all, is Israel not merely an extension of colonialism and another instance of the dispossession of an indigenous population (Rodinson, 1973; Said, 1979, 1994)? Are we not, as Americans, radically opposed to the proliferation of such regimes, despite our own national past? But to blindly take this position on Israel is (a)

to fail to place Zionism in its particular historical context, at the height of nationalist movements in Europe that specifically *excluded* Jews (Hobsbawm, 1990), and (b) to view Israelis as a monolithic group of "colonialists," which is certainly not the case, given the great ideological diversity that exists within Israeli society (Shafir & Peled, 2002).

The complexity of my own identification with these two cultures has, I believe, enabled me to strike an interpretive balance in this study. My ability to identify with the aspirations of each is, I believe, framed by their parallel psychological needs. Both groups need to express their cultural identities in ways that ensure existential security and national status, with all of its representative "liberties" (Fukuda-Parr, 2004; UNDP, 2004). If one comes to view these parallel needs as *legitimate*, as I have come to, then one inevitably identifies with the psychological conditions of both groups equally. I do not wish to argue that I in some way achieved the remarkable ability to engage in interpretive ethnography or fieldwork in some "value-neutral" manner. I believe such practice is impossible in social science, as our values always frame our research questions, procedures, and interpretations (Prilleltensky, 1994). What I do believe, however, is that I successfully attained and maintained the status of a "stranger," striking a balance between nearness and distance from my research subjects and maintaining a level of "prestige" as an American, a psychologist, and a face of the global culture to which Israeli and Palestinian youth so commonly look for influence.

My intention in very honestly presenting my own professional and personal biography vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was to address from the start questions about my own identity and my motivation to conduct the research. Whether or not the reader identifies with me in this process or in my own desire is likely very much related to his or her own biography. I can only proceed in presenting and interpreting my findings with the

knowledge that I have, as it were, "come clean" on my own positionality. I will not, as I

present my findings, shy away from continuing this level of reflexivity in interpretation.

The Field Sites

The fieldwork conducted in this study occurred in three general sites: two

coexistence programs in the United States (one in Maine and one in Illinois) and in the region

(Israel and the Palestinian territories of East Jerusalem and the West Bank). While the

fieldwork conducted in the United States was generally confined to two very specific

geographic locales (the Seeds of Peace International Camp in rural Maine and the northern

suburbs of Chicago where the Hands of Peace program is based), fieldwork in Israel and

Palestine occurred in a number of communities, representing highly variant locales (i.e.,

urban, rural, and village). In this section of the chapter, I will present a chronology of my

field research, beginning in the summer of 2003 at the two coexistence programs in the

United States.

In addition to presenting an ethnographic overview of my general field experience, I

will provide details on the field sites and, in the case of the American sites, the philosophy,

curricula and structure of the programs themselves. For each of the two programs, I will

present a historical narrative of the program itself, providing the reader some insight into its

genesis, development, and sustenance as a program, for awareness of positionality of the

organizations themselves is just as salient as my own reflexive admissions. Following this

brief narrative, I organize the description of each field site into two additional sections: one

that details the "culture" of each (i.e., my ethnographic attempt to "map" the basic ideological

position and its impact on the social ecology) and one that details the "rites" of participation

(i.e., the specific activities that are undertaken, either voluntarily or by coercion, by the youth

participants in each program). With regard to field sites in Israel and Palestine, I present brief

descriptions of the communities in which fieldwork was conducted. Proceeding the description of field sites, I present detailed information on the interview sample and procedures through which I obtained narrative data.

While it may seem somehow out of order to begin my description of field sites with the coexistence programs themselves, both based in the United States, it in fact preserves the authentic chronology of my fieldwork experience. My travels to the region, which ultimately involved four field trips from 2004-2005, actually occurred after my initial summer of fieldwork in the programs in 2003.

Field Site 1: Seeds of Peace

My intellectual interest in the conflict and my unwavering determination to conduct fieldwork with Israeli and Palestinian youth (against the suggestion of some early on in my career as a graduate student) was complicated by the fact that the second Palestinian intifada was at its peak in 2002 and 2003. Fortunately for me, a researcher too deterred by the images of war in the Holy Land, every summer hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian youth gather in, of all places, rural Maine. Equally, if not more, fortunate for me, a smaller version of the same "idea" was about to embark on its first summer program in the northern suburbs of Chicago. The mission of both programs—classic experiments in intergroup relations—is to learn to "coexist," "before fear, mistrust and prejudice blind them from seeing the human face of the enemy" (Seeds of Peace website, 2006).

Although Israel and Palestine are gripped by seemingly infinite cycles of violence, such is not the inevitable state of their relations. War and conflict emerge from governments, not people. Ordinary Israeli and Palestinian people, inhabitants of a land of mutual significance to identity, can coexist in peace, if only they can come together to "humanize" the other and recognize the equivalent ideological legitimacy in their master narratives.

Israelis and Palestinians can coexist, but only by transcending the ideological rigidity of what

divides them—those "negatively interdependent" (Kelman, 1999) master narratives of history

and collective identity. Through meaningful contact, in a neutral setting where both groups

are accorded equal status, such transcendence of identity polarization can create a new

generation of leaders whose personal identities are attuned to peaceful coexistence. Or so the

story of coexistence goes.

If Israeli and Palestinian youth are socialized in the context of identity polarization,

in which their commitment to a master narrative of social identity is expected and supported

by the obstinacy of the conflict itself, then programs like Seeds of Peace present a third

narrative—the narrative of coexistence. Its story is one of optimistic, idealistic possibility.

With the ubiquitous motto, "Treaties are negotiated by governments; peace is made by

people" (Seeds of Peace website, 2006), this third narrative relies on an ideology of liberal

value pluralism (Galston, 2002), cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 2006), and individual-driven

social change. And with its focus on intervention during adolescence, the narrative primes a

decidedly American cultural model of adolescence itself, so eloquently posited by Erikson in

Young Man Luther and reinforced by other social theorists of youth in the 1960s and 1970s

(e.g., Keniston, 1971, 1972; Mead, 1970).

Respect for diversity, the legitimacy of justice and equality, the existential legitimacy

of national identities, and the recognition of relativity in narrative—of historical

interpretation and collective story-making—represent the ideological components of the

narrative of coexistence. It is a new narrative for Israeli and Palestinian youth—one which

commands the reduction of identity polarization and the salience of social identity in favor of

a "transcendent," common identity. That common identity, as it were, is imparted in the

recognition of *sameness* that can occur through intergroup contact. As youth come to

recognize that little besides their negatively interdependent narratives in fact polarizes them, they may come to achieve ideological distance from these master narratives and, in this way, to break the cycle of narrative reproduction that only serves to reproduce the conflict itself.

I present this third narrative—a narrative of possibility—as a "hypothesis," for it represents the implicit aims of these American-based coexistence programs[1]. In the case of Seeds of Peace, it is rather explicit in fact. As Wallach (2000) notes in his account of the program,

> [Seeds of Peace] is about changing attitudes, ending the fears and prejudices that have prevented entire generations from getting to know one another; in short, it is about 'rehumanizing,' not dehumanizing, the enemy. (p. 13)

Wallach frames the process of transformation meant to occur at the camp as a "journey from fear and suspicion to understanding and trust..." (p. 13), but he does not question that

> Most reach their destination: a new level of compassion for one another as human beings. When they return home, they are well on their way to becoming the true leaders of a new generation that is as committed to fighting for peace as their predecessors were in waging war. (p. 13)

Naturally the idealistic appeal of the third narrative offered by programs like Seeds of Peace encourages such audacious statements. But Seeds of Peace, I came to realize early on in my preparation for fieldwork and during that initial summer of 2003, in fact remained a "hypothesis" largely untested by anything approaching "science." It had, if you will, "coasted" in its existence for its noble idea—one of great appeal to those American funders who would support the cause of educating Israeli and Palestinian youth to respect existential diversity.

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[1] It is important to note that Hands of Peace is an "off-shoot" of Seeds of Peace in its basic curriculum and philosophy, so much of the detail on Seeds of Peace as a field site is relevant to Hands of Peace as well.

Founded on the eve of the Oslo accords in 1993 by liberal Jewish journalist John Wallach, with extensive connections across groups in the Middle East, Seeds of Peace has always been decidedly idealistic in its aims. Staff recollect, with some humor, that in the inaugural summer of the program, the need to have facilitated dialogue sessions actually escaped John Wallach, whose idea was merely to bring Israeli and Arab youth (from across North Africa and the Middle East, but with the largest concentration from Palestine) together to recognize their commonalities rather than to engage in any serious or substantive discourse about the conflict that consumed their lives. "Make one friend" was always Wallach's sage slogan for the youth, and we will revisit it when we consider the narratives of youth in Chapter 4. Needless to say, the focus of the program has shifted to incorporate a loosely structured (and loosely monitored) dialogue program and has gradually opened itself up to systematic evaluation.

The Culture of Seeds of Peace

I conducted fieldwork at Seeds of Peace for four weeks in the summers of 2003 and 2004 as a dialogue facilitator. That I came to the program with few skills in this professional role again proved quite beneficial, as it allowed me to go through the "training" program in facilitation as an authentic participant, rather than a scrutinizing observer. What I came to encounter immediately in this first summer of fieldwork was that Seeds of Peace really represented its own cultural system, the values of which were decidedly consumed with the American project of an idealized form of "liberal pluralism" (Galston, 2002), albeit one that was not entirely committed to the deep tenets of that political philosophy. The primary aim of this project is to cultivate a new, superordinate "cosmopolitan" (Appiah, 2006) identity that can transcend the disparate narratives of social identity that polarize Israelis and Palestinians.

A Cosmopolitan Idea

The emergence of a narrative of cosmopolitanism can be considered an attempt to accommodate the social, technological, and economic forces of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that have resulted in the confluence (or, at times, "collision") of cultures. Processes of human confluence such as immigration, globalization, and multiculturalism challenge traditional narratives of the "primordial" nation (Suny, 2001) and the foundations of identity (Arnett, 2002). Though the focus of most work on the concept of liberal pluralism is on political and legal philosophy, structure and process (e.g., Galston, 2002; Kymlicka, 2001; Rawls, 1995), interdisciplinary perspectives have increasingly proliferated (e.g., Shweder, Minow, & Markus, 2002). I consider liberal value pluralism in this dissertation in terms of its *ideological* and *cultural* character. That is, I am interested in philosophical notions of liberal value pluralism and cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 2005, 2006) for their cultural influence and embeddedness in discourse.

The reader will come to appreciate, for its immediate ability to be recognized in the contemporary cultural discourse of the urban, liberal bastions (those "blue-state" strongholds of the Democratic party), the ideological content of cosmopolitanism. It should not be confused with any kind of radical relativism, for its pluralistic postulates speak to a common social ethics that can be identified (Appiah, 2006). The ideological root of cosmopolitanism is the recognition of *validity in ideological and cultural diversity*, with a genuine *commitment to conversation* across sites of human difference. Thus, as Appiah (2006) argues,

> [Cosmopolitanism] begins with the simple idea that in the human community, as in national communities, we need to develop habits of coexistence: conversation in its older meaning, of living together, association. (p. xix)

Seeds of Peace, though established long before Appiah's (2006) eloquent treatise for cosmopolitanism, is ideologically infused with the idealism of its liberal thesis. It seeks

precisely to instill the "habit" of coexistence through conversation and, in fact, an ephemeral experience in "living together."

Before we return to Seeds of Peace, it is worth an additional comment on the ideology of cosmopolitanism and its specific relation to *American* culture. A cosmopolitan ideology has indeed, I believe, caught hold in the contemporary American national consciousness. And it is precisely the desire to disseminate this ideology that has come to be associated with the particular "creed" that has come to underlie our own national narrative (Lieven, 2004), perhaps inspiring our own "missionary" (Shweder, 2004) and "civilizing" (Pomeranz, 2005; Shweder, 2003) projects of late. American-based coexistence programs like Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace, then, must be viewed as a part of this larger, distinctly American cultural project. We will return to this important connection in Chapters 4 and 5.

Pluralism in Practice

Let us now return from the abstractions of the philosophical and ideological context of Seeds of Peace to the camp itself. The staff members reflect very much the founder of Seeds of Peace in their own identities: they are overwhelmingly Jewish but willing to be critical of Israel and its policies. They are, like the "left-wing" in Israel, largely against the occupation of Palestinian territories. They are classically "liberal" in their desire to express benevolence; they are idealists in their vision of pluralism for the region.

Curiously, although the idealistic vision of the program resonated with my own hopes for the region, I felt immediate resistance to the "culture" of the camp. The first night of my arrival, several days before the youth arrived, I witnessed a most contrived scene: the staff were gathered around a campfire (much needed in the cold Maine summer evenings), getting acquainted, when a number of staff who were musically inclined spontaneously started to

play music. Dancing quickly followed. Writing in my field notes that night, I reflected on the

experience:

> Tonight at the campfire seemed like an initiation ritual for us, the new staff. The old
> staff led the music and dancing. The people are, by and large, "peaceniks," or at least
> extremely "liberal." They embody a certain "type" of American—that one who is
> always fighting and challenging the "mainstream." Here in the woods, away from
> anything that seems like a "reality" to me, the whole thing seems so false somehow. I
> wonder how the kids will react to this, what initially seems to me like a very
> contrived environment, and one which certainly does not resemble their own (or my
> own). I wonder how the fact that those in power—those making the norms here and
> constructing the culture—seem so homogeneous ideologically, united in a particular
> political solution it seems (two states), will impact the experience of the kids.

My initial reaction to the culture of the camp would prove, as it turns out, quite useful in

understanding the experiences of the youth over the ensuing years of my fieldwork.

That Seeds of Peace is successful in constructing a unique cultural setting, with a

particular social structure, relational power structure, normative system, and physical setting,

owes much to its remote location and its isolated character. My impressions and ethnographic

insights on the culture of the camp will be interwoven throughout the dissertation, but I will

satisfy the interested reader at this point with some of the more mundane details of the

program itself. Knowing specifically what experiences the youth must go through as

participants is essential to interpreting their narratives. Let us begin with the first "rite of

passage": how the participants actually get from the zone of proximal danger to the eerily

serene woods of Maine.

The Rites of Participation

From its inception, Seeds of Peace has worked collaboratively with governments to

select the participants in the program and to guarantee their safety. Such collaboration has

always secured the legitimacy of the program; it is more difficult to receive criticism of bias

toward one side or the other if both sides support you on paper. This method of participant

selection in fact works well for the aims of Seeds of Peace: the two governments[2] aim to send

youth who will be the best "representatives" of their respective nations, thereby ensuring a

measure of ideological diversity among the youth by encouraging youth who are not

necessarily "pro-peace" to attend. In Israel, the qualifications are largely academic, and this

generally guarantees a diverse group of youth (though Ashkenazi Jews, or Jews of European

origin, are overrepresented). In Palestine, the qualifications are academic and dependent upon

social network and political affiliation. The diverse motivations expressed by youth suggested

to me that these youth were not universally committed to peaceful coexistence by any means.

In fact, a number of youth from both groups endorsed motivations such as wanting to

"convince the other side they're wrong."

Once selected in the region, both groups undergo preparatory seminars that are

designed to ensure they are ready for the encounter. In particular, instilling within the youth

the master historical narrative is absolutely essential. Though I was unable to observe such

seminars, I received a number of reports on them from my interviewees. Laila, a 16-year-old

Palestinian citizen of Israel[3], reports that the seminar presented a narrative of Israeli history

that contradicted her knowledge of the Palestinian narrative:

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[2] Though its focus has always been on the larger Arab-Israeli conflict, Seeds of Peace in fact works with youth from other regions of war and conflict (e.g., Cyprus, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan). For the purposes of this dissertation, only the portion of the program that focuses on Israel and Palestine will be discussed and considered. During the summers in which I conducted fieldwork, approximately 85% of the total youth participants were engaged in dialogue on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the larger Arab-Israeli conflict.

[3] The Palestinians who remained inside the borders of the newly declared State of Israel in 1948 and were granted citizenship (though with initial limitations) go by a number of identity labels. Traditionally they were called "Israeli Arabs" or "Arab Israelis," depending on the desired emphasis of the namer or the named. More recently, many have preferred to renew their sense of Palestinian cultural identity by taking on the label "Palestinian citizen of Israel" (Ghanem, 2002). In this dissertation, this group will be referred to as "Palestinian-Israelis."

> We had this seminar in Jerusalem before we came…. The seminar was about the history of Israel and everything. I knew the history of Palestine, and then I learned the history of Israel. I was kind of unhappy because I totally disagreed with them in the seminar. But I shut my mouth, you know. I couldn't speak. I felt like they were kind of preparing us for war and not for peace, so it was kind of difficult for me. …They have this *totally different* history of the Palestinians.

Laila's experience of the pre-program seminar reveals the complex positionality of the Palestinian-Israelis, with their immediate access to both historical narratives. The problematic nature of their dual identity will recur, particularly in the context of Seeds of Peace, in which they are expected to "behave" like Israeli citizens. The Palestinian-Israelis are unique in their exposure to the ideological polarization of both historical narratives.

Youth arrive at the camp in "delegations" and are greeted in each instance by an enthusiastic group of staff. As they descend the stairs of the bus, the head counselor or another senior staff member politely removes all symbols of national identity adorning the youth. Typically, these include necklaces with the star of David, representing the national symbol of Israel, or Palestinian *kafiyas* or bracelets featuring the Palestinian flag. All of these symbols are permitted to be worn on the last night of camp, but for now, the youth are to be stripped of the symbolic gestures that communicate their commitments to a national identity. It is part, as we will see, of the larger project of an attempt at identity "restructuring" that occurs at the camp.

Each delegation is escorted from the bus to the lawn overlooking the lake, in which they are told the origin story of Seeds of Peace (recounted now by the soft but nurturing voice of Bobbie Gottschalk, a former social worker who was one of John Wallach's collaborators in founding the program). They are also introduced to the narrative of the new cultural system in which they will be (re)socialized. Bobbie tells them:

> When you drove into Maine, when you crossed that border, there was a big sign. Did anybody see the sign? It said on it, 'Maine, the way life should be.' At camp, we try

to make this a reality for you. We try to make *this* the way life should be. So after tonight, you'll all be wearing the same green Seeds of Peace t-shirt. This is very important, because it shows that you're all equal. Everybody at camp is equal. All of you with each other, even with the staff. There is no inequality here.

At camp, the "difference" of identity undergoes an attempted erasure through a radical restructuring of social ecology. Underlying this attempt is, most clearly, a liberal American cultural model of intergroup relations that relies on a humanist ethic of identity pluralism: identity diversity is worthy of reciprocal respect, and it is the environments of youth that polarize them. Here, in a place that could not resemble "home" less for either Palestinians or Israelis, they might come to witness the elements of their identities that are united: in eating, sleeping, playing; their commonalities as boys or girls, as human beings.

And so youth come to be subjects of a most "natural" experiment in the social psychology of identity and intergroup relations: the attempt to restructure identity through the transformation of external reality. The social structure of the conflict itself is stripped of its perceptible quality in anything but memory—which of course remains salient for the youth. The differences between youth become obscure, as they undergo a series of rituals that encourage the "loss" of identity and the "gain" of a new one—they begin the socialization process of becoming a "Seed." An excerpt from my field notes the day after the youth arrived from their long journey tells the story as it first occurred to me: "Today the kids began to lose their identity by receiving the green Seeds of Peace uniform. One group at a time they learn the Seeds of Peace song—the 'anthem.'" The remainder of Day 2 is spent orienting to the camp. It is not until Day 3 that camp begins in earnest, and the identity restructuring rituals continue.

Figure 2.1. Flag-raising ritual at Seeds of Peace camp.

A key ritual of camp—one that marks its formal initiation—is called "flag-raising" (see Figure 2.1). In this ritual, all of the youth file outside the camp to its front gate, where the flags of all nations represented at the camp hang. One by one, each group stands together, sings their national anthem, and raises their flag. Once all flags are raised, the youth sing the Seeds of Peace song together and file back into the gates of camp, leaving, they are told by camp director Timothy Wilson, their national identities behind. Again, my field notes reveal the impressions of a newcomer to this cultural system:

> This morning was flag-raising and the official beginning of camp. This ritual serves the purpose, from what I could make, of symbolically initiating—in a more specific way than the t-shirts—the youth into the new culture of Seeds of Peace.

Returning staff had, I must admit, poisoned me to this ritual long before I had actually

witnessed it. Their claim was that it tended to cause unnecessary turmoil, particularly for the

Palestinian-Israelis, who tended to be conflicted about which group to join in song for the

national anthem. While they are Israeli citizens, the content of the national anthem presents

significant problems to their Palestinian identity:

> As long as the Jewish spirit is yearning deep in the heart,
> With eyes turned toward the East, looking toward Zion,
> Then our hope—the two-thousand-year-old hope—will not be lost:
> To be a free people in our land,
> The land of Zion and Jerusalem
> (available at www.stateofisrael.com/anthem)

Ideologically, then, there can be no connection to this anthem for the Palestinian-Israelis, for

its contents refer to a collective identity that is foreign to them and to their own defeat in

achieving their own Palestinian nation.

At the same time, the Palestinian-Israelis are completely unfamiliar with the

Palestinian anthem:

> My country, my country, my country,
> The land of my grandfathers,
> My country, my country, my country,
> My nation, the nation of eternity,
> With my determination, my fire, and the volcano of my revenge,
> The longing of my blood to my land and home,
> I have climbed the mountains and fought the wars,
> I have conquered the impossible and crossed the borders,
>
> My country, my country, the nation of eternity,
> With the resolve of the winds and the fire of the guns,
> And the determination of my nation in the land of struggle,
> Palestine is my home, Palestine is my fire, Palestine is my revenge,
> And the land of the eternal
>
> My country, my country, the nation of eternity,
> I swear under the shade of the flag
> To my land and nation, and the fire of pain,
> I will live as a guerilla, I will go on as a guerilla,
> I will expire as a guerilla, until I will be back

> My country, my country, the nation of eternity
> (available at www.palestinehistory.com/anthem.htm)

With its references to "pain," "revenge," "struggle," and a "guerilla" identity, the Palestinian

national anthem is clearly derivative of the experience of Palestinian loss and dispossession

(Said, 1994). It is also clearly rooted in the founding ideology of Arafat's Fatah party, which

until recently dominated Palestinian politics. The initial emphasis of the Fatah platform was

explicitly rooted in the adoption of "guerilla" tactics to fight the occupation of all of mandate

Palestine (Harkabi, 1968/2001). The contents of the Palestinian national anthem also echo

strongly key documents such as the Palestinian National Charter (Palestine National Council,

1968/2001).

It should be quite apparent that the contents of each of these national anthems,

regardless of the challenge that the very ritual itself presents to Palestinian-Israelis, is highly

problematic for any kind of peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians that entails

the mutual recognition of identity. The Israeli anthem represents the classic discourse of

Zionism and commitment to a Jewish state in the "land" known as Palestine until 1948. The

Palestinian anthem is both violently reactive to Zionism and reflective of a national identity

that emphasizes suffering, struggle, and violent resistance. The identity polarization is

inevitable in the internalization of these discourses. So perhaps the notion of leaving these

discourses safely "behind"—outside the gates of camp—is not such a bad idea after all.

The new, third anthem, sung by youth as they file back into the camp, represents the

common, superordinate identity of a "Seed":

> People of Peace, rejoice, rejoice,
> For we have united into one voice,
> A voice of peace and hate of war,
> United hands have built a bridge between two shores.
> We on the shores have torn down the wall,
> We stand hand in hand as we watch the bricks fall.

> We've learned from the past and fear not what's ahead,
> I know I'll not walk alone,
> But with a friend instead.
> I am a Seed of Peace, seed of peace, a seed of peace
> I am a seed, a seed of peace
> I am a seed, I am a seed of peace
> Peace, peace, peace, peace

Most notably, this anthem refers to the common identity of a "Seed" (I *am* a Seed of Peace) as "united" against "war" and a "bridge" between the polarized identities that maintain the conflict. The reference to friendship is also key, as Wallach (2000) coined "Make one friend" as his programmatic slogan. His notion was that only through friendship with the enemy could the stereotypes and negative attitudes toward the outgroup really diminish, consistent with Pettigrew's (1998) reformulated contact theory, in which cross-group friendship receives centrality.

These early rituals at camp thus serve the purpose of contributing to the larger "reacculturative" design of the program. If the problem that creates the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is decidedly located not *within* individuals, particularly *young* individuals, but rather in their *environment*—that is, the social structure and cultural system that surrounds them— then a radical restructuring of environment will, at the very least, de-essentialize the perception of the "enemy." Youth should come to view the members of the outgroup as individuals who share many common features with them, such as an interest in soccer or swimming, Eminem or Britney Spears.

Seeds of Peace is consumed with the project of fashioning a new common identity among the youth: that of a "Seed." By no means does this project somehow *necessitate* the abandonment of national identity. Rather, consistent with common ingroup identity theory and its ability to reduce intergroup conflict (Gaertner et al., 1999), the goal is to preserve ingroup identity but to "add" the perception of a higher level of category inclusiveness (e.g.,

we may be Palestinians or Israelis, but we are all human). Participants undergo a process of identity *recategorization*, placing themselves in a new group that shares an identity with the outgroup. Chapter 4 will explore in greater detail the ways in which youth engaged with the new culture of Seeds of Peace either accommodate or resist the inculcation of the identity supplement of a "Seed." This brief preliminary account of the early rituals of camp has, I hope, sufficiently introduced the ideological project of Seeds of Peace. Let me now provide more detail on the "curriculum" of the program.

As camp begins in earnest, after the flag-raising ritual, the youth settle into what will become a stable activity routine for the next three weeks. Each morning the ringing of a loud bell awakes them, and they file to the outdoor "auditorium" in which camp director Tim Wilson, an African-American man and former civil rights leader in Maine of incredible presence, makes announcements and, more critically, delivers daily "lectures" on how he perceives the process to be going. He recounts stories from his own childhood experiences with racism, inequality, and intergroup conflict in America, solidifying the connection between America's "prior" social project to reduce intergroup conflict (relatively successfully) and the project of "assisting" those in the Middle East to do the same. Given his stature and authoritative presence, the campers are consistently focused and silent. Then the youth eat breakfast together at a pre-assigned, mixed-group table.

As Wallach (2000) describes, the youth interact in three distinct groups at camp designed to maximize intergroup contact and exposure to a number of outgroup members: (1) the "sleeping" group who reside in a bunk together, (2) the "eating" group who eat together for each meal, and (3) the "talking" group who meet once daily for dialogue about the conflict and intermittently during the program for physical "group challenge" activities. Thus

social identity at the camp is reorganized (away from strictly national identity) in a multitude of ways, demonstrating possibilities in social identity diversity to the youth.

The remainder of the day is spent in scheduled blocks of sports, artistic activities, and the dialogue sessions themselves. On the field and in other contexts at camp, youth become members of even more groups, such as sports teams or a group working on a particular art or drama project. Again, the purpose here is to get youth working toward goals that transcend the conflict they in fact have with each other as a consequence of their particular national identity. The one place in which identity transcendence is not explicitly built into the curriculum is the dialogue session.

The dialogue program at Seeds of Peace in fact possesses an extremely tumultuous history. As noted, the need for facilitated dialogue was not immediately apparent to Wallach in 1993, and it was introduced in the second year. Since the inception of the dialogue program, a number of facilitation methods have been used, with no set guidelines for facilitators. A general "flow" to the dialogue program proceeds in three stages. In the first stage, the goal is to develop trust among group members and to cultivate personal knowledge of one another. The conflict is typically not directly addressed, at least by the facilitators themselves. Naturally, the conflict arises immediately in dialogue, as youth indicate even their communities of origin (e.g., Palestinian youth claiming to live in "Palestine" immediately sparks fury among the Jewish Israelis). The second and most extensive phase of the dialogue program involves a more direct focus on the conflict, covering topics such as the two historical narratives (typically a lengthy part of Phase 2), identity and interpretation, and mock conflict resolution. The final, quite brief phase concerns preparation for the re-adjustment home. This phase typically involves either direct conversation or role play of possible scenarios upon the return home (e.g., reaction of friends and family to a "new self").

The dialogue sessions contribute to the general re-acculturative efforts of the program by providing a safe space for processing the experience. But they also serve the important function of directly confronting the conflict and, in that confrontation, assaulting the polarized identities that youth possess as they enter the camp. The exercises on history and identity are designed to instill in the youth a relativistic (or at least pluralistic) view of historical fact. A sample "Walk through History" exercise (Table 2.1) reveals the two polarized historical narratives.

In the table below, consider the differential interpretations of three key years in the history of the conflict: 1948, 1967, and 2000. In this exercise that I observed, youth were instructed to create newspaper headlines that depicted what was happening around these key events. They worked in separated groups and thus did not have access to each other's narrative until they came together. Exposing the negative interdependence of historical narrative serves to highlight the relativity of historical fact to youth. Recognition of this relativity must, by its very occurrence, lead to a decrease in salience of ingroup identity, as youth come to see the narratives they have been presented as incomplete or one-sided.

Israeli	Year	Palestinian
"State of Israel Declared Independent"	1948	"The Land of Palestine Occupied; Families Killed; People Expelled"
"Israel Victorious Over Arab Enemy Invaders"	1967	"Israel Rapes the Virginity of Palestine and Seizes It in Total"
"Terrorists Strike: Intifada Begins"	2000	"Sharon Disrespects the Muslim People, Instigates the Palestinians to Rise Up!"

Table 2.1. Sample responses to "Walk through History" exercise.

While many of the activities and curricula of the dialogue program contribute to the larger project of common ingroup identity construction, an interesting change in the program

has occurred with the increase in facilitators from the region in the past several years. The leading center for training dialogue facilitators in Israel, Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam ("The School for Peace"), has developed a specific philosophy that is grounded in social psychological theory and research. That theoretical foundation happens to be social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As Nadler (2004) describes it:

> The work at the School for Peace reflects a perspective that is closer to the social-identity approach. It is predicated on the view that unequal power relations between Jews and Arabs are the key factor in understanding the conflict between these groups within the Israeli context and beyond. The work within the parameters of this model aims to lead Arabs and Jews to genuinely and openly address the inequality and the power differences that exist between them. ...[T]he School for Peace model view[s] relative power as the nexus through which greater understanding of the conflict between groups can be achieved. (p. 28)

So the School for Peace model has a particular topical aim that, in theory, can contribute to "greater understanding" between Arabs and Jews: the unequal distribution of power. This focus adheres to the social identity approach in its emphasis on group status; but it also adheres in its focus on the dialogue participants *as group members* rather than *unique individuals*:

> This model emphasizes that a genuine dialogue that may produce social change is one that occurs only between two conflicting groups and not between individuals who happen to belong to groups in conflict. ...This work aims to promote an encounter between secure identities. It represents an emphasis on interidentity dialogue about power and equality between Jews and Arabs, rather than a personal meeting between Jewish and Arab individuals. (Nadler, 2004, p. 29)

True to a social identity approach, facilitators trained in this model view the encounter as occurring not among individuals, with particular life stories and unique engagements with master narratives of history and identity. Rather, the dialogue occurs between groups, as the intergroup experience primes social identity over and above personal identity.

The fact that Seeds of Peace increasingly relies on facilitators from the region (particularly in 2004, my second summer of fieldwork), most of whom are schooled in this

model, introduces an interesting element to the larger project of the camp and its regional follow-up program. It creates a more complex blend of underlying philosophical approaches, to some extent leading Seeds of Peace more toward a "mixed" model of peace education (Maddy-Weitzman, 2005). Yet in some ways, as I saw it in my fieldwork, the two approaches created confusions among the youth. On the one hand, they were supposed to somehow "lose" their identities: to leave behind their national identities, their polarized ingroup narratives of self and other, at the front gates of camp. On the soccer field and basketball court, in the bunks and the dining tables, they were to see themselves as all part of a larger, more diverse team.

That Seeds of Peace relies first and foremost on a common ingroup identity model cannot be denied. Yet in the dialogue session, the youth were to prime their national identities again; they were to serve as representatives of their group. One might argue that this blend helps to inject a dose of realism into the curriculum at Seeds of Peace, but my impression is that it created more conflict between facilitators and other (American) staff. In fact, the summer after I completed fieldwork there apparently witnessed a "revolt" (or "intifada," as one of my Palestinian colleagues dubbed it) of facilitators which resulted in the dismissal of all of them. As we consider the narratives of youth most explicitly in Chapters 3 and 4, we will explore further the impact of these sessions upon their own understanding of personal and social identity.

The ultimate ritual in which the construction of a new common identity is cultivated is the closing ritual of "Color Games." Adapted from the popular American camp finale, "Color Wars," Color Games involves the creation of two larger teams that compete for three days intensively in a number of sport and challenge activities. During these three days, no dialogue sessions are held, and what has become the routine, regimented camp schedule is

essentially erased as youth stay up late planning their strategies for the next day's challenges.

It is an intense period of adrenaline-infused intergroup competition. The strategy, naturally,

underlying the event is to (a) demonstrate the fluidity of social identity (someone's bunk mate

and best friend one day may be an "enemy" the next), and (b) facilitate intergroup

cooperation (between Israelis and Palestinians, not between the two Color Games teams)

through the "superordinate" goal of winning the games. The Games culminates in a kind of

ritual "baptism," if you will, as all campers and staff storm into the lake in celebration and,

reuniting as the external imposition of their divergent social identities is removed, sing the

Seeds of Peace anthem in unison. An excerpt from my field notes conveys the perception of

an onlooker:

> The winning team was announced followed by what appeared to me a "baptismal"
> rite. Prompted by the counselors, the winning team led the whole camp into the lake.
> Kids were coerced to submerge, despite the freezing temperatures and their clear
> state of exhaustion. It seems to me like a rite of passage in which the identity shift to
> "Seed" is complete by reflecting successful completion of the Color Games, itself
> another identity ritual in which identity is somehow "given up." To me the rite
> seemed to represent a kind of ultimate acquiescence to the Seeds ideology. Those
> who resisted were essentially coerced, literally dragged into the water.

My reaction to the ritual, taking on a somewhat critical tone at this particular point in my

fieldwork, is linked to my own concern with a number of key observations at camp.

I came to view the culture of camp, with its distinctly liberal American ideology, as

highly problematic for youth socialized in the context of conflict. The "third" narrative

presented by Seeds of Peace is one of respect for diversity and identity pluralism, anchored in

a radical perspectival approach to history. Ideologically, this narrative is rooted in our own

experience with intergroup conflict (e.g., racism and segregation), and the vast social

psychological literature on intergroup relations has precisely this American history in mind

(e.g., Brewer & Miller, 1984). My ethical concern as a researcher, and as an observing

participant, was centered squarely on the psychological challenge that indoctrination of this new, superordinate identity narrative creates for youth. I use the word "indoctrination" for its authenticity here, not for some kind of dramatic intent. There is at camp a rather pernicious "press" to identify with and internalize the identity of a Seed. The coercive participation in rituals such as the post-Color Games "baptism" is just a minor example. Staff and facilitators, not to mention the ubiquity of Wallach's "Make one friend" mantra, seek to instill this third narrative into the consciousness of youth through discourse and practice. While the context of camp substitutes an ecology of identity polarization with an ecology of cosmopolitanism, it does so with just as strong a drive for conformity among youth. It constructs an artificial, highly contrived narrative of identity—one which is disconnected from the reality of conflict.

I will reserve further analysis of the context of Seeds of Peace for Chapter 4, but I trust the reader has been at minimum introduced to a critical perspective on the ideology to which participants are expected to become resocialized. I would be unfairly critical were I not to acknowledge that, despite the disconnection of camp itself from the conflict, an extensive follow-up program was developed in the late 1990s by former counselor Ned Lazarus. Based in Jerusalem, it has undergone a number of evolutions in focus and philosophy. But it must be noted that the effort of the follow-up program is precisely to address the problematic distance of the camp (both physically and ideologically) from the region. Providing a safe place for continued intergroup contact, in a highly segregated parcel of land, is certainly foremost in the minds of staff. And as Seeds of Peace has (again, intermittently) relied upon regional facilitators and staff, the greater the admission of challenge in cultivating so rigidly this third narrative within youth. (In the midst of writing this dissertation in 2006, the Seeds of Peace Center for Coexistence in Jerusalem shut its doors permanently.)

Field Site 2: Hands of Peace

Let us now consider a very similar enterprise, but one which is less removed from the context of an "authentic" cultural setting. I conducted fieldwork in the suburbs of Chicago in the Hands of Peace program for four consecutive summers (2003-2006). Hands of Peace was the idea of Gretchen Grad, a University of Chicago-educated businesswoman-turned-housewife in the northern suburbs of Chicago. As she often describes the genesis of the idea in a number of public forums, the idea sprang from her own experience with pluralism and religious diversity. Her neighbor and best friend, Deanna Jacobson, happens to be Jewish. Grad, a Protestant Christian (a member of the liberal United Church of Christ), took great pleasure in the fact that her children were exposed to religious diversity at young ages, owing to this friendship. An avid follower of international affairs with a supremely poised presence, Grad decided that youth from Israel and Palestine, in addition to members of her own progressive community, could perhaps gain much from exposure to cultural and religious diversity through such a program. In the tradition of cosmopolitanism and the idealism of cooperation through contact, Grad viewed the possibility of such a program to transform individual lives through exposure to "others" unlike themselves. She approached Jacobson about the idea, who successfully persuaded her synagogue to co-sponsor the endeavor. The two women then approached the local mosque, which agreed to the interfaith venture and appointed a Palestinian-American woman to complete the triumvirate of what became known locally as the three "soccer moms" working for peace in the Middle East.

The three women approached Seeds of Peace to assist in getting the first summer's program off the ground, and the program quickly achieved independence in operations. I noted earlier that the two programs share a great deal with regard to philosophy, curriculum,

and structure. I will now elaborate through a consideration of the "culture" of Hands of Peace and its "rites" of participation.

The Culture of Hands of Peace

Let me be faithful to my desire for "full disclosure" on the matter of my own position and say that I was afforded far greater access to the culture of Hands of Peace than Seeds of Peace for two reasons. First, Hands of Peace is a far more modest endeavor than Seeds of Peace. For a single three-week session, Seeds of Peace participants number around 300, and the camp essentially becomes a small village. One of the key distinguishing features between these two programs is that Hands of Peace strives for a greater sense of intimacy among its participants and therefore recruits a delegation of approximately 15 youth from Israel and Palestine. These youth are joined by approximately 12 American youth, resulting in a total program size that approaches 30. As a field researcher, it was far easier for me to observe the dynamics of the group and to assess the culture of the program at Hands of Peace, for it was of a more manageable scale for an army of one.

In addition, I assumed a unique role in Hands of Peace. In 2003 I served as a dialogue facilitator (as I had at Seeds of Peace). In 2004 I was asked to serve as Program Director. Not only did assumption of this position enable me to travel several times to the region in 2004 and 2005 in order to conduct fieldwork there, it also transformed my role from a key figure in the dialogue sessions to one of significantly greater psychological distance from the youth. The position of Program Director required that I be able to work closely with the youth and command a level of authority and respect, but it primarily involved the more mundane administrative aspects of the program, such as ensuring that buses arrived on time and that lunches were delivered as scheduled.

To say that I was not intimately involved with both the culture of the program itself and its participants during these years would certainly be an exaggeration of my psychological distance. Yet my position afforded me the opportunity to witness the "identity politics" of the organizers themselves, as they struggled (quite nobly) to "balance" the seemingly infinite sets of group and individual interests that vied for primacy of consideration. In addition, while in 2003 my particular behavior in a dialogue session could conceivably have induced a particular outcome of my own desire (though I confess to being far too naïve and stupefied at that point in my fieldwork to have known what outcomes to try to elicit to make my data more "interesting"), my role as Program Director prevented such possibilities of what classic experimental psychology would dub the "experimenter effect." This role, in fact, likely elevated the sense of "prestige" that the youth already had of me as a psychologist and as a researcher. What I consider to be of greater significance, as far as any influence on my data is concerned, are my other identities: American, Male, Christian. As I indicated earlier, it is these features of my identity that seemed to fashion me as a "globalized stranger" to which youth might impart the stories they wish the global village to hear. Having followed through on my commitment to reflexivity, let us now consider most explicitly the culture of Hands of Peace.

Far from removed from a recognizable culture, Hands of Peace is deeply embedded in the suburban culture of a politically liberal, hyper-diverse metropolis: Chicago. Here amid the expansive shopping centers and new developments of "McMansions"—the physical culture of suburbia that Erikson (1968) once described as "safe and remote" but "bland" (p. 298)—lies the nexus of middle-class liberal America. Physically, then, the culture of Hands of Peace is one that, similar to Seeds of Peace (but in radically different ways), resembles nothing of either Israel or Palestine. It is interminably flat—a topography quite foreign to

Israelis and Palestinians, even those who reside on the coastal plain who are quickly transported to the mountains with a brief drive. The expansiveness of the place is also quite alarming to youth from a land of relatively diminutive size (Israel and Palestine are about the size of New Jersey and Delaware combined). The fact that a journey from Glenview to downtown Chicago can take an hour by car is shocking to them: Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are only 45 minutes apart, and Jerusalem and Ramallah are (absent military checkpoints) only about 20 minutes apart.

Naturally another key aspect of the physical culture of Hands of Peace that is quite divergent from both Israel and Palestine is the enormity of the homes in which youth reside. Hands of Peace blends standard American summer "day camp" with "hospitality" program in that participants reside with host families in the local communities while coming together for the majority of each day. Typically those families who are able to serve as a host to such youth are quite well-off financially and thus have rather large homes. Expressions of awe are not at all uncommon as the youth arrive at their host family residences. David, a Jewish Israeli who lives in a rather cramped Haifa apartment with his parents and two siblings, had his own "suite" in a home which overlooked Lake Michigan in Wilmette for the duration of the two-week program in 2005.

The novelty of the physical culture, while instantly revealing the economic discrepancy between the societies (particularly for Palestinian youth, whose emerging country occupies a far lower level of economic development than Israel), also serves to excite the youth. Participants in both Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace, owing to the criteria for admission, are typically middle-class youth from the region; they are all subjects of globalization, fluent English speakers, consumers of the global youth marketplace. So for them the visit to America and their residence in the homes of affluent families is like a dream

realized. This physical culture, then, brings with it an economic one. As global consumers, this generation of youth is lured by the affluence of American culture, even as that affluence itself is a caricature. Though it may be a kind of caricature—or, at least, an incomplete representation of our culture—it infuses the culture of Hands of Peace physically, economically, and socially.

The social ecology of Hands of Peace is thus the American suburbs as we know them: sites of, dare I say it, superficial shelter from the "peril" of urban living. Unnaturally clean streets, carefully manicured lawns, driveways with glimmering sports cars and SUV's. And above all, good public schools. So it makes sense that such a program would be born out of the liberal idealism of these communities—places where a level of cosmopolitanism and an ethic of pluralism infuse the identities of their citizens, at least in the liberal discourse if not necessarily in its practice.

It is, therefore, quite readily perceptible that the culture of Hands of Peace in its more ideological, rather than physical, form should resemble that of Seeds of Peace. A key difference, however, is that Hands of Peace has its origins in the commitment of a largely middle-class Christian community (as opposed to the elite liberal Jewish American community of which John Wallach was a member). Even though she was successful in enlisting the support of her Jewish friend Jacobson, and the endorsement of Jacobson's synagogue, Grad struggled over the years to maintain the support of the local Jewish community, who witnessed a far greater threat to their Jewish identities in welcoming Palestinian youth and hearing their stories than seemed psychologically manageable. As the sponsoring synagogue changed hands to a right-wing rabbi who had lived in an Israeli settlement in East Jerusalem, gradually the institution and its community withdrew support

for the program. Jacobson herself quietly diminished her own role, despite a highly visible

presence and level of involvement in the first summer of the program in 2003.

In addition to the difficulties of maintaining the support of the Jewish community, the

collaboration of the local Arab and Muslim community could not be sustained after the first

summer of the program. Nuha Dabbouseh, the Palestinian-American whom the mosque had

appointed as its representative to the program (Dabbouseh was in fact dubbed a "co-founder"

for purposes of public relations and legitimacy in the local Arab and Muslim community),

recommended that the mosque withdraw its support after she perceived Grad and Jacobson to

be culturally insensitive to her requests for program policies that were respectful of Islam

(e.g., a more strict dress code). Beyond what appeared minor "slights" or instances of

"imbalance" to the local Jewish and Muslim communities, it was abundantly clear to me that

institutional support for such a program created far too many threats to identity, at least in

these suburban communities. The withdrawal of institutional support from both the mosque

and the synagogue revealed quite plainly the superficiality and naïveté of the liberalism

initially espoused by the community members. Theirs was a cosmopolitanism in theory,

rather than one sustainable in practice. Yet it was the inability to predict the interplay of their

own identity politics that ultimately seemed to render their participation untenable. Once

confronted with the difficult reality of youth from a region of war and conflict, the idyllic

superficiality of suburban American idealism was simply far too threatened. Psychologically,

retreat became the only conceivable option to those who perceived too great a threat from this

realistic encounter with the conflict.

But the fact that Grad and her Christian community remained firmly at the helm of

the organization, supported of course by those American Jews and Arabs who were willing to

risk a level of alienation from their religious institutions to remain active in the program,

ensured that an ideology of superficial liberal pluralism and cosmopolitanism endured. In fact, for Grad, a richer appreciation of the challenges posed by such a program seemed to set in, and the idealism with which she founded the program seemed to transform—to an extent—with this recognition of the "reality" of the conflict. Her own travel to the region did not begin until after the initial summer program, and naturally there is no better way for the reality of the conflict to set in than to immerse oneself in it, as I of course realized in my fieldwork. What therefore happened, it seemed to me, was a far more expansive attempt to appease various "camps" in the organization. A kind of factionalism emerged with the efforts of Grad and other leaders to live out the virtues of cosmopolitanism and to consider a multiplicity of voices and perspectives on the actual program itself.

This narrative of Hands of Peace offers an inside view of the contestation of the very culture of the program. In the two-year debate of whether to become an entirely independent non-profit organization (it originally existed as a subsidiary of Glenview Community Church, Grad's congregation), the identity of the program was certainly at stake, particularly around its emphasis on an *interfaith* versus *intercultural* focus. (An emphasis on interfaith dialogue suggested a religious basis for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which tended to distress the regional staff and the youth themselves, who, like most of their peers, lived relatively secular lives.) Yet the contestation over programmatic identity hardly, in my estimation, affected the essential culture to which the youth were exposed in the course of participation.

The culture of Hands of Peace, not surprisingly, mimicked that of Seeds of Peace in a number of ways. The use of a uniform served to highlight for the youth their status as a new group with a common, superordinate identity. The mission statement of Hands of Peace, despite undergoing the occasional minor revisions over the course of my fieldwork, was

always quite clear in its ideological foundations and allegiance (unscientifically, that is) to the

common ingroup identity model of intergroup contact:

> The mission of Hands of Peace is to foster long-term peaceful coexistence among Jewish-Israelis, Arab-Israelis, and West Bank Palestinians by bringing young people from the Middle East together with American teens in an *interfaith setting*. We strive to promote this mission by creating opportunities for the participants—young people from the Middle East, local teens, host families, staff, and volunteers—to seek the *mutual understanding that comes from face to face encounters* by: (1) Exposing teens and host communities to cultures other than their own for the purpose of *recognizing our common humanity*; (2) Promoting the ability of participants to give and receive *differing perspectives* in a respectful manner; (3) Developing *a personal commitment to promote intercultural relationships*; (4) Educating home communities about the need for continuing dialogues to foster peaceful coexistence. (Hands of Peace website, 2006; available at www.hands-of-peace.org; italics added)

The highlighted portions of the mission statement serve to draw the reader's attention to the

ideological features of the program.

First, the immediate statement of an "interfaith setting" reflects the desire on the part

of the organizers to view the social ecology of the program as one of primarily *religious*

diversity. Cultural diversity is certainly noted but, owing to its later placement in the

statement, receives a slightly lesser degree of emphasis. This insistence of framing the

program as *interfaith*, it should be noted, was met with resistance even among members of

the Steering Committee[4] upon the recognition that most of the youth participants from Israel

and Palestine were not very religious. There were also, as noted, concerns about the

conflation of religion and nationality by framing the program as primarily "interfaith" in

nature, which might contribute to the somewhat common misconception that the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict is largely a religious conflict between Muslims and Jews. Regardless of

these concerns, Grad's commitment to her religious congregation, as well as that

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[4] The Steering Committee was the primary governing body of Hands of Peace during my fieldwork. Though I never served as a voting member of the Committee in my role as Program Director, I did attend the majority of Committee meetings from 2004-2005.

congregation's significant financial contributions to the program, necessitated an insistence that the program retain its original interfaith focus. As will become clear upon detailing the "rites" of participation, this focus was never well-integrated into the program's curriculum. It should, however, be noted that the alliance with the three congregations (which ultimately reduced to two and then only one—the Christian church) possessed implications for the physical culture of the program: many key events (including the dialogue sessions in the first year) occurred at the church, synagogue, and mosque themselves.

Let us now consider a second component of the Hands of Peace ideology revealed in the mission statement. The assumption that "mutual understanding" emerges from "face-to-face encounters" is guilty of that most common misconception of intergroup contact: that mere exposure somehow radically restructures our understanding and, subsequently, our cognition of self and other. To be fair, such idealism is difficult to resist when considering the social psychology of intergroup relations. But Allport (1954) was quite clear on the matter in his classic study of prejudice: only under specific conditions can intergroup contact really effect significant intrapsychic (and intergroup-relational) change. Decades of research on his famous contact hypothesis have demonstrated its predictive strengths and limitations (see Pettigrew, 1998), but the satisfaction of the conditions of optimal intergroup contact that he set forth remains essential for practitioners. The architects of Hands of Peace, having been quite unfamiliar with the social psychology of intergroup contact, fell prey to the assumption that mere exposure in fact results in "mutual understanding." As it turns out, this lack of intentionality was not problematic, owing to the fact that the program did in fact satisfy most of the conditions for "optimal" intergroup contact.

The mission statement of Hands of Peace reveals quite plainly the program's commitment to a common ingroup identity (again, implicitly) model of intergroup contact

and the same ideology of cosmopolitanism that permeates the culture of Seeds of Peace. The focus in the statement on getting participants to recognize their "common humanity" reveals a desire to, in social psychological terms, initiate a cognitive recategorization process of social identity in which the youth will come to view Israeli and Palestinian national identities as a part of the superordinate "common human" identity, as well as the superordinate identity of a "Hand of Peace." The emphasis on promoting the ability to tolerate "differing perspectives" and to foster "intercultural relationships" reveals the ideological project of the program as connected to cosmopolitanism: through the recognition of pluralism in perspective and identity, achieved through relational exposure to such difference, a higher level of "identity consciousness" is achieved. It is precisely this "higher level" that embraces an ideology of peaceful coexistence.

So we come to view the ideological project of Hands of Peace, like Seeds of Peace, as intimately connected to the larger American project of liberal pluralism and its embrace of cosmopolitan values in human consciousness. Fundamental to this project is both (a) the reduction in salience of one's social identity—a rigidly internalized group narrative that only serves to polarize and insulate, and (b) the induction of a common ingroup identity at a "higher" level of category inclusiveness: that of "Hand" most proximately and ultimately that of "Human." It is in this recategorization of identity that the possibility of a new generation of "de-polarized" identity narratives might flourish. Or so is the appeal.

<center>*The Rites of Participation*</center>

Getting to Chicago

Having established the essential culture of the program, with its particular social ecology and ideology, let us explicitly consider the rites of participation: the actual goings-on of the program, from the moment of recruitment of the youth to their re-integration home

after the program. As I indicated, Hands of Peace relied on the support of Seeds of Peace to recruit youth in their inaugural summer of 2003. Seeds of Peace did so by soliciting former participants and their siblings who, for whatever reason, had not been accepted by their governments to participate in Seeds of Peace but desperately wanted to. This recruitment strategy worked quite well for Hands of Peace, as the idea of having participants who were in fact somewhat acquainted with the nature of a coexistence program meant that there was less at stake in the program's experimental beginnings.

After the first summer, a school-based recruitment strategy was initiated in the region in which the organization developed relationships with a small number of schools from across Israel and Palestine. Presentations were made once a year by American staff (including myself), and interested youth applied online. Every attempt was made in recruiting a delegation to balance a number of factors. For example, among the Palestinian delegation, there was a desire to balance Muslim and Christian youth, as well as youth from large cities like Ramallah or Nablus and those from villages. Among Jewish Israeli applicants, there was a desire to balance geographic locale as well as "ethnic" distinction (i.e., Ashkenazi versus Mizrahi[5]). Beyond the consideration of demographic dynamics, however, there was a genuine attempt to recruit an ideologically diverse group of youth. That is, there was an active desire to avoid taking youth who seemed somehow already committed to peaceful coexistence. While many participants may have been "predisposed" to such ideological commitments, there was an attempt to assemble a delegation that mirrored as closely as possible the actual population of Israel and Palestine.

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[5] The term *Ashkenazi* refers to "Occidental" Jews, or Jews who immigrated to Israel from European countries. The term *Mizrahi* (sometimes also referred to as *Sephardi*) refers to "Oriental" Jews, or Jews who immigrated to Israel from North Africa and other parts of the Middle East (generally Arab speaking countries), as well as from South Asia.

Once selected, the participants underwent at least one pre-program orientation in Jerusalem with regional staff and former participants. These were important sessions for them to become initiated into the larger group of active program alumni, thereby beginning the process of identity restructuring. Their participation began in earnest as they departed from the region to Chicago.

The politics of identity immediately played out in the journey. I will offer two examples, both of which derive from the fact that one's travel documents are highly determinative of the experience one will have in both leaving the region and in entering the United States.

To leave Ben-Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv, an American committed to the values of a legal system that respects identity diversity is instantly transported to another time in our own history—a time of lines and stations for different identities, a time of segregation. Since identity is so central to the conflict itself, and therefore to Israel's very security, it is impossible for certain cultural practices (like entering and exiting the country) in Israel to really embody the liberal pluralism of the multicultural democracy it may strive to be. That is, identity in such contexts of vital interest to security as the airport cannot be somehow erased, as the eyes of a cosmopolitan pluralist might somehow attempt in scanning the visual field. For those who work airport security at Ben-Gurion embody more our Secret Service agents than anything resembling a Transportation Security Administration employee examining the baggage X-ray screen in mind-numbing nonchalance. Airport security is, for Israelis, a science—and one of vital existential significance.

The significance of identity in the very process of leaving Israel means that the identity of the passenger is key to one's experience in the airport. Upon arriving to the airport, one is greeted every 20 to 30 feet by security screeners who ask for passports and

details on the nature of one's visit to Israel. It is at this point that I learned one must be discreet (i.e., disingenuous) in sharing information. I was carefully instructed, by my Arab and Jewish colleagues alike, to only mention the names of the Jewish families with whom I had stayed and to avoid mention of my travel to the Palestinian territories at all (despite the fact that I always had secured written permission from the army for my travel into the West Bank).

When one enters the airport and undergoes that initial "interrogation" by the security agents, one is then "marked" with a color-coded sticker. As best I could discern, pink indicated low-risk, yellow indicated medium-risk, and red indicated high-risk. (As revealed by this color scheme, airport security was fairly overt in its classifications.) Not surprisingly, one's identity was entirely predictive of one's sticker color: Jews invariably received a pink sticker, Arabs a red one, and "unidentifiable" travelers such as myself (i.e., non-Jews and non-Arabs of any nationality, including American) a yellow one. When I first traveled through Ben-Gurion and was extensively quizzed about the "origin of my surname" and whether it may have any Arab origins (explicitly asked by security agents), I initially sort of laughed off the event as the paranoia and lack of trust of one random security agent. When the same exact ritual occurred *every time* I left the country, I finally realized the discernment of any Arab origins at all was fundamental to the science of Israeli security, and the relevance of my own identity in the perception of Israelis was constantly affirmed in this experience.

The Hands of Peace participants who travel through Ben-Gurion include all Israeli citizens (i.e., both Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel) and Palestinians who reside in Jerusalem and therefore have "permanent resident" status in Israel. They typically have passports issued by Jordan and an Israeli travel document that permits them to travel in and out of Israel. (Jerusalemite Palestinians possess what is called the coveted "blue ID" that

maximizes their ability to pass through checkpoints and to cross between Palestine and Israel. They are the one group that essentially has complete freedom of movement, as Palestinian-Israelis are prohibited from entering the territories without approval from the army.)

The initial encounter with airport security highlights most poignantly the identity dynamics of the conflict, as all of the Arab participants are taken through a different, far more lengthy security line than the Jewish ones. Psychologically, that this event commences the program immediately highlights the perceived power imbalance of the Palestinian youth. When I met Ali, a 16-year-old Palestinian from East Jerusalem, upon his arrival in Chicago, he shared this account unsolicited:

> Today we witnessed the discrimination. First our car was stopped and searched at the airport. Then all the Jews just walked right through, while all of us Arabs were searched, practically strip-searched. This is our lives as Palestinians. We're always struggling, always fighting. It's really depressing.

The experience in the airport serves, then, as a catalyst for the identity salience that will consume the coexistence program. The politics of exit from Israel are, unfortunately, closely mirrored upon entry to the United States, where Israeli citizens again receive preferential treatment. Palestinians who travel with the Israeli delegation again experience detention upon entry to the United States, where they are required to undergo an entrance interview with the Department of Homeland Security. In my years of fieldwork, Israeli citizens never needed to undergo such interviews (including Arab citizens).

Palestinians who hold a "green ID" and a passport issued by either Jordan or the Palestinian Authority are not permitted to travel from Ben-Gurion. Rather, their only option is to depart from Jordan to reach destinations outside the Middle East. The Palestinian delegation for Hands of Peace thus begins their journey to Chicago two days prior to the Israeli group. They do so because they must traverse the West Bank route to Jordan, passing

through numerous Israeli checkpoints and then eventually the Jordanian border. According to the staff who serve as chaperones for the youth, this journey is exhausting and fraught with numerous possibilities of potential obstacle, including delays at checkpoints and the border. Thanks to good planning and political connections in Jordan, the group has successfully made the journey to Amman in each of the three years of my fieldwork with little incident. They then fly directly to Chicago.

Unfortunately, even though this Palestinian group experiences little in the way of identity discrimination upon their exit from Jordan, the entry to the United States is anything but a welcoming one. It is the policy of the Department of Homeland Security to register all Palestinians and Jordanians who enter the country, although an informant at the Department indicated to me that only males are indeed registered; females are interviewed out of a desire to disguise the identity strategy of registration. As a consequence, the Palestinian delegation spends up to four hours following arrival in Customs and Immigration at Chicago waiting to be interviewed and registered. My colleague Amin, a chaperone to the group, summarized his experience as follows:

> It's what we're used to, us Palestinians. It was very disappointing for us, though, because we were expecting to be welcomed. We are a group that is working for peace, and we think of America as a great land of freedom and democracy. To be singled out like that—which we knew we were because we saw other foreigners walk right through—it reminded us that we are Palestinians. We know we face this at home, by the Israelis and the Jordanians and everyone, but we didn't think we'd face it here.

The very experience of travel to Chicago itself thus primes key aspects of the master narrative of identity, particularly for Palestinians. The narrative of oppression and discrimination, of victimhood, is thus rendered salient even before the youth enter the coexistence session with Israelis.

Acculturating

Once in Chicago, the "traumas" of travel are rapidly left behind them as youth are in awe of the vast expanse, cleanliness, and affluence of the suburban community in which they will spend the next two weeks. The exact welcome ritual varied each year during my three summers of fieldwork. In 2003, when both groups arrived in the morning, the day was spent at a local park where youth played softball, basketball, and made bracelets and other types of "playful" activities. In 2004, when both groups arrived in the late afternoon, something a bit more "ritualistic" was attempted. A formal welcome dinner was organized and, at a point late in the evening, all of the youth were gathered in a separate room from the families, given their official program t-shirts, and then introduced (amid energized applause) anew to the families wearing their purple program t-shirts. Obviously this kind of ritual was more explicitly "initiative" for the youth and much more explicitly "ritualistic," closely mirroring the concept of flag-raising at Seeds of Peace: thanks to a uniform, they are all now part of a new group, possessing a new social identity as a "Hand." In 2005, such a ritual was no longer possible, as the security situation at Ben-Gurion necessitated that youth receive their program t-shirts in the region so that (in theory) they could proceed through security more expeditiously. But a formal program dinner and welcome still occurred in which the new participants were highlighted as a new group.

The early days of Hands of Peace are spent in basic relationship- and trust-building activities both in and out of the dialogue sessions. In the sessions, this phase typically involves the use of name games and basic interpersonal sharing, although this experience can even prime a direct conversation about the conflict. Outside of the sessions, youth eat and play together in outings like mini-golf or ice-skating. This initial phase culminates in the

"teams challenge" course, an outdoor group-building challenge course that requires youth to work together.

Like Seeds of Peace, Hands of Peace has an "anthem" which the youth learn in the very first days of participation and then "perform" at various points throughout the program. Its lyrics affirm the basic foundation of the program's ideology:

> We are people from different nations,
> But now we're learning how to live as one.
> We just wanted our voices to be heard,
> No more enemies to fear,
> Working together we can reach the highest heights,
> Keep this in mind and peace is near.
>
> (Chorus) Hands of Peace, we're building a bridge,
> Put your hand in mine.
> Trust in me, we'll change the world.
> We are people from different nations,
> But now we're learning how to live as one.
>
> Coexistence is more than just a word,
> Meet me halfway and that's a start.
> With your commitment and with honesty and time,
> You will feel a change of heart.
> (Chorus)

The song suggests a unity in the national pluralism of the group. It conveys a respect for diversity, while simultaneously identifying the need for cooperative interaction. Its goals are infused with emotion, with its poignant ending, "You will feel a change of heart." Such emotional transformations, it suggests, are possible only once the values of coexistence—and the narrative of cosmopolitanism—are internalized.

All of these early experiences serve very well to "acculturate" the youth to the program—to its basic structure, its essential characters, its social ideology. Outside of the dialogue sessions, the goal is to construct a new group, and the ability to do so is facilitated by the fact that these youth are all subjects of globalization. As such, finding common ground

does not pose a formidable challenge, so long as discussion of the conflict (which primes ingroup identity and reminds the youth of their differences from the larger group) does not occur.

The Resilience of Ingroup Identity

As the second phase of dialogue gets fully underway, the youth address the conflict head-on, focusing on discussions of stereotypes, history, and identity. This phase culminates in a full day of religious service observation. The youth attend Friday services at a local mosque and then discuss Islam with congregation members and staff. They then attend Shabbat services at a local synagogue, followed by a typical ritualized Shabbat dinner. It should be noted that the synagogue has always been of the Reform variety, which is in fact not recognized in Israel. Thus the ritual is often quite different to what even Jewish Israeli youth have experienced at home.

Although these rites of participation are designed to be purely observational in nature, the lines often blur between "observation" and "participation," as even observation of services poses some requirements of the youth. For example, female participants who are menstruating are forbidden from entering the prayer area of the mosque, even just to observe. Females also need to cover their heads, regardless of whether they are Muslim. Some youth interpreted the need to comply with these rules as somehow "oppressive," but in general the mosque observation was welcomed by the non-Muslim youth, most of whom had never stepped foot inside of a mosque and had little knowledge of Muslim religious practice.

Observation of Shabbat services proved more problematic for the group for several reasons. First, for Palestinian youth, the very idea of stepping into a synagogue brings about feelings of guilt and disloyalty, as Jews in general are viewed as the aggressor and the synagogue itself represents an institution of oppression. The experience thus typically created

unique challenges for the Palestinian participants. Unfortunately, the encouragement by the rabbis for youth to actually *participate* rather than simply observe the service over the years also created tensions for the youth (as well as tensions between the program staff and the rabbis). For example, in 2003 Palestinian youth were asked spontaneously by the senior rabbi (a confessed right-wing Israeli who lived on a Jewish settlement in East Jerusalem before relocating to the Chicago area) to approach the altar and light a series of candles. In this way, they were asked to become participants in a service that was already quite psychologically difficult for them to attend. An even more basic problem with Palestinian attendance at Shabbat services is the content of the service itself, with constant reference to "the people of Israel" and the "return to the land of Israel." For better or worse, the content of the Shabbat service strikes the Palestinian participants as essentially Zionist, affirming their attendance of the service as guilt-ridden.

These mid-program rituals thus challenge the common identity being constructed by priming social identity. Though initially intended to contribute to the program's aim to "expose" youth to different faith traditions and rituals, and in this exposure to facilitate their recognition of a common identity, they in fact interrupt the process of common ingroup identification. The resumption of social activities—a series of barbecues and other events—reinstates a sense of common identity, if only until the conflict is once again made to return to the consciousness of youth.

The Triumph of the Common Identity

Ingroup national identity is thus primed during the course of the program, albeit unintentionally by the organizers. As the second week of participation begins in earnest, it becomes increasingly difficult to segregate the content of the coexistence sessions with the social activities outside of them that serve to develop the common ingroup identity. Yet by

"Handshake Games," a ritual mimicking that of Color Games at Seeds of Peace, the triumph of the common identity becomes readily apparent.

Handshake Games consists of an entire day's worth of sports, games, and other challenges. Youth are divided into mixed groups (i.e., dialogue groups are divided, good friends are separated, sex and nationality are balanced) for the day's competition. It is a day of fun and laughter, the youth acting as good friends and teammates. The following night youth work together for "Culture Night," the ultimate ritual revealing the cosmopolitanism that infuses the ideology of the program.

For Culture Night, youth work together to cook their favorite recipes from home. The families are then treated to a feast of food, including traditional Palestinian fare like *makloube* and *kibbe* and Jewish dishes like *schnitzel* and *latkes*. The evening culminates in performances which represent their cultures in some way. The Palestinian *debka* is standard fare, along with a number of traditional Israeli songs. With Culture Night, there would seem to again be a kind of priming of social identity, but in fact the Israelis and Palestinians are very encouraging of one another, watching intensely as the other performs, or asking members of the other group about the various dishes prepared for the dinner. There is a way in which, with this ritual, the program seems to have succeeded in getting youth to appreciate cultural difference, though we must remember that such appreciation occurs in a social structure that is quite divergent from the actual context of conflict.

The final three evenings of the program are thus spent in social activities. A party for participants only (i.e., no host families) occurs the night following Culture Night, and the Farewell Dinner the next night. The Farewell Dinner brings together families that have been involved and major community donors. After the meal itself, attendees are treated to more performances from the youth (some repeated from Culture Night, but now more perfected), as

well as speeches about their experiences in the program. By this point, the youth feel so connected to one another that the idea of their imminent departure is extremely disappointing to them. Tears run down their faces as the Farewell Dinner performances conclude with a group rendition of the Hands of Peace song. That final lyric—"Now we're learning how to live AS ONE!"—is shouted passionately in unison. The next morning the youth gather at the church before the bus departs for the airport. They sign each other's t-shirts, write in each other's journals, and spend quiet one-on-one moments together. As the tears return, it is clear to me that the program has, in its way, and despite its many diversions into territories that could further polarize the youth, "succeeded."

An Analytic Interlude

Before detailing what happens *after* participation, at least insofar as the role of the program itself in the region, I ought to pause to further comment on what I mean when I claim that the program has somehow "succeeded" at its conclusion. I would like to expand upon this notion that the construction and cultivation of a common ingroup identity in fact triumphs over a polarized social identity in the final estimation at Hands of Peace. Yet I want to reserve a more serious consideration of the *outcome* of participation for Chapter 4, so I will leave the reader here with only my ethnographic impressions, my general interpretation of observations made during my four summers of fieldwork in the program.

Hands of Peace is dedicated to fostering a transcendent identity among Israeli and Palestinian youth—one that recognizes the legitimacy of outgroup ideological perspectives and historical narratives. It is, as I have argued, ideologically consumed with the project of American cosmopolitanism, in which the organizers and families who host participants are deeply enmeshed both physically and culturally in the Chicago suburbs. The liberal intent of the program has always been to cultivate this transcendent identity by introducing youth to

diversity—diversity in religious practice, in national and cultural identity, in culinary practice, in dance, song, and play. But with this introduction comes the recognition of *sameness* at a higher level of consciousness: members of all cultures have *some* religious practice, belong to *some* national entity, like to eat, dance, and play.

With no significant exposure to Israel or Palestine among the organizers, the notion of constructing a context in which identity polarization may be reduced, or potentially eliminated altogether, hardly seemed insurmountable. Such was their idealism, or, their "vision." Thus the fact that a number of rituals and even daily happenings in the program might in fact prime social identity, thereby somehow increasing its accentuation and polarization between the groups, did not really occur to the organizers. While they may have underestimated the psychological power of the salience of social identity in the context of conflict, they certainly did not underestimate the salience of the third narrative they were constructing—the narrative of coexistence, the narrative of American cosmopolitanism.

Although the youth by no means were able to, or would even want to, somehow abandon ingroup identity or even to decrease its salience as significantly as perhaps the organizers would have liked, the appeal of the third narrative cannot be denied. Particularly in the intimate context of program participation and in the warm, welcoming, and aspirational allure of the American suburbs, an internalization of this new narrative was perhaps inevitable. Such is the instinct, I would argue, to acculturate, perhaps particularly in adolescence, when identifications do possess a higher degree of plasticity (Erikson, 1968).

My fieldwork suggests that participants in Hands of Peace do indeed go through a process of re-acculturation, quite similar to Seeds of Peace, in which the narrative of American cosmopolitanism is internalized. Although mid-program rituals serve to accentuate ingroup identity, they allow for a realistic consideration of ingroup identity during a time of

identity "restructuring." The result of this restructuring, as revealed in the life story, is in fact consistent with the aim of Hands of Peace to induce a common identity. I will return more comprehensively to this phenomenon as we consider the life stories of youth most explicitly in Chapters 3 and 4. But the final programmatic question remains: What happens after participation?

After Chicago

Owing to the level of acculturation which the youth experience during the program, the return home is typically a traumatic one. There is also, naturally, the realization of travel from what has become a kind of ideological "utopia," with its new narrative of coexistence, to the land of identity polarization. At this point, I wish only to inform the reader of the ways in which youth can and do intersect again with the program after its conclusion in Chicago, rather than to address the experiences of youth, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Youth who choose to remain active in the program can do so in two ways. First, there is a program listserv to which they can send messages to the entire group. Second, there are semi-regular follow-up meetings in Jerusalem for all alumni. These are conducted by the regional staff who accompanied youth from Israel and Palestine to Chicago. They consist of both socializing and typically a dialogue session. The attendance of West Bank Palestinians at these meetings is, unfortunately, infrequent owing to the difficulty of travel to Jerusalem. (They require special permission and even then must endure the numerous checkpoints in order to get to Jerusalem.) In Chapter 4, we will consider the ways in which the new narrative of coexistence is or is not sustained by continued participation in the program in these contexts—far removed from the original physical and ideological culture of Hands of Peace itself.

Field Site 3: Israel and Palestine

To remind the reader, the narrative of field sites themselves is presented chronologically, as I began my fieldwork in the two coexistence programs prior to my actual travel to the region. An initial summer of fieldwork in both programs in 2003 naturally sparked my desire to conduct fieldwork in the region, where youth could be assessed more systematically in relation to their participation (i.e., life-story interviews could be conducted before and after participation, rather than only during). In addition, meeting and befriending Israeli and Palestinian youth and colleagues naturally increased my sense of security and comfort in traveling to the region.

The Politics of the Field

When I began my fieldwork in the summer of 2003, it was a time of great optimism in the history of the conflict. Sadly, the peaks and valleys of the conflict resemble a dramatic mountain range in which great peaks give way to ominous drops. I recall working on my research proposal in the spring of 2003 amidst news reports of visits from Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and newly appointed (at the urging of the President Bush, who refused to deal with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on the grounds that he was a "liar") Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (a.k.a. Abu Mazen) to Washington. Though largely "sheltered" from news reports in the isolation of the camp in Maine, all of us there were keenly aware of the fact that the "road map" was put on the table as a blueprint for progress toward a final solution. Israel's continued settlement construction and assassination attempt on senior Hamas leader Abdel-Aziz Rantisi (unsuccessful for the moment) sparked lively discussion of concern on the prospects of the road map. To Israel's credit, the intifada still raged on, so the Palestinians were not exactly ready to implement the plan either. Abu Mazen demonstrated his ability to influence the militants in the successful brokering of a

ceasefire, though many claimed it was in fact imprisoned leader Marwan Barghouti who was able to wield such influence. The fragile ceasefire hardly lasted more than a month, though, and by the summer's end, there were fresh rounds of targeted assassinations by Israel, and a 29-year-old imam from the Palestinian city of Hebron—a man with a family of his own—exploded himself on a bus full of Orthodox Jewish families returning home from prayers at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

The mood of that first summer was thus initially, however briefly, optimistic. The two governments, aided significantly by the United States, seemed to at least be talking to one another and moving in a particular direction. Yet a break in the cycle of violence on the ground could not be sustained, with Israel believing it vital to their long-term security and interest to assassinate Hamas leaders in Gaza, and the Palestinians feeling justified in continuing their bloody, carnage-laden intifada in retaliation and in long-term defiance of the occupation. The coexistence programs, with their physical and psychological distance from the social structure of conflict, provided sites of isolation for the youth—respites from the intensity of constant shifts in mood and prospect.

The political context leading up to my first field visit to the region in May of 2004 was, not surprisingly, replete with significant events. Mahmoud Abbas resigned his post, replaced by another senior Fatah figure, Ahmed Qurei. Israel suggested that Arafat ought to be deported, and deputy prime minister (now Prime Minister) Ehud Olmert publicly did not rule out the possibility of assassination. Edward Said, the great Palestinian scholar and icon and de-facto spokesperson to the West, died after a long battle with leukemia. Construction of Israel's controversial security barrier increased, along with a growing discourse of concern about it in the international community. A brutal suicide bombing in an Arab-owned restaurant in Haifa (in fact, belonging to the family of Miriam, one of my research

participants) frequented by both Israeli Jews and Arabs revealed that no citizen of Israel was immune from possible attack. The popularity of Hamas, the social service and welfare agency with a militant wing that vowed the destruction of Israel, grew in Palestine. Ariel Sharon first spoke of unilateral "disengagement" unless the Palestinian Authority could reign in militants, all the while facing allegations of financial improprieties which threatened to ruin his political career. The once-architect of Jewish settlement expansion in the Palestinian territories, and thus a champion for "Greater Israel," proposed the complete evacuation of Jewish settlements in Gaza. The legality of the Israeli separation barrier came into question, as the United Nations issued a resolution calling for its removal and the International Court of Justice in the Hague considered hearing the case. Finally, on March 22, 2004, Israel assassinated the wheelchair-bound icon and founder of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

To even the casual follower of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this catalogue of political happenings reveals quite shockingly the transient nature of a political context in conflict. Initial faith in the road map strikes us now as naively optimistic. The very fact of Ariel Sharon and Yasser Arafat as *the* key players in this part of the long saga seems somehow remote to us. Now both leaders have vanished from the political landscape, one dead, the other "permanently incapacitated," as the Israeli knesset has recently acknowledged. An entirely new government, save for the lonely Abu Mazen, who remains the somewhat powerless president of the degenerating Palestinian Authority, now exists in Palestine, with Hamas—that group Israel was so desperately trying to decapitate and render impotent from 2003 to 2005—in power. Sharon's ideology of unilateral disengagement has evolved into an entire political party—"Kadima" (Hebrew for "Forward")—with a centrist platform and a vow to dismantle a significant number of West Bank settlements. But this strategy has now been called into question, with the Israeli public perception that unilateral

disengagement in both Lebanon and Gaza served only to increase the security threats against them. The fate of Olmert and the party that Sharon founded grows increasingly fragile.

I highlight the salience of political change because it most certainly impacts the identities of its youth subjects, if for no other reason than that political and ideological changes beget shifts in the discourse of a society. For me in my regional fieldwork, conducted in successive "waves" in 2004 (one trip) and 2005 (three trips), the rapid shifts in political context enabled me to readily detect the ways in which these shifts were impacting individual lives. Was it easier or more difficult to traverse the checkpoints? Were there fewer or more of them? Were sites in Israel more or less fortified? These basic components of the physical culture of the field in fact reflected that all-too-irreducible "ethos" that one cannot help but feel upon immersion into a particular culture not his own. So my fieldwork experience was informed by an interpretive perspective on the ways in which the social ecologies of the youth were or were not impacted by the larger political context.

The Communities of Fieldwork

My fieldwork in the region occurred in a number of communities. In most of these communities, I resided with families of youth subjects. In Israel, I conducted fieldwork in West Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa (with both Jewish and Arab families), Taybeh (an Arab city), and in two different rural communities (a *moshav* and a *kibbutz*) in the Gilboa area of the Galilee. In Palestine, field communities were East Jerusalem, Beit Jalla (which neighbors Bethlehem), Ramallah, and Qadas[6] (a small village that borders Tulkarm). Fieldwork in Palestine also brought me to Bethlehem, Tulkarm, and Nablus for day trips and interviews. It

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[6] Qadas is the name of a Palestinian village destroyed after the 1948 war. It is used here as a pseudonym for another village in the West Bank. It is the only community of fieldwork which is not recognized by its actual name because of its very small size and the possibility that it could easily be identified as a result.

is noteworthy that I did not conduct fieldwork in the Gaza Strip at all, which limited my experience somewhat of Palestine as a field site. Neither coexistence program, however, recruited youth from Gaza during the period of my fieldwork, so the sampling of Gazan youth was not central to the aims of the study. One should take general statements, though, about Palestine, Palestinian culture, and Palestinian identity with something of a grain of salt, as none of my findings are meant to characterize or to represent the lives of Gazan youth.

Nonetheless, one can see by the catalogue of communities that a fair amount of geographic diversity was obtained in my fieldwork. For such a tiny piece of land, and for such small countries, Israel and Palestine retain a number of local identities that are quite salient. For example, growing up on a kibbutz in the north of Israel brings with it a certain "kibbutznik" identity that is quite divergent from one who has grown up in cosmopolitan Tel Aviv. The same can be said of Palestine, where Jerusalemites possess an identity quite distinct of Palestinians from villages like Qadas or even Ramallah, the cosmopolitan Palestinian city. Those from Beit Jalla and Bethlehem, with their larger traditional Christian populations, naturally possess a different local identity than Palestinians from predominantly Muslim Tulkarm. I will briefly detail the demographic and physical characteristics of the primary communities of fieldwork, to provide the reader with some detail of the communities.

Jerusalem

As a recent report in *The Economist* suggests, this city offers a microcosm of the larger conflict itself. Jerusalem has always been the center-point for the numerous conflicts that have characterized this part of the world over the course of human history. In modern times, it has been a site of great identity diversity, where numerous communities of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religious faith have at times cooperated and at other times been pitted

against one another (Jacobson, 2006). The city, referred to in Arabic as *Al Quds* ("the Holy"), contains the holiest religious site for Judaism (the Western Wall of the original Temple). It is the third holiest city for Muslims, as the Prophet Mohamed is said to have ascended into heaven from the *Haram al-Sharif* (the "Noble Sanctuary"), which rests on the Temple Mount. Obviously, the city holds great significance for Christians as well, as it is the site of Jesus' crucifixion. (His route walked with the cross is marked as the *Via Dolorosa* in the Old City.)

The city is, not surprisingly, a profoundly religious locale, especially when compared with other Israeli and Palestinian cities. The skyline is littered with churches, mosques, and synagogues. Religious Jews, who dress in their distinctive clothing, fill the streets of the West. Priests and imams can be readily identified walking the narrow paths of the Old City, located in the East. Yet the current population of Jerusalem is, however divided, quite heterogeneous.

My field visits to Jerusalem were characterized by the salience of its cultural (and national) division. Once divided in half in its entirety, prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Arabs and Jews could not come together because of the massive barrier erected between them. Today, that physical barrier is absent, yet its invisible remnants remain. Despite Israel's contention that Jerusalem is the "reunited eternal capital," one does not feel in "Israel" in East Jerusalem. Although Israel has constructed a number of Jewish settlements around the Arab parts of East Jerusalem, the communities remain entirely at bay. During my first field trip, a good friend and colleague who is Jewish was uncomfortable driving me to the house in which I was staying in East Jerusalem—a place in which I felt extremely comfortable, welcomed, and safe—even though he is no stranger to the Arab population in East Jerusalem. (We worked together at Seeds of Peace.)

I discovered, rather quickly, that Jerusalem indeed remained two quite insular worlds—one Jewish, one Palestinian. The youth who inhabited these worlds were, for all intents and purposes, in fact living in two separate countries. The education system itself was indicative. While Roai, a Jewish Israeli, studied for his *bagrut* examination (akin to the American SAT in significance for future educational possibilities) and prepared for army service on the weekends, Mohammed, a Palestinian, studied for the *tajihi* examination, an examination used in the Arab Middle East as an indicator of scholastic aptitude, and contemplated his options for university study in Palestine, Lebanon, or Egypt. Mohammed was by no means integrated into Israeli society, even in terms of its institutions. He did, however, possess permanent residency status from the state of Israel, as did all East Jerusalemites after Israel's "annexation" of the East following the 1967 war. (This annexation remains unrecognized by the United Nations and the international community.)

East and West Jerusalem thus continue to offer a binational socialization experience for youth. The invisible border between Jewish and Arab areas means that, despite their proximity to one another, this is a heavily segregated city. The entire culture of the two "sides" of the city replicate their two nations, even in physicality. East Jerusalem, like most cities in the West Bank, is dirty, with dilapidated buildings and rubble—in general, poor infrastructure and maintenance of the physical culture. (I should note that this physical state resembled that of West Bank cities but was nowhere near as complete as in those cities and villages, which tended to be on the receiving end of Israeli incursions. Such was not the case in East Jerusalem; it simply was not well-maintained in its physical culture.) West Jerusalem, in contrast, was beautiful, leafy, modernized. I often spoke of the experience in my field notes, upon crossing between Palestine and Israel, as my traversal from the "third" to "first" world—from the "developing" to the "developed." Though less dramatic in crossing that

invisible border from East to West Jerusalem than from Palestine to Israel, the feeling of cultural change in crossing that line was nonetheless quite perceptible.

Ramallah

Ramallah, the center of cosmopolitan life in Palestine, is a close distance from Jerusalem (without checkpoints) but feels quite far. With a population of approximately 280,000 (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2005), it is by no means Palestine's most populous. That honor goes to Hebron, with about 525,000 inhabitants. Yet Ramallah is a crowded, densely traversed city, the streets lined with numerous businesses and filled with ubiquitous yellow taxis.

Just with a brief stroll down the famous Rukab Street, Ramallah reveals the incredible diversity of Palestine and its people. Businessmen and women, dressed in European-style fashion, walk beside women in full *hejab* (covered, in the Muslim tradition), young men in tight t-shirts and jeans (again, European style), and older men wearing the traditional Palestinian *kafiya* and holding prayer beads. Nuts, falafel, sweets, and produce are sold on the streets. The city is alive. So alive, in fact, that the notion of a "curfew," imposed by the Israeli military during its re-occupation of Ramallah in the early days of the second intifada, seems so inconceivable to me.

Culturally, then, Ramallah is a site of incredible cosmopolitanism in Palestine. Western journalists, tourists, and diplomats mingle with young educated locals at Ziryab, a restaurant that serves both *nargila* (water pipe) and alcohol. Business and commerce abound; nearby Birzeit University serves as the site of higher education and ensures that Ramallah has a large student population. Women and men work together, and there is an air of respect for the diversity embodied here, an acceptance of the multiple lifeways Palestinians may (and do) follow. While the occupation may at times constrain (and even test) this cosmopolitanism, as

the life stories of youth reveal in Chapter 3, it is the unity of secular Palestinian nationalism that seems to help retain this ethos in Ramallah.

In the two years of my travel to Ramallah, I witnessed major improvements in the physical infrastructure of the city, although it had quite far to go. Nowhere in Palestine was a socioeconomic gap more readily apparent than in Ramallah. Ministers and businessmen occupied a number of newly constructed mansions atop the hill that resembled small villas. Meanwhile, others slept several family members to a room (as was the case for me in Ramallah) and struggled to support one another. The visibility of this disparity helped me to anticipate the rise to power of Hamas over Fatah following Arafat's death and Abu Mazen's inability to improve life for ordinary Palestinians.

Qadas

A very small village just outside of Tulkarm, Qadas typifies the Palestinian village of today. Getting to the village from anywhere in Palestine necessitates crossing several checkpoints monitored by Israeli soldiers. To enter the village, one must pass through an entry gate attended by Palestinian security forces. My driver upon one visit to the village exclaimed, as we approached the gate, "Aha! A Palestinian checkpoint!" (The Israeli checkpoint is, not surprisingly, the subject of incredible disgust and disdain among Palestinians. It serves as a constant reminder of the occupation and the unbalanced power dynamics between the two peoples.)

The entry is adorned with Palestinian flags. On my second visit to the village, a number of green Hamas flags began to dominate, as the village became a Hamas stronghold over the course of 2005. The road into the village is, like most of the roads in Palestine, in terrible shape. Potholes and unpaved sections abound. The streets are littered with trash, the walls littered with graffiti. Posters of Palestinian martyrs (*shahid*) are ubiquitous, featured at

times in marquees resembling advertisements or movie posters. It always seemed to me a great distance from the cosmopolitan center of Ramallah.

However "militant" the village may have been, or become, during the course of my fieldwork, in most ways it resembled a very typical Mediterranean village to me. The structure of social life was relatively conservative, with most women wearing the traditional Palestinian dress of that area (a beautiful purple in color), and most focusing on their roles as wives and mothers. The adult children of a family would, as in other Mediterranean villages (e.g., in Italy), construct a house for their family above that of their parents, resulting in clustering of residences by family throughout the village.

Qadas was the recipient of a beautiful new park and gymnasium, all constructed with money financed by Hamas, as well as exceptional health facilities constructed by the Palestine Red Crescent, financed by foreign governments. An ethos of struggle and conservatism may have filled the air in Qadas, not to mention a degree of religious observance I had not witnessed in other parts of Palestine (e.g., the regular praying of family members at the appropriate times), but the residents of this village were no exception in the realm of "Arab hospitality." As in other Palestinian communities, I was made to feel quite at home, with plentiful amounts of food and assistance in all my needs. Of course, my host mother's conviction on several occasions that I really ought to become Muslim—that in fact she prayed for me to become one—seemed to reveal the distance in tolerance for religious diversity this village occupied from a city like Ramallah.

Beit Jala and Bethlehem

Beit Jala and Bethlehem lie just outside of Jerusalem. Both communities possess significant historical sites to Christianity and continue to be home to a number of Christian Palestinians. Bethlehem in particular remains a major tourist destination, with its regular

welcoming of Christian pilgrims at Christmas. Despite the fact that tourism continued—to an extent—during the second intifada, it is difficult to sit in Manger Square and not notice the absence of giant tourist buses that this city really *should* see, given its historical significance.

Beit Jala and Bethlehem in fact resemble most other Palestinian cities and towns in their appearance, with the occasional rubble from either an Israeli incursion or the infrastructural neglect of the Palestinian Authority. Yet the Christian families that I worked with in this area noted the difficult and complex relations between Muslims and Christians— a phenomenon quite distinct to this area, as all the other Palestinian areas in which I conducted fieldwork which were overwhelmingly Muslim.

Both of these communities witnessed significant activity during the second intifada. On my first night in Beit Jala during one of my field trips, the father of Peter, one of my research participants, pointed to the hills which their balcony overlooked toward Bethlehem. The house of a suicide bomber, destroyed by Israel after his attack, is visible on the hill. "They came in with a plane and just blew it up!" says Peter's father. "They tried to re-build it, but the army just kept coming and blowing it up again, and we could see it each time right here from this balcony."

The next day, Peter's father took me to a most depressing site just outside of Bethlehem. "You see," he explained with his deep smoker's voice, "before the intifada, Bethlehem was really growing fast. We had busloads of tourists coming. It was a good time." He points to a large building by the roadside. "That was to be a mall," he says. "It's completely built, but they never opened it, because then the intifada started."

At last we arrive at the site he has been wanting to show me. It is a site of major historical significance, he says. I described what I saw next as a "most fascinating tragedy" that night in my field notes. We arrive at King Solomon's pools—historical reservoirs

constructed by the Jewish king, as Peter's father explains to me. It is here that this tragic site emerges. I have certainly seen ruins before, in Greece, Italy, and Turkey, of empires long past and grand buildings weathered by time, but I had never seen something quite like this: a contemporary ruin.

In the 1990s, when a cold peace had set in and Palestine at last possessed some autonomy—on its way to full sovereignty in the minds of its inhabitants—all kinds of development projects had begun. Naturally, the Palestinian economy was expected to rely significantly on tourism for its revenue. Bethlehem would likely be the capital of its tourist economy, given the confusing status that Jerusalem would likely assume in the final settlement. In 2000, Manger Square underwent a $200 million dollar share of renovations in anticipation of new possibilities for the city, with the dawn of a new millennium for Palestine. So, sometime in the 1990s, in this time of economic idealism, construction began on what would become a resort at King Solomon's pools—surely a major tourist destination. As I stared at the empty edifice in front of me, a skeleton with grand arches and crumbling walls, despite the clear recency of its construction, a feeling of profound tragedy overcame me.

It did not really matter that now, in 2005, the siege that occurred in the Church of the Nativity in April 2002 had given way to an extended period of calm. Bethlehem was a destination for only the few determined tourists, not for the hordes destined to fill the grandiose rooms of the resort at King Solomon's pools or, perhaps more modestly, the hotel rooms in the city itself. Today, most of these hotels remain significantly under-occupied, with most tourists making day trips to Bethlehem but staying beyond the massive security barrier that cages in Bethlehem as it juts out on the border of the West Bank.

It is in the midst of this physical culture, with its economic realities, that a particular psychological ecology of development consumes the lives of the inhabitants of Beit Jala and

Bethlehem. Perhaps more than any other Palestinian area, these communities began to experience the optimism of the emerging state of Palestine in an economic way more remote to other communities. It is, then, an ecology of loss that transcends the Palestinian master narrative, sometimes only distantly accessible to Palestinian youth. Rather, in these communities, the loss of possibility and of economic development creates a most pernicious feeling of pessimism and failure. The occupation, with its debilitating unpredictability and "caging in," naturally receives full blame for this state of regression in the culture of these communities.

Yet there is a way in which hope remains in Beit Jala and Bethlehem. The sharp, refurbished Bethlehem Peace Center consumes an entire block of Manger Square. The sights and sounds of construction abound. One can hear a number of international languages on the streets, including English and French. The coffee house that Peter and his brother took me to on my last night is clean and open for business, selling alcohol in addition to the traditional coffee, tea, and *nargila*. I order a Taybeh beer, Palestine's only "microbrew," and a nargila. Bethlehem, like Ramallah, possesses a kind of cosmopolitanism and a yearning for intercultural contact unlike other communities in Palestine.

It is in the midst of this unique social ecology, with its perceptible tragic decline but hopeful return, that three young men who participated in my study reside: Peter, the son of a Muslim father and Christian mother, both of whom work inside of Israel and thus are far from insulated from other identities; Luca, the son of Christian parents whose families have been merchants in the heart of Bethlehem for generations; and finally Osama, a Muslim whose best friend became a "martyr for Palestine" in the second intifada. Though many of the youth with whom I have come into contact in the course of my fieldwork have lost friends in this uprising, whether on a bus in Israel or at the mercy of Israeli soldiers during the re-occupation

of Palestinian towns and cities, Osama's best friend in fact aspired to a different kind of martyrdom in his quest to be a "freedom fighter" for Palestine.

Tulkarm and Nablus

As noted, my fieldwork brought me to some communities in Palestine for day trips only. Tulkarm and Nablus, both of which are major urban centers, represent two of these communities. In these cities, I met with school officials and families and conducted formal interviews with youth. I describe these cities together, as they possess a number of similarities.

In 2004 and 2005, accessing Nablus was generally a prohibitive challenge. I was, however, determined to visit the city, with a population of approximately 325,000 (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2005), and famous for its *kunafa*, the delicious Palestinian dessert made of shredded wheat, nuts, cheese, and honey. The driver I had hired to take me from Qadas to Nablus in his yellow Mercedes taxi warned me it would be a bumpy ride. He failed to mention how strangely beautiful it would be as well. As we traversed the ruins of an old Israeli military outpost on what had once been a road, now a pothole-filled field of dirt and gravel, the stony mountains of the West Bank ascended in the background.

During the course of the second intifada, Nablus had essentially become sealed off from the rest of the world. An Israeli tank stood at the paved road where a prominent sign pointed, in English, Hebrew, and Arabic, "Nablus." So there was no way to reach Nablus apart from gaining access to the mountain roads, which required some careful maneuvering on the part of my driver. Somewhat surprisingly, by taking these roads (or non-roads), we avoid any checkpoints at all. One of the first sights as we enter the city are the ruins of what was once a mammoth police station, reduced to rubble in one of the sieges on the city. Again,

the infrastructure of a *possible* society, now in ruins. Across the street is, quite prominently, a massive painted rendition of the Islamic Jihad symbol (Figure 2.2), with its blood-red map of mandate Palestine, superimposed over Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock, and flanked by fists and guns.

Figure 2.2. Emblem of Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

That this emblem was in fact ubiquitous, along with the emblem of Hamas (Figure 2.3), throughout the West Bank, is hardly surprising. The strength of resistance movements in Palestine seemed to grow as a function of discontent with the peace process in the 1990s, and by the intifada and Israel's formidable response in parts of Palestine like Nablus, discontent had given way to despair. The conditions for recruitment into such movements were ripe during the course of my fieldwork, and the symbolism of these movements, with their violent imagery and clear claims to all of mandate Palestine, reflect the growing polarization of narratives between Israelis and Palestinians. (I should note that maps of Israel with the Green Line erased were also readily available in Israel during the course of my fieldwork.) Nablus thus presented itself somewhere between Qadas and Ramallah to me, in terms of its "ideological" culture. In Qadas, the symbols of Hamas and Islamic Jihad were painted into every wall on my walk from my house into the heart of town. Posters of martyrs, many of

whom were suicide bombers, adorned the same walls, where in perhaps a village with a

different kind of economy there might hang advertisements.

Figure 2.3. Emblem of Hamas.

In Ramallah, the symbols and posters were certainly present, along with the requisite anti-

occupation graffiti. But at times in Ramallah, I felt as though I sort of had to look for it. It

seemed less ubiquitous (though varying somewhat across the period of my fieldwork). Nablus

was somewhere in-between, but without question a place of greater ideological insulation

than Ramallah, likely owing to its physical isolation.

I chose to present Nablus and Tulkarm together as field sites for this reason: they are

very similar in both their physical and ideological culture. The signs of military incursions

abound in both cities. And yet, between the incursions, there is a vibrant life. The commercial

avenues of both cities are filled with people, buying fruits and vegetables, sipping coffee and

playing cards. These are major urban centers, though Tulkarm's population is significantly

smaller than that of Nablus, at approximately 130,000 (Palestinian Central Bureau of

Statistics, 2005). There are hints of a cosmopolitanism of another time, particularly in Nablus,

where a massive villa overlooks the city. Yet these cities are clearly severely bruised by the

incursions that have taken place since the start of the intifada in 2000.

It was in these cities of ideological insularity, physical dilapidation, and daily struggle that Tamer, Lubna, and Omar negotiated their identities over the course of my fieldwork. Though I came to know them less intimately, owing to my more limited fieldwork in these communities, it was clear to me that the ecology of their daily lives impacted their narratives-in-formation in profound and unfortunate ways. Replete with stories of fear and loss as they experienced repeated incursions by the Israeli army, the narratives of these youth revealed an intimate confrontation with the occupation, and the ways in which such a challenging ecology of development came to bear on their own identities.

Tel Aviv

After an extensive stay in the West Bank, I always longed for Tel Aviv, a city where one could easily forget that a conflict of any kind existed. Littered with trendy cafes, restaurants, gyms, bars, night clubs, and shops, the streets of Tel Aviv reveal a genuine cosmopolitan allure. As my field notes revealed, my arrival in Tel Aviv was usually met with a sigh of relief. No more checkpoints, no more bumpy roads and dirty showers. This was a city of the West, with its sky-scrapers, beautiful sandy beaches, and vibrant culture.

The field experience is often disorienting, as one traverses great distances in geography, thought, and behavior. So the occasional experience of the familiar, such as I was able to have in Tel Aviv, offered a respite from the necessary inhibitions of other areas in Israel and Palestine. No longer did I need to excessively concern myself with self-presentation; the cosmopolitanism of Tel Aviv meant that I could express my own identity with greater authenticity. Identity diversity was simply more acceptable in this city, the undeniable cultural capital of secular Israel.

It was in fact on the grand Rothschild Boulevard, with its massive leafy trees and carefully restored Bauhaus mansions, that I came to view Zionism for its remarkable

achievements, not for its oppression of the Palestinians. I suspect this revelation stemmed from just how impressive Tel Aviv is as a city, and how laudable the culture of Israel appears from this vantage point, this grand boulevard on a pleasant summer evening, on a stroll after a first-class meal at a French restaurant. As in any cosmopolitan city, where a tradition of cultural collision results in harmonious fusions, rather than disruptions, of ways of living, Tel Aviv was home to multiple lifeways. Mizrahi and Ethiopian immigrants mingled with Russians and Jewish tourists, guest workers from Thailand, and Israeli natives whose grandfathers had established this Jewish settlement down the street from the major Palestinian port city of Jaffa.

Tel Aviv as a field site thus represents a highly modernized, urbanized city. Economically and culturally, it is the center of Israeli society. And with its physical culture— its clean, leafy streets, expansive beaches, and thriving boutiques, cafes, and restaurants—Tel Aviv is without question the center of cosmopolitanism in Israel. It is a place where identities do indeed collide, and seem to do so in ways that are accommodating and open. It is no surprise then that my interviewees from Tel Aviv inevitably identified as "left-wing" ideologically and were perhaps the most exposed to identity diversity among their peers. That exposure, however, rarely extended to Arabs, but they were nonetheless ready for such engagement.

Taybeh

Twenty minutes from Tel Aviv lies an Arab city called Taybeh (the largest of several towns with the same name across the region). Just in the distance, Tulkarm is immediately visible, revealing the close proximity to the West Bank. For me, in the course of my fieldwork, the two locales always seemed quite distant. Ideologically and economically, they indeed were. Culturally, they were both Palestinian, serving as home to people with identical

cuisine, identical wedding rituals, identical *nargila* cafes where men would assemble each evening to smoke and play cards. Yet they were far from identical in other elements of their social ecologies beyond some of these shared cultural practices.

Taybeh is and has always been inside of the Green Line—the official armistice line declared following the 1948 war that created the State of Israel. One evening, after a barbecue hosted by the family of one of my closest colleagues, I queried her father about why Taybeh, of all the Palestinian villages and cities that were erased overnight in that war, remained. He told me that "We in Taybeh were strong. We fought when the Jews came here, and we pushed them out. We didn't just run like all the other towns. So they said they wouldn't push us out. But of course that meant we became Israeli." Like all stories, this one must naturally be taken with a grain of salt, passed down in all likelihood by a desire to instill a sense of pride among its inhabitants.

That Taybeh became officially an Israeli city means a great deal for the identities of its inhabitants, especially compared with their fellow Palestinians in areas that did not become part of Israel, such as West Bank communities like Tulkarm. Though in Taybeh I feel quite strongly as if I am in a distinctly *Palestinian* city, with older women often wearing the traditional dress of the region and old men driving donkey-led carts of fruits and vegetables, there are differences that are notable.

The distinctions between Palestinian communities inside and outside of Israel center on, as I alluded to already, ideological and economic factors. In terms of the physical culture of Taybeh, it indeed resembles a Palestinian city like Tulkarm, even in its state of disrepair. In Taybeh, roads are often crumbling, and sewage fills the streets in rivers. Trash abounds. Yet the absence of political graffiti and martyr posters immediately distinguishes Taybeh from a place like Tulkarm. While Taybeh may *look* a bit in need of some economic

development, its inhabitants are in fact in a good economic position, particularly compared with Palestinians beyond the Green Line. Most of the adults in Taybeh, including many women, have jobs outside of the city, in places like Tel Aviv. Everyone in the city speaks fluent Hebrew, for they deal quite regularly with Jewish Israelis in their daily lives. Arabic is the language of the home and of the community, but Hebrew is recognized as the language of the country. There is no desire, ideologically speaking, for them to be a part of Palestine as opposed to Israel. In all of my interviews with youth from the city, as well as all of my conversations with adults and adolescents in Taybeh, not a single inhabitant supported such an idea, even though they all viewed themselves as marginalized as a minority inside of Israel. They were all quite critical of Israel's "ethnocratic" character which favored Jews over Arabs (Abu-Saad, 2004; Ghanem, 2002; Rouhana, 1997; Yiftachel, 2000). Ideologically, though, they aspired to be anti-ideological. That is, they preferred to remain silent.

The silence of the Palestinian-Israelis, particularly in more insulated cities like Taybeh, is connected to the fact that these communities lived under a military administration in Israel until 1966 (Tessler & Grant, 1998). Though they may have, as my colleague's father put it, "fought the Jews," the sacrifice for them to stay in their city was that they become subjects of the Israeli state—a Jewish state. The new Israeli administration naturally viewed all Arabs as hostile. Thus the system of military administration was at least temporarily necessary, so that a realistic threat assessment could be discerned. During this time and after, these communities have been carefully observed by the Israeli intelligence, and thus the inhabitants of these Arab communities have, over time, come to recognize the value in avoiding politics. These communities favor the economic benefits, and the benefits of staying in one's community, over any political aspirations to, say, "liberate" the entirety of mandate

Palestine. In fact, it is perhaps *because* of their economic success and the freedom they have to maintain their local cultural practices that they seek to maintain the particular status quo.

The taboo against political discourse was readily apparent to me in my fieldwork in this city. Yet its sustainability was threatened by a new generation of Palestinian-Israeli youth whose anger and frustration at the ongoing perception of marginalization and discrimination within Israel, as well as the continued occupation of their cultural brothers and sisters just beyond the hill, has infused their identities with more political awareness and interest. It will come as no surprise, then, when I detail the stories of youth such as Laila, Jibril, and others from this and other Arab villages inside of Israel, that their narratives reveal both the challenges of negotiating multiple identities, as well as the frustrations of the political evasion of a previous generation.

Haifa

A 45-minute train ride along the Mediterranean coast from Tel Aviv, Haifa is contrasted with this other coastal city in both its topography—it is exceedingly hilly—and its cultural character. Ofra, one of my Jewish research participants from Haifa, once shared with me that Israelis refer to Tel Aviv, in a comparison to New York City, as "the city that never sleeps" and to Haifa as "the sleep that never cities." In a way, she is quite right. Even though Haifa is a very large city, on the Mediterranean coast just like Tel Aviv, it has a decidedly slower pace of life.

Often dubbed "the city of coexistence" in Israel, Haifa is home to both Jews and Arabs. It is, as some call it, an "integrated" city, even if the two communities within the city generally segregate by neighborhood. Jews spend their nights out at the Carmel Center, atop Mount Carmel, while Arabs stroll Ben-Gurion Street, down by the water, with its beautiful view of the Baha'i Temple. My fieldwork revealed that segregation is in fact alive and well in

Haifa, but I have to confess it certainly represented the closest thing to group integration that could be witnessed in the region.

A story from my fieldwork helps to differentiate, politically and ideologically, some of the major communities in Israel, particularly Haifa. The majority of my fieldwork in Israel and Palestine occurred in 2005, the year of the Gaza disengagement (i.e., forced evacuation of Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip). As the disengagement approached, an "orange" movement began in Israel (the color of orange being adopted as it had been in the Ukraine to protest the "rigged" election there). Orange came to represent opposition to the disengagement. In particular, orange ribbons on the antennae of cars or tied to the backpacks of students indicated an opposition to the plan and, in most cases, a conviction that the Jewish settlements in Palestine ought to remain (and perhaps even expand). Essentially the orange movement was a pro-settler movement. I was struck in my visit to the Ben-Yehuda shopping district in Jerusalem during one of my field trips by the ubiquity of orange. I thought to myself that surely Israel was going to have a big problem if this many people were opposed to the disengagement.

By the time I got to Tel Aviv on that trip, I had learned that there was in fact another movement: the "blue" movement, which signaled support for the disengagement and a general left-wing political stance. I would not say I saw as much blue as orange during that field trip, though it is difficult to know how many left-wing Israelis chose to stay "colorless" during that period, recognizing the inevitable need (and success) of disengagement. Yet when I got to Tel Aviv, I was greeted (not surprisingly) by a significant amount of blue. When I arrived in Haifa shortly thereafter, I discussed the disengagement plans with Ofra's parents in their living room. To my surprise, Ofra's mother had not even heard of the counter color movements. I found that even the parents of the Arab families with whom I stayed in Haifa

had tended not to know about these movements, or to perhaps have only vaguely heard of them.

Haifa, then, represents a kind of ideological oasis—a complete counter to a place like Jerusalem, where physical segregation and ideological polarization are in plain sight. In Haifa, these structural and psychological forces do indeed exist (it is, after all, still in Israel, in the midst of a conflict zone). But in Haifa, these forces are a bit more hidden. There seems to be a culture of coexistence in the city, in theory if not always in practice.

Many of Haifa's Palestinian residents are, in fact, Christian, which stands in contrast to most of the Palestinian cities and villages in Israel (Nazareth being the other city with a large Christian population). Haifa is also surrounded by a number of Arab villages, some of which are Druze (the mystical sect of Islam) and others of which are Christian. Haifa, then, makes for an interesting site of identity collisions in Israel, a place where a multiplicity of cultural and religious identities coexist in a fragile state of general harmony, occasionally shattered by a suicide bombing.

The Gilboa

The final formal site of fieldwork in Israel occurred in two rural communities in the fertile Galilee, near Mount Gilboa. I refer to the area simply as "the Gilboa," as both communities are too small to be named, to preserve a measure of confidentiality for my research participants. These two communities represent, culturally and ideologically, the great aspirations of Zionism, in its most socialist form.

I conducted fieldwork in two types of cooperative agricultural communities in the Gilboa: a *moshav* and a *kibbutz*. While in a *moshav* each family operates its own plot of land and keeps its profits, the land is owned by the state. In contrast, in a *kibbutz*, the land is collectively owned, the profits are collectively shared, and all aspects of life are essentially

collectively controlled. Meals occur not at a family dining table but in the *communal* kitchen. Youth live in houses together, away from their parents.

The extent to which these cooperative systems have been maintained varies considerably, particularly among kibbutzim. It happens that there was wide variation among the three kibbutzim in which I conducted some measure of fieldwork. One of these kibbutzim in fact was quite faithful to the cooperative practices of the original ideology. The other two were less faithful. Gal's father, Eli, the chain-smoking slight man with the weathered face and the vivid memory of the bus on which a bomber exploded himself right in front of him and Gal, described the gradual erosion of the kibbutz ideology this way:

> Look, the people who came here at first, they were totally idealistic. They were young; they were naïve. In the end, people want capitalism, at least some kind of capitalism. People *want* to own their own things; it just wasn't realistic. And the young people, they don't wanna stay here. They wanna go off, away from here, though they think it's a nice place to grow up.

With its natural beauty, idyllic setting, and proud heritage, these communities seem indeed a fine place to grow up. But Eli is quite accurate, based on my interviews with youth, when he says that there is little interest in spending one's adulthood in these places. Eli, like other parents on the kibbutzim and the moshav, worry about the future of these communities, particularly their economic sustainability.

I have said something about both the physical culture and the existential viability of these communities in the Gilboa. Let me now say something about the ideological character of them. Traditionally, inhabitants of these communities have affiliated very strongly with Israel's foundational Labor party. Its ideology was always their ideology. Its secularism and its pragmatism always resonated with their aspirations for a cooperative Jewish society. They have, therefore, generally favored peace with the Arabs and the "land-for-peace" concept. They have little interest in "Greater Israel." They are quite content with the Jewish state they

have now, minus the absence of peaceful relations with its Arab neighbors. They are quite literally a few kilometers from both Jenin and the Jordanian border. The security barrier constructed by Israel—in this part of it clearly a "fence" and not a "wall"—runs behind the apple orchard of Ezra, one of my research participants.

Physically, then, the inhabitants of the Gilboa are quite close to the Palestinians. Culturally, they could not be farther away, in custom and lifestyle. Yet ideologically, perhaps because of their proximity, the members of these communities are willing to compromise. The youth, then, of these communities can readily be labeled "left-wing," and the encounter with Arabs in the coexistence program creates new challenges for their identities, rooted in the "venture in utopia" (Spiro, 1956) which frames their social ecologies of development.

The Interviewees

What to call the 45 youth who shared with me their life stories on at least one occasion over the course of my fieldwork? In the parlance of traditional experimental psychology (of which this dissertation is obviously not), they would be called "research subjects." This language naturally stemmed from experimental psychology's method of administering some "treatment" to one group and not another (the classic experimental paradigm). The language lived on, even in non-experimental research, out of tradition and out of, I would argue, the "scientific" sound of the term.

More recently, the language has shifted to refer to those individuals who are part of a research study as *participants*. I would be more than happy to label these 45 youth as such, if I had not come into contact with as many as 450 youth during the course of my fieldwork, entering into a number of conversations that naturally made their way into my field notes. I consider these 45 youth part of this larger "pool" of youth with whom I came into contact from 2003-2006 while conducting this fieldwork, in both the camps and the region. Though I

do not claim a kind of pure method for obtaining this interview sample and thus guaranteeing a kind of "representativeness" of the larger population of youth who participate in these programs, I can say with some certainty that the data which they provided me in their interviews was echoed in the less formal, less stylized, and less composed narratives that youth spontaneously shared with me in the camps and on the streets of Israel and Palestine.

The evolving nature of my fieldwork over the two years also served to prohibit the "cleanliness" of a sampling design to select the interviewees. Tables 2.2 and 2.3 provide demographic summary data that illustrate the identity diversity of the sample. Table 2.2 summarizes participants by overall identity group (i.e., Jewish Israeli, Palestinian Israeli, and Palestinian) and sex.

Identity Group	Sex	
	Male	Female
Jewish Israelis	7	10
Palestinian-Israelis	5	7
Palestinians	10	6
TOTAL	22	23

Table 2.2. Characteristics of the interview sample: Identity Group and Sex.

The identity label *Jewish Israeli* refers to all youth who are Jewish citizens of Israel. The label *Palestinian-Israeli* refers to all youth who are Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel. These youth are the descendants of the indigenous Palestinian Arab population that in 1948 remained in the territory that became the State of Israel. The label *Palestinian* refers to youth who reside in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel following the 1967 Arab-Israeli ("Six-Day") War. These territories include East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank.

Identity Group	N
Jewish Israeli (*n*=17)	
Ashkenazi	13
Mizrahi	4
Urban	11
Rural	6
Palestinian-Israeli (*n*=12)	
Christian	4
Muslim	7
Druze	1
Urban	4
Village or rural	8
Palestinian (*n*=16)	
Christian	4
Muslim	12
Urban	13
Village or rural	3

Table 2.3. Demographic characteristics of the interview sample.

The ultimate interview sample was thus demographically diverse and representative of most of the identity groups that reside in Israel and Palestine. Missing, of course, are the voices of youth from smaller identity groups, such as the Druze who reside in various areas in the north of Israel, and the Armenians, who reside in East Jerusalem. Also notably missing

are voices of youth from Gaza, from refugee camps, and from Jewish settlements (with one notable exception). This sample, then, is not fully representative of the population of Israel and Palestine. But, in the parlance of grounded theory qualitative methodology, it represents a "theoretical" sample—one that is recruited to specifically address the research questions. While such a sample of youth may fail to fully answer the first research question that concerns this dissertation—that is, the basic impact of conflict on adolescent identity formation—it is designed to more concretely address the second, which focuses on the impact of the coexistence programs. These youth, geographically and religiously diverse though largely middle and upper-middle class, are representative of those youth who participate in such American-based programs.

It is important to note that certain groups overrepresented in my interview sample tend in fact to be overrepresented in the programs themselves. Specifically, Ashkenazi Jews outnumber Mizrahi Jews substantially in these programs, likely owing to the educational criteria necessary for securing admission to the programs and the differential treatment of Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews in Israeli society, which may impact educational success (see Leichtman, 2001; Mizrachi, 2004; Shavit, 1990). In addition, Muslims outnumber Christians substantially among Palestinian participants. Such an imbalance both reflects Palestinian society, which is majority Muslim, and the desire on the part of these programs to compose a delegation of youth that essentially mirrors the demographics of the society as much as possible. (Hands of Peace, for example, routinely receives applications from more Palestinian Christians than it can possibly accept in order to maintain some representativeness of the actual demographics of Palestine.)

Interviewees ranged in age at first interview from 14 to 18 years. In 2003, interviewees were recruited in collaboration with staff at Seeds of Peace, who insisted on a

very limited number of interviews (seven in total). At Hands of Peace in 2003, two of the 12

participants from the region who had formerly been participants at Seeds of Peace were

selected as interviewees, as the focus at that point in the project was primarily on Seeds of

Peace. In 2004, Seeds of Peace permitted me to recruit interviewees randomly from two

dialogue groups, which resulted in the recruitment of eight additional interviewees. All

participants in the Hands of Peace program in 2004 and in 2005 (n=30) were successfully

recruited as interviewees.

The Interview Procedure

In the tradition of grounded theory interviewing, the protocol changed over the

course of my fieldwork, as I sought to "test" some of the theories that were emerging from

the data. In addition, time constraints for certain interviews prohibited the administration of a

standardized protocol (e.g., at camp we were allotted a maximum of one hour per interview).

Despite some variation in content of the interview, a number of factors were standardized

across administration.

A waiver of parental consent was granted by the Institutional Review Board at the

University of Chicago, as the research was classified as "minimal risk." Thus each interview

began with a verbal assent agreement in which I carefully explained the purpose of the

research and provided information about my own identity (see Appendix 1). Interviewees had

to provide a verbal statement of agreement in order to participate in the study. After 2003,

when the research extended to the region, the Board required parental consent to conduct the

research. Written parental consent was then obtained for all youth participants recruited in

2004 and 2005. A copy of the consent form is included in Appendix 2.

All of the 45 interviewees completed a "life-line" drawing at the beginning of each

interview. In this task, interviewees were prompted with the following instructions:

> What I'd like to ask you to do is to draw a line that represents the events of your life. The line should go up when it was a good time in your life, and down when it was a bad time in your life. You can write as much information as you like on the line. You can do this quietly to yourself, and then we'll talk about it.

Interviewees then completed the life-line drawing, similar to a "life chart" commonly used in life-course research (see Giele & Elder, 1998). The life-line presents a visual plot of life experience which essentially places the life-story narrative in a visual form. The life-line of Liat, a 16-year-old Jewish Israeli, illustrates.
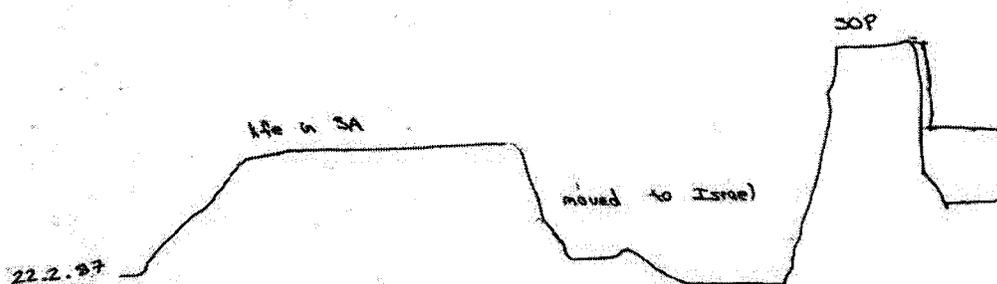
Figure 2.4. Liat's life-line, 2003.

After completing the life-line, interviewees were instructed to tell the story of their life using the line. They were prompted throughout this portion of the interview to provide as much detail as possible, and I intervened to ensure that a complete picture of each element in the story emerged. Items from the formally constructed interview protocols (Appendix 3), including a modified version of McAdams' (1995a) Life Story Interview, were ensured coverage in this process. If items in the protocol were not spontaneously covered by the telling of the life story, I asked them of interviewees after their initial telling.

The resulting interview data was rich in content, providing basic demographic and family information as well as the key events of life (e.g., peak experience, turning points, nadir) and the meaning made by interviewees of those events. Personal and political ideology

was assessed in great detail, particularly with specific reference to the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict and the various political ideologies in the respective societies of the youth (e.g.,

Hamas vs. Fatah, Labor vs. Likud).

I conducted all interviews in English. For the occasional moments when interviewees

were unable to express themselves in English, I instructed them to speak in their native

language. These portions of the interview were then later translated by research assistants

fluent in either Hebrew or Arabic. Interviews conducted at Seeds of Peace and Hands of

Peace occurred in a variety of available locations, all of which were private, which ensured

the interviewees comfort to speak openly. Interviews in the region were conducted either in

the homes of interviewees or in public locations such as cafes. Every attempt was made to

secure as much privacy as possible for interviews conducted in public spaces. The duration of

interviews ranged from approximately 40 to 120 minutes. All interviews were audio-taped

and transcribed verbatim, with corrections made in some cases for comprehensibility, given

that interviewees were not native English speakers.

Interviewees narrated their life stories at various points relative to their participation

in the coexistence program. Of the 45 youth interviewed, 26[7] were interviewed at least twice.

Interview administration proceeded according to six patterns, as described in Table 2.4. The

absence of a systematic sampling design and interview administration was both deliberate

and uncontrollable. It was deliberate in the grounded theory tradition: as theories emerged

from various sources of data, new designs were implemented each year. It was uncontrollable

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[7] Originally a greater number of longitudinal interviews were planned, but the plans for data collection had to be revised in order to facilitate the timely completion of the dissertation. Plans to significantly increase the number of longitudinal interviews obtained remain for the summer of 2007.

in the sense that, in order to secure permission from the two programs themselves, I had to

abide by the limitations they imposed on when interviews could be conducted.

Pattern	Description	N	Interviewees
1	Subjects interviewed during participation in either Seeds of Peace or Hands of Peace only	4	Karam, Tamer, Tariq, Rachel
2	Subjects interviewed during participation and 1-2 years following	8	Haya, Jibril, Karen, Luca, Nizar, Rania, Shlomo, Yossi
3	Subjects interviewed 1-2 years following participation, now participating in a leadership role or in another program	8	Abdullah, Ali, Aya, Laila, Liat, Miriam, Mohammed, Ofra
4	Subjects interviewed in the region before participation, followed during, and interviewed 1-2 years later	10	Ahmed, Ayelet, Daniel, Israa, Lana, Noa, Peter, Roai, Sami, Sylvia
5	Subjects interviewed in the region before participation and followed during; scheduled to be re-interviewed in summer of 2007	13	Adara, David, Dorit, Gal, Hadasa, Leah, Lina, Lubna, Najah, Omar, Osama, Rashid, Salma
6	Subjects interviewed in the region 1-2 years following participation	2	Ezra, Navit

Table 2.4. Patterns of interview administration.

In the spirit of complete "reflexivity" about the project, I wish to inform the reader of

these patterns, which reveal the absence of a systematic design, so that my interpretations can

be considered with the necessary caveats. I believe, as I intend to illustrate in the next two

chapters, that I was able to successfully address the research questions of interest, even in the

absence of greater systematicity. In fact, I would argue that the ability to address the research

questions is enhanced by the multiple points in time relative to program participation that youth were interviewed—some before and after, some during, some only after. As I present the narratives of youth in Chapters 3 and 4, I will make every attempt to contextualize my data with specific reference to program participation, so that the reader can judge the "validity" of my interpretations.

Other Data Sources

In addition to my field notes and interview data, I would like to briefly note that another valuable source of data presented itself to me throughout the course of this research. This data came in the form of public posts to two email listservs—one set up by each of the two programs to encourage youth to stay connected. In some instances, as I analyze particular cases, I will call upon this data. These emails represent public forums for expression and discussion, and youth participants in the Hands of Peace listserv were informed of my collection of these emails as potential data. None objected to my use, provided I continued to use pseudonyms.

Analytic Strategy for Life-Story Narratives

The life-story narratives of youth were analyzed using both holistic and categorical analytic approaches (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998), in keeping with analytic strategies commonly used in narrative research (e.g., Gergen & Gergen, 1983; Lieblich et al., 1998; Mishler, 1986, 1999; Wortham, 2001). Both content and form were analyzed, with an emphasis on the *meaning* of events in the narrative (Bruner, 1990; McAdams, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988) and of their *ideological* content (Gregg, 1991). In *holistic* analysis, a single, intact life story is examined in its entirety, both in its form (readily available in the life-line drawing) and in its content. Holistic analysis explores themes within a single life

story. In *categorical* analysis of content and form, themes across narratives are examined, providing information about patterns relevant to groups of stories.

Chapters 3 and 4 rely on a fusion of these approaches to address the two central research questions of this study: (1) What themes are present in the life stories of Israeli and Palestinian youth, revealing the specificity of identity development in the context of conflict? (2) What is the impact of an "identity intervention" on the development of a life-story narrative for Israeli and Palestinian adolescents? Both of these questions speak to the need to consider patterns both *within* and *between* individual youth. Chapter 3 will focus squarely on the first of these questions by presenting exemplars of youth who embody the identities in consideration (i.e., Jewish Israeli, Palestinian-Israeli, Palestinian). Findings from the categorical-content analysis of narratives will be illustrated using holistic analyses of cases. The connection between *master narratives* of each group and the form and content of individual life stories will be explicitly considered. In Chapter 4, which addresses the second research question, I will present categorical outcomes of participation in the coexistence programs that emerged from the data, revealing the ways in which participation impacts the life story and, subsequently, the sense of identity.

The purpose of this ambitious chapter was to offer some authentic, reflexive description of my activities as a cultural psychologist and as a "stranger" in the Holy Land. I trust that my fusion of personal narrative as a researcher with a description of the fieldwork, the interviewees, the procedures of data collection and analysis has sufficiently satisfied the desire of the reader to know something of me and of the context of this study. It is now to the voices of youth, expressed in their narratives of identity-in-formation, that we concretely turn to for insight into the cultural psychology of adolescence in Israel and Palestine.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE NARRATIVE STALEMATE: CONFLICT, IDENTITY AND

THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN ADOLESCENCE

VOLUME TWO

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

BY

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CHAPTERS THREE, FOUR, AND FIVE

CHAPTER THREE

POLES APART: NARRATIVES IN CONFLICT

"There were no such thing as Palestinians. When was there an independent Palestinian people with a Palestinian state? ...It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist."

—Golda Meir, Israeli Prime Minister, 1969-1974, in "Golda Meir scorns Soviets," *Washington Post* (1969)

"There is no solution to the Palestinian problem except by Jihad. The initiatives, proposals, and International Conferences are but a waste of time, an exercise in futility. ...For Zionist scheming has no end, and after Palestine they will covet expansion from the Nile to the Euphrates. Only when they have completed digesting the area on which they will have laid their hand, they will look forward to more expansion.... Their scheme has been laid out in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and their present [conduct] is the best proof of what is said there."

—Hamas (1988/2001), Charter (pp. 342, 347)

"...By the mere fact that he forms part of an organized crowd, a man descends several rungs in the ladder of civilization. Isolated, he may be a cultivated individual; in a crowd, he is a barbarian—that is, a creature acting by instinct."

—Gustave Le Bon (1895/1969, pp. 27-28)

Since its emergence in the early twentieth century, social psychology has consistently revealed the ways in which individual cognition and behavior are socially influenced. The individual perception of tangible realities, such as the length of line segments, becomes skewed in the interest of group solidarity, revealing the pervasiveness of conformity in thought and action (Asch, 1956). Groups tend to take risks in decision-making that individuals alone would not (Cartwright, 1971; Janis, 1982). Perhaps most disturbingly,

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individuals are willing to engage in violent behavior at the command of a respected authority (Milgram, 1974).

The group, and the desire of individuals to be a part of it, has a most pernicious effect on altruism and ethical human behavior (see also Latané & Darley, 1968). As noted in Chapter 1, the group context can in fact serve to polarize attitudes, so that the group takes on a more "extreme" or polarized stance on a particular topic as a consequence of discussion (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969). A group outcome is, if you will, a simultaneously "risky" and "extreme" one.

Even Sigmund Freud, that champion of individual psychology and architect of the inner workings of an individual mind, posited that:

> In the individual's mental life someone else is invariably involved, as a model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent; and so from the very first individual psychology...[there] is at the same time social psychology as well. (Freud, 1921/1959, p. 1)

Every individual possesses within consciousness some "Other"—some model of existence apart from him- or herself (cf. Bowlby, 1982). And with the genesis of this consciousness, the early formation of social identity begins.

With the need to reconcile "self" and "other"—the individual and the social, the unique and the common—emerges processes of *integration* and *differentiation* that rely precisely on perceptions of self and other, along with decisions about the discourses and ideologies to assimilate into the self-narrative. In their developmental social psychology of identity model, Adams and Marshall (1996) argue that

> ...The process of socialization and human development appears to be based on the paradoxical association between two seemingly opposing factors; that is, the duality between agency and communion, individuality vs. collectivity, self vs. other. (p. 430)

While the process of differentiation fulfills the individual need for a sense of agency, uniqueness, and selfhood, integration commands decisions about elements of the social that are meaningful to the self. That is, "otherness" is integrated into conceptions of self as we assimilate discourses and ideologies from the social world into our own self-narrative.

We might, then, consider the rather "polarized" statements made at the start of this chapter, by leaders and representatives of national groups, in the context of a social psychology of identity. These statements, I argue, are representative of particular discourses which remain deployed in Israeli and Palestinian societies today. In fact, the endurance of these discourses, laden with an ideological perspective that invalidates the existential legitimacy of the other, likely owes much to the intergenerational reproduction of polarized identity narratives.

In this chapter, I argue that the cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian adolescence, as revealed in the life-story narratives of youth and in my own observations in the field, is characterized by the need to identify with a master narrative of identity, promulgated in the discourse and reified in the social structure to which youth are exposed. As introduced at the very beginning of this dissertation, these master narratives represent collections of stories about the group which contain, apart from their characterization of specific events, particular themes. Considered together, these stories assume a quality of *polarization* in their psychological distance from one another. That is, their negative interdependence would inevitably seem to preclude their reconciliation and integration.

Yet we must recall that identity is a *process*, not merely an outcome. As such, the dueling forces of integration and differentiation within an individual create diversity in the extent to which master narratives and polarized discourses are appropriated into the personal narrative during adolescence. What is of empirical import, then, is the extent to which the

Israeli and Palestinian youth in this study—admittedly only a theoretical sample—indeed

identify with the master narrative of ingroup social identity. If conflict seems to somehow

necessitate polarized social identities, how do youth manage the divisiveness of this discourse

as they begin to construct their own life stories?

In seeking to document the cultural specificity of identity, presented most vividly in

the life stories of Israeli and Palestinian youth themselves, I wish to suggest a particular

taxonomy of identity in the context of political conflict. Central to this taxonomy is the notion

of identity polarization—the condition of radical narrative asymmetry between groups, the

seemingly incalculable psychological distance between discourses of collective history and

identity. Its preponderance in conflict, if indeed it is successfully reproduced from generation

to generation, creates a crisis in meaning, a division of consciousness, a narrative stalemate.

This taxonomy of identity polarization, I should note, requires little in the way of profound

insight, as it is both intuitive and readily apparent in any engagement with this research

context. In arguing for the utility of such a taxonomy, I seek to infuse my analysis of the

narratives of youth with some overarching theoretical frame, as well as to suggest the

manifestation of a psychological process in all of its "indigenous" specificity.

THE IDEA OF IDENTITY POLARIZATION: DISCOURSE AND NARRATIVE

Before we proceed most concretely to the stories of youth, which will inject some

much-needed clarity into the idea of identity polarization, I wish only to remind the reader of

the theoretical meaning of the idea. As I argued in Chapter 1, an integrated model of personal

and social identity assumes the *structure* of a life-story narrative (McAdams, 1996), the

content of which is essentially "ideological" and "cognitive" (van Dijk, 1998). Identity is

accessible, then, in the life story constructed by an individual at a particular time and place.

Furthermore, as a *process*, identity is constructed in and through *social practice* (Holland et

al., 1998), mediated through cultural "tools" such as language and the development of "inner speech" or "inner voice" (Bakhtin, 1981; Vygotsky, 1934/1986, 1978; Wertsch, 1991).

It is precisely about this "discursive" aspect of identity that I want to more fully address momentarily here, as it bears considerably upon the narratives of youth and their connection to master narratives of ingroup identity. It is my aim here not to suggest that discourse itself contains the central nexus of power, as others have (e.g., Foucault, 1972, 1978), but rather that discourse when deployed in the structural context of conflict takes on a quality of polarization and obligatory adherence among the most vulnerable, and in some ways most powerful, members of a culture—youth. In making this argument for the centrality of discourse in shaping both the content and the structure of identity, as well as the process by which identities form, I do privilege the concept for its ability to illuminate identity in its totality. In this way, the idea of discourse, and a "field of discursive events" (Foucault, 1972), is central to the theory of identity polarization.

Were it not for the promulgation of polarized, insular discourse, made manifest cognitively in the ideological content of identity, the necessity of conflict would naturally disappear, for the reproduction of conflict requires this discourse. And we ought to mention that changes in discourse—transformations in master narratives that must *necessarily* accompany the repudiation of conflict—naturally beget changes in the social structure and power relations of a society, which may explain the difficulty that leaders seem to have in actually coming to a resolution or negotiated settlement. The power of leaders is, of course, entirely dependent upon the reproduction of the very structural conditions by which they came to power. Hence leaders like Ariel Sharon and Yasser Arafat arguably *needed* the conflict to reproduce itself in order to maintain their own power. In short, conflict commands

the reproduction of discursive polarization that dominates the master narratives of Palestinian and Israeli identity.

To expand upon the rudimentary operational definition proposed in Chapter 1, identity polarization refers to the psychological distance between narratives of youth, rendered highly differentiated in the ideological legitimacy accorded the "other" in and through an engagement with the polarizing discourse that abounds in the social structure of conflict. A state of identity polarization is, quite simply, a state of narrative irreconcilability. That this distance comes somehow to characterize the identity discourse of a society is most certainly related to the perception of *collective identity threat* (Pettigrew, 2003)—the consciousness of a need to assume and express a high degree of solidarity with one's social identity that becomes all the more psychologically distant from *other* social identities. This distance, as many scholars of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have argued, comes to be reified in narrative and, quite specifically, in the core "societal beliefs" (Bar-Tal, 1998a; Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998) or social identity tropes that come to consume that narrative. Let us now take this notion, this idea of identity polarization, out of the abstract and back into the concrete reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will seek to address my first research question—the particularity of youth identity in the context of conflict—through a series of case analyses of narratives. For each of the three identity groups (i.e., Jewish Israeli, Palestinian, and Palestinian-Israeli), I will begin by presenting in greater detail the master narratives of ingroup identity to which youth are exposed in and through the discourse of their respective societies. Following this elaboration, I will then offer a series of cases, selected for their representativeness of the particular identity group in consideration. The ways in which youth

engage with master narratives of identity will, I believe, become readily apparent, as will the specificity of the life course in conflict and the cultural psychology of identity itself.

"JEWISH IN MY BLOOD":

NARRATIVES OF JEWISH ISRAELI YOUTH

For a number of reasons, it makes sense to begin with the Jewish Israelis. Some may be intrigued by this decision, arguing that certainly an initial consideration of Palestinian identity—that of the indigenous people of that land when the saga of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict commenced—makes sense as the "older" of the identities. Without taking an intellectual position that somehow pits me, a cultural psychologist with no training whatsoever in the methods of historical analysis, in the midst of some debate about the origins of Palestinian national identity (see Khalidi, 1997; Kimmerling & Migdal, 2003; Muslih, 1988), I begin with a consideration of Jewish Israeli identity because I believe that the *ideological content* of the Palestinian master narrative is entirely dependent on the existence and success of Zionism. Regardless of when a coherent Palestinian identity truly crystallized, there can be little dispute that *its* ideological content has been framed largely *in response to* Zionism (Said, 1979). Thus we must understand the fulfillment of Zionism in a coherent, if contested and ever-shifting, master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity.

The master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity naturally relies upon Zionism and its birth in the context of the modern European nationalist project (Anderson, 1983; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990), as well as the anti-Semitism and discourse of "ethnic purity" that accompanied that project (Mosse, 1978). I will outline what I have come to construct as this master narrative, assembled in my reading of various key texts and my encounter with contemporary Jewish Israeli discourse in the field. The stories of Yossi, Noa, Roai, and Ayelet will reveal the ways in which youth engage with this master narrative in the ecology

of their everyday lives as they begin to write their own life stories and to set them in the context of a particular ideology.

The Master Narrative of Jewish Israeli Identity

The story of Israel is a story of emancipation and regeneration, of the rescue and resurrection of a marginalized and threatened cultural identity (Halpern, 1969; Hess, 1862/1997; Pinsker, 1882/1997). It is a tale of suffering and success, of vulnerability and perseverance, of the emergence of power and strength out of weakness and persecution (Gamson & Herzog, 1999). It is a classic narrative of "descent and gain" (Lieblich et al., 1998) in which great tragedies precede resilient triumphs (Talmon, 1970). Yet this story continues to be written, and the need to preserve these triumphs—these great collective accomplishments—in no way eradicates the foundational narrative tone of vulnerability and threat. The maintenance of great power may, in fact, rely upon the reproduction of great fear.

If we could trace the master narrative of Israel—and here I refer to *Jewish* Israel alone—and plot the form of this narrative, it would look something like Figure 3.1. In its simplest rendering, it begins many, many years ago, when the Kingdom of Israel existed and thrived, only to be destroyed and its people sent into exile around the world. It gradually ascends as the great success of the Jews in exile revealed their contributions to civilization and were accorded a special status, despite their minority permanence in these cultures. Then the narrative takes a most tragic turn, as these host cultures come to persecute the Jews, wishing for themselves a kind of national purity. A systematic program of what we would today call "ethnic cleansing" results in the forced migration of Jews to cultures of greater safety.
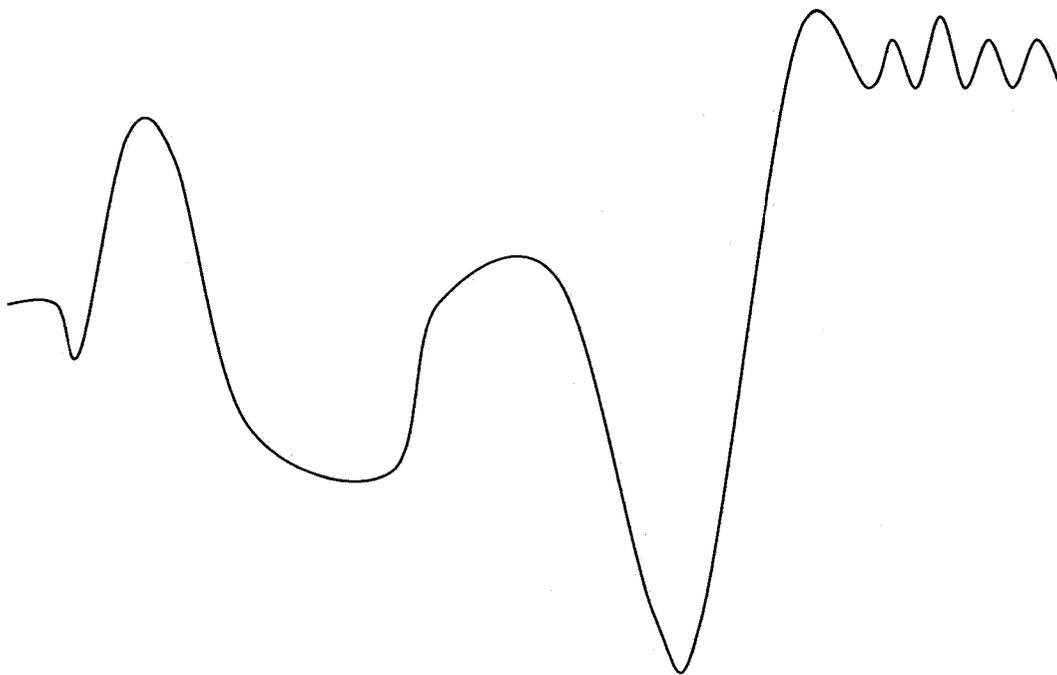
Figure 3.1. Visual plot of the Jewish Israeli master narrative.

But the pace of this great migration cannot be swift enough, as the ultimate nadir in the story—the Holocaust—fulfills the promise of vulnerability and lack of a fully realized national identity. This great tragedy, however, serves as the impetus for the peak experience of the master narrative—the revitalization of the State of Israel, a Jewish state, a safe haven for the Jews of the world, and a model for democracy in a region devoid of civilized institutions. Though the existence of this state—and its people—has been perpetually challenged, its superiority and exceptionality have been revealed by its great successes in defense. The need for a secure national identity is affirmed in the constant reality of threat from Israel's Arab neighbors, solidifying the belief in perpetual vulnerability. Though the stability of the narrative is under constant threat, it reveals a remarkable resilience to attempts at eradication.

In terms of content, the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity to which today's youth are exposed contains four key tropes. These tropes center on (1) historical *persecution and victimization* of the Jews as minorities in other countries, which suggests the need for collective organization in the form of a definitive demographic *majority* in a Jewish-controlled nation-state; (2) the need for *security* and a strong *defense institution* (i.e., military) in order to protect the collective; (3) the *exceptionality* of Jewish Israelis, in their economic, military, and moral success, as well as their commitment to "democracy"; and (4) the *delegitimization* of the Palestinians—their referential outgroup. This latter trope at its extreme is characterized by *existential denial* of an indigenous Palestinian identity, well-represented, perhaps in its most "pure" form, in the quote by former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir at the start of this chapter. At a minimum, this delegitimization argues for the dubiousness of the Palestinian master narrative, in contrast to the Jewish Israeli narrative of the conflict which is rooted in "factual accuracy" rather than interpretation.

Let me now, before commencing a more precise discussion of the basis and sustenance of these tropes in the Israeli identity discourse, state the obvious to anyone familiar with Israel or Jewish Israelis at all. These are not, by any means, a monolithic people. Jewish Israeli identity is, in fact, deeply contested, and Israel has indeed become a nation with prodigious identity diversity (see Rosenthal, 2003).

First, ideologically speaking, we know well that Israel has a rather prolific polity, one that embraces a large number of political parties. Political ideology, economic policy, the role of religion (see Wald & Shye, 1994), and the peace process are all sources of prodigious debate in Israeli society. Lemish (2003) divides Israeli identity among four basic groups, including the Palestinian-Israelis. Considering the three Jewish communities, he identifies (1) an *ultra-orthodox* community (approximately 9% of the total Israeli population), who live

relatively autonomously from the institutions of the state and in many ways are opposed to the dominant stream of Zionism; (2) a *national-religious* community (approximately 15% of the population), who believe strongly in the concept of "Greater Israel" and Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and hence are the most ideologically polarized vis-à-vis the Palestinians; and finally (3) the *secular* Jewish community (approximately 50% of the population), who represent the descendants of "hegemonic" Labor Zionism (Kimmerling, 2001; Shafir & Peled, 2002), Ashkenazi elites who are more committed to secular nationalism than to the religious aspects of Judaism. As Shafir and Peled (1998, 2002) argue, these ideological rifts in Israeli society are represented in discourses of "citizenship" in the society. They distinguish between three specific discourses: a *collectivist republican* discourse, which characterized the founding "pioneers" of the state; an *ethno-nationalist* discourse, which focuses on Jewish descent; and an *individualist liberal* discourse, focusing on civic responsibilities.

But there is much more identity diversity in Israel than that created by ideological differences and discourses of citizenship. Despite attempts to construct Israel as somehow "ethnically unified" as a Jewish state, it is without question a pluralistic culture, a nation of immigrants from diverse cultures such as Eastern and Western Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and, more recently, Ethiopia. Long considered a key source of identity diversity (see Hofman, 1970), a significant divide in Israeli society continues to exist between Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews, and differential "ethnicity" in this regard is the source of status differences and a stratification "hierarchy" in Israeli society (Leichtman, 2001; Mizrachi, 2004; Shafir & Peled, 1998). That is, the Israeli identity narrative is really dominated by the Ashkenazi Jew, and Israeli society continues to operate, as it always has in some way, on a

model of assimilation (Mizrachi, 2004)—what Shafir and Peled (1998, 2002) refer to as an "incorporation regime."

Speaking of the contemporary context of Israeli society, Kimmerling (2001) argues that in fact Israel is becoming an increasingly "pluralistic" culture. This most recent historical shift in Israeli identity discourse—away from a more unified narrative toward one that is more differentiated—remains unaccompanied by a real concept of "multiculturalism," according to Kimmerling.

> Within the Israeli state, a system of cultural and social plurality is emerging, but in the absence of a concept or ideology of multiculturalism. [This emergence is accompanied by] the subdivision of Israeli identity, nationalism, and collective memory into many versions, with only a soft common core. The result has been not only a process of reshaping collective identity but also a continuous conflict over the meaning of what might be called Israeliness.... (Kimmerling, 2001, p. 2)

Kimmerling identifies seven specific "cultures" inside present-day Israel that contribute to its increasing identity diffusion: the secular Ashkenazi upper and middle class, the national-religious (e.g., settlers in the territories), traditional Mizrahim, Orthodox religious, the Palestinian-Israelis, the new Russian immigrants, and the Ethiopians. In his estimation, the inculcation of a single, coherent Israeli identity narrative is diminishing as the existence of this cultural diversity is increasingly accepted in Israeli society and as the assimilationist discourse and practice wanes.

While I see in Kimmerling's observations of Israeli society and its increasing acceptance of pluralism a kind of acquiescence to identity diversity among Jewish Israelis, I question the extent to which this "toleration," if you will, has really resulted in the kind of identity "diffusion" that Kimmerling suggests. That is, Kimmerling seems to suggest that a coherent narrative of Israeli identity has become "soft" at best and perhaps entirely eroded at worst. He makes no claims on whether this process is "better" or "worse" for Israeli society,

though he suggests a kind of necessary resignation, out of realistic, pragmatic, and perhaps even "moral" concern, of mainstream Israeli society and the hegemonic Ashkenazi class to, at the very least, a revision of the Israeli master narrative.

I would argue, however, that Kimmerling's thesis remains an empirical question with regard to Jewish Israeli youth. My fieldwork suggests that, at least to an extent, the four themes of the Israeli master narrative, as well as the basic story of Jewish Israeli collective identity, remain quite intact in the consciousness of contemporary youth. While Israeli identity has in many ways shifted from a *contestable* to a formally *contested* concept—and with that contestation shifts in cultural discourse and practice have occurred—I believe that a core master narrative exists and is readily accessible to youth as they begin to construct their life stories in adolescence.

The thrust of Kimmerling's (2001) argument is that the revision of Israeli identity is connected to the state's inherent liberalization—economically, culturally, demographically. But the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity is contested also on ideological grounds in Israeli society, with the emergence of a "new" historiography that disrupts the foundational myths of the state (e.g., Morris, 1987, 2001; Shlaim, 2001). A segment of the Israeli populace has embraced an ideology of "post-Zionism," in which it is argued that the need for a "monoethnic" Jewish state has outlived its usefulness and in fact prevents Israel from regional integration (Cohen, 1995; Kelman, 1998; Liebman & Susser, 1998; Silberstein, 1999). Post-Zionism deploys a new discourse in Israeli society that directly challenges the master narrative. In this way, as an ideology, its existence increases the field of discursive possibilities for Jewish Israeli youth. They may, for example, learn the master narrative in school, only to be offered a critical evaluation of it by their post-Zionist parents at home.

Again, the extent to which the *contested* nature of Jewish Israeli identity in fact has a significant impact upon contemporary youth is very much an empirical question.

There is, I believe and will demonstrate, a kind of resilience to the master narrative that prevents its total reconstruction. The four themes I outlined—persecution and victimization, strength and security, exceptionality, and the delegitimization of Palestinian identity—remain part of what I would prefer to call the "hard" center of the Israeli master narrative of identity. To become members of Israeli society and participants in its requisite institutions (e.g., the military), it is inevitable that youth will at the very least engage with these tropes. Whether this engagement results in the reproduction of identity polarization, or its repudiation in the critical contestation of these very tropes, is truly an empirical question—and a central concern of this dissertation. Rather than accepting Kimmerling's (2001) narrative of the "decline" or diffusion of "Israeliness"—a thesis which appears quite plausible when one immerses oneself in Israeli culture for any length of time—I intend to offer it as a hypothesis we can readily explore in the narratives of youth, which reveal identities in formation.

Before the content of this engagement for youth—as realized in their life-story narratives—is properly considered, we must more comprehensively specify the thematic content of the master narrative itself. For without a specification of its content, we have only a vague point of comparison for the life stories of youth. Having established the contestation of contemporary Israeli identity, and its ideological and ethnic diversity, I wish to consider in detail four key themes of the master narrative.

Persecution and Victimization

At the core of the Jewish Israeli master narrative is the theme of collective experience of the historical persecution and victimization of the Jews in Europe. It is readily perceptible

in Israeli discourse, once the layers of other, more derivative tropes are peeled away. It is,

thematically, the foundation of Zionism, the ideology that once viewed Israel as merely an

"idea"—an experiment in nationalism—and that has now, to a remarkable extent, created an

entire culture.

Zionism must be viewed properly in the historical context of its ideological

emergence. The nineteenth century witnessed a "golden age" of nationalism (Hobsbawm,

1990), in which groups united along perceived cultural, linguistic, and "ethnic" lines to

construct "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983). The day of great Empire, with its often

distant rulers and obedient subjects, had begun to fade, and the time had come to reawaken

the "primordial" Nation (Geertz, 1973; Suny, 2001).

Zionism and the creation of an Israeli state, with its own national status, is a part of

this project of primordialism that emerged in the nineteenth century. This primordialism is

well-represented in Zionism's foundational texts. The title of Moses Hess' (1862/1997) essay

speaks for itself. In *Rome and Jerusalem*, he argues that the Jews of Europe, who have

favored assimilation into European culture (and thus the erosion of a Jewish identity)

constitute a Primordial Nation that can be "reawakened" and "restored" to greatness in

Jerusalem:

> The Jewish people will participate in the great historical movement of present-day
> humanity only when it will have its own fatherland. As long as the great Jewish
> masses remain in their position of inequality, even the relatively few Jews who have
> entirely surrendered their Jewish identity in the vain attempt to escape individually
> from the fate of the Jewish people, will be more painfully affected by the position of
> the Jews than the masses, who feel themselves only unfortunate but not degraded.
> (pp. 137-138)

Hess, of course, is not conceptualizing a primordial Jewish nationalism out of some inevitable

diasporic identity crisis among Europe's Jewry. Europe's rapidly assimilating Jewish

community, which included arch-Zionist Theodore Herzl, was, by and large, quite content

with the privileges of European identity (Kimmerling, 2001). Rather, the idea of Zionism is reactionary. It is reactionary in the sense that its development was entirely dependent upon the growth of European nationalism that rapidly *excluded* the Jews, and with this exclusion a kind of rapid polarization of European identities that beget racism, anti-Semitism, and the well-known pogroms against Jews in Europe (Mosse, 1978).

The experience with rising anti-Semitism among Europe's Jewry naturally began to write a most inhospitable chapter in the history of the diaspora. At the height of their great contributions to civilization, at a time when Jewish intellectuals and scientists seemed to achieve remarkable greatness in Europe and a Jewish culture coexisted in harmony with other local ones, their sense of "home" was disrupted. Leo Pinsker, another foundational figure of Zionism, states this experience quite eloquently in his 1882 essay, *Auto-Emancipation*:

> The Jewish people has no fatherland of its own, though many motherlands; it has no rallying point, no center of gravity, no government of its own.... It is everywhere a guest, and nowhere *at home*. (Pinsker, 1882/1997, p. 183, italics in original)

Pinsker, like other architects of Zionism, is reacting to the growing reality of Jewish oppression and persecution in the context of an orthodox nationalism in Europe, with its growing notions of "racial purity."

Zionism, then, was a national movement that emerged in reaction to the persecution and victimization of Jews in Europe. In his influential essay, *The Jewish State* (1896/1997), Theodore Herzl crystallized the sentiments of other European Zionists when he said, "I consider the Jewish question neither a social nor a religious one.... It is a *national* question" (p. 209; italics added). The "nation-building" ideology of Zionism thus, foundationally, had little to do with Palestine per se and owes its emergence less to some irrational primordialism than to the very real experience with group marginalization—and persecution—in Europe. Reactionary though it may be, there is no question that Zionism, like other nationalist

movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, can reliably be understood as classic primordialism, in which a discourse of national identity is rooted in the belief in some inherent national status long lost or eroded (Suny, 2001).

Zionism and the settlement movement in Palestine began long before the ultimate moment in the history of Jewish persecution in Europe—the Holocaust—but it is the Holocaust that served as the final impetus for the creation of a new Jewish identity that could only be realized in the context of a national majority status. The Holocaust indeed serves as the ultimate story of Jewish victimization in the Israeli narrative (Caplan, 1999; Stein, 1984); it reveals the *necessity* of Israel's existential legitimacy. It fulfills the tragic prophecy of Zionism. It permeates Israeli culture and saturates its identity discourse, framing the entire politics of Israeli national identity (Moses & Moses-Hrushovski, 1997; Zertal, 2005).

Collective suffering, persecution, and victimization may reside at the core of the Jewish Israeli identity narrative, and in fact reveal the necessity of a distinct Israeli primordialism for existential security, but there are other tropes in the master narrative which, perhaps owing to the passage of time and the great success of Zionism as a national project, appear more salient for contemporary youth. The historical experience of victimization in the diaspora led to an entire reconceptualization of Jewish identity and the emergence of the "Jew as Fighter": the emergence of Jewish "militancy" (see Figure 3.2). This emergence is narratively framed in the experience of Jewish Israelis out of a strong *need for security* that naturally emerges from the core of the narrative of victimization.
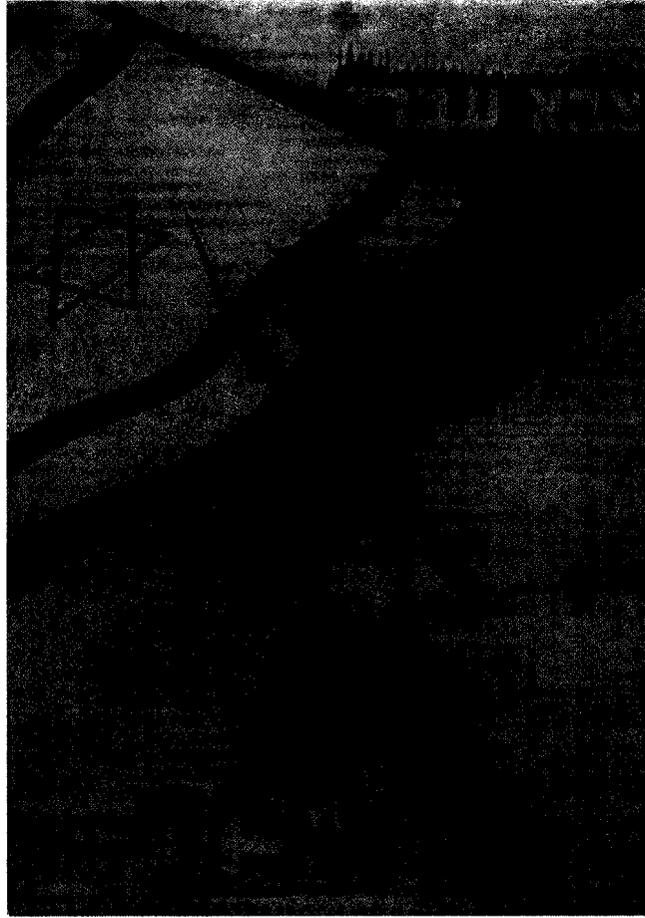
Figure 3.2. A pre-state recruitment poster for Jewish soldiers (circa 1941-1945).

Existential Insecurity

As Hareven (1983) argues, the idea of Jews as perpetual victims serves to construct a traumatic story of Jewish defenselessness. In fact, the new Jewish identity seeks to annul and entirely reverse this component of the Jewish identity narrative. Like Zionism itself, this annulment has witnessed great success in the construction of a New Jew—the Israeli, no longer a defenseless victim, now a strong fighter to be feared. Once Victims, now "Righteous" Victims (Morris, 2001)—victims with a new, superordinate morality and defensive purpose.

Historically, the need for security began relatively soon after Zionist settlement in Palestine and the tensions that arose between Jews and Arabs long before the 1948 war (see Kimmerling, 2001; Morris, 2001). What began as community militias established to protect the Jewish settlements in Palestine commenced the institutionalization of a new identity: the Israeli Fighter. As an identifiable Israeli *culture* emerged in Palestine, with the consolidation of Jewish immigrant identities into a unified Israeli "group," aided by the "resurrection" of a Hebrew language, it stood in contrast to the indigenous Arab culture, considered "backward" in the ethnocentric discourse of the European societies from which those early immigrants hailed. With the desire for cultural and political autonomy in Palestine, and a firm desire to cultivate some *new* culture (i.e., an "Israeli" one), rather than to assimilate into some "primitive" indigenous culture, tensions between the indigenous Arabs and the Jewish settlers were inevitable.

Rather than being understood for what these tensions, which eventually turned to violence between Jews and Arabs, in fact likely were—a frustrated relationship between a local population and a new population that were perceived as European "colonizers" (see Rodinson, 1973)—the skirmishes between groups activated the trope of victimization that the Jewish immigrants to Palestine brought with them from Europe. And so the perceived *need* for a national homeland, and with that the need for a national *culture*, simultaneously brought with it the inevitability of a refashioning of Jewish identity in Palestine—from the "weak" Jew of Europe, who would relinquish his "ethnicity" for the approval of the French, or the Germans, or the Russians, to the "strong" Jew of Israel, the Fighter who would reverse the trauma of defenselessness.

The need for security may have developed as a narrative trope from both the rejection of the European Jewish identity of victimhood and the early experience of Jewish settlers in

Palestine with the indigenous Arab population, but it has been gradually strengthened and solidified over the course of Israel's national history (see Arian, 1995). The 1948 war—Israel's "War for Independence"—saw the realization of the Zionist aspiration for the status of nationhood, instigated by the rejection of the United Nations partition plan by the Palestinian Arabs and neighboring Arab countries. The need for security thus became cemented into Israeli identity by the very real perception of existential threat instigated by the Palestinian rejection of Zionism and, subsequently, the legitimacy of Israel itself. We will, at a later point in this chapter, deal most concretely with *why*, ideologically speaking, the Palestinians rejected Zionism and the legitimacy of an Israeli state, for any "balanced" consideration must take into account the existential concerns that the Palestinians had for their own national identity as a consequence of Zionism. For now, though, we must consider the way in which Palestinian "rejectionism" and delegitimization of an Israeli identity has contributed to the perception of Jewish Israelis of a need for security and, concurrently, a strong defense.

Palestinian rejectionism may have begun in the struggle that characterized Jewish-Arab relations in pre-1948 Palestine, and culminated in the unwillingness to accept partition, but it has continued in the sustenance of further wars with the Palestinians and other Arab neighbors (in 1967 and 1973, most notably), as well as the two Palestinian intifada, the most recent of which has been extremely bloody and relied quite extensively on "terrorist"[1] tactics. Palestinian rejectionism has elevated the salience of security beliefs in the Israeli master

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[1] Labeling Palestinian actions as "terrorist" is problematic for recognizing the legitimacy of the Palestinian master narrative, which views Palestinian violence against Israelis as acts of "resistance" (for further discussion, see Battin, 2004; Pape, 2005). Seeking a kind of mutual recognition of these competing narratives, I will avoid condoning one label or another in my own interpretation and so will suggest some distance between these labels and my interpretations with the use of quotation marks, indicating that such labels are part of the ingroup discourse about the outgroup.

narrative, situating the narrative in a discursive setting of existential insecurity. Again, the prophecy of Zionism is revealed: only a strong Jewish nation can protect and preserve the sustained existence of a Jewish identity and of the Jewish people.

Beliefs about security have thus become a firm part of the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity (Bar-Tal, 1998a; Jacobson & Bar-Tal, 1995), institutionalized in the "siege mentality" (Bar-Tal & Antebi, 1992) that pervades discourse in Israel. Though certainly powerful in discourse, with talk of existential threat somewhat ubiquitous in Israel, if sometimes below the discursive surface, it is in cultural practice that the need for security is most readily apparent in Israeli identity.

Cultural practice, certainly central to the inculcation of any identity (Holland et al., 1998), is absolutely essential to the sustenance of an identity under perceived existential threat. In Israel, practice related to the cultivation of security beliefs is quite centrally integrated into the life course of *all* its Jewish citizens through compulsory military service. Institutionally, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) emerged out of a consolidation of various militias in pre-state Israel. No aspect of the life course was perhaps more central to the youth in this study—the male youth in particular—than the years of military service that preceded university (see also Seginer, 1999). Soldiers—as ubiquitous in Israel as the sun—are figures of national reverence. They ride buses and trains for free; they are given special discounts at shops, hostels, and restaurants. Their stories consume entire pages of daily tabloids, with tales of heroic sacrifice beside stories of coping apart from families. The need for security, cognized in the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity, is realized in the institutionalization of the Jewish Israeli life course itself, and the stories of youth reveal the salience of the contemporary Israeli identity as Fighter, rather than as Victim, in the Israeli master narrative.

Israeli Exceptionality

Even before the great success of Zionism and of the State of Israel—militarily, economically, culturally—a notion of *exceptionality* was present in the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity. Certainly in order to provide the Zionist political movement with some motivational force in Europe, Jewish exceptionality (again, perhaps in response to the growing assimilation of Jews in Europe) was called upon to increase the salience of group solidarity. In those early Zionist texts, like Hess' *Rome and Jerusalem*, the call to Zion is the call to a higher moral order, to a nation which can be looked at for not only its material but also its moral successes, such as the abolition of "race and class oppression" (Hess, 1862/1997, p. 137).

The idea of Jewish Israeli exceptionality likely owes much of its origins to eternal stories of the "Chosen People" (Stein, 1984), but less remotely to the great success of Zionism itself, in its existential fulfillment. Talmon's (1970) essay, "Israel among the Nations," casts the efforts of Zionism, culminating in the creation of the State of Israel, as "the most remarkable and most constructive achievement of the Jewish people..., and one of the great feats of universal history" (p. 3). Socially, economically, politically, and militarily, Zionism represents a great success—in a relatively short span of time—in more than simply "nation-building"; it succeeded in constructing a whole new *culture*.

It is precisely this *remarkability* of the achievements of Zionism, as well as Israeli society since the establishment of the state, that infuses the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity with a concept of exceptionality. Jewish Israelis view themselves as a "special" people—a people who, despite the "hostility" of their origins and current surrounds, have demonstrated not merely *resilience* but *progressive sustenance* in their ability to secure their own national and cultural existence. As Mizrachi (2004) argues, this component of the master

narrative of Jewish Israeli identity has traditionally referred more to the hegemonic Ashkenazi class of Israeli society, with the Mizrahim expected to be "nurtured" (*tipuach*) sufficiently to come to embody this aspect of the Israeli identity.

Exceptionality infuses the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity and reinforces ingroup solidarity by highlighting the distinctiveness of the group. Like other elements of the master narrative, the idea of exceptionality in achievement cultivates a kind of isolationism that polarizes Jewish Israeli identity in its regional context, particularly when this exceptionality, as it often does both historically (e.g., Hess, 1862/1997) and in contemporary Israeli discourse, takes on an ethnocentric (i.e., Eurocentric, Orientalist) character (see Mizrachi, 2004; Said, 1978). The exceptionality of the Jewish Israelis, at its most ethnocentric extreme, serves to delegitimize Palestinian identity, arguing that the Jews have a connection to the region "from time immemorial" whereas "the Arabs" served only as temporary inhabitants at best or "squatters" at worst (e.g., Peters, 1984[2]), awaiting the end of the "third exile" (Pinsker, 1882/1997) of the "Chosen People."

Delegitimization of Palestinian Identity

Probably no other social psychological process is more characteristic of identity polarization than outgroup delegitimization. Israeli social psychologist Daniel Bar-Tal (1990) defines delegitimization as "the process of categorizing groups into extremely negative social categories and excluding them from acceptability" (p. 65). Delegitimization, as a key component in the larger psychological process of identity polarization, has cognitive, affective, and behavioral consequences for intergroup relations. A delegitimized outgroup is conceived hierarchically below the ingroup in the ladder of human cultures. Its members are

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[2] It is important to note that the scholarship of this study has come under scrutiny for its accuracy and scholarly integrity. See Finkelstein (2003) for an analysis.

reviled, dubbed as "evil" and not worthy of humane treatment; they are, in fact, less than human. As Bar-Tal (1990) argues, delegitimization facilitates moral exclusion, which essentially provides justification for the ingroup's acts against the outgroup and its members. Delegitimization is part of the psychological cycle of violence that permits the intergenerational reproduction of conflict by cultivating a cognitive category of the "Other" that is entirely polarized from the category of Self.

The final element of the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity that I wish to present centers precisely on this identity polarization, this need to deny the legitimacy of Palestinian identity and to maintain an Orientalist, exotic "gaze" at the Arabs more generally. Nowhere is Jewish Israeli exceptionality more problematic, both conceptually and "ethically," than in the way it constructs the *relationship* between Israelis and Palestinians in an enduring Orientalist tradition.

Orientalism in its broader thesis argues for the hegemonic construction of "the Orient"[3] and "the Oriental" in relation to the Occident (Said, 1978). The Orient is viewed through the lens of European ethnocentrism as a place for civilizing, and the Oriental is thus a character *to be civilized.* The failure of early Zionist writing to mention with any real specificity the fact that an indigenous population indeed existed in Palestine likely had more to do with the proliferation of Orientalism as given in European discourse than with some attempt to hoodwink the masses into Palestine's complete emptiness. Zionism was of course Orientalist in nature, being a product of European nationalism.

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[3] As Said (1978) notes, American readers will be less familiar with the use of the "Orient" and the "Oriental" to refer to the Near, rather than the Far, East. In European discourse and in academic parlance in both North America and Europe, the Orient refers largely to the Near East (e.g., to be an "Orientalist" in anthropology would refer to one whose work centers on areas such as Turkey, Palestine, Egypt, and the like).

Even Erik Erikson (1959), in one of his characterizations of Israel, seems to neglect the existence of an indigenous population in Palestine, having internalized the Orientalist conception of its "emptiness" and "unclaimed" status.

> These European ideologists [the Zionists], given—as it were—a *historical moratorium* created by the peculiar international and national status of Palestine first in the Ottoman Empire and then in the British mandate, were able to establish and to fortify a significant *utopian bridgehead* for Zionist ideology. In his "homeland," and tilling his very home soil, the "ingathered" Jew was to overcome such evil identities as result from eternal wandering, merchandising, and intellectualizing and was to become *whole* again in body and mind, as well as in nationality. (Erikson, 1959, p. 172).

The Zionist vision of national regeneration is quite clearly explicated by Erikson in this passage, with its emphasis on revising identity through the redemption of a "spoiled" land, a land of uncertain status, a land in need of "tilling." Such an account can indeed be considered Orientalist in its inability to recognize that another narrative in Palestine was brewing, one which viewed Zionism not as *progressive* but as *oppressive*. Attention to Orientalism exposes the multiplicity of narratives and their significance for human relations; for Orientalism as an ideological system sought precisely to reduce the complexity of narrative multiplicity, to simplify identity in ways that were, in fact, damaging to intergroup relations.

Let us not think of Orientalism as an ideology of the past. Though many in the West have been adequately sensitized to its existence and perseverance, it continues to frame the relationship between East and West in great measure. In Israel, the "Arab," in fact, continues to be constructed in keeping with the Orientalist tradition, for the *identity needs* of Jewish Israeli society (e.g., the need to maintain a narrative of exceptionality, to prevent the consociation of Jews and Arabs, and to reproduce a salient narrative of ingroup solidarity). Orientalism endures in Israel out of its very need *to exist*, for Israel is not threatened solely by bombs and guns but also by the politics of demography. I refer not only to the fact that,

currently at least, Arabs are reproducing at levels considerably higher than Jews (and Jewish immigration to Israel is not helping to correct that discrepancy), but also to the unyielding endurance of physical segregation between Jews and Arabs to which I referred in Chapter 2. This segregation helps to ensure the maintenance of "ingroup purity" and conformity to master narratives of polarized identity.

Not surprisingly, Orientalism has a long history inside of Israel, and the intractability of conflict with its Arab neighbors has likely prevented a full reconciliation of its ideological harm to intergroup relations both within Israeli society and beyond its still-undetermined borders. In his analysis of anthropological study of the Palestinians, Israeli anthropologist Dan Rabinowitz has argued that early anthropology contributed to the "Oriental othering" that was necessary to construct a coherent, exceptional Israeli national identity (Rabinowitz, 1992, 2001, 2002). Specifically, he argues that anthropological interpretations of Palestinian culture served to construct a clear outgroup that essentially provided a perfect counter-identity to the Israeli identity under construction. Palestinian culture was characterized as "traditional" in its familial and general social structure, in contrast to the new Israeli culture, which was "modern" and "metropolitan" in its social structure (Rabinowitz, 2002). Palestinian political culture was characterized as "unequal," with its tendency to emphasize social relations and the power dynamics of those relations over an "equal" system like democracy. Rabinowitz argues that Israeli anthropologists unwittingly served the identity needs of the nascent Israeli society by constructing contrasting identities that in fact polarized Israelis and Palestinians even further.

Identity polarization was also nurtured by the institutions of the state. In his study of school textbooks in Israel from the pre-state period to the Oslo accords, Bar-Gal (1994) reveals the ways in which Palestinians were fashioned in the larger project of Israeli national

production (see also Bar-Gal, 1993; Bar-Tal, 1998b). He discovered that, by the 1920s,

textbooks used with Jewish youth constructed the Palestinian Arabs in highly ethnocentric,

Orientalist ways. In the 1920s and 1930s a delegitimization project appeared in full-force in

Jewish textbooks. Not only were the Arabs presented, in true Orientalist form, as backward,

lazy, savage, and exotic, they were presented as diffuse in their identity. That is, the argument

against any real existence of a Palestinian identity was presented concretely in the education

curricula of pre-state Jewish schools in Palestine. As one textbook reads, "Their common

language does not create a single nation of them, for the inhabitants of the Orient can be

divided not by their language but by their religion" (Brawer, 1936, p. 73, cited in Bar-Gal,

1994, p. 226). The contents of these textbooks reveal a desire to incite psychological distance

between Jews and Arabs, as well as a desire to suggest the homogeneity of the people of "the

Orient," encompassing land far beyond Palestine. The connection of the "inhabitants" of

Palestine, as they were called in those pre-state textbooks (Bar-Gal, 1994), to the inhabitants

of other neighboring lands could frame the Palestinians as diffuse in their national identity

status; their "nationality" was not Palestinian but perhaps "Oriental."

　　　With the founding of Israel in 1948 and the establishment of a national curriculum,

the contents of textbooks changed. Once referred to as *inhabitants*, the Palestinians were now

referred to as *minorities* (in pre-1967 Israel). The issue of the Palestinian refugees and the

overnight disappearance of numerous Palestinian communities during the war (see Abdel-

Nour, 2004; Morris, 1987) is simply ignored in the early state textbooks, according to Bar-

Gal (1994). The Palestinian-Israelis are, after a period of being identified as "enemies,"

constructed rather paternalistically in the textbooks. The Arab citizens are presented as

benefiting greatly from Zionist success and being afforded more rights than their brethren in

other Arab-ruled countries. They are also openly discussed as a "demographic threat" in textbooks, including those used in Arab schools in Israel (Bar-Gal, 1994).

It is important to view the construction of the Palestinian in Israeli discourse as fulfilling Israel's need to construct a new national identity that argued for the distinctiveness of the two identities. The fact that the Palestinians, and Arabs in general, continue to be viewed in an Orientalist frame speaks to the endurance of Orientalism as an ideology (Said, 1978). The use of negative stereotypes in Israeli discourse contributes to the perception of righteousness, benevolence, and exceptionality in the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity. Studies with Jewish Israeli children have revealed that negative stereotypes of Arabs are present by age 3 or 4 (Bar-Tal, 1996), that Palestinians are judged most negatively relative to other Arabs (Bar-Tal & Labin, 2001), and that children even express a desire to inflict violence on Arabs at a very young age (Bar-Tal, 1996). For Jewish Israelis, the tendency to express ingroup favoritism and outgroup delegitimization appears to emerge as early as preschool and then to diminish in middle childhood, only to return quite strongly in early adolescence (Teichman, 2001). Not surprisingly, such negative stereotypes are accentuated during specific major conflict-related events, such as a Palestinian attack inside Israel (Bar-Tal & Labin, 2001). These studies reveal the extent to which the Arab in general, and the Palestinian in particular, is constructed as an antagonist in the master narrative and internalized at a very young age.

At its most extreme, the Jewish Israeli master narrative goes beyond Orientalism in its treatment of the Palestinians and, in fact, undertakes an entire delegitimization project. To reiterate, delegitimization functions as a form of outgroup categorization in which a highly negative image places the group outside the realm of an acceptable human group that acts with any sense of values (Bar-Tal, 1989, 1990, 1998a). While Orientalism provides the

necessary negative stereotypes of Palestinians, it is in fact the delegitimization of Palestinian identity—ideologically and existentially—that contributes to the greatest identity polarization in the Jewish Israeli master narrative. This delegitimization can most readily be seen (and heard) in the popular resistance to *the very existence* of a Palestinian people. Golda Meir's quote at the start of this chapter serves as the best known discursive example. Very concretely, this existential denial takes the form of a rejection of geographic terms used by Palestinians.

As noted in the very beginning of this dissertation, the very naming of the region and the labeling of a place called "Palestine" truly sums up the conflict itself. While Palestinians want to insist that *some* piece of land can still be legitimately called Palestine, it is completely unacceptable (or, at least, quite provocative and reproachable) in the Jewish Israeli narrative to refer to anything called "Palestine," except perhaps in historical terms. As Lemish (2003) notes, in 1977 the geographic designation "Land of Israel" (*Eretz Israel*) was redefined to refer to the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. The terms "occupied territories" or "Palestine" are in fact prohibited in government-supported media or textbooks (Lemish, 2003). But, of course, the desire to geographically define the region in such a way as to exclude the aims of that rival nationalist movement, to deny the legitimacy and the possibility of Palestinian identity, does little to reduce the polarization of identities.

The Jewish Israeli Master Narrative: A Summary

The story of Jewish Israeli identity is a story that begins with suffering, persecution, and victimization and ends with glorious triumph, righteous indignation, and moral exceptionality. Along its narrative path of descent and gain, in its attempt to construct a coherent, compelling, and sustainable ingroup identity, it offers a polarizing contrast in the construction of the Palestinian as (Oriental) Enemy. The story is deceptively simplistic. It has

a clear protagonist and antagonist, with the necessary discourse to credibly frame these characters as such. The seemingly indefatigable existential threat posed by the Antagonist (Palestinian) to the Protagonist (Israeli) creates the narrative conditions in which the theme of *security* (and subsequently *militarism*) must assume primacy.

This master narrative is, based on my fieldwork, accessible to contemporary youth through its infusion in both discourse and practice. In discourse, one can locate it in textbooks, in media, in conversations on the street, in cafes, and at the dinner table. In practice, it is realized in the symbolic interactions that frame Jewish-Arab relations both in Israel and in Palestine (e.g., checkpoints). It is also realized in Israel in the cultural practice of commemoration (Ben-Yehuda, 1995; Zerubavel, 1995), whether during national holidays or ritualized field trips for youth (e.g., to the Nazi death camps). The question remains and will now be thoroughly explored: In what ways do youth appropriate this master narrative as they begin to write their own life stories in adolescence?

The Story of Yossi

It seems fitting to begin with Yossi, the first Israeli adolescent I had ever met, not just for its significance in the chronology of my own narrative, but for the path it would eventually take. I first came to meet Yossi in the summer of 2003. On a hot summer afternoon in the woods of Maine, a few days after his experience at Seeds of Peace commenced, Yossi narrated his life story to me.

At age 15, Yossi is a tall, slender, athletic boy with military-short hair, dark eyes, and a confident presence. An Ashkenazi Jew whose family is quite secular, Yossi grew up in the suburbs of Haifa—that idyllic "city of coexistence." Mirroring the Jewish Israeli master narrative in form, his life story offers a classic account of descent and gain, with nadirs followed by ever-increasing upward slopes (Figure 3.3).
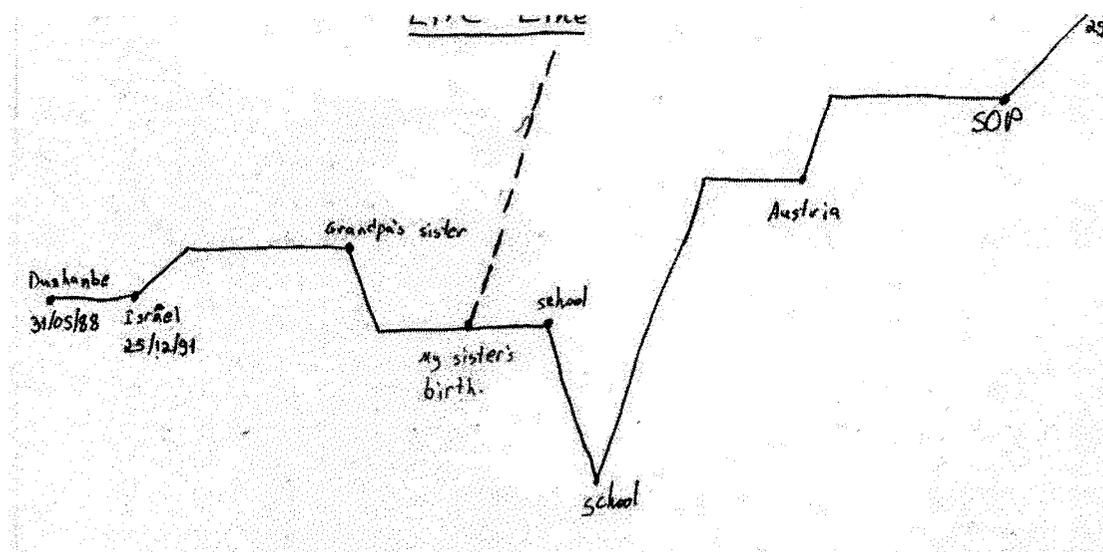
Figure 3.3. Yossi's life-line, 2003.

The complexity of Yossi's identity is immediately revealed as he begins his life story

and reveals the family's story of immigration to Israel.

> I was born in Dushanbe, it's the capital city of Tajikistan, and my both
> grandparents—from both sides I mean—they came from Ukraine to there. So, I know
> I'm kind of Russian but was born in Tajikistan and came here to Israel.

Like many Jews who, in the twentieth century, fled from persecution in places like Russia,

the story of Yossi's family is one of *necessary* migration. In this way, with the common

family story of immigration to Israel as a flight from persecution, the theme of persecution

and victimization is encoded into the life-story narratives of youth like Yossi.

Yossi's earliest memory, at age two, reveals the perception of existential threat that

begins at a very early age and creates a narrative tone of fear for Jewish Israeli youth.

> We moved to Israel from Tajikistan exactly two weeks before the Gulf War started.
> And I remember that every evening, we used to go in our rooms and put on the masks
> and seal the rooms. I remember I didn't like it at all, and sometimes when I put the
> mask too tight I just had to take it off, and I was puking all of the time. I hated it. I
> really hated it when I was little.

The experience of possible death is thus perceptible at a very early age for Yossi. Affirming the theme of persecution and victimization, this experience in the narrative immediately positions Yossi's life story in a state of threatened existence. A need for protection and security naturally flows.

The first descent in Yossi's life story occurs at the death of a family member, his great aunt, to natural causes. The lowest point in his narrative—the nadir—involves an experience so common to adolescents in the industrial and post-industrial world: a negative school experience (see Eccles, 2004).

> In fifth grade, I had an awful teacher and hated her. Then I changed schools, and I felt like I lost all my friends. Then I found out that I have new friends; it's a better place with better teachers. By the way, they fired the teacher after I left, because everybody hated her....

Yossi's narrative follows the descent-and-gain pattern precisely in his seeming ability to use challenging events as an opportunity for making cumulative gains. The challenge of transfer to a new school is followed by a successful gain in the recognition of his ability to make new friends. In this experience, he has learned a valuable social skill. From the moment of this realization, the trajectory of his narrative assumes a stable ascent. Skiing in Austria, followed by his attendance at Seeds of Peace, represent peaks on the ever-ascending course of his life story. The peak experience of his life, which he initially inadvertently omitted, is his younger sister's birth (indicated by the dashed line in Figure 3.3).

In terms of his life experience, then, Yossi's story reveals the narrative of an adolescent traversing what ought to be considered highly "normative" ups and downs: immigration to a new country, the death of a family member, the birth of a sibling, troubles with school, success in friendship-building, and exciting travels. But Yossi's first memory—

the memory of the first Gulf War—reveals that this life story is being constructed in a particularly unique cultural context.

In narrating his life story, it is not until we come to questions of the meaning of identity and of Yossi's decision to participate in Seeds of Peace that we come to a greater understanding of the ideological setting his story is beginning to assume. It is also only upon this further probing that we come to realize the impact of the perception of threat—as understood through his experience with Palestinian suicide bombing during the second intifada—on Yossi's narrative.

First, on the meaning of being Israeli, Yossi constructs a narrative of the elements that comprise a collective identity and identifies the ways in which he fits into this collective.

> I think [being Israeli is about] speaking the language [Hebrew], all the education stuff, living in this country and speaking this language, and having friends that are Jewish, and being Jewish yourself—you know what, you don't *have* to be Jewish. It's just a way of life in Israel, and I think when you live this way of life, it doesn't matter if you like it or not, and sooner or later you just have to act the same way you see these life ways demand you to behave somehow. …The whole way of life that makes you an Israeli includes the religion, it includes the language, it includes everything, the clothing.

To be Israeli, then, in Yossi's mind, is first and foremost about *language* and *culture*, if we can consider the latter term as what Yossi refers to as a "way of life." Interestingly, Yossi reveals some ambivalence about the role of being *Jewish* and the role of *religion* in Israeli identity. Initially, being Jewish seems foremost, but then he qualifies his statement with no explanation, no reference for example to the Arabs who are Israeli citizens. But ultimately his final definition of Israeli identity places religion at the forefront.

Yet it is quite obvious that Yossi's ideas about Israeli identity are in a process of formation, as revealed by his ambivalence. He has been exposed to a number of discourses in

Israeli society, on identity and on citizenship (Lemish, 2003), and he remains in a process of selective appropriation.

> We're not a religious country. ...I'm Jewish in my blood; I don't really believe in all this stuff about religion, like I gotta pray and stuff. I don't believe in this. In Israel, we have the Islam, the Christians, but when you're talking about the Jewish people, you're talking about two large groups—the Orthodox Jewish, and the secular Jewish, which are a lot more than the Orthodox. What brings everyone together is this country. There are problems between the Orthodox and the secular, but what makes us all together is that we live in this country. *We have the same enemy.* They're attacking us both. Not only Orthodox people die, not only Jewish people die, even Arab people die. ...We have so many different ways of life, so many different cultures in Israel. But what brings everyone together is that you live in Israel, that you're an Israeli. Maybe we can call it, having the same problems. It makes you all together in some kind of way. [Italics added.]

In this portion of his narrative, Yossi makes a number of very critical statements for understanding the way in which Jewish Israeli youth construct their national identity. First, being Jewish is an *ethnic* or, perhaps more appropriately, a *racial* matter. Yossi is "Jewish in his blood." It does not really matter how religious he or any other Jewish Israeli is, they are united in a "blood line." Yossi also makes reference to a key contributor to identity polarization *within* Israeli society: the religious-secular divide. He also mentions, a bit obviously as an afterthought, that Israeli identity includes members of other "religious" communities (Muslims and Christians). But most critically, he identifies the *existence of an enemy* as the key uniting force in Israeli identity. It is precisely the fact that the victim of a bombing can be religious, secular, or even Arab, that constructs a coherent unity amidst prodigious identity diversity. Kimmerling's (2001) notion of the "decline" of a coherent Israeli identity might better be understood as the transformation of a previously narrow, monolithic narrative to one that embraces pluralism, if we are to take Yossi's rather apparent pride in the identity diversity of his country. Yet in spite of the pluralistic nature of Israeli identity, all Israelis are united against a common enemy—the Palestinians.

It is here, in this part of Yossi's narrative, that we can see the ways in which the conflict assumes an important *identity function* in Israeli society. The conflict with the Palestinians in fact is fundamental to the construction of a unified, coherent Israeli identity that possesses some kind of distinctiveness from the surrounding Orient. As Yossi suggests, having an enemy in fact helps to reduce the tension within Israeli society that naturally stems from its intrinsic pluralism. To cultivate a coherent identity for a nation of immigrants requires a clearly identifiable language and culture, as well as some readily identifiable "Other" identity that can be easily contrasted (see Rabinowitz, 2002). To produce and reproduce a coherent Israeli identity, the conflict is perhaps essential.

Before we consider the ideological setting of Yossi's life story most concretely, I want to present an important part of his narrative that indeed reveals the unique challenges of the Israeli life course. The perception of existential threat that infuses the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity is, we know, rooted in the very real experience of Palestinian attacks in Israel. In fact, a bus bombing in Haifa provides Yossi with the primary motivation to participate in Seeds of Peace.

> While I was on a field trip with my school, a suicide bomber killed himself on the bus in Haifa. ...It really came together with the explosion—the terrorist act—so I wanted to go here. At the beginning, when I thought of the children that were killed, I thought about this place, all the Palestinian children who would be here. I wanted to go here. I wanted to talk to them. I wanted to see their side. I wanted them to see my side.

The experience of a proximal attack—relatively uncommon in Haifa during the second intifada—serves as the catalyst for Yossi's interest in intergroup contact with Palestinians, to try to understand their motivation for conducting such attacks and to try to express his perspective as a Jewish Israeli.

Reflecting on what daily life is like in Israel, having to cope with the possibility of an attack, Yossi reveals the sense of resilience and defiance that has come to consume the Israeli discourse on Palestinian bombings.

> ...My mother is so scared. She won't let me ride the bus or something to see my friends.... Now she's a little bit more calm because she realizes the situation, and if you show you're frightened, the terrorists will achieve their goal: to frighten us, to make us think they're stronger than us. This is not right. So now I can go with friends to the mall and stuff, and to parties, and I can ride the bus and stuff. But you know, you always live in fear, that the next person who walks into the bus will just jump in and explode himself. And this is not the kind of fear you want to live in.

The possibility of attack indeed creates an initial response of fear and anxiety, as my own field experience revealed to me. Though my own method of coping with this possibility—this very real, perceptible threat to one's very existence—leaned more toward denial and rationalization, Jewish Israelis like Yossi focus more on a kind of defiant coping, quite similar in fact to the American determination to resume air travel after 9/11, in which giving into anxiety is interpreted as a kind of "treason." To continue one's life as normal is the "patriotic" response and, indeed, the duty of someone victimized by "terrorism." In the case of young Jewish Israelis, and for reasons that are vital to national security and sustained national *existence*, resilience and defiance are necessarily incorporated into the self-narrative.

Let us now consider the ideological setting of Yossi's life story at this age of 15. First, Yossi's interest in contact with Palestinians says much about the flexibility of its setting. He is an interested and willing interlocutor who recognizes the legitimacy of a Palestinian identity, even if such a recognition is somehow "conditional."

> ...I know that by words, just talking to them once or twice, won't change their minds. But maybe when they'll see my point of view, they'll get something and I'll get something. Because they're calling the suicide bombers "freedom fighters." I don't really understand why. I just wanna get it. Maybe it's because I wanna understand the enemy, cause if you have an enemy, you gotta know him, if you wanna beat him or something. No, not beating, that's now what I meant. If you wanna live with him peacefully, you have to understand. If he opens a war against you, you gotta know his

ways to fight back. I mean, you can't fight terror with terror. This is not the answer. But you can fight terror with strikes against the terrorists.

In Yossi, then, we see a genuine desire to *understand* the Palestinians. Because he has constructed the Palestinian as the antagonist of his life story—the enemy—Yossi reveals that a part of this motivation for understanding is to be able to stand strong *against* the Palestinians. Yet it is clear that he is still negotiating the specific role that the *imago* (McAdams, 1993) of the Palestinian will assume in his narrative. Will this experience with intergroup contact come to create a more realistic, less stereotyped, and more legitimized Palestinian character in his story, or will it only come to affirm and reproduce the state of identity polarization between groups?

Ideologically, Yossi sees himself as a "man of peace." He says, "I don't like violence. ...Especially in what's going on in the last years. I don't like it. I really don't like it." He expresses a curiosity about the Palestinians and about the conflict and a genuine will to understand its pernicious origins. And perhaps most crucially, he demonstrates a conditional acceptance of the legitimacy of Palestinian claims.

> I do believe in the right of the Palestinians to have a country, and I think the education that I receive has a part in this, and I do believe in it. I think they should have a country. It's better for them, and it's better for us. Cause if a country will stop all the terrorism, I'll agree for it. I want peace—well, even if it's not peace, I just don't want these terrorist acts to continue. This is the first thing. After that, [the Palestinians] can do whatever [they] like.

Yossi, in keeping with left-wing Israeli political discourse, supports Palestinian independence, yet he does not acknowledge that it has already been declared. He places the onus of conflict resolution on the Palestinians, arguing that "terrorist attacks" must cease before the Palestinians can have full independence. This "conditional" recognition of Palestinian nationhood relies on the negatively interdependent interpretation of victimhood that characterizes the narrative stalemate between Israelis and Palestinians (Kelman, 1999).

Israeli youth, appropriating part of an accessible master narrative, interpret themselves as

victims of Palestinian "terror," while Palestinian youth interpret themselves as victims of

Israeli military occupation, with its own brand of power imbalance and dispossession. Thus

while we ought to view Yossi's conditional recognition of Palestinian statehood as certainly a

"step in the right direction," with regard to likely conflict reduction, we must recognize the

problematic nature of its conditionality, reproducing a stalemate of narratives.

The conditionality of Yossi's acceptance of the Palestinians becomes clearer as we

discuss with greater specificity his perspective on the prospect for peace.

> I think the first thing, they should stop the terrorist attacks against us. The whole
> thing started because of the terrorist acts against us. ...They actually started it. They
> fired first. They were the first to use suicide bombers.

Yossi's narrative may reveal a measure of ideological flexibility, particularly in his

recognition of the legitimacy of claims for Palestinian statehood. Yet his narrative of the

conflict conforms very closely to a master narrative in which Israel is simply the victim of

Arab aggression. He fails to recognize any validity whatsoever in the Palestinian counter-

narrative of, for example, what sparked the intifada (Sharon's provocative visit to the Haram

al-Sharif/Temple Mount) or what needs to occur for peace (the end of the Israeli occupation

and Israel's recognition of Palestinian independence). In this way, Yossi's ideological setting

does indeed display identity polarization. The interpretive distance of his narrative from that

of the Palestinians is so great as to be insurmountable.

One of the most concrete ways in which I came to view Yossi's narrative as

ideologically polarized was his stance on the naming of "Palestine." As I have indicated since

the very first pages of this dissertation, the naming of a place called Palestine—whether it be

a location or an actual "nation"—is met with great resistance among most Jewish Israelis.

This resistance should hardly be surprising for a number of reasons. First, the government's

decision to refer to all of "historic" Palestine as the "Land of Israel" in 1977 explicitly banned the official use of terms like "occupied territories" or "Palestine" (Bar-Gal, 1994). The government's position did not, of course, eradicate the use of such terminology, for recall that Israel has quite a diverse polity and a fair amount of ideological diversity on the matter of the Palestinians. Yet the unwillingness to name Palestine, or rather to accept the use of that geographic name by the Palestinians themselves, is likely rooted in the second reason we ought not to be surprised by this resistance to the use of the term: the very legitimate fear among Israelis that, in fact, when Palestinians refer to Palestine, they are not referring only to the Palestinian territories of East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank.

The way in which Yossi, though he supports Palestinian independence, seeks to invalidate the use of the name "Palestine" among Palestinian youth says much about the salience of his own social identity and his desire to construct a narrative that "works" in the discourse of Israeli society.

> Of course, I think that I'm right—that my country's right. Everybody thinks that his country's right. Let's start from the first thing [Palestinians at camp] say, when they say, "I am from Palestine." I mean, there is no such country named Palestine. You can check the U.N. There is no country written in the U.N. notebook called Palestine! There *is* such country called Israel. So he can say, "I'm a Palestinian from Israel." But when you say, "Hi. I'm from Palestine." "Jerusalem, Palestine" or something, it hurts the people that are from Israel and are from Jerusalem. …This is the problem: they don't have a country, and they feel like they have it. And they're speaking like there is no Israel!

The naming of Palestine is, for Yossi, a threatening act. He interprets the use of the term Palestine by Palestinians as entirely invalidating the existence of the state of Israel. What he fails to see is the delegitimizing nature of his request to have Palestinians refer to themselves as "Palestinians from Israel." He also fails to acknowledge the counter-narrative of the land: that Israel's control of the *entirety* of mandate Palestine is in fact unjust, and that Palestinian nationalism deserves its own fulfillment alongside of Israel. Certainly this premise was

accepted by the original Zionists who agreed to the U.N. partition plan of 1947, but the legitimacy of its fulfillment is now contested in the Israeli master narrative.

If we agree that "to name is to know" (Strauss, 1959/1997), in the sense that it is through *naming* that we come to *identify* something in cognition, then the inability of Yossi, and of most Jewish Israeli youth, to name Palestine as a geographic possibility can only be interpreted as part of the delegitimizing theme of the master narrative. That is, the unwillingness to acknowledge the *possibility* of Palestine—for, truly, it is possibility, rather than actuality, that is being expressed when Palestinian youth use the term—contributes to, and is in fact fundamental to, identity polarization. Yossi may be ideologically flexible and open to the Palestinian narrative, but he displays a defiant rigidity when confronted with the actual contents of the counter-narrative. The strength of this rigidity speaks to the salience of his social identity as a Jewish Israeli and to his relationship with the master narrative.

Ultimately, his engagement with the Palestinians and his exposure to their counter-narrative hardly seems to be working toward identity transcendence. Speaking of Palestinians as people, Yossi admits that he held a number of negative stereotypes prior to coming to camp. Unfortunately, his experiences have done little to alter their salience.

> I think of them as liars. They came in and lied. The more facts you give them, they just keep on lying. I just saw that in my own eyes, so I don't really think it's a stereotype. It's the reality.

As his own historical narrative undergoes considerable challenge at camp from the Palestinians, Yossi is unable to interpret the challenge in any other way than "lies." He is in the thicket of a stalemate as he dialogues with Palestinians about the seemingly irreconcilable content of their narratives, his own narrative being re-written in the process.

The Story of Noa

A 14-year-old tall, lanky, and skinny red-head, Noa is from a kibbutz in the Gilboa. As we sit outside on the balcony of her apartment—an apartment communally owned by the kibbutz—dramatic views of the mountains and the fertile valley surround us. The mountains of Jordan are within sight; the border is not far. The separation barrier that, in this part of Israel, essentially follows the Green Line of the 1967 armistice agreement and is quite accurately a "fence," is just a few kilometers away. So is Jenin—the Palestinian city known during the second intifada for producing a number of suicide bombers. But Noa's kibbutz feels like a world away from all of this. Its setting is pastoral, its natural beauty serene, its utopian vision undeniably admirable, even if rapidly fading.

It should be no surprise that, ideologically speaking, Noa's upbringing was quite left-wing. Kibbutz culture is and always has been rabidly secular. Part of a historic project in economic and social communalism, the people of the kibbutzim considered themselves secular pioneers (see Sprio, 1956). They had a vision—without question a utopian one, particularly when viewed through a lens that recognizes the great triumph of capitalism in the twentieth century. Their vision, influenced by social movements in Europe, from which all of them had emigrated, was of a "scientific socialism" (Spiro, 1956) in which man's connection to labor, and to one another, was returned to a natural state of symbiosis. Their goal was to construct a whole new identity—that of the *Sabra* (Almog, 2000; Neslen, 2006; Spiro, 1975), the first generation of actual "Israelis"—who would fulfill the utopian vision of social and economic equality. Such was the goal of their brand of "nation-building."

Contemporary residents of the kibbutzim are typically left-wing not just economically and socially but with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Secular and pragmatic, they tend to view the achievement of a Jewish state in 1948 as complete and the

idea of "Greater Israel" as problematic for the safety and security of Israel. Noa's family is no exception. Describing her own political cognition, she says, "...Most of the things that I know about politics is from my brother, and so, I don't know, he's very on the left side, and so I just heard from him and from my family."

Noa comes from a long line of kibbutz residents on her father's side, her great grandfather having emigrated from Russia. Her mother is a native Australian Jew who immigrated to Israel for Noa's father. Noa's life story (see Figure 3.4) begins with the faint memory of loss at the divorce of her parents. Pointing to the first descent in her life-line, Noa says, "...This is where my parents got divorced, so I think it was a bad time, but I can't really remember." Difficulties with her parents' divorce returned when she was age 10. Pointing to the second descent in her life-line, she says, "When I was like 10 years old, I remember that I started having problems with the fact that my parents got divorced, but I got used to it and worked it out."

The third of Noa's descents reveals the overall pattern of her narrative, like Yossi's and like that of the Jewish Israeli master narrative, of descent and gain.

> This is when I'm in the seventh grade, and I remember that I *hated* the seventh grade because you become the youngest again, and I was so shy. I'm not a shy person now but I was back then, and I hated this about myself. It was a bad year. And then the eighth grade was good. I loved it.

The transition to a new year at a new school, where the developing social skills of an early adolescent are still being tested and reformulated, creates a crisis for Noa. But as with her previous challenges in the story, the resolution of this crisis is a successful adjustment, with accrued confidence in her ability to manage life's challenges. As the life-line reveals, the challenges become psychologically more significant with age, the peaks and valleys larger and larger.
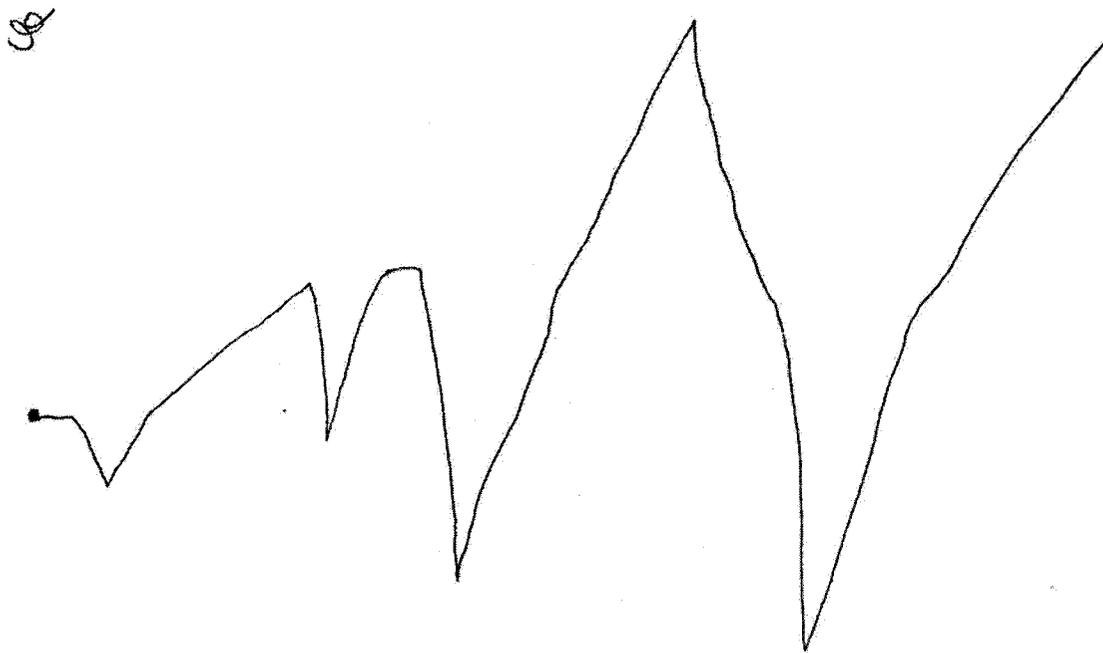
Figure 3.4. Noa's life-line, 2004.

The final low point in Noa's life story centers again on her family. She describes it as

follows:

> ...In the beginning of the ninth grade, I remember having a terrible, terrible time
> because my brother was supposed to fly to the U.S.A. for a year of community
> service, and he lost his passport two days before his flight, and all the time there is so
> much stress and everyone was so angry and really, it wasn't a pleasant time.
> ...Everyone was so nervous, and my mother and I, we had these horrible fights all the
> time because she was so stressed and I was, and we were always fighting. In the end,
> it all worked out and he was able to go. And overall the ninth grade was really
> great—the best—which is why the line goes up again.

The nadir of Noa's life story to date thus involves essentially a single family incident and its

impact on family dynamics for a brief time. Noa's greatest challenges, then, involve mastery

of life's inevitable ebbs and flows. In her own words, "Normally, I just love my life, but it has its ups and downs."

Noa's life story, like Yossi's, conforms to a descent-and-gain pattern in which challenges are mastered, and a sense of cumulative gain infuses the tone of the narrative. Impressionistically, Noa presents as an extremely vivacious, outgoing young woman whose challenges with family struggle and her own "shyness" are hardly perceptible. Spending significant amounts of time with Noa and her mother, however, reveals the depth of emotional challenge that characterizes Noa's narrative, in a way unapparent in her interactions with peers. Noa's mother, perhaps owing to her own life challenges, presents a radical contrast with Noa's vibrant outgoing persona. She is quiet and calm, cool and collected, but beneath the surface a perceptible melancholia is readily apparent. Between the divorce and other family struggles—including the emotional needs of Noa's brother currently serving in the army and struggling significantly—Noa's mother projects a quiet resignation to life's fortunes. Noa's contrasting confidence in traversing the "ups and downs" often appeared to me to frustrate her mother, with her cynical outlook on life's possibilities.

Noa's story is thus one in which the main characters—her family members—have in fact created challenges and struggles that she finds herself having to negotiate. But her tendency to see the resolution of these challenges in optimistic terms, in terms of inevitable satisfactory resolution, reveals the overall optimistic tone of her narrative, even for her own sense of confusion. As we conclude the interview, talking about her feelings of safety and security in Israel, she says, "You can never feel really safe because everything can happen. But usually I don't feel scared." After a long pause in which she seems to reflect upon the entire interview, she adds, "It seems like I'm a really depressed girl, but I'm not."

Considering Noa's narrative and its relation to the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity, clearly it mirrors the form of the master narrative. But it is possible to see some ideological distance. In fact, Noa's life story has no references to persecution and victimization. Its references to the army are mostly in more negative terms, rather than any serious emphasis on Israel's need for security. There are no references to *Jewish* exceptionality per se, and little discussion at all of Arabs or Palestinians. Her social identity as a Jewish Israeli is not, I would suggest, incredibly salient. What is salient is her *local* "kibbutznik" identity, even as the sustenance of that collective identity is in a process of erosion. I do not want to suggest that this lack of social identity salience is necessarily typical of youth from the Gilboa, for the youth in my interview sample did indeed display heterogeneity in this regard. But Noa's story is actually quite close to that of the other *females* from the Gilboa (Navit and Leah), whose stories favor the salience of a local identity over that of a national one. The gender difference in social identity salience among Jewish Israelis is an important one, and one that I will consider at greater length. But, to stay with Noa's story for the time being, I wish only to highlight the ideological setting of her story, even in its most nascent stage at the young age of 14.

I noted that Noa comes from a very left-wing family—a family opposed to Jewish settlements in the territories and supportive of claims for Palestinian statehood. Narratively, this political perspective is transmitted to Noa through the stories of army service from her two brothers.

> ...My brother would talk with me about the conflict with the Arabs, and he would tell me how they would make him go to Arabs' houses and tell them to leave their house. And he was telling me these stories in a perspective like "this is bad, this is wrong, this is *morally* wrong."

Noa is introduced to the conflict through the stories of her older brothers, both of whom

resented having to serve a country whose policies they saw as immoral toward another group.

As a consequence, it is not surprising that Noa is ideologically very much in favor of

Palestinian statehood.

> ...I think that Israel should give the Arabs those territories that we took from them. I
> think the Arabs should get their own separate state. This is the situation: there is a
> small piece of land both cultures and religions. We should live together, and if we
> can't do it together then we should do it separate.

Before she has even met Palestinians, Noa displays a real desire to compromise and an

authentic pragmatism about the conflict. She does not, as the master narrative might have

encouraged her to do, delegitimize the national aspirations of the Palestinians. She sees their

struggle as entirely legitimate, and she even seems to assign Israel a level of responsibility for

the resolution of the conflict. The first step, according to her, is for Israel to return the

territories to the Palestinians. Unlike Yossi's conditionality, Noa seems rather unequivocal in

her conviction that Israel, not the Palestinians, holds the key to peace.

The ability of Noa to construct a narrative that conforms very little to the master

narrative of Jewish Israeli identity reveals the extent to which this master narrative is

contested and, perhaps, on the "decline" (Kimmerling, 2001). But it is also, I believe,

connected to the unique social ecology of Noa's development. The kibbutz is certainly a

unique place to grow up, as is the Gilboa area in general. It is, as Noa notes in her life story,

quite insulated from the realities of the conflict.

> ...We live in an area all those bombings and stuff aren't really here. I mean, it's
> everywhere, but it's not like in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. It isn't affecting our daily
> lives, but it is. It's affecting our lives because guys from the kibbutz have to go to the
> army and serve in the territories, and these friends of my brother's got killed in
> Hebron. So that's really hard.

To spend any time at all in the Gilboa truly feels like an oasis—both physically and psychologically. My impression of it as an area relatively unaffected by bombings may have been affirmed by Noa's account, but it was certainly shattered by Gal's story, which I presented in the Prologue of this dissertation. But Noa's perspective is that the conflict affects her daily life more in the sacrifices the young community members serving in the IDF must make, rather than any specific existential threat she encounters in her life.

It is not, then, as if youth from the Gilboa have no exposure to or experience with the conflict. The "situation," as it is commonly called among both Israelis and Palestinians, consumes every aspect of existence in the region. Yet what Noa's story demonstrates, I think, is the way in which Jewish Israeli youth can, with the support of a local identity narrative, question and even reject elements of the master narrative that frames the larger discourse in society. In this local identity narrative, the outright repudiation of identity polarization is possible. We turn now to the story of Roai, a Mizrahi raised in one of the largest settlements in the West Bank. Not surprisingly, the contrast between his life story and that of Noa could not be more significant.

The Story of Roai

I first met Roai in the spring of 2004, one month prior to his participation in Hands of Peace. We met at a popular café on the campus of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. I used this café frequently to conduct interviews. I still recall quite vividly the psychological ritual of this experience. I would always approach the café, with its large outdoor area in front, very cautiously. The security guard often seemed to notice my hesitation and began to stare me down when I was still at quite a distance. Public places like cafes in Jerusalem inevitably rouse feelings of anxiety at a possible attack. After receiving the requisite, if cursory, search by security guards, I would always struggle with the decision of where to get a table for my

interview, not out of concern for privacy, as *ought* to be the case, but rather out of a concern for my continued existence. I often reasoned that, were we to sit in the outside area, we could see a bomber coming and perhaps even make a quick escape. Then, I would consider whether settling inside, as far as possible from the front door, might be the safest locale for us, as perhaps the bomb would not be strong enough to affect us from a distance. How ridiculous this thinking seems to me now. Yet it felt very real and, in fact, necessary, even if entirely illogical, at the time. Such was my glimpse into the daily realities of life under conditions of threatened existence.

Today I have chosen to set up a table outside for my interviews, and Roai is promptly on time. A Mizrahi whose mother was born in Morocco and his father in northern Iraq, Roai is a handsome, athletic young man with fashionable sunglasses, dressed in jeans and a t-shirt, and an iPod in his ear. He immediately seems older than his 16 years. I soon learn why.

Roai's life story (see Figure 3.5) begins very calmly, with a steady but slowly progressive form. He connects this time in his life with a period of relative stability in the conflict: "…We had a very quiet time in the country." The peak experience in his life story occurs during a two-year period (1998-2000) in which his father, a tourist guide in Jerusalem, has significant work. During this period, Roai and his family traveled to the United States for a month, which he describes as "a very good time" in his life.
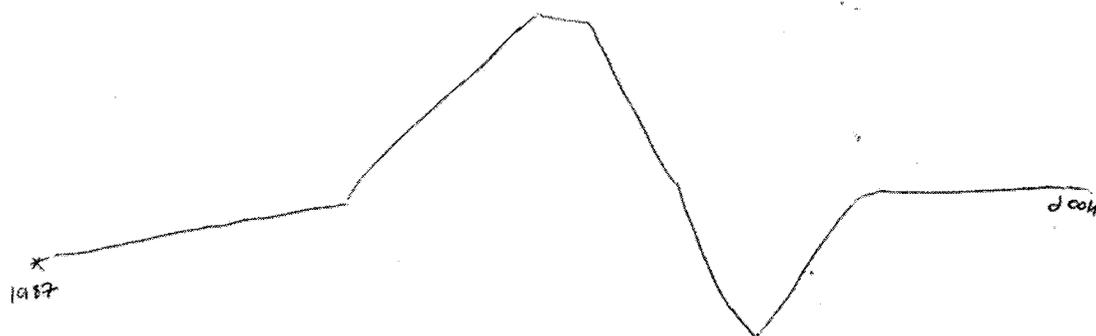
Figure 3.5. Roai's life-line, 2004.

The year 2000 marks the beginning of the tragic descent of his narrative, with the commencement of the second Palestinian intifada. The tourists stopped coming to Jerusalem, which was the focal point for the start of the uprising, so Roai's father suddenly found himself out of work. Then, very suddenly in 2002, Roai's father passed away, having suffered a severe heart attack while in the midst of his routine morning jog. For Roai, not surprisingly, this event is the nadir in his life story. He claims now, two years on, to be coping well, saying, "...It's getting better." When I spend time with Roai and his family at their home, it is clear to me that his father's death has forced Roai to mature more quickly. He has two younger brothers and a quiet, fragile mother. He has, since his father's death, assumed responsibility for the family, emotionally if not financially. To spend any significant amount of time with this family, there can be little doubt that Roai has taken on the role of "man of the house."

Formally, then, Roai's narrative reveals a stable equilibrium that is disrupted by both political and personal events. His positive evaluation of the political situation as a child contributes to this stability, which is followed by a brief period of sustained ascent, then by a tragic regress owing initially to the dramatic change in the conflict and culminating in the death of his father. Yet a sense of stability ultimately returns to the narrative, as Roai constructs a story that possesses coherence and acceptability for his role in the family.

In contrast to Noa, political events figure prominently in Roai's narrative. Here we can again recognize the salience of local identity among Jewish Israelis. While Noa resides in the midst of Israel's (crumbling) utopian experiment, far away from the epicenter of the conflict, Roai resides in a Jewish settlement in the West Bank, just outside of Jerusalem. The view from his community is a Palestinian town, with its identifiable absence of red-tile roofs in favor of ubiquitous satellite dishes, the barren but stunning mountains of the West Bank, and a shepherd herding his flock in the valley below, his head wrapped in a red-and-white kafiya, a scene from another time. Roai's social ecology, both physically and ideologically, lies a great distance from Noa's.

Noa has known no Arabs in her life, catching only occasional glimpses at rare moments. Roai, however, recalls his first memory about the conflict as follows.

> Since I live in the settlement, we had a checkpoint right outside. If we wanted to go to Jerusalem, we had to go through the checkpoint. But for me it wasn't a big problem because I'm an Israeli. But I saw the Palestinians waiting there, in the sun, and that's the first time I thought about us and them. ...I remember asking my father why they are waiting and we are not. He said they have to be checked. I asked why, but he just said they have to be checked. Now, of course, I know why.

This early experience seemed to arouse within Roai a genuine interest in understanding the conflict—its origins, its characters, its differential structure. Certainly nowhere is this structure more readily apparent than inside of the territories themselves—a place most

Israelis never see. (Since the start of the second intifada, Israeli citizens are forbidden to enter the territories, except for residents of the settlements and those who can obtain special permission.)

Roai's life story thus contains within it actual, not theoretical, interactions with Palestinians. In fact, his attendance at a selective Jerusalem school places him in direct contact with other Jewish Israelis, Palestinian-Israelis, and Palestinians. Ideologically, then, Roai's life story reveals more complexity than one might expect, given the social ecology of the settlement and the right-wing ideology of most of its inhabitants. His story allows for the possibility of transcending identity polarization, if only in his basic exposure to other narratives.

Similar to Yossi, Roai accepts the idea of Palestinian statehood, seemingly rejecting the delegitimization of Palestinian identity contained in the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity. But also like Yossi, Roai's is a conditional acceptance. His narrative of Israel's history reveals its foundation in the need for Jewish protection through national sovereignty, though he does not hesitate to acknowledge the existence of the Palestinians and their own desire for national self-determination.

> In 1948 we established our own country, but there were a lot of Arab communities— the Palestinians were here, and they also wanted to build their own country. They started fighting us with the Arab neighbors. Four wars we had, and now today we are still fighting them. The main reason we wanted a state was the Holocaust—that's why we came here and tried to build our own country.

While Roai clearly recognizes the existence and validity of Palestinian identity, he conforms to a master narrative of "conditional recognition" that frames a new post-Oslo Israeli discourse and that is appropriated among many Jewish Israeli youth.

> I think that the Palestinians have to get their own state, but not in such as this condition—like today, they are attacking us. We need to have it quiet before we are letting them to build their own country. No attacks from the Palestinians, and then we

> will talk about the peace process. And it will not be a fast movement. It has to be for a long time. ...But I think that they must have their own country.

Roai's conditional acceptance of the legitimacy of Palestinian aspirations for statehood reveals a level of ideological confusion. On the one hand, he seems to truly believe that the Palestinians constitute a distinct, national identity group deserving of their own country. He does not seek to delegitimize their existence. He does not see their existence as necessarily threatening his own. Yet his stance remains one of classic paternalistic Orientalism—that the Arab must be "tamed."

During the second intifada, the Israeli discourse about the failure of peace talks at Camp David that had preceded the outbreak of violence placed blame squarely on the Palestinians, and on Yasser Arafat in particular (see Dor, 2003; see also Dershowitz, 2003). Information about Arafat's rejection of the deal, as presented by the Israeli government at the time, essentially initiated this discourse by arguing that the Palestinians had been offered the best deal imaginable and had rejected it without making counter-proposals (Bar-Tal, 2004b). The Israeli interpretation, officially speaking, was that the Palestinians indeed did not seek peace but rather the destruction of Israel as a Jewish state (hence the insistence on the right of return for Palestinian refugees to Israel, not just Palestine). Roai's view of the start of the intifada conforms very closely to this ingroup narrative of Camp David.

> A time when I was very, very angry about the conflict was in 2000 when the intifada started. Yeah, because it was after Camp David when we tried to talk with them about the peace process, and we gave them a lot of good conditions before they are building their own country. But they wanted to return their refugees to Israel, and they didn't let it go, and we didn't want to give them this right, because then Israel would not be a Jewish state. There would be too many Arabs. They don't understand how important this is to us.

Roai believes in the legitimacy of Palestinian nationalism, but not at the cost of threatening Israel's identity as a Jewish state. Here we see the extent of Roai's ideological flexibility. He

is open to a Palestinian nationalism, so long as it does not threaten the maintenance of Israeli identity.

For Roai, to be Israeli first and foremost means *to go to the army*. This experience is, in his pre-army adolescent view, the ultimate in identity fulfillment. It should hardly be a surprise, given the need for security in the master narrative that creates the conditions for a militaristic state (Kimmerling, 2001), that Roai, like all of the Jewish Israeli boys in this study, anxiously awaits his military service, looking forward to the day when he can fully *become* Israeli. When asked about what it means to be Israeli, Roai reveals a hierarchy of factors that comprise, in his estimation, a coherent social identity.

> That's a hard question. To go to the army, that's to be an Israeli. We're serving in the army, we're speaking Hebrew, we are Jewish. Religion has a major part in Israel. What else? Being in the conflict, *that's* Israeli.

For Roai, then, after military service, it is language and Judaism—ethnically and, for him, religiously—that comprise Israeli identity. The final element he identifies, though, is a very important one: Israeli identity is rooted in the experience of conflict itself. Having to traverse the daily anxieties of possible attack, internalizing the perceived existential threat of an entire collective identity—these factors in fact construct a coherent Israeli identity. Like Yossi, Roai views simply "being in the conflict" as a fundamental unifying feature of Israeli identity.

In terms of the master narrative, then, the experience of persecution and victimization resides within Roai's narrative, but only as it serves as the root cause for what he views as the most essential aspect of Israeli identity: the need for security. The identity fulfillment in performing military service enables the social practice needed to fully qualify as an "Israeli." It is a rite of passage, and certainly one with greater resonance for boys than for girls, given the connection between masculinity and nationalism (Nagel, 1998; see also Sasson-Levy, 2003). But military service is a rite of passage that reinforces this key component of the

master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity. The practice of "defense" of the nation does more

than simply protect land and borders; it preserves an entire social identity. As we will see

when we return to Roai's life story in Chapter 4, when we consider the impact of intergroup

contact on his narrative, other elements of the master narrative become salient. But for now,

at age 16, one month before Hands of Peace, it is the theme of security and of military service

that, despite his ideological openness to the Palestinians, conforms most closely to the master

narrative.

Before we depart from Roai's story, let us conclude with his own key reflections on

the ideological setting of his life story. As noted, Roai lives on a settlement in the West Bank.

Currently, however, he attends a prestigious high school in Jerusalem, which has

exponentially altered the "discursive field of events" to which he is exposed. Ideologically, he

inhabits two very divergent worlds, and he is still determining how to negotiate them.

> All the ideology of my school is to be with the Arab neighbors...to live in peace.
> ...My friends from my town, they are a little more militant than me, and my friends
> from school are the opposite of me. Their ideology is the opposite of my ideology.
> It's a bit opposite because they think we should give them the state and not fight
> them and not make all the action in Gaza and the West Bank. ...[My friends from
> home], they think that we should fight them now, and all the Arabs are killers and
> something like that. ...It's very hard to think from a different way while you're
> always living in one place and you can't hear the other side, or meet people from the
> other side. It's very hard.

In this very direct admission of his ideological struggle, Roai reveals the deep ambivalence in

the setting of his life story. Up to this point in his narrative, he has generally advanced

conditional acceptance of Palestinian identity. For him, this conditional acceptance—this

notion that Palestinians can and should achieve independence, but only under certain

conditions specified by Israel—can be seen as a "compromise ideology." It is, for the

moment, the ideological location that is essentially at the center of the two internal poles Roai

has been exposed to in his upbringing. On the one hand, the ideology of the settlement is, as

he describes it, "militant." It is the ultimate in polarization from the Palestinian narrative. The Palestinians are viewed as "killers" and sinister characters; the legitimacy of their narrative, and their very existence, is called into question. There are no compromises for a settlement. Peace is not even really possible with such a savage enemy—one that needs to be controlled.

On the other hand, the context of Roai's prestigious high school seems to espouse a left-wing ideology that is quite polarized from that of the settlement. As he describes it, the students there desperately want peace and view Israel's continued occupation as unjust—a trope that of course resonates with the Palestinian master narrative of identity. They believe in the return of the territories in exchange for peace—highly problematic for Roai since he in fact lives on a settlement *in* those territories. What we can discern from this direct statement on his ideological identifications is that Roai is in fact quite ambivalent. Exposed to competing discourses within Israeli society on the conflict and on the legitimacy of Palestinian identity, he has come to a compromise ideology that is, given the polarized discursive ecology in which he was raised, actually quite remarkable. Yet he continues to struggle with these ideological poles, even as he speaks with such conviction and confidence as he presents his life story to date. This struggle is evident in the way in which he ends the interview, reporting that it is indeed "very hard" to think differently than the way one has been brought up to think, to embrace a discourse one has always been urged to reject. The ways in which his ideological "compromise" withstands the reality of his approaching military service, not to mention his forthcoming intensive contact with Palestinians, will be considered when we revisit his narrative in Chapter 4, one year later.

The Story of Ayelet

The portrait of Jewish Israeli youth sketched so far in the stories of Yossi, Noa, and Roai certainly reveals key points of convergence. There are numerous ways in which the

narratives of these youth contain themes that reflect the master narrative of Jewish Israeli

identity, particularly in the form the narratives assume and in much of their thematic content.

But there have also been important sources of divergence. These sources are largely based on

the diversity in *local* identity that exists within Israel. So we saw that Noa's social ecology of

the kibbutz is in fact quite distinct from Yossi's social ecology of the Haifa suburb, or Roai's

Jewish settlement in the West Bank. The pluralism of Israel's local identities in fact is quite

key to understanding ideological identifications among youth and, thus, divergence in the

ideological setting of the life stories themselves. Roai has engaged his entire life with a right-

wing—"militant," as he calls it—ideology that delegitimizes Palestinian identity. Noa has had

just the opposite experience, with her exposure to the kibbutz narrative of pragmatic

reconciliation with the Palestinians. We come now to another local culture in Israel and to the

life story of one of its inhabitants, Ayelet.

Ayelet has spent her entire life in the cosmopolitan cultural capital of Israel—Tel

Aviv. With its beautiful Mediterranean coast lined with radiant sandy beaches and trendy bars

and restaurants, the Tel Aviv identity is certainly distinct from other locales in Israel. For

Ayelet, it has facilitated her primary identity as, first and foremost, a "Surfer." "It's my

therapy," she says. An Ashkenazi-Mizrahi mix, Ayelet's fashionable dress, long blonde hair,

and perpetually tan skin speak volumes to her embrace of the Tel Aviv cosmopolitan identity.

At age 16, Ayelet first narrated her life story (Figure 3.6) to me on a hot Tel Aviv

afternoon in 2004, at a popular café where several languages could be heard throughout our

interview. Ayelet's narrative, true to the Jewish Israeli master narrative, assumes once more a

descent-and-gain pattern in its form. The first descent, which also consists of Ayelet's first

vivid memory, centers on the divorce of her parents at age 4.

...I had a pretty rough time because my parents broke up. They got divorced when I was like four years old. You know how it is, kids can't really understand the reason. So I found a nice little way to deal with that. Every time somebody pissed me off or something, I didn't think twice, I just hit him. And so kids didn't really like me for that.

As a consequence of her belligerent behavior, Ayelet reports that she had few friends during her childhood. The divorce of her parents seems to have quite classically resulted in significant emotional and behavioral problems for her—a common occurrence in many cultures (for review, see Emery, 1988; Kelly, 2000; McKenry & Price, 1995; cf. Bilge & Kaufman, 1983).
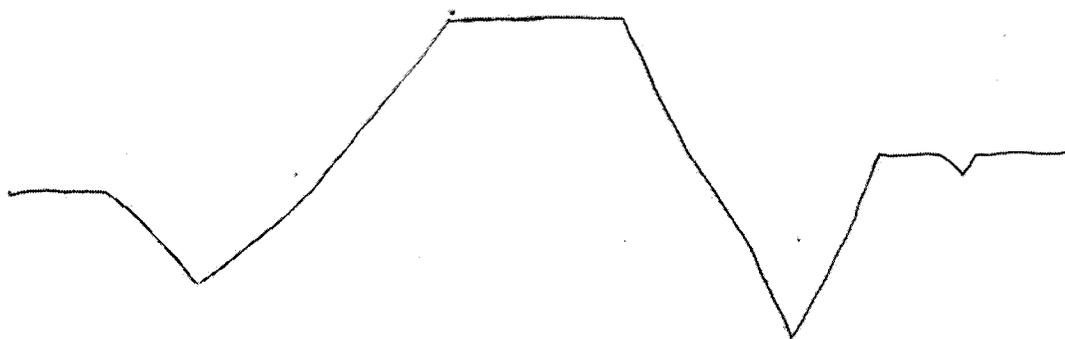
Figure 3.6. Ayelet's life-line, 2004.

Ayelet's life story achieves gains after this difficult early descent with the increase in her perceived social competence. By age 11, she reports to have achieved a peak experience of social acceptance and "popularity" among her peers, which positively impacts her self-confidence.

...I was like 11 years old, which is like fifth grade, when kids started to understand that sometimes you should give a second chance, sometimes you miss things in life.... Then, when I was in sixth grade, the last one of the elementary school, that was the best. I got so popular and everybody liked me and since then, it just went way up.

For Ayelet, we see the significance of peer approval in her self-narrative from a young age. The divorce of her parents created formidable challenges for Ayelet, which interfered with her ability to form and maintain friendships with her peers. But transcendence of these challenges, and mastery of the ability to become socially competent with her peers, has created a strong sense of self-confidence in Ayelet. Her peer relations assume a highly salient role in her construction of self, which will become problematic for her in the year following Hands of Peace, as we will see in Chapter 4. Yet for now, Ayelet interprets the mastery of this ability as absolutely central to the positive tone of her narrative. Out of challenge she has developed a strong sense of self and her ability to, unlike her parents, cultivate and maintain close relationships. From descent, she discovered a way to ascend through shifting the source of her self-confidence from her family to her peers.

While this strategy worked for Ayelet for some time, the nadir in her life story again centers on her family and, more specifically, on her relationship with her father.

> ...Then the line went really down, because that was the time when my dad left Israel. ...On my fifteenth birthday, I got to see my dad is not totally who I thought he is. I found out exactly who is my dad—that he stole money from my mom, money that was actually for me, when I was older and stuff. ...It was a hard time to find out that my dad stole money and did so many terrible things.

The difficulties between her parents resurface in Ayelet's life story at age 15 with the simultaneous departure of her father from Israel to the United States and the discovery of many of his wrongdoings. Ayelet considered her father a "best friend" as a child and reported feeling much closer to him than to her mother. But now her father's behavior has forced her to re-evaluate those relationships. She has recast her mother as a victim, but one whose strength has helped Ayelet to cope with the loss, not only of the physical presence of her father but also of the image of him she had carried for many years.

> My mom worked so many years, kicked her ass, and I am who I am today because of my mom—not because of my dad. He was a great dad, he was a best friend and everything, but come on, the one that was really there for me in hard times was my mom.

While Ayelet identifies the strength of her mother as a source of her own identity, her resilience and recovery from this nadir seem to reflect her own abilities to master the challenge of coping. Referring to that difficult time in her life story, she says,

> Basically, there is a hole inside. But you grow up, you move on, you learn to accept things. The purpose is not crying about the milk that went off the table, it's to see how you can get a new glass! And that's what I'm trying to do—forgive my dad and actually to go see him. ...After that time, [life] went way up, because I started to look at the positive way of life. ...Basically, I did it on my own. It's kind of, to be proud of myself, that I hold myself so tight. I guess that life can offer you so many things and sometimes you're down, sometimes you're up—that's the way of life. You can't always be up. It's not possible. And then you'll not be a strong person if you don't go through things and see things.

As a method of coping with life's inevitable challenges, Ayelet has adopted a decidedly problem-centered approach (see Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), and she uses the stresses in her life to make cumulative gains in her ability to adjust and adapt.

Because of the success of her coping strategies, Ayelet's narrative is, in tone if not necessarily in form, essentially a progressive story. Speaking of the current challenge she faces in her school work (the final small descent of the life-line), with difficulties in mathematics, the progressive, positive tone of Ayelet's narrative is readily apparent.

> I decided that no matter what, no matter what price, I'm going to be successful. Whatever I want, I will do. There's nothing that's going to stop me. And probably I will have to work for it—very hard. But hey, when you get to be successful and you're stopping for a second and looking back and say, "Wow! Look what I did!" And that's what gives you the most power to keep going. So I pretty hope that I'm going to do well.

As a consequence of her challenges and her ability to cope and adapt to them, Ayelet views the current challenge before her—improving her performance in mathematics—as entirely surmountable. She possesses extraordinary self-confidence and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

This kind of resilience and the self-narrative she has constructed—of someone who can effect change in her own life through cultivating a strong sense of agency—affects the ideological setting of her life story.

In contrast to Roai, for whom the conflict is quite physically perceptible in his daily life, Ayelet's life story reveals no connection whatsoever to the conflict. Upon probing, however, it becomes abundantly clear that her story does possess an ideological setting— albeit one still in formation—that is quite connected to her *local* identity as an inhabitant of cosmopolitan Tel Aviv.

> I'm kind of in the middle. I think we should all just learn to live together. It's such a small country. And with all the bombings and things, eventually we're not going to have an Israel. We're going to have chaos; we're going to have nothing. And people dying for no reason, I just believe that somebody's got to put an end to that. …I just hate the thought—we are coming from a place where we've been hated all our lives. The Holocaust, wherever we go, we still have it. So people that go through such a thing are supposed to understand that thing. …We're part of a group that feels hated, so we shouldn't be hating another.

Not only is the trope of persecution and victimization, culminating in the Holocaust, a salient theme from the master narrative that resonates for Ayelet, but she already displays the kind of empathy and recognition that characterizes a transcendent identity. She recognizes the problem with identity polarization and sees a contradiction in the most polarized aspects of the Jewish Israeli master narrative. Ayelet goes beyond a conditional recognition of the legitimacy of Palestinian identity and even views her own ingroup as partially responsible for the continuation of the conflict.

> This is where I live and these are my neighbors, and you have to choose whether you want to live in a fight and make your life miserable, or whether you want to try and make a solution. I know you can't find a solution for everything; you need both sides for that. It takes two to tango, yes? I just sometimes feel like they stabbed us with a knife in the back. But we're not totally white in that thing. We're not totally good. So I really hope that the kids of this generation will have the chance to change it. …Maybe one day, you know, there'll be peace. It's got to happen, eventually.

Though it seems like kind of a dream, one might say, but I really believe you can do
it. You just need to be willing and have the strength for that.

The existence of the Palestinians is a foregone conclusion for Ayelet, as she refers to them as
"neighbors." She reveals some ambivalence about them, having been exposed to one of the
most common discourses about Arabs in Israel—that they cannot be trusted and are prone to
betrayal. But so far in her narrative it appears that, ideologically, this is a young Jewish Israeli
who need not go far to achieve a measure of identity transcendence. She is already quite
willing to assume, at least in theory, some responsibility for the conflict on the part of her
ingroup.

Ayelet's narrative of the conflict itself also reveals a great deal about the current
ideological setting of her life story.

> ...They were here first [the Palestinians]. We came and took this land from them
> because God—whoever wrote the Bible—said that this is our land. But if you look at
> it the other way, in their Bible, in the Koran, this is their land. ...We just came from
> Europe here after the Holocaust before we settled down here and we started to take
> control of their lives. I pretty understand their way of thinking right now—of the
> Arabs. Come on, they were here, they were having a nice life, and then we came and
> we started to take control of everything. Jobs, and basic social life. So I can totally
> understand how they feel.

Naturally, my initial impression of Ayelet was that she hardly "needed" the experience of
intergroup contact to expose her to alternative discourses of the conflict. She seemed to have
developed a narrative of the conflict that was quite sympathetic to the Palestinians. Her
account, in fact, closely resembled that of the Palestinian master narrative. Yet as she
continued to describe her views on the conflict—particularly on the matter of its resolution—
it became clear to me that the ideological setting of her life story was still very much in
formation.

> ...The problem is that everyone is looking at the past instead of looking at the future.
> ...This is the situation right now; crying about it won't help you achieve anything. I
> just think Israel is supposed to be a place for everybody—Jews and Arabs. They will

have to understand that they can't kick us out. We will have to understand that this is our neighbors, and whether we like it or not, half of them actually live here, inside of Israel. We need to coexist with Arabs, just live with them, no politics or nothing.

The extent to which Ayelet's ideological identifications contain a measure of pragmatism are called into question by her utopian vision of a one-state solution to the conflict. When I queried her about the possibility of two states, Israel and Palestine, side by side, she revealed that perhaps her engagement with the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity was more significant than I had at first realized.

> I don't really understand [the idea of a two-state solution] because I don't understand why they need a country, because they have so many. They have Egypt, Syria, so many Arab countries. Why can't they live there? We have only one. No matter where we go, everybody's gonna hate us, no matter where we going to go. ...It's not like they're different—Syria and Egypt and all of those countries—it's all Arabs. I mean, they're part of it, they're not supposed to *feel* different. And they could totally live there—Egypt and Syria are *huge*. Iraq even. ...For the Jewish people, we have only one country. There's nowhere we can go basically. This is where we live.... There's no place for Palestine, and there's no place for making it here. And I kind of understand them, because they are kind of in the place where we were before, when we didn't have anywhere to go, and then the Holocaust happened and whatever, and so we have Israel. Basically what they care most about is Jerusalem, so the ones that really care about it, stay here around Jerusalem, and be happy about what they have and stop complaining about what they don't have. People always look at the empty half of the glass instead of the full half! That's the stupidity of people, they never appreciate what they have, they always want more, and that's greedy.

Quite alarmingly, given the initial sympathetic tone Ayelet revealed in discussing the Palestinians, she now seems to be an advocate of that most "right-wing" effort in the Israeli discourse: population transfer. Displaying significant outgroup homogeneity in her understanding of the Arabs, she rejects the national and cultural distinctions Arabs themselves make, as "Egyptians," "Syrians," "Palestinians," and the like. She rejects the notion that the Palestinians indeed constitute a unique social identity apart from Egyptians or Syrians and, in this way, seems to delegitimize Palestinian identity.

Ayelet's view of Palestinians thus in fact conforms to an extent with the delegitimization of Palestinian identity contained in the master narrative. Clearly, though, she is ambivalent and, at the age of 16, is still in the process of making decisions about which aspects of the master narrative to appropriate and which to repudiate. For now, though, her view of the Palestinians can be legitimately described as classically Orientalist, particularly in the paternalism that underlies the elaboration of her one-state solution.

> [The Palestinians] need to stop complaining about the things they don't have. They need to stop and think about what they do have. And they have each other, and they have families. I think if we go through them, if we help them, because they barely have technology. Half of them doesn't even know what a computer is. So if we help them, all around Gaza, build them houses, give them games, give them money a little bit, something like that, I think it will be better. It's all about helping each other. Sometimes Arabs can be all the way around there. I've heard stories, some people say, "We give one finger, they want the whole hand." They have to be fair if we gonna be fair. Both sides equal.

Ayelet has internalized the power imbalance in identity that Orientalism as an ideology establishes. She sees her ingroup—Jewish Israelis—as wealthier and more developed, economically and socially. She adopts a paternalistic benevolence with regard to the Palestinians, certainly with a genuine sense of generosity. Perhaps the greatest irony in this excerpt from her narrative is the way in which she concludes it. Having established with Orientalist precision the *in*equality of status between Jews and Palestinians, she reverts to a discourse of equality, suggesting that the Palestinians will have to do *something* in exchange for all of this assistance, despite the fact that they have lived under Israeli military occupation for nearly 40 years.

The ideological setting of Ayelet's narrative is like the pattern of a quilt in the midst of its design. Fragments of one pattern shift to another, as the artist abandons original designs for new pathways, then decides perhaps the original ones were best. Any ideological setting of a life story in adolescence is likely to assume this quality, particularly with exposure to

such a myriad of ideologies in a place like Israel. A life story currently in the early stages of conscious construction, Ayelet's narrative reveals deep ambivalence about its reflection of the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity, with its characteristic form and content. On the one hand, the form of her narrative conforms very closely to the national narrative. In its content, we see glimpses of familiar themes—of the need for a Jewish state because of the history of persecution and the belief that there is nowhere else for the Jews of the world to *safely* call home, of the exceptionality of the Israelis, as revealed in her internalized Orientalism. When it comes to the Palestinians, what seems initially to be a rejection of the master narrative—a recognition of the Palestinians and a genuine sympathy for their plight, as well as an expressed *identification* with their experience—gives way to a greater degree of conformity by the narrative's end. Ultimately, Ayelet suggests that, in a way, Palestinians do not even exist as a unique identity group and certainly cannot have a state of their own. They should, rather, be a part of Israel in some kind of apolitical fantasy of coexistence.

Ayelet's narrative may reveal significant ambivalence in its ideological setting, but her willingness to consider counter-narratives and to engage in the conversation of discourses that consumes the conflict reveals her cosmopolitan identity.

> The key to everything is to accept the different. I might disagree with the other side; you can disagree with a person, but I'll never see that as a negative. I'll never take it and say, "No. You're wrong. You're definitely wrong and no, I'm not about to listen!" The whole point of it is success with the other and the other opinions, even if you don't agree with them. You're not always supposed to agree with others, you just have to accept their opinions. ...You can see I'm a very peaceful person—against war, basically.

If cosmopolitanism condones, ideologically and culturally, a coexistence of conversations (Appiah, 2006)—a willingness to accept the multiplicity of discursive possibilities and the identities that they construct—we can see in Ayelet the promise of identity transcendence. If the key to conflict resolution is indeed the transcendence of identity polarization, the

ideological ambivalence which inhibits the repudiation of elements of the master narrative

that support the reproduction of the conflict might, perhaps, be infused with a more definitive

setting upon contact with Palestinians. We will return to Ayelet's story in Chapter 4 to

examine the possibility of transcendence through contact.

Summary: The Cultural Psychology of Jewish Israeli Adolescence

The stories of Jewish Israeli youth reveal narratives of descent and gain that closely

mirror the master narrative of national identity. Yet their stories suggest the salience of *local*

identity over *national* identity, particularly as youth determine the ideological settings of their

narratives. Local identity also determines the extent to which the conflict has a predictable

impact on their daily lives. Only Roai, who lives on a West Bank settlement and commutes to

Jerusalem for school, has significant exposure to the actual social structure of the conflict.

For Noa, Yossi, and Ayelet, their exposure is almost entirely relegated to particular

discourses about the conflict, rather than to the conflict's tangible physical realities. The

prominence accorded to political events in Roai's narrative—its tone and many of his critical

life events are tied to them—speaks to the differentiation of Jewish Israeli identity across

local contexts.

The portraits of Jewish Israeli youth offered here, exemplars of the narratives

collected in this study, demonstrate the challenges created by conflict. Dealing with the

possibility of attack on a bus, or hearing stories of siblings in the army, Jewish Israeli youth

meet the challenges of conflict by constructing—again, mirroring the national narrative—

stories that reveal resilience, strength, and defiance. No matter what the challenge—the loss

of a family member, difficulties at school, a parental divorce, the possibility of Palestinian

"terror"—Jewish Israelis rise to the challenge with *strength*. This is the image of the New

Jew—the Fighter, the Brave, the Strong and Righteous.

The thematic content of the narratives reveal key points of convergence with the master narrative. The theme of Jewish persecution and victimization is present, if sometimes only deployed to justify the existence of a Jewish state. The need for security is internalized by all of the youth, with the recognition of continued existential threat. The idea of Israeli exceptionality occurs in places, as does the delegitimization of Palestinian identity. But this delegitimization, a legacy of Orientalism and its Eurocentric posture toward the Middle East, is contested within the narratives of youth themselves. What can at first appear to be a surprising legitimization of Palestinian identity frequently becomes conditional—and conditional in ways that suggest it is the Palestinians who possess greater power in the conflict than Israel. In some cases, even the most sympathetic Jewish Israelis, like Ayelet, can espouse a delegitimizing narrative of Palestinian identity.

Considered together, the stories of Jewish Israeli youth do indeed reveal the ways in which a master narrative is contested, particularly for its underlying political ideology. Yet most youth appropriate enough of the master narrative's form and content to suggest the reproduction of identity polarization. Yet we see in the erosion of once far more polarized sentiments (e.g., the delegitimization of Palestinian identity) the possibility of cultivating a Jewish Israeli identity that can transcend negative interdependence through the acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the Other. The question remains, how does contact with Palestinians alter the life story? But we must now consider Palestinian identity most explicitly, to plot its own polarizing master narrative and examine the ways in which Palestinian youth are engaging with its form and content.

"IT'S NOT A NORMAL LIFE WE LEAD":

NARRATIVES OF PALESTINIAN YOUTH

The story of Palestine is, first and foremost, a great tragedy in human history. It is the story of a peaceful people, harmoniously inhabiting a place of religious pluralism, whose rights for dignity and national self-determination were grossly violated by an alien colonial ideology. It is a story of struggle and loss, subjugation and occupation, dispossession and despair. But it is also a story of resistance and resilience, of righteousness and liberation, of steadfast survival.

The Master Narrative of Palestinian Identity

Like the form of any great tragedy, the Palestinian narrative (see Figure 3.7) begins at a point of ideal imagination—a time in which people of different religions and ideologies coexisted, united in a language and cultural tradition. But like most moments of incredible possibility, the decline of this peak in the Palestinian historical narrative is inevitable. As a consequence of Zionism, with its Western support and colonial ideology (Rodinson, 1973), the Palestinian narrative is, as it were, greatly disrupted. That moment of extraordinary possibility—for the independence of a people and a place under four centuries of "benign occupation" by the Ottoman Empire—was thwarted by the invasion of a foreign ideology and "national" movement that could and would only deny the rights of an indigenous population, longing for its freedom and its place among the emerging nations of the world.
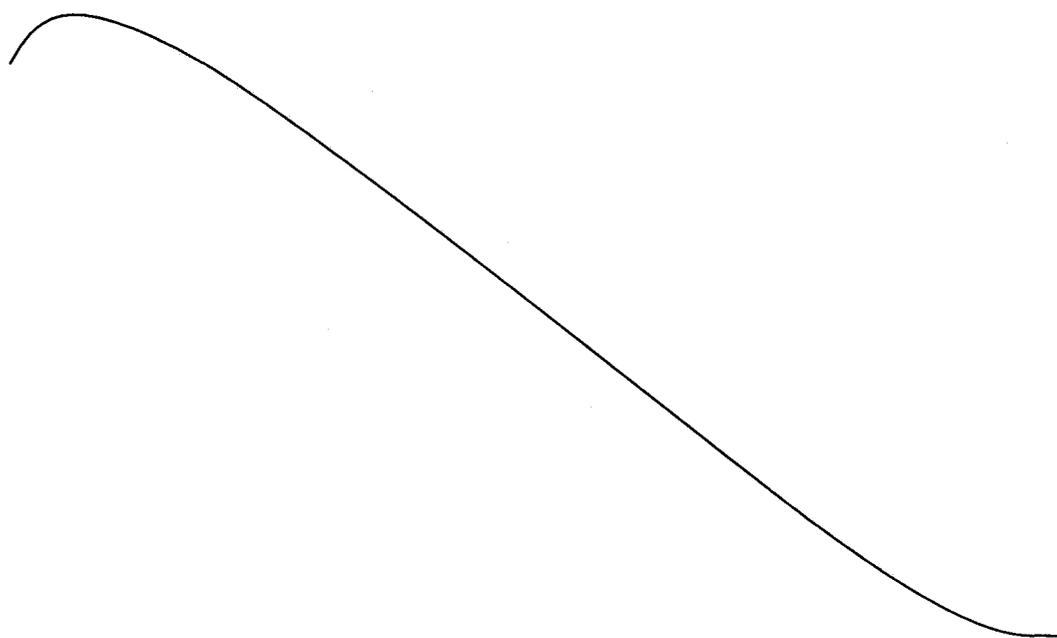
Figure 3.7. Visual plot of the Palestinian master narrative.

In the Palestinian narrative, the disruption of Zionism and Jewish aspirations for statehood is genuinely traumatic. This disruption, in fact, provides the narrative with its moral salience. According to the narrative, a group of immigrants, with nothing but a long-eroded historical connection to the land, were welcomed from the persecution of imperial Europe. These newcomers were of course embraced as inhabitants who, given the independence of the state, would be granted the same equal rights of citizenship as all others. They, like the indigenous inhabitants of the land, would be participants in a great sovereign state founded on democratic principles and respect for identity diversity. Such respect would not only be absolutely necessary, in the midst of such pluralism, it was guaranteed in the tradition of acceptance that had developed in Palestine as a result of its historical significance to multiple religious faiths.

These newcomers, however, did not arrive simply seeking refuge from the hostile host cultures of Europe; they arrived with an ideology and a nationalist ambition. In true Orientalist fashion, these immigrants viewed the indigenous people—a simple people no doubt—as "backward" and "savage." They viewed the land as "empty" and "undeveloped." Their displacement from Europe would thus come at a cost not only to themselves, but also to another, innocent people. The great hope for Palestine was lost as these immigrants consolidated considerable power, particularly from abroad. Resistance through violence became the only means of defending what had been progressively robbed of these people: their right to self-determination and sovereignty, with full respect of the inherent pluralism of the land. The polarization of the Jews, with their unwillingness to integrate or assimilate, to consider becoming a part of some place *already in existence* rather than to create something *entirely foreign and new*, culminated in their ability to persuade a number of international bodies of the importance of their cause.

With the foreign attempt to violently rupture their homeland, the Palestinians did what could only be done: they joined the neighboring Arab nations to fight the "Zionist enemy." The loss of this struggle, repeated time and time again since 1948, as the Israelis continually prove their military superiority, infuses the Palestinian master narrative with its most pervasive trope. The "Catastrophe" (*al-Nakba*), as it is called, is the loss of the nation, and of the culture, not just the loss of a war.

Yet the second great trope of the master narrative—*resistance*—is realized as the response of this great loss. The organization of a resistance movement and a *culture of resistance*, in which the attempt to fashion an entirely new Palestinian identity (as Fighter) was supported institutionally, reverses the inherent powerlessness of loss and dispossession. The culmination of this culture of resistance was the first Palestinian intifada (1987-1993), in

which images of helpless Palestinian children at the mercy of a powerful Israeli army became ubiquitous and injected new moral weight into the Palestinian cause.

The great injustice of Palestinian dispossession would be gradually corrected with the emergence of a "peace process" following the first intifada. Yet the incomplete sovereignty that the Oslo agreements would provide has only, in Palestinian eyes, created a permanent state of liminal existence—a state of conditional recognition that prohibits self-determination and independence, and with that the possibility of positive human development. A second intifada was, in the absence of any real sense of "progress" toward the end of occupation, inevitable.

Before and during this second uprising, the lives of Palestinians have continued to be ruthlessly controlled by Israel, with systematic attempts to "choke" the inhabitants psychologically and economically (Roy, 2004). But the Palestinians have proven themselves to be, in the words of a young man I came to know in Ramallah, "lions in a cage." The resistance has lived on even as, in more recent times, it has taken on a new discursive character. The once-rabid secularism of the Palestinian story, centered in the discourse of postcolonial liberation movements, has, in more recent times, been eclipsed by the discourse of Islamism, itself an ideological competitor within Palestinian society for some time.

The Palestinian master narrative is thus a great tragedy, but one for which the ultimate ending remains unwritten. In its form and tone, its tragic character, with its thematic center of loss, dispossession, injustice, and oppression, competes with its resilient features. While the resilience of Palestinian identity may not impact the form of the narrative, it undoubtedly infuses its thematic content, the specification of which I will now consider more fully.

The Palestinian master narrative is infused with a number of emotionally salient tropes. I will highlight four of these as they related to the discursive encounters of contemporary youth. First, the core of the narrative is the experience of *loss and land dispossession*, which also infuses the tone of the narrative with despair. Second, the theme of *resistance*, grounded in the perceived *injustice* of this loss, pervades the narrative and redeems its sense of powerlessness. Third, the *existential insecurity* of Palestinian identity, and the insecurity of everyday life in Palestine, represents a significant trope in the narrative. Finally, the *delegitimization of Israeli identity* serves the classic role of dehumanizing the enemy (Bar-Tal, 1990).

Loss and Dispossession

The great struggle for Palestine and its national destiny culminated in the massive loss of the 1948 war, which turned 700,000 Palestinians into refugees over night and transformed the landscape by erasing entire villages (Morris, 1987). With the resolution, as it were, of "the Jewish question" emerged a whole new question—the question of Palestine and of the Palestinians (Arendt, 1973; Said, 1979).

> ...The Muslim and Christian Palestinians who lived in Palestine for hundreds of years until they were driven out in 1948, were unhappy victims of the same movement whose whole aim had been to end the victimization of Jews by Christian Europe. Yet it is precisely because Zionism was so admirably successful in bringing Jews to Palestine and constructing a nation for them, that the world has not been concerned with what the enterprise meant in loss, dispersion, and catastrophe for the Palestinian natives. (Said, 1979, p. xxxix)

The success of Zionism as a solution to the Jewish "problem" in Europe thus resulted in the "displacement" of injustice. The condition of the Jews in Europe—increasingly alienated from European cultural life—was addressed at the expense of another, the Palestinians. The consequence for the Palestinians—displaced and dislocated by the unjust usurpification of their land, their dignity, their national identity—has been, in Said's words, a "catastrophe."

Perhaps the most compelling and convincing voices of the Palestinian experience since 1948 have been those in exile, most notably Edward Said (1979, 1994, 2000, 2003). The experience of loss and dispossession—of the theft not only of one's physical land but of the ability to express freely his *national* and *cultural* identity—forms a key part of the Palestinian master narrative, particularly for those in exile (Aoudé, 2001). Remarkably, though, it is not the loss of an identity that is primarily mourned in the Palestinian narrative. Rather, it is the alienation from the land, the dislocation from one's home, whether one is now an exile or a refugee, that constructs the primary trope in the master narrative (Christison, 2001; Khalidi, 1997; Lynd, Balhour, & Lynd, 1994; Rubinstein, 1991; Said, 1979, 1994). The *land*, its liberation and reclamation, are central to the master narrative. In fact, in his famous speech to the UN General Assembly in 1974, Yasser Arafat argued that the conflict was entirely reducible to land dispossession.

> [In 1947] the General Assembly partitioned what it had no right to divide—an indivisible homeland. When we rejected that decision, our position corresponded to that of the natural mother who refused to permit King Solomon to cut her son in two when the unnatural mother claimed the child for herself and agreed to his dismemberment. ...The roots of the Palestine question lie here. Its causes do not stem from any conflict between two religions or two nationalisms. Neither is it a border conflict between neighboring states. It is the cause of a people deprived of its homeland, dispersed and uprooted, and living mostly in exile and in refugee camps. (Arafat, 1974/2001, pp. 173-174)

The land, then, is a vital character in the Palestinian story, and its loss *is* the great tragedy of the narrative. The perceived injustice of this loss is, we will shortly see, the basis for Palestinian *resistance*.

As the conflict between Jews and Arabs in Palestine was at its peak, and a civil war loomed, the historian George Antonius reflected in his 1939 classic *The Arab Awakening* on the connection of the Arabs to the land of Palestine.

> The rights of the Arabs are derived from actual and longstanding possession, and rest upon the strongest human foundation. Their connection with Palestine goes back uninterruptedly to the earliest historic times.... The Arab claims [to Palestine] rest on two distinct foundations: the natural right of a settled population, in great majority agricultural, to remain in possession of the land of its birthright.... (Antonius, 1939/1965, pp. 390-391)

Antonius summarized here quite concisely the Palestinian narrative as the threat of Zionism and its national project created a heightened state of insecurity. In framing the concept of land possession in terms of historical continuity and morality, he offers an early interpretation of the injustice of Zionist aspirations. Less than a decade after the publication of his seminal book, that "longstanding possession," in fact, came to an abrupt end.

Dispossession of the land is not, thematically, just a historical relic of the Palestinian story; it is very much alive in the everyday discourse of Palestinian lives today. Stories of loss and trauma pervade popular Palestinian discourse, particularly among residents of the refugee camps (Awwad, 2004), now in their fifty-eighth year of existence. For those displaced by the wars, particularly the 1948 war, it is customary to retain the antique key from one's original house. My friend and colleague Khalid always identified himself as a "refugee" from Haifa, even though his family had lived in Tulkarm since the 1948 war and he had become a resident of Ramallah. Stories of dispossession abound and are reawakened in the contemporary context of Israel's construction of the infamous "separation barrier," which has in fact confiscated a great deal of Palestinian land (Roy, 2004).

For Palestinians, then, the creation of Israel represents a disruption in the continuity of their relationship with the land. The psychological experience of this disruption is reproduced from generation to generation through the master narrative, with its unyielding emphasis on the unjust dispossession of the land. The land and its reclamation thus constitute

the central core of Palestinian identity, and it is in resistance that the Palestinian narrative

seeks to fulfill its possibility for redemption.

Resistance

If the "Catastrophe" of Israel creates in the Palestinian narrative a radical

disruption—a state of prolonged liminal existence—it is the trope of resistance that rescues

the narrative from the great depths of inevitable tragedy. In resistance, hope is not lost for the

righteousness of the Palestinian cause and for a reversal of fortune. Through resistance,

despair turns to possibility, fatalism to optimism, vulnerability to agency. Resistance confers

power, and with that power the redemption from suffering, oppression, and victimization.

The nature of Palestinian resistance and its course is intimately linked to the

historical context in which it developed following the initial rupture of the emerging

Palestinian nation. Once the dream of pan-Arabism had faded, and with that all hope for the

assistance of their Arab brethren to support the cause of Palestinian liberation, a distinct

Palestinian resistance movement began. For inspiration, that movement looked to other

postcolonial liberation struggles, such as the Algerian War (Harkabi, 1968/2001). The

success of these movements convinced the Palestinians of the value of such a program. The

new Palestinian Revolutionary Identity was embodied in the doctrines of the organizations

that emerged following the 1967 war, most notably Fatah and the Palestine Liberation

Organization (PLO). The seventh point in Fatah's "Seven Points" document reveals this

connection lucidly:

> The struggle of the Palestinian People, like that of the Vietnamese people and other
> peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, is part of the historic process of the
> liberation of the oppressed peoples from colonialism and imperialism. (Fatah,
> 1969/2001, p. 131)

Fatah's ideological platform—which originally centered decisively on the eradication of

Zionism and, hence, Israel itself—assumes the discourse of a "Revolutionary War waged on

guerilla warfare lines" (Harkabi, 1968/2001, p. 121).

As the Palestine National Council (1968/2001) proclaimed in its original charter, the

cultivation of a new revolutionary Palestinian identity among youth was absolutely essential

to the success of the movement.

> It is a national duty to bring up individual Palestinians in an Arab revolutionary
> manner. All means of information and education must be adopted in order to acquaint
> the Palestinian with his country in the most profound manner, both spiritual and
> material, that is possible. He must be prepared for the armed struggle and ready to
> sacrifice his wealth and his life in order to win back his homeland and bring about its
> liberation. (p. 117)

The production and reproduction of a new Palestinian was considered vital to this new phase

of the national movement—one in which pan-Arabism was utterly rejected in favor of an

"indigenous" Palestinian solution. Palestinian liberation became part of the postcolonial

struggle, and resistance, *in spite of* loss, its new dominant trope.

It is important to note that this discourse of resistance not only provided an important

sense of legitimacy to Palestinian identity and the Palestinian struggle, but also a moral

justification for the use of force against Israelis. The related theme of *injustice* that pervades

the Palestinian master narrative legitimizes resistance to Zionism and to Israeli occupation. A

mantra of Palestinian discourse on peace has long been "Peace with Justice." The notion of

injustice stems directly from the perception of Zionism as an outgrowth of European

colonialism. We will return in a moment to this perspective on Zionism as we consider

Palestinian delegitimization of Israeli identity. For now, it is only vital to view Palestinian

resistance as rooted in the perception of an unjust incursion—and domination—of their

homeland.

Injustice, of course, breeds legitimate resistance, according to the narratives of other

postcolonial encounters and struggles for independence. Discursively, then, acts of violence

against Israelis cannot be interpreted as "terrorism," for that interpretation implies a lack of

legitimacy, a kind of chaotic, meaningless intent to harm. Palestinian acts of violence are,

rather, forms of resistance in the master narrative. Yasser Arafat makes a compelling case in

his 1974 speech at the UN:

> Those who call us terrorists wish to prevent world public opinion from discovering
> the truth about us and from seeing the justice on our faces. ...The difference between
> the revolutionary and the terrorist lies in the reason for which each fights. For
> whoever stands by a just cause and fights for the freedom and liberation of his land
> from the invaders, the settlers and the colonialists, cannot possibly be called terrorist;
> otherwise the American people in their struggle for liberation from the British
> colonialists would have been terrorists, the European resistance against the Nazis
> would be terrorism, the struggle of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples
> would also be terrorism, and many of you who are in this Assembly Hall were
> considered terrorists. This is actually a just and proper struggle consecrated by the
> United Nations Charter and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As to
> those who fight against the just causes, those who wage war to occupy, colonize and
> oppress other people—those are the terrorists, those are the people whose actions
> should be condemned, who should be called war criminals: *for the justice of the
> cause determines the right to struggle.* (Arafat, 1974/2001, pp. 176-177, italics
> added)

In this landmark opportunity to present the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause to the

international community, Arafat eloquently articulates the Palestinian master narrative. The

Palestinian struggle, rooted in a just cause, consists of resistance to Israeli "terror," with its

systematic expansionism, exclusionism, and oppression of the indigenous inhabitants of the

land. Resistance is, in the master narrative, entirely justifiable and, in fact, vital to the

preservation of human rights and the self-determination of all postcolonial subjects.

The idea of Palestinian resistance held hope for the redemption of the tragic

Palestinian master narrative. Relying on the discourse of other liberation movements, it

promulgated an appealing end goal: the emergence of a democratic Palestinian state in which

the rights of all citizens—Jews included—would be equally accorded. The Palestinian narrative of emancipation, then, was one in which the outcome was indeed utopian: a return to the "natural" culture of Palestine, in which the embrace of religious pluralism gives way to a democratic culture. The final objective of Palestinian resistance is, as articulated by Fatah (1969/2001), "the restoration of the independent, democratic State of Palestine, all of whose citizens will enjoy equal rights irrespective of their religion" (p. 131). Such a claim of course obscures the fact that Palestine never was an independent sovereign democracy and could not therefore be "restored."

Like contemporary Jewish Israeli identity, Palestinian identity is far from monolithic and is, in fact, contested. While Fatah and the PLO have dominated Palestinian discourse and can legitimately be credited with scripting the narrative of resistance, a formidable challenge has arisen in more recent times with the ascent of political Islam and organizations like Hamas and Islamic Jihad. These organizations, the former of which today controls the Palestinian parliament, explicitly call for an "Islamic state" in Palestine and do not embrace the same secular vision that consumed the initial liberation movement. It remains to be seen how the youth of Palestine engage with these contested narratives of the vision for the state, but the discourses of both "factions" indeed legitimizes violent acts against Israelis as "resistance."

If we consider the involvement of youth in the first Palestinian intifada (Barber, 1999a, 1999b, 2001; Bucaille, 2004), which culminated in what was initially perceived to be the beginning of the end of Israeli occupation, at least in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, we must view the attempt to fashion a new Palestinian identity—one consumed with resistance against occupation—as entirely successful. Barber's work with Palestinian youth serves as an excellent example. He discovered that involvement in political violence during the first

intifada was not always associated with negative psychological outcomes and that Palestinian youth instead reported *great meaning* in their involvement in the intifada (Barber, 1999b, 2001). Involvement in political violence served as an important source of social integration (Barber, 2001). They saw themselves as part of a legitimate, enduring struggle for self-determination. "Political violence," as it were, really meant something very positive to the Palestinian youth of the first intifada. Participation in it meant that they could fulfill their identities as Palestinians through meaningful social practice—so internalized had the narrative of resistance become. Their commitment to the ideology of resistance had, in fact, "protected" them from the challenges to psychological well-being that the context of conflict can naturally create (Punamäki, 1996). The fact that their resistance may, in fact, result in imprisonment is hardly problematic for the Palestinian, as imprisonment is viewed as a rite of passage in the Palestinian life course and a site of education about the Palestinian movement (Barber, 1999b; Peteet, 1994).

It is important to note that Palestinian youth are by no means "protected" from the trauma of war and conflict by internalizing a narrative of resistance. In fact, there is a significant literature that reveals the negative impact of the prolonged conflict on the psychological development of children and adolescents (e.g., Baker & Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 1999; Elbedour, 1998; Elbedour, ten Bensel, & Maruyama, 1993; Garbarino & Kostelny, 1996; Thabet & Vostanis, 1999; Zakrison, Shahen, Mortaja, & Hamel, 2004). Yet children who are socialized in conflict appear to identify at young ages with the strength of its cause (Jagodić, 2000), thereby at minimum ascribing a sense of meaning and purpose to the violence associated with it (Barber, 1999a, 199b; Barber, Schluterman, Denny, & McCouch, 2006).

Israeli psychologist Michelle Slone has also discovered in her work an interesting pattern with regard to the impact of political violence on Israeli and Palestinian youth (e.g., Slone, Adiri, & Arian, 1998). For Israeli youth—Jewish and Arab alike—a clear linear relationship appears to exist between exposure to adverse political events and psychological symptoms. By contrast, a curvilinear relationship exists for Palestinian youth, whereby youth with moderate exposure report the highest levels of symptoms, and youth with the highest exposure appear "buffered" from the negative impact. Psychologists like Slone discuss this differential impact in terms of coping, suggesting that the Palestinians have indeed adopted coping strategies that are highly effective at high levels of exposure to political violence (see also Punamäki & Puhakka, 1997). But another interpretation, of course, is consistent with Barber's emphasis on the *meaning* of political violence. Suffering at the hands of the Israeli army is, for Palestinian youth, perhaps a rite of passage in the same way that military service is for Jewish Israeli youth: it serves to secure the internalization of an identity of resistance.

The trope of resistance in the master narrative thus serves a number of important social and psychological functions for Palestinians. First, it reconfigures Palestinian identity and associates its endurance with *strength* rather than *weakness* (notably similar to the reconfiguration of Jewish identity that occurred through the establishment of Israel). Second, it produces subjects who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the Palestinian cause of national liberation. Its allure is precisely in its reconfiguration of power, its refusal to acquiesce to a state of subordination and domination. Finally, it provides the inherent struggles in Palestinian daily existence with a sense of meaning and purpose. The struggles of Palestinians can be reinterpreted, on an axis away from *suffering* toward *emancipation* (again, much as the Israeli master narrative sought to configure before its own fulfillment). Yet it is

ultimately existential insecurity in the daily lives of Palestinians and in their sense of identity

fulfillment that legitimizes the need for resistance.

Existential Insecurity

By now even the most casual of readers of this dissertation will have observed some

of the important similarities between the Israeli and Palestinian master narratives. No tropes

contained within the two narratives overlap as much as that of *existential insecurity*. Just as

the construction of an Israeli identity was intended to ensure the ontological survival of

Jewish identity, the Palestinian master narrative is consumed with the sustenance of a fragile

Palestinian national identity. No other occurrence provided as great a threat to the existence

of Palestinian identity than Zionism.

The Orientalist foundations of Zionism, along with other Western accounts (e.g.,

Twain, 1869/1966), challenged the existence of a "modern" Palestinian identity that was truly

worth preserving. The very real threat of Zionism, which in fact helped to fashion a more

unified Palestinian consciousness (Khalidi, 1997; Said, 1979), could only be interpreted for

the existential uncertainty it would seem to reveal for the Palestinians. Since the failure of

Palestinian national identity to achieve its recognition, Palestinian identity has forever been

relegated to the status of a *question*. This lack of security in national identity, Khalidi (1997)

argues, creates a pernicious sense of anxiety in the Palestinian consciousness and, in fact, is

rooted in the experience of existential interrogation that Palestinians routinely undergo—at

the border crossing, the checkpoint, the airport.

> This condition of suspense in which Palestinians find themselves at borders means
> that as far as the world, or at least a large part of it, is concerned, the Palestinian's
> identity remains in question. This identity is therefore a source of anxiety to
> governments and their security authorities. ...At a time when internal and
> international barriers to free movement of people and ideas are crumbling rapidly in
> many places, those barriers remain in place for Palestinians.... The fact that all
> Palestinians are subject to these special indignities, and thus are subject to an almost

unique postmodern condition of shared anxiety at the frontier, the checkpoint and the crossing point proves that they are a people, if nothing else. (Khalidi, 1997, pp. 4-5)

The existence of Palestinian identity is structurally threatened by the lack of freedom of movement and of full recognition in the global consciousness, according to Khalidi. But it is precisely in this threat—this state of "suspense," as he calls it—that the existence of Palestinian identity is in fact secured, for the identity perils that they must experience together construct a community of shared subordination.

Existential insecurity appears oppressive yet benign if we only consider Khalidi's contemporary formulation. His own identity as a Palestinian *exile* must be considered in his interpretation of identity insecurity. There is, rather, a far greater threat to the existence of Palestinian identity than the approval of the international community to permit the Palestinians as a people to partake of the privileges of globalization. That threat concerns the very perceptible daily experience of life under military occupation, which has become rather more threatening since the outbreak of the second Palestinian intifada in 2000 (Collins, 2004). This intifada—far more bloody and seemingly intractable than the first—has been characterized by prodigious collective punishment to the Palestinians for attacks in Israel. This punishment has included the reoccupation of a number of cities and towns granted autonomy during the 1990s. This reoccupation has ravaged communities that were in the process of economic and cultural development (Roy, 2004), with institutions destroyed and many lives lost (over 2,500 Palestinians by some estimates).

Existential insecurity is therefore not *abstract* in the lives of Palestinians; it is *tangible* in the daily reality of their existence. Their identities are challenged as they go to work and school, even as they leave their homes to purchase a loaf of bread. In its most pernicious form, this trope of the master narrative has come to create what Reuter (2002)

calls a "culture of death" among Palestinians, a culture in which life is seen as so temporary and rich with trauma that the notion of self-sacrifice, or "martyrdom" (*shahid*), is not considered exceptional. The discourse and status of martyrdom, in fact, imbues a sense of meaning in death that could only be so alluring under conditions of grave existential uncertainty and, of course, the noble "service" of resistance.

With the theme of existential insecurity, it is not merely the legitimacy of Palestinian identity that is unstable in the master narrative, it is rather *existence itself*. While much is made of Israel's need for security—admittedly a very salient trope in the Israeli master narrative—what goes often unacknowledged, or at least somewhat muted in international discourse on Israel/Palestine, is the *Palestinians'* lack of security. Again, the negative interdependence of these master narratives is palpable. How can one group achieve security without compromising the security of the other? The experience of existential insecurity that naturally consumes the daily life of a people under military occupation can both fuel the need for resistance—to make meaning of the uncertainty of life—and the depressing tone that underlies the master narrative.

Delegitimization of Israeli Identity

There are many salient tropes in the Palestinian master narrative, but all of them essentially rely upon the existence and success of Zionism and its embodiment in Israeli identity. So there would be no loss, no dispossession, no alienation from the land, no absence of self-determination, and certainly no resistance without the fulfillment of Zionism and its disastrous consequences for the Palestinians. Palestinian identity would be secure, fulfilled in its own national existence, and granted the status of full citizenship in the global village— were it not for the existence of Israeli identity. And so it seems somehow *logical* that the legitimacy of Israeli identity could not be acknowledged, for that acknowledgment would

somehow contradict the ideology of Palestinian liberation. The case for Palestine is a case *against* Israel; in a democratic, secular Palestine, there is no need for Jewish separatism. The security of all identities would be guaranteed by the penchant for pluralism inherent in the Palestinian vision of statehood. Or so the narrative goes.

In the Palestinian narrative, Zionism is an extension of European colonialism: the Zionist national project, a colonial one (Rodinson, 1973; Said, 1979). Edward Said (1979) characterized the struggle between Palestinians and Zionism as "a struggle between a presence and an interpretation, the former constantly appearing to be overpowered and eradicated by the latter" (p. 8). By this he meant that the Palestinians indeed had a claim to Palestine in their very *presence*, whereas the Zionist claim to Palestine rested on an historical *interpretation*—the notion that the Jews possessed a distant but powerful connection to the land. Again, we can look to Arafat's seminal speech in 1974 for a most concise treatment of the subject:

> The roots of the Palestinian question reach back into the closing years of the 19th century, in other words, to that period which we call the era of colonialism and settlement.... This is precisely the period during which Zionism as a scheme was born; its aim was the conquest of Palestine by European immigrants, just as settlers colonized, and indeed raided, most of Africa.

> ...Just as colonialism as a system and colonialists as its instrument used religion, color, race and language to justify the African's exploitation and his cruel subjugation by terror and discrimination, so too were these methods employed as Palestine was usurped and its people hounded from their national homeland.

> Just as colonialism heedlessly used the wretched, the poor, the exploited as mere inert matter with which to build and to carry out settler colonialism, so too were destitute, oppressed European Jews employed on behalf of world imperialism and of the Zionist leadership. European Jews were transformed into instruments of aggression; they became the elements of settler colonialism intimately allied to racial discrimination.

> ...Zionism is an ideology that is imperialist, colonialist, racist; it is profoundly reactionary and discriminatory; it is united with anti-Semitism in its retrograde tenets and is, when all is said and done, another side of the same base coin.

> ...Zionism encourages the Jew to emigrate out of his homeland and grants him an artificially created nationality.

> ...When we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow we include in our perspective all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live with us there in peace and without discrimination. ...We invite them to emerge from their moral isolation into a more open realm of free choice, far from their present leadership's efforts to implant in them a Masada complex. (Arafat, 1974/2001, pp. 171-172, 181-182)

In this speech, Arafat reduces Israeli identity to an "artificially created nationality" and its subjects as victims of a racist colonial movement—pawns in an imperial project. He seeks to delegitimize the perceived need for a national identity among the persecuted European Jews who immigrated to Palestine. The Israeli narrative is, as it were, an empty one, contrived by the "Zionist leadership."

In the Palestinian narrative, the Israeli identity is thus an extension of Western imperialism. In a postcolonial era, such an identity lacks both necessity and validity. It is not an enduring identity, as the Palestinian identity is, with its intimate cultural authenticity and connection to the land. Israeli identity is, rather, an ephemeral identity. Its existence and subsistence is grounded in an Orientalist, ethnocentric, and racist ideology in which Jewish identity is somehow accorded special status in a pluralistic place. The Palestinian National Charter, that document which instructed Palestinians to raise their children in a "revolutionary manner," to prepare them for "armed struggle," again states the case against Zionism clearly:

> Zionism is a political movement organically associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to all action for liberation and to progressive movements in the world. It is racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist, and colonial in its aims, and fascist in its methods. Israel is the instrument of the Zionist movement, and a geographical base for world imperialism placed strategically in the midst of the Arab homeland to combat the hopes of the Arab nation for liberation, unity, and progress. (Palestine National Council, 1968/2001, p. 119)

Ideologically, then, an Israeli identity is an illegitimate identity, founded upon aggression, antagonism, and strategic dispossession. It is, in this way, a false identity, and one worthy of eradication.

Though the Palestinian master narrative denounces and delegitimizes Zionism, and by association, Israeli identity, it is important to note that it does not, in fact, espouse anti-Semitic discourse. Quite to the contrary, the narrative seeks to "intercept" such critiques by acknowledging the distinction among Zionism as an ideology, Israel as a national identity, and the Jewish people and religion. The second of Fatah's (1969/2001) "Seven Points" articulates this distinction:

> *Fatah*, the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, is not struggling against the Jews as an ethnic and religious community. It is struggling against Israel as the expression of colonization based on a theocratic, racist and expansionist system and of Zionism and colonialism. (p. 130)

It is not, therefore, *Jewish* identity that is somehow delegitimized or devalued, but rather *Israeli* identity as a product of Zionism, a colonialist ideology. Arafat (1974/2001) in fact argues that the Palestinian struggle for liberation is also a struggle for the liberation of Jewish identity:

> ...Since its inception, our revolution has not been motivated by racial or religious factors. Its target has never been the Jew, as a person, but racist Zionism and undisguised aggression. In this sense, ours is also a revolution for the Jew, as a human being, as well. We are struggling so that Jews, Christians, and Muslims may live in equality enjoying the same rights and assuming the same duties, free from racial or religious discrimination.

The struggle against Zionism and against Israel is an emancipatory one not just for Palestinian identity but also for Jewish identity, having been captured and held hostage by Zionism. The Palestinian master narrative, in this claim, seeks to elevate its democratic project to a higher moral space than Israel in its aims to construct a state for *all* the identities

of the region, not just one. Palestinian nationalism is thus an *inclusive* nationalism, Zionism and Israeli nationalism *exclusive* in their ideological foundations (see Peleg, 2004).

The Palestinian master narrative thus delegitimizes Israeli identity on both historical and ideological grounds. It constructs the Israeli national identity as an artificial one, and one with far less legitimate basis than the Palestinian national identity. This artificiality stems from the recency of its construction, compared with the enduring Palestinian identity. But beyond this characterization of Israeli identity as somehow "artificial" and therefore illegitimate, it is the perceived ideological content of the Israeli identity that most delegitimizes it in the Palestinian narrative. In its content, Israeli identity is exclusionary and discriminatory; it favors its group members and is, therefore, a blatantly ethnocentric identity. Its ideology conflicts with democratic principles and the idea of universal human rights, in which multiple identities are granted equivalent dignity. With its ingroup-specific ideological foundation, though, Israeli identity is antagonistic and therefore in conflict with the postcolonial project of liberation.

The Master Narrative of Palestinian Identity: A Summary

The Palestinian master narrative contains a number of salient tropes that exceed the four briefly outlined here. Yet most of these tropes are centered on the trauma of loss and dispossession. Victimization, oppression, powerlessness, humiliation, and indignity all stem from this experience. Resistance as a responsive trope injects the narrative with the possibility of resilience, though it also predicts further loss to the extent that it requires self-sacrifice and martyrdom to achieve its thematic strength. It must be translated from discourse into practice. In that translation, the loss of life is inevitable, particularly given the historically uneven match of Palestinian resistance and the Israeli military (Said, 1979). So these tropes in the narrative in fact rely on one another for their reproductive weight. They also create for the

Palestinian a fragile existence, a constant perception of identity threat and, in Khalidi's (1997) words, "suspense." Ideologically, their resistance and suffering are for a just cause—the negation of Zionism and its "racist" brand of nationalism. Such resistance would hardly be possible without the systematic delegitimization of an Israeli identity—the denial that such an identity is in any way valid or acceptable.

A coherent master narrative is of course always a fragile construction, for social change and the competition of discourses ensure its contestation. The Palestinian case is no exception to this general rule. In fact, its genesis was complicated by, on the one hand, a tradition of *localism* over *nationalism* in Palestinian identity before Zionism (Tamari, 1999) and, on the other, competition between a pan-Arab nationalist discourse and a distinctive Palestinian national discourse (Khalidi, 1997). Today, the introduction of an Islamist discourse into the mainstream of Palestinian society has rendered the master narrative extremely fragile, particularly since the death of Arafat and the growing disenchantment with the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority. This discourse is well-represented in the Hamas (1988/2001) charter, which calls for an Islamic—rather than a secular democratic—state in *all* of mandate Palestine. The success of Hamas, politically and socially, has indeed presented a new discourse of national liberation on the grounds of *"jihad"*—in stark contrast to the master narrative constructed largely in the 1960s and 1970s. The perceived lack of success of this original narrative in achieving full Palestinian independence is likely the root cause both of the second intifada, which has been almost entirely conducted by Islamists as opposed to Fatah's "guerillas," and transformations in the discourse to which contemporary Palestinian youth are exposed.

As we consider the life stories of Palestinian youth, we will examine the ways in which the master narrative of Palestinian identity is appropriated, both in its form and its

ideological content. This analysis will, of course, reveal the extent to which identity polarization is reproduced in today's adolescents as they engage with the discourse of their social ecologies of development. The consideration of only four of these life stories in their totality only begins to shed light on the Palestinian experience, yet an in-depth analysis of these four cases, selected for their representativeness of the larger sample, provides idiographic specificity to the problem at hand.

The Story of Ali

With his baggy shorts, baseball cap, and discman, Ali looks just like a typical American teen. The first day I met him, he engaged with me, in his fluent English, about some of his favorite movies, like *The Matrix* and *Lord of the Rings*. He is, in fact, a 16-year-old Palestinian Muslim from East Jerusalem. His appropriation of American style, his consumption of American products, his fluent mastery of English and French, in addition to his native Arabic and some Hebrew, all attest to his residence in the "global village." Ali is, without question, a subject of globalization. From a wealthy Palestinian family who is rabidly apolitical and anti-ideological, Ali has, by most standards, an exceptional status as a Palestinian.

Yet despite his privilege, Ali's life story (Figure 3.8) does not present itself as a narrative of progress or ascent. It is, rather, true to the form of the Palestinian master narrative: a great tragedy. With its tone of despair and depression, loss and anger, and vengeful resistance, it conforms quite closely to the master narrative of Palestinian identity, and Ali has in fact appropriated much of the discourse of this narrative into his life story.
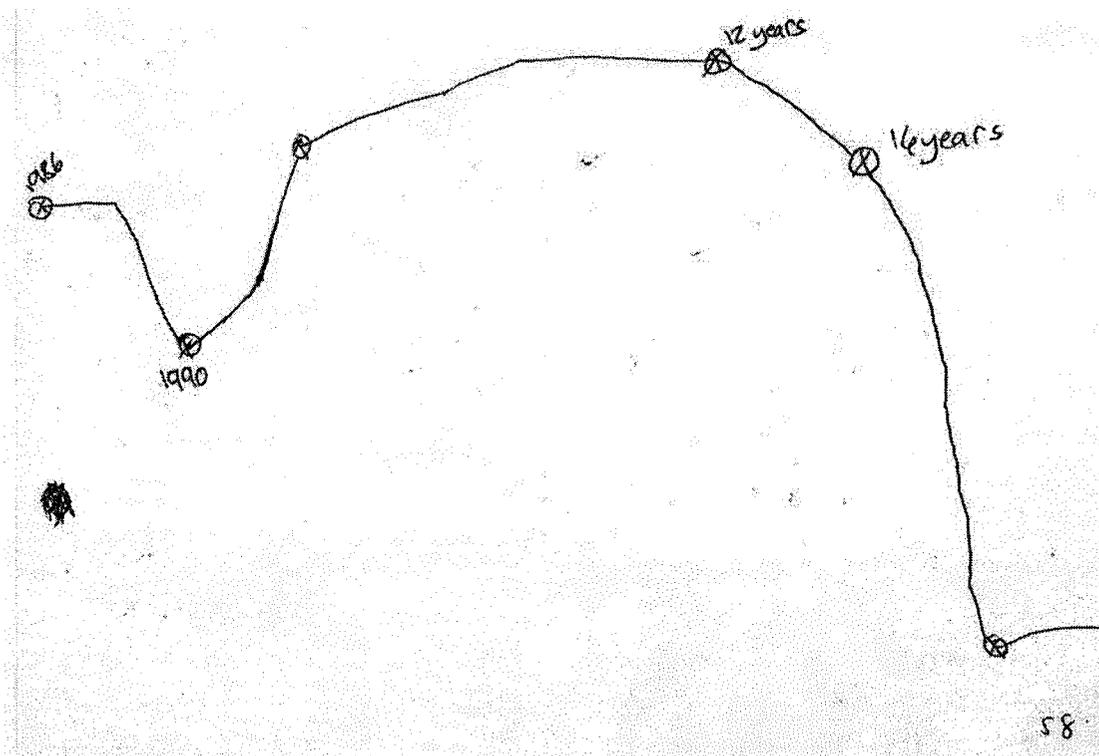
Figure 3.8. Ali's life-line, 2003.

Ali's narrative assumes a stable form until age 4, when the first Gulf War began. In

striking similarity to Yossi's narrative, Ali's story is grounded in the foundational tone of fear

that characterized that historical moment in the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis,

connected in the mutual fate of potential annihilation.

> I wasn't really aware of everything, but I remember it. The gas masks, and I
> remember my little brother was like, two or one, and they had to put him in this
> plastic box or something. And I was really scared. I remember that. ...You could hear
> the alarm everyday, the sirens. I remember crying sometimes.

Ali's first memory is thus the first descent in his life story. It is a time at which the idea of

existential insecurity is awakened for him—the notion that his life is not secure and that he

and his family live a fragile existence as Palestinians.

Ali's life-line ascends as he professes to have slipped into a period of political unconsciousness, dismissing the threats in his social ecology and attempting to live a "normal" life.

> This is when things were going back to normal. I was a kid, so I wasn't aware of the situation, just normal life, school, making friends. It starts going down when I grew up.

With the emergence of political consciousness and the birth of a sophisticated understanding of "the situation," Ali's life story begins its tragic decline.

> I didn't really start to care about other people until I was like 12 years old. But then I came to know about the whole thing, and it's really depressing. It was like, to see how people are humiliated.... And then the intifada started. It's like, when you're a 16-year-old, I'm a 16-year-old Palestinian...and it's so hard. It's hard to be who you are.

For Ali, the increase in his political awareness became a "depressing" influence on his life story. The conflict and its pernicious psychological structure has for him a most deleterious effect: the perception that his identity is somehow "blocked." He cannot fully express his identity as a Palestinian, which is in fact connected to his residence in East Jerusalem (Klein, 2004). From 12 years on, Ali's narrative contains one tragic story after another—stories of his own experience, but even more so of the collective experience of the Palestinians. His privilege has, to some extent, shielded him from the harsh realities of the conflict, and he experiences a sense of guilt as a result.

Formally, then, Ali's narrative mirrors the master narrative in an alarmingly exact way. His story, saturated with the tone of fear and the experience of identity insecurity, is an archetypal Palestinian story. As we consider in greater detail the thematic content of the narrative, the link between his story and the master narrative is increasingly apparent.

Dispossession of the land frames the ideological setting of Ali's life story. In connecting resistance to this loss, he reveals the extent to which he has appropriated the master narrative of Palestinian identity.

> It's like we're supposed to fight for every inch of the country. It's ours, and they took it by force. We're gonna take it back by force, if we can. But we, we can't take it back by force! We don't have money. We're not allowed to have an army, weapons, nothing! This is why we use the freedom fighters.

> ...I believe, if we're not gonna get our land back, we don't have to make peace. Everyone should fight until they die.

In this brief excerpt from his narrative, we see quite readily the axis upon which Palestinian identity is constructed and, quite successfully, reproduced among youth: the *unjust* dispossession of the land ("It's *ours*, and they took it by force"), and the *just* cause of Palestinian resistance, symbolized in the current phase of the conflict by the "freedom fighters." In this excerpt, though, the theme of Palestinian *powerlessness* is also apparent. For Ali, the inherent *weakness* of the consistent *loss* of the Palestinians is not fully reversed through resistance, as perhaps it is intended to be in the master narrative. Yet the promulgation of powerlessness serves an important function, particularly as Palestinians tell their stories: to elicit sympathy with them, the unjustly displaced and helpless.

Ali endorses the practice of suicide bombing as a legitimate form of resistance, though he professes that he would never become a "fighter" for his family. As he says, "I don't wanna mess up their lives," causing yet another disruption in their own narratives.

> And how come do they call the suicide bombers "terrorists" and not the Israeli government? They started all the violence! They invaded Palestine! It's like, we're just defending ourselves. What else can you do?! If your wife was raped and killed, your mother and father, your whole family was killed in front of you, and you were humiliated, your wife being raped in front of you, and your home destroyed, and you have no reason to live, and all the hate, and you have all the hate inside you, and all you could think of is revenge, right?! ...It's wrong, but it's the *only* way. And it's like every Israeli has to join the army. It's like, so no one's innocent.

Ali appropriates the master narrative when he rejects the label of "terrorism" to describe

Palestinian acts against Israelis. These are, rather, acts of "resistance"—and a *legitimate*

resistance at that. As he notes, "They started all the violence. They invaded Palestine." In this

narrative frame, Israel is the aggressor and antagonist and the Palestinians only defending

themselves and their legitimate cause for liberation from occupation and oppression. But Ali

also reveals the current phase of Palestinian resistance as a time grounded in desperation. He

presents a narrative of the suicide bomber as the ultimate victim, and thus someone who has

"nothing to lose." It is this characterization that approximates the Palestinian "culture of

death" (Reuter, 2002) of the second intifada (see also Grossman, 2003). In many ways, Ali

shares the same sense of collective depression, despite the fact that he has not experienced

these kinds of traumatic losses: "…We don't believe that we have a good life," he says, "We

live, like, we have no reason to live." Yet Ali reveals his own ambivalence about the practice

of suicide bombing—justifying it as a legitimate tactic on the one hand, but claiming that it is

somehow "wrong" on the other. Desperate circumstances, in Ali's formulation, require

desperate measures, and the use of "human bombs" is indeed the result of utter desperation.

Ali's characterization of the Palestinian collective experience, as well as the obstacles

of his own life story, reveal salient perceptions of insecurity, trauma, and humiliation—all at

the hands of Israeli soldiers.

> [As a Palestinian in East Jerusalem,] you're so humiliated, discriminated against,
> everywhere. …Checkpoints everywhere you go, soldiers looking at you. You are not
> allowed to look at soldiers. You get beat up if you do anything. If you do…you're
> fucked up. You can't be yourself. And if you do, you're in danger. Like a guy was
> shot next to my house, just because a soldier felt like killing somebody.

> …Like a month ago, I was going through the checkpoint, and the soldiers were just
> training, practicing how to shoot and stuff. They were pointing the guns at us, and
> they started shooting but the rifle was empty. They didn't care. It was so scary.

The structure of the conflict, with its ubiquitous checkpoints that serve to reinforce the power differential of the conflict, creates regular traumas for Ali and essentially blocks his ability to express an identity: "You can't be yourself," as he says. As an East Jerusalemite, a member of a subordinated identity group within Israeli society (recall that East Jerusalem was officially annexed by Israel and its residents granted "permanent residency" but not citizenship), Ali's identity is under constant threat by Israelis who seek the de-Palestinization of Jerusalem and insist on its Jewish identity (Klein, 2004; see also Romann & Weingrod, 1991).

Ali is particularly influenced not only by his own experiences but also with stories of Palestinian suffering that proliferate in the larger society, on the streets between friends, on the internet.

> A friend of mine was shot—not a friend of mine, someone I know—was shot because he was walking in the street during curfew, and he was killed. That was really, really terrible. Yeah, he's my friend's best friend. It's so fucked up. And you get to hear lots of stories. They show it on the, they show it on the Palestinian TV. It's so weird, like, the media's so biased. You hear about every suicide bombing, right? But you never heard about what the soldiers are doing.

What some might label, in polarizing fashion, a culture of "propaganda" is really just the effective transmission of stories, irrespective of their veracity. Palestinians like Ali who are distant from the nexus of violent confrontation with Israeli soldiers only know the stories of loss and trauma in the second intifada through stories in media and through friends. The salience of these stories commands a powerful sense of identification, as the existential security of one's identity is at stake.

Ali experiences only glimpses of identity insecurity—at the checkpoint most notably. But the plight of Palestinians in the West Bank resonates with him and forms a crucial part of

his own narrative. Identifying the West Bank as "the most dangerous place you can live," he

explains the inherent insecurity of daily existence there.

> Cause you never know what happens, even if you are in the middle of your house. An F-16 could just come and shoot! They bomb houses. Little babies get killed with their family. It's so scary. There's this guy, Ahmed, he's a singer, a Palestinian singer. There's a song about a little girl that was on the roof of her house, and the Israeli soldiers were shooting and she was shot and died. He made a song about her. She's like an innocent little girl that had nothing to do with anything! I think she was 5 or 4. Yeah, it's heart-braking.

The stories of Palestinian struggle in the intifada are extremely salient to Ali, who reports

feeling a sense of guilt that, as an East Jerusalemite, he "suffers less" than his West Bank

brethren.

Ali's narrative reveals the significance of stories of collective suffering, and their

proliferation in the discourse of contemporary Palestinian culture, as fundamental to

adolescent identity development. It is these stories that infuse Ali's story with its tragic form

and tone, its polarizing ideological content. Early in its development, Fatah noted that "Our

operations in the occupied territory can never reach the stage of the aspired revolution unless

all Palestinian groups are polarized around the revolution" (cited in Harkabi, 1968/2001, p.

130). In spite of his secular and apolitical upbringing, in spite of the discourse of his family—

a Westernized family who are pragmatic and not ideological—Ali has indeed become

"polarized around the revolution." His life story is saturated with the thematic content of the

master narrative that seeks to ensure this polarization. His distance from the idea of Israeli

identity, and therefore from peaceful coexistence with Israel, could not be greater.

Perhaps most surprisingly, given the rabid secularism of his family, Ali has

appropriated the discourse of radical Islam into the ideological setting of his life story.

> And there's this thing in Islam, if someone dies for his own country, he's like, these are the best people. If you die for your country, you go straight to heaven. That's what we believe. It's in the Koran also. …The whole Islamic population is supposed

to fight for Palestine because, you know, there is the prophet Mohammed was there. It's a holy land.

Considering his narrative in the context of his larger social ecology, Ali's identification with radical Islam seems a bit out of place. While refugees and Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have experienced great hardships during the second intifada, Ali's family has suffered little. They own a hotel, with a restaurant and bar, in Jerusalem. His mother, with her uncovered blond hair and her stories of extensive world travels, is clearly a member of the Arab elite. Ali, like his parents, acknowledges that he does not practice Islam. Yet it is precisely his sense of privilege as a Palestinian that makes him all the more motivated to appropriate the master narrative of Palestinian identity, and an Islamist variant of it at that. In fact, his case lends considerable credence to the idea of identity polarization: in cases of great conflict and identity threat, conformity to a master narrative that is psychologically distant from the Other who in fact poses the threat to one's ingroup is likely in adolescence and beyond. The allure of ideology and of identity polarization is of course connected to the *meaning* that identification with a master narrative can provide in cases of existential insecurity (see Giddens, 1991; Kinnvall, 2004).

It is precisely because Ali feels *incomplete* as a Palestinian, because he feels unable to fully express an identity, that he seeks to appropriate a polarized self-narrative that conforms closely to the master narrative. And this sense of *inadequacy* as a Palestinian stems both from the uniqueness of his socioeconomic privilege and his status as an East Jerusalemite. The following excerpt from his narrative illuminates:

> ...The most disturbing thing is, like, little kids, throwing stones. It's like, you see the courage in your people. And I'm really proud of being a Palestinian. I'm really proud. It's like, you see men in 8-year-old children. *Men. Real* men.

> ...I live in East Jerusalem, it's different there. I think these children are better than me. Better. Better than me. ...They're like men, *real* men.

Ali's sense of *inferiority* as a Palestinian from East Jerusalem—his sense that he does not undergo the same kind of daily trauma that affects Palestinians in the West Bank—likely motivates his identification with a discourse that he perceives to represent the master narrative of Palestinian identity. As an elite, he may be shielded from elements of this *experience*, but its master narrative is too compelling to repudiate. It is a narrative, rather, that commands identification in the meaning and purpose it can provide young Palestinians who perceive the powerlessness in their midst. The identification with the master narrative restores power and a sense of agency—albeit a false one—through its call to resistance and justice.

The Story of Adara

As is customary upon my arrival to Qadas, a small Palestinian village near Tulkarm under full control of the Palestinian Authority, I am greeted by an entourage of young children, who seem to see in my visit the arrival of a minor celebrity. Such is the carefree pace of life in Qadas and the eventlessness of the place. Or perhaps it is the unusual attention being paid to the village's inhabitants, whose lives unfold in relative predictability and insularity, aside from the occasional military incursion from the Israeli army in the search for Palestinian "militants." Summer evenings are spent on the driveway-cum-patio, with delicious mint tea and the requisite smoke of the apple-flavored *nargila*. Winter evenings, the family huddles around the makeshift fire in the TV room, which doubles as a dining room and a bedroom for Adara and her older sister. Lemon trees and spices grow in the family's garden, which serves three generations of the family, with houses stacked on top of one another like legos, in the traditional village method. The family olive grove is a short drive away.

I sleep in the spacious living room on a thin mattress on the floor. Several of the children compete to sleep in the room with me. Tonight, little Hassan has won the competition, and he is entranced by my laptop, on which I am furiously writing the day's field notes. He brings a CD to me and begs me to let him show me his new favorite game. As the program starts up, I am somewhat taken aback by its content. The key characters are Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the Hamas founder and spiritual leader, and Abdel-Aziz Rantisi, the political leader of Hamas. They have both just been assassinated prior to my visit. The goal of the game seems to be to fight the Israeli soldiers before they kill Yassin or Rentisi. Visually, it is stunningly similar to the popular American game, *Grand Theft Auto*. But its contents are far from fantasy in the minds of young Palestinians like Hassan. The game depicts an actual reality for them, and it affords them an early start in learning the content, characters, and configurations of the Palestinian master narrative.

Nowhere is the Palestinian master narrative and its ideological content more salient than in Palestinian villages like Qadas. Physically isolated from Israel and the rest of the world, an insular discourse in the service of producing identities of resistance is carefully deployed. Posters of the *shahid* are ubiquitous, as are the flags and symbols of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The popularity of these organizations and their ideologies is probably enhanced by virtue of the fact that this is a deeply religious place. Nowhere else in Palestine did I witness people waking early to pray at the mosque, or interrupting their daily routines to bow toward Mecca. And nowhere else did I encounter such a proliferation of songs and symbols of Palestinian resistance. I am stunned the next morning to be greeted by Adara's 8-year-old nephew, Youssef, adorned in a t-shirt prominently featuring a swastika, the symbol of Nazism.

Adara's family describe themselves as refugees from a coastal city occupied by Israel in 1948. The antique key to their home hangs on the wall of their modest home in Qadas. Adara's mother spends most of her time with me lamenting not about "the Israelis" but "the Jews" and what they have done, how they had schemed and robbed the Palestinians of their land and their dignity. In between these diatribes, she implores me to convert to Islam, the "true revelation" and the only possibility for my salvation.

Qadas, then, offers a social ecology literally saturated with an Islamist version of the Palestinian master narrative. The stories of Palestinian struggle and suffering proliferate in the discursive field to which youth are exposed from very young ages, and a polarizing ideology abounds. In the midst of this social ecology, 16-year-old Adara, a quiet, deferent young woman, devotedly covered in a *hejab*, like all the women in her family, has begun to construct her own life-story narrative and establish an ideological setting for it.

Adara's story (Figure 3.9) begins with the forgotten happiness of childhood. Quickly, though, her narrative assumes the tragic form of the Palestinian master narrative.

> I think when I was a baby I had a good time. But then, I was 5 years, 6 years, at that time it was the occupation, and I became aware of it, and it was so bad.

Adara's political awareness begins at an earlier age than Ali's, and with that awareness the tone of her story becomes grounded in the struggle of life under occupation.

Asked to divide her narrative into chapters, she identifies two: a "good" chapter and a "bad" one. Tragically, she says, "I think the bad time is more than the good time." Her first memory reveals the only role the Israeli will assume in her life story: that of a soldier.

> When I was a child, always soldiers were there. They came to our house to take my brother. I remember I was four years old. The soldiers came to our house. I was in another room, and they stayed the whole night waiting for my brother to come home. And my mother, she was crying. It was a terrible experience.

As it turns out, it is only one of many encounters with the occupation for Adara and her

family, most of whom have chosen exile over the limitations imposed by Israel. But a small

number of family members, including Adara, remain in Qadas, forced to reckon with the

obstacles of life under daily occupation.

Although she cannot identify a peak experience in her life story, Adara does purport

to experience happiness, but that happiness is entirely contingent on the status of the

occupation and of Palestinian suffering.

> When I see the news and there will be no people killed from the occupation here in Palestine, I am so happy. I am like, "Oh, it must be like this always." Without killing or the separation wall.

The perpetual descent of Adara's narrative—its abyss, if you will—is also rooted in the

experience of life under occupation.
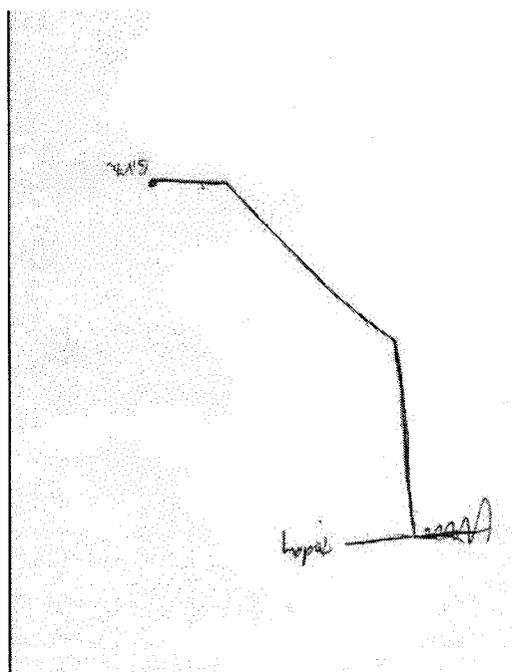
Figure 3.9. Adara's life-line, 2005.

> It's extremely hard, the checkpoint. And from 2003, the life is always going to be difficult and complicated, with the separation wall. So we can't go to Jerusalem to

visit Al-Aqsa Mosque, to visit other holy sites. So always when you want to go to another city in Palestine, you see the Jewish settlements, and I feel so bad, when I see the Israeli flag here in Palestine. Because Palestine is our land.

In this excerpt from Adara's narrative, we see the connection between the tragic form of her life story and the "difficulty" of Palestinian life more generally, given the structure of military occupation. We also see her connection to the land, and her sense of alienation from it as a consequence of the occupation and the Jewish settlements in Palestine.

The salience of the occupation in a place like Qadas—where the population is quite literally caged in by the structure of occupation, with soldiers right outside the gates of town—commands a method of coping with its daily challenges. For Adara, drawing and writing are methods she employs to channel her emotional response to the occupation. She shared with me one of these drawings (Figure 3.10), which offers a graphic summary of her perception of daily life under Israeli occupation. In this drawing, Adara draws a scene from her daily life that she has witnessed: a Palestinian being beaten by Israeli soldiers at the checkpoint. The rings of the Olympic symbol are replaced here by handcuffs, which for Adara symbolize the imprisonment of the occupation for Palestinians.

In its basic content, then, Adara's life story closely mirrors the master narrative of Palestinian identity, with its focus on cumulative loss and trauma as the master trope, and tragedy as the guiding tone and form of the story. The ideological content of Adara's narrative also closely conforms to the master narrative. First, she makes a number of references to dispossession of the land and to the land as legitimately belonging to the Palestinians. Interestingly, though, she is firmly committed to a two-state solution to the conflict and willing to recognize Israel and to concede that the entirety of mandate Palestine is not a realistic goal for reclamation.

We are here in Palestine, we are helpless. ...We want the world to believe that Palestine is our homeland. Palestine is our homeland.

Palestine is our land, so I don't like these feelings [that the conflict creates]. I think that Israel-Palestinian conflict is complicated.... But we are two nations, we must decide to stop killing and live peacefully in the two separated countries in 1967 borders.

Adara longs for the tranquility of life without occupation. As a compromise in her ideological setting, she seems to have exchanged willingness to acknowledge the legitimacy of Israeli identity, as realized in the existence of a Jewish state, with the possibility of emancipation from the occupation. While many other Palestinians in the course of my fieldwork would emphasize that the occupation in fact began long before 1967, Adara seeks only the liberation of these territories.

Figure 3.10. "The Palestine Daily Olympics" by Adara.

A key component of the ideology of the master narrative is the existential threat of identity insecurity, as symbolized in structural encounters such as the checkpoint. This theme resonates strongly with the experiential content of Adara's narrative, and her drawing reveals the extent to which such insecurity is at the forefront of her consciousness as an adolescent. Insecurity consumes her narrative when she identifies the struggles of life under occupation, beginning with her childhood memories of soldiers coming to her house to look for her brother. The fact that the occupation comes to create for youth in Qadas a kind of insecurity and unpredictability is extremely disruptive, socially and psychologically. For, as I have described it, Qadas is a place of great eventlessness. It is a simple village, and lives are lived in relative simplicity. But the occupation introduces a layer of complexity that reverses the "natural" flow of life and reframes the "life space" (Lewin, 1951) of Qadas' inhabitants.

It is not, however, simply stories of the daily life of Qadas' inhabitants that influence the life stories of youth like Adara. Rather, it is the highly effective dissemination of stories throughout Palestine, as noted in the consideration of Ali's narrative, that serves to ensure an ideological setting, as well as a thematic reproduction, that conforms to the master narrative of Palestinian identity. In discussing her favorite film, Adara describes it as follows:

> It's talking about the Palestinians in 1948 when they are getting, they got out of Palestine and they go to Lebanon and Egypt and Jordan. It talks about the story, and about the soldiers. It talks about the children of Palestine. Some children were lost from their parents. When you see these things, you feel sad about them. Because it's a hard feeling to be without your parents. Maybe the child, his parents are still here in Palestine. Sometimes a family from Israel has taken this baby and made him Israel, Jewish.

In film, then, Palestinian youth like Adara are exposed to the master story of Palestinian identity and to its great tragic foundations in the Catastrophe of 1948. The story offers in alluring simplicity the construction of a protagonist (the innocent Palestinian) and an

antagonist (the vicious Israeli) that is appealing to youth and that essentially resonates with their daily experience of the occupation, in which the only Israelis they come to know are soldiers. The mechanism of identification and reproduction is, as revealed in Adara's story, *affective*, its contents possessing a deep emotional resonance that constructs social identity and ingroup solidarity.

In her engagement with Palestinian literature and poetry as well, Adara comes to internalize the discourse of the Palestinian master narrative.

> I'm reading now a book by a Palestinian writer about Palestine, and about the war here in Palestine and in Lebanon. The writer who wrote this book, it's so nice because he wants to make the people understand what the Israelis want from the Palestinians. Maybe we can understand them, the Israelis. Every story finished in Israel, and the plans Israel has. ...When you read the book you can understand many clues about the occupation, from the beginning until now.

> I like the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish. ...There's this poem about Israel, he says, "You are stealing my children. You have stolen my whole church with my ancestors, and the land which I cultivated, along with my children, and you have left us with nothing except for these socks." He talks about the true stories, how they have stolen our land. And sometimes our children.

The perception of the conflict as the unjust dispossession of her people's land is firmly secured through her engagement with these texts—these sites of discursive reproduction that are highly effective for both their emotional salience and their resonance with the structural conditions of the occupation itself. Such stories affirm the *imago* of the Israeli as a brutal, inhuman antagonist acting against the Palestinians.

The most significant family story transmitted from generation to generation in Adara's family is, of course, the experience of dispossession in 1948, when her parents were forced to flee their placid seaside village for Qadas. But this story is too vivid, too real and raw for Adara. It is not just an ideological abstraction or the tale of collective loss, like the stories described in the poems of Mahmoud Darwish. It is, rather, a story that arouses great

emotion in Adara and in all of her family members, for it is the great tragedy in the narrative of the family. When I ask her about the story, she says, "I don't like this story. Many are crying in this story. And when my parents talk to me about this, they are so sad. And me too. It is too sad."

We find in Adara's story, still in its formative stages of construction as an adolescent, a connection to a number of stories accessible in the discourse of her particular social ecology. These stories are quite appealing in their thematic content, as they provide a larger perception of group struggle and loss that serves to construct a coherent tragic narrative. The inculcation of a tragic narrative—a narrative that focuses on loss, dispossession, and injustice—is necessary if one is to also cultivate a narrative of resistance, for the two are mutually contingent. A narrative of resistance would be unnecessary were the conditions of Palestinian life not tragic. Yet in Adara's story we find little in the way of resistance. Instead, Adara seems to possess a kind of resignation to tragedy, or at least to the futility of Palestinian organized resistance. This perception, though not explicitly acknowledged by Adara, is likely connected to something I briefly alluded to earlier: Adara's older siblings, including that brother who was always being hounded by the Israeli army (and who, apparently, I bore a striking resemblance to), have all become exiles. They have moved to countries in Europe and North America, seeking to flee the interminable occupation in Palestine.

Because of her family's experience with Palestinian resistance—initial involvement followed by resignation and then exile—Adara has perhaps internalized a sense of futility in resistance. Ideologically, as noted before, she supports a two-state solution:

> We need to live peacefully, and to separate the countries in 1967 borders, so that if we can find a good result. ...I think this is good for the Palestinians, for Israel. We need this. And of course, without separation wall.

Interestingly, even though Adara strongly supports a two-state solution to the conflict, she

purports to identify more with Hamas than with Fatah in terms of her politics. Yet, as she

confesses this identification to me, which I do not find surprising given her religiosity and the

fact that Hamas has, in fact, provided a number of social services to the youth in Qadas, she

seems to do so with a sense of guilt: "I think that [Fatah] is good, but sometimes I feel

Hamas."

It is noteworthy that my initial interview with Adara took place in the summer of

2005, before Hamas assumed power in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). But clearly

Adara is more aligned ideologically with Fatah, even if the Islamic nature of Hamas at times

appeals to her. Her ideology more closely resembles the Palestinian master narrative, with its

focus on the liberation of Palestine, without any allusion to religion. Yet, of course, the

ideological setting of her life story is only beginning to be constructed, and it remains to be

seen the path is will eventually assume.

Adara's story ends with a central message that speaks to the extent to which the

master narrative is quite powerfully embedded in her voice and her experience. Describing

the theme or message of her story, and the impression that it will have on an audience, Adara

describes it as follows:

> [People will think about my story,] there is a nice story. When you read it, you can
> feel good. You feel you are good now, at first, but then you feel not so good because
> then you, the whole story about the Palestinians, you can't, you shouldn't feel good
> in the story about the occupation, the separation wall, about the killing here. About
> the situation. So it's not so good a story.

Adara's story is thus a story that was not meant to be a tragedy. It is the story of a good life,

with great possibility. Yet the tragedy of collective struggle looms and infuses the story. The

story of Palestinian suffering should, in Adara's thinking, create in the audience a sense of

sympathy in the tragedy. In this important concluding passage of her narrative, Adara reveals the extent to which her life story is intimately connected to the Palestinian master narrative, with its great tragic form and thematic content.

While Adara's life story conforms rather closely to the master narrative in its tone and form, as well as much of its key thematic content, it is worth noting that in two notable ways her story diverges from the master narrative. First, there is little in her narrative about resistance. She seems relatively resigned to Palestine's historic loss and willing to compromise for peace. In this way, she already possesses a measure of pragmatism and identity transcendence. Second, she does not seem to invalidate or to delegitimize Israeli identity. Though she emphasizes time and time again that "Palestine is our land" and that it was taken unjustly, she does not refer to Zionism or to Israeli national identity as explicitly illegitimate. She does not question the existence of Israel, nor does her two-state solution to the conflict suggest that Israel might not exist. In this way, she indeed seems a prime candidate for intergroup contact, as she has not identified with two key polarizing elements of the Palestinian master narrative.

The Story of Luca

The two stories we have considered so far have both been the stories of Palestinian Muslim youth. In the case of Ali, whose family is extremely secular, we see the identification with an Islamist ideological discourse on Palestine and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Interestingly, although Adara is from a very devout Muslim family and lives a rather insular life—both physically and ideologically—her ideological perspective on the conflict is more in keeping with the traditional secular nationalist narrative of Palestinian identity.

We will now consider the narrative of a Palestinian Christian youth—someone for whom the Islamist discourse on Palestine, with its calls for an Islamic state, can have no

resonance by virtue of its exclusionary ideology. I first came to know Luca in the early days

of his participation at Seeds of Peace in 2004 and then visited him and his family in their

native city of Bethlehem one year later. The son of a carpenter and small-scale entrepreneur,

Luca's life story (Figure 3.11) begins in conflict.

> The first day I was born my parents could not take me to the hospital because it was a
> Palestinian holiday, where people remember the day the Israelis came and started
> digging up, uprooting the trees. After that day until now, they remember that day.
> ...My father suffered and they both suffered to take me to the hospital in Jerusalem.
> ...The soldiers wouldn't let anybody move, and this was the day my life started. Just
> my mother only, they wouldn't let my father go to the hospital.

Luca's narrative thus begins in the structure of occupation. The fundamental task of getting to

the hospital for childbirth is disrupted by the conflict, and his life story thus begins in

complete engagement with the conflict.
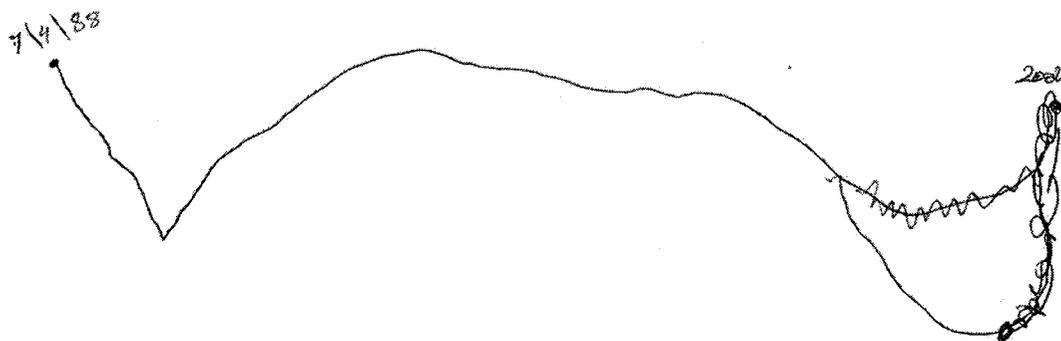
Figure 3.11. Luca's life-line, 2004.

Luca's narrative assumes in its form immediate tragedy upon his birth and the

complications of it, the story of which has been passed down to him from his parents. As the

conflict becomes more psychologically remote, his life-line briefly ascends and stabilizes, yet

its direction is inevitably downward as it makes a gradual descent toward a present-day nadir.

This period of ascent and stability occurs during the first intifada and the subsequent Oslo-

period. As Luca describes it,

> [The first part of my life] was during the first intifada. And the situation was getting better day by day until the peace agreement, and then it's back to normal for two or three years. And then it got worse and worse until now, and now we have the second intifada. I got injured in the second intifada.

Luca's story is entirely connected, as we can see, to the political situation. His life-line is

essentially a map of the conflict itself, perceived through the lens of a young Palestinian.

Experientially, he cannot escape the conflict.

The second intifada, still raging during our first interview in the summer of 2004, is

the great nadir of Luca's story. It is a time in which the fragility of his very existence was

called into question during the siege on Bethlehem two years earlier. That period of

reoccupation is vividly imprinted into Luca's life story.

> You know when they occupied Bethlehem we can't go out of our homes. So I was riding my bike and a jeep was passing by. He called me, the soldier. I ran as much as I could, but there was something in the way, and I hit it, and flew in the air before I came down. This is one of the times I got injured.

The events of Luca's life which determine the form of his narrative cannot be dissociated

from the master narrative of Palestinian identity, or its ideological setting, for Luca's

experiences mirror the experiential content of the master narrative itself.

In describing his life during the second intifada, Luca highlights Palestinian suffering

and insecurity.

> We don't have anything. We don't have zoos, parks, nothing. And like, you've been in the West Bank, right? And it's a terrible life. It's like a jail. You can't do anything. Even in jail, people don't worry about their food. But us, we're worried about our food, how we're going to drink water. The Israelis control everything in our lives.

...And now, the new, what's called the new separation wall, makes a big difference. Smaller jail. Every time, smaller and smaller. They're trying to cage us in. Until we just disappear.

The "abnormality" of Palestinian life is well-represented in this excerpt from Luca's narrative, with his insistence on the deprivation of Palestinian life under Israeli occupation and its comparison to imprisonment. But what is perhaps most thematically salient in this excerpt, in terms of his story's connection to the master narrative, is the pervading sense of identity insecurity that is revealed. The perception that the Palestinians indeed have no control in their own lives, that the "Israelis control everything," including the water, leaves Luca with an internalized sense of threatened existence. His conviction that the separation barrier just creates another phase in the Israeli attempt to eradicate the Palestinians—"until we disappear"—reveals the extent to which he identifies with the pervasive sense of existential insecurity in the Palestinian master narrative. Yet this identification, we should note, is secured in the structure of the conflict itself, in the concreteness of the separation barrier and its location inside of the Green Line, in the checkpoints and closures that complicated Luca's very birth.

Existential insecurity may lie at the root of Luca's narrative, with the challenge of getting to the hospital for his own birth, but it has been consistently affirmed during the course of the second intifada. Describing life under occupation, Luca says,

> It's terrible. You can't imagine, everyday, how we go to school. And whether we're going to school or not. If the school is destroyed or not. Even if we're in school, we hear shooting, we are confused all day, we can't concentrate, we don't understand anything. But Palestinians have a really hard life. You're going to wake up the next day, and the house is going to get blown up. You know, it's always, Israelis always say it's a mistake. 'We hit this house, we thought it was a terrorist house.'

> The beginning of the second intifada, they were shooting a lot, and my house was shot over 30 bullets. It came in the windows. It didn't hit anyone. There's some nights when we didn't sleep at all.

Luca must deal with the uncertainty of daily life as a Palestinian adolescent. Schools may

come and go, as will stray bullets and even houses. With this uncertainty in daily life and its

experiential content comes naturally a perception of existential insecurity, of life in constant

threat.

As Luca describes his motivation to attend Seeds of Peace, the thematic proximity of

his personal narrative to the master narrative is striking.

> I came here to show, first of all, I want to show all the people that Palestinians are
> suffering. The Israelis occupied our land. They don't have any rights, no human
> rights. They use all the ways to torture us. Plus, freedom fighters are not terrorists
> because they are fighting for the country, and we don't have an army. I came to show
> all the people, Israelis, Americans, Jews, and nationality, I want to show them all
> what Palestinians are actually going through, how much we suffer.

The unjust dispossession of the Palestinians from their land, despite the fact that Luca and his

family indeed remain in possession of their original home in Bethlehem, is a central message

that Luca seeks to communicate in his life story. The Palestinian cause is a just cause, and

actions against Israel are legitimate, justifiable, and cannot credibly be labeled as "terrorism."

Palestinians suffer, suffer, and suffer under the harsh, unjust Israeli occupation, and resistance

to something so unjust, so threatening, is both normal and justifiable. Theirs is a righteous

and moral cause, and Luca is determined to reveal that to all whom he encounters in the

program.

Speaking more directly of his personal experiences in the second intifada, Luca

identifies being an adolescent during this historical moment as beneficial to his own personal

connection to his social identity as a Palestinian.

> [The intifada,] it's a bad thing, but it's a good thing because it made, the second
> intifada made me stand for Palestine. The first intifada I was small, I didn't
> understand much. But now, I like understand more about it. People are dying for their
> country, for Palestine, and I think the second intifada was good too because people
> are fighting, not like the first intifada because now we have suicide bombers and the

first intifada was just throwing rocks and small things. And now, we have small weapons. ...Plus the whole world gets to know what's happening now in Palestine.

Luca identifies the second intifada as formative in his connection to his national identity, which he sees as extremely beneficial. He also views the second intifada as a better and more effective demonstration of Palestinian resistance, revealing his connection to the ideology of active Palestinian resistance as a method of opposition to the occupation. He sees the first intifada as a passive movement in which the Palestinians did not possess weapons and did not use the suicide bombers, which he sees as more effective.

Clearly, then, Luca identifies strongly with the thematic content of the master narrative of Palestinian identity, including a focus on the unjust dispossession of the land, the existential insecurity of Palestinian identity under occupation, and the legitimacy of armed resistance as a response. Though he does not explicitly delegitimize Israeli identity or call for the destruction of Israel, he implicitly does in his argument for the unjust dispossession of Palestinian land. Not surprisingly, his is the discourse of a secular nationalist Palestinian resistance. As a Christian, he cannot identify with the Islamist discourse that has emerged as a viable competitor for ideological identification among youth. Yet, at the same time, as a religious minority in Palestine, in a discursive field that has become increasingly Islamist, there is a way in which, like Ali (but for very different reasons), Luca has to prove he is fully Palestinian. Because he is not Muslim, he is somehow not fully as affected by the conflict.

In Israel, the Palestinian Christians are often described as more "Westernized" and "moderate." It is the Muslims who are really "the problem." So for youth in the process of constructing an identity narrative that is somehow acceptable in the frame of one's larger social identity, being a Palestinian Christian poses a unique challenge. The call to identify with the master narrative can perhaps be even greater among Christian youth who, like Luca,

struggle with their minority status within Palestinian society. When confronted directly with

the question of how being Christian impacts his experience of life in Palestine, Luca says,

> I am the one guy that was throwing rocks, everyone throws rocks, because you want
> to do something for your country. It doesn't matter if someone's Muslim or Christian,
> or this myth like only the Muslims are involved in the shooting and fighting, it's not
> true, cause we're all Palestinians.

Luca's religious identity as a Christian is, at least for the moment of his early days at Seeds of

Peace, quite remote in his narrative. It is nothing more than a linguistic marker of identity; it

has no experiential impact on the substance of his story. According to Luca's story, being a

Palestinian is being a Palestinian, suffering as a Palestinian in solidarity, regardless of one's

religion.

Luca's narrative highlights the interesting additional challenge in identity

development that exists for Palestinian Christians. As a minority group, they must negotiate

their identifications with the master narrative of Palestinian identity which at times excludes

them. For youth at a particular moment of identity formation, the need to feel part of the

larger national group, to fully identify with *and be recognized* as a member of the social

identity of "Palestinian," may outweigh other identifications and consume the entirety of the

life-story narrative. The need to belong is simply too significant, especially when existential

threat is a daily component of lived experience.

On the one hand, Luca's narrative illustrates this process for Palestinian Christian

youth—this need to internalize the master narrative in order to fully "pass" as a Palestinian.

Yet on the other hand, Luca's story, and its experiential content in particular, demonstrates

the extent to which the structure of the conflict possesses quite salient effects on the daily

lives of Palestinian youth, irrespective of religious identity or community. Bethlehem may be

a "Christian" city (it is not, in fact, majority Christian but has such an identity because of its

significance to Christianity), but it is still a city in Palestine. It remains a city surrounded by Israel's massive separation barrier, nowhere more visually ominous than at the entrance to the city. It remains a city in which the Israeli military presence hovers, a city which has been witness to significant activity, and even more significant economic impact, during the interminable second intifada. So we can only speculate about the extent to which Luca's identity as a Palestinian Christian truly impacts his narrative, for he is subject to the same lot in life as his Muslim brethren.

The narrative tone of Luca's story has closely mirrored that of Ali and Adara in its emphasis on the tragedy of Palestinian existence. Ideologically, we saw in Adara the seemingly genuine desire for a peaceful resolution of the conflict, as well as a de-emphasis on Palestinian resistance in her narrative. In Luca's story, we see the same kind of ideological identification with armed acts of resistance that we witnessed in Ali's narrative. As I queried Luca about his thoughts on suicide bombers toward the end of our interview, he revealed the frustration and rage that underlie the great tragic tone of the Palestinian master narrative.

> [The suicide bombers,] they're depressed. I'm depressed. I'm here, I don't know. I feel that I'm going to explode.... I don't know, it makes me angry. If I wasn't in this Seeds of Peace camp, I would kill any Israeli, I don't care. Being Palestinian, and living the Palestinian life, going through hundreds of checkpoints, getting beaten by soldiers....

Luca's narrative is thus more than merely tragic and despondent in its tone and form; it is on the brink of an overwhelmingly furious anger. This anger is, for Luca, channeled into his support of armed acts of resistance. In Chapter 4, we will consider the extent to which this great sense of frustration is activated precisely by the experience of intergroup contact, for Luca is just beginning to participate in the coexistence program during this first interview.

The Story of Lubna

At one point or another during the course of the second intifada, most Palestinian cities have witnessed some level of Israeli reoccupation, with soldiers and tanks taking control of the streets, brutal fighting between soldiers and fighters, and the imposition of curfew. Lubna, a 15-year-old Muslim from Nablus, has, like Luca, had to endure life under such disruptive circumstances.

The daughter of secular, professional parents, Lubna is, like many of my interviewees, a subject of globalization. She spends most evenings on the internet, chatting with friends. She speaks fluent English; she does not wear a *hejab*. But she lives with vivid memories of some of the greatest challenges the conflict has created, as Nablus has been the site of many Israeli incursions during the intifada. Like many residents of Nablus, she has come to view her life with great unpredictability and without the guarantee of continuity, not just for her own threatened existence but also for those of her friends, many of whom have either been imprisoned or "martyred."

Prompted by the explanation of my research, Lubna begins the telling of her life story by spontaneously sharing the story of a book she is currently reading.

> ...I hope that you will tell people what you saw here. It's a coincidence because yesterday I was reading a book that has maybe 200 pages. I finished it in two days, so it was really good. It was about two boys. One of them was real cool, he was a singer, and his brother was, his personality was so weak, so when the intifada came, everything was different. The cool boy went to fight against the Israelis, and the brother, he lost his cat and went looking for it in a settlement, but there he was arrested by the Israelis. And soldiers caught him and he had to stay in jail. After he went out of it, he became a different person. He was, he had a real strong personality and then he started working with the ambulance so he saw many bodies and he hated very much the Israelis. ...His village that was near the great wall in Israel. So they gave him a paper that their house would be destroyed. The wall has to be! A tractor came and destroyed their house, and a little girl, she was British, she stood in front of the tractor but it ran over her and crushed her. ...The boy tried to escape from the soldiers in the ambulance, but they shot him, and his father said, "My little boy is a martyr."

> After I read this story, I was just thinking so much about our situation. I kept thinking, why this was the end. All the stories are supposed to end "They lived happily ever after." But the only answer I thought was that this was our life, and the suffering never ends in Palestine. Welcome to home.

The narration of Lubna's life story is thus framed by her engagement with literature which goes to great length to reproduce the Palestinian master narrative, with its emphasis on perpetual loss and powerlessness, interminable suffering. The boy who immediately joined the Palestinian resistance movement as a "fighter" was "cool," while his brother found in the imprisonment rite of passage a "strong personality." The prison served as an important site of education and socialization for him (see Barber, 1999b; Peteet, 1994). And the story essentially contains within it almost every symbolic encounter connected to Palestinian suffering, at least in the current phase of the conflict: the wall, the bulldozer, land confiscation, and brutal disrespect for human life on the part of the Israelis (with the allusion to the Rachel Corrie incident in which a young American woman was killed while serving as a "human shield" to try to stop the demolition of a Palestinian home in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip).

That a 15-year-old from Nablus, whose life story, as we will soon see, is saturated with memories of direct confrontation with the conflict, should be consumed with such stories is hardly surprising. The deployment of such stories in Palestinian culture serves not just the purpose of inculcating the master narrative—though it is probably quite effective in doing that. Rather, it also provides affirmation of a collective experience with the structure of the conflict. It is comforting for Lubna to learn that Palestinians as a collective suffer and struggle as she does.

Let us also not omit the important context of her narration and the way in which this excerpt from her narrative began: "I hope that you will tell people what you saw here."

Introducing her own life story with the story of this book says much about what it is she wants to communicate *to me*. In fact, in no other interview was the construction of the *interview event* more apparent to me than in this one with Lubna. I draw the reader's attention to this not to contest any of the contents of Lubna's story, for nothing in the content is actually all that contestable. Rather, I want to remind the reader that each life story was narrated with the knowledge of my own identity and what that identity meant to those being interviewed. For Lubna, she hoped that I would faithfully communicate the suffering of Palestinians in a way that could elicit great sympathy in my Western audience. The experiential content of her life story, in fact, makes it difficult to not sympathize with the difficulties of her life as a Palestinian adolescent.

Lubna's life story (Figure 3.12) begins at a low point. In a story similar to that of Luca, Lubna's father could not be present at her birth. He was, in fact, in prison. The tone of her narrative is thus grounded in a sense of loss and injustice—the loss of having a "normal" birth situation, unjustly deprived to her because of the conflict. Lubna is a child of the first intifada. But since the culmination of that uprising is viewed as the partial liberation of Palestine, with the creation of the PA and semi-autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, Lubna interprets the end of the intifada around age 12 as the peak experience in her narrative, a time of possibility for the end of Palestinian suffering.
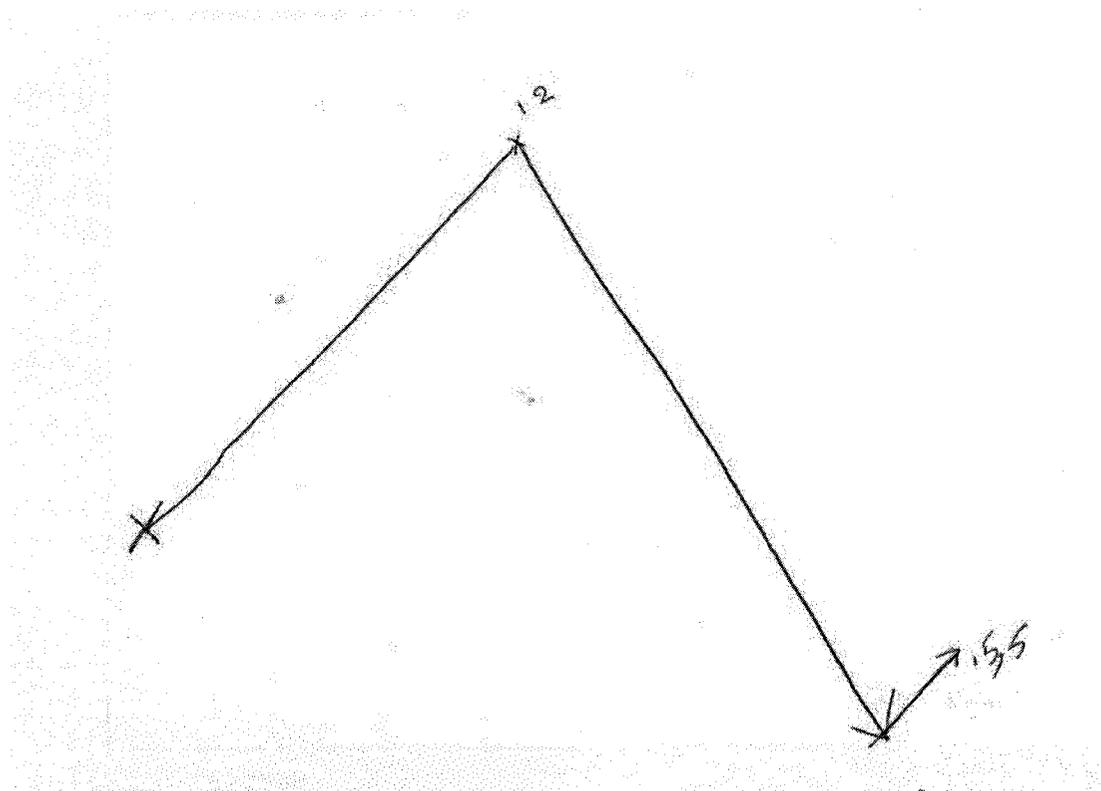
Figure 3.12. Lubna's life-line, 2005.

The time of hope and optimism that occurred after the first intifada was extremely

short-lived in Lubna's narrative. She describes the descent of her story as beginning with the

second intifada.

> ...And then at 12 years old, there was the intifada. I was in the sixth grade. I
> remember when it started, we had to, everything got closed. We didn't go to school
> for three weeks. I was at my grandmother's house, and I saw the picture of the Al-
> Aqsa mosque, that Sharon went there. I couldn't explain what was happening in my
> mind.... All I was thinking of was when will this end?

For Lubna, though, the beginning of the intifada would commence a dark and tragic chapter

in her life story, one which is replete with stories of fear, suffering, and existential insecurity.

They are also stories of loss—loss of friends to imprisonment and martyrdom, loss of

freedom, loss of childhood itself.

> I remember there was a funeral of a martyr. It came next to our house and so you know the guys always hold the guns and start shooting because they are angry, so I was very frightened and, I don't know, it was the first gun shooting I heard, because it was near our house.

> ...It was really tough to live in the sixth grade. In school you would hear the gun shooting. The principal would come in and say, "Come on, you have to go home now." And maybe we get really happy because the school ended but deep in us, it's tough. To know the reason is not good. ...And then I was in seventh grade, in 2002, we had the invasion.

Lubna's memories of life during the second intifada are consumed by fear and insecurity, as well as the unjust deprivation of a "normal" adolescent life, like being able to attend school. But no experience would be more traumatic for Lubna—nothing would arouse greater feelings of existential insecurity—than the 2002 invasion and reoccupation of Nablus by the Israeli army.

"The tanks are coming," Lubna says as she recalls precisely the moment at which the invasion began. She could hear them in the distance. Nablus was gripped by a frenzy of fear. In her mind, her death and those who were dear to her was imminent.

> They're going to kill the people from Nablus. ...So it was scary. ...And then there was many guns shooting. And the bullets were powerful because it sounded really loud. And there was explosions, the electricity gone. A long night. After the long night, I didn't want to walk out. The first day we had to stay in the room. Because everybody knew that if you open the window and they saw you....

> So we had to stay in there [in the house]. It was very scary. The first day we had food. The first day it was fresh. The second day it became a bit stale. The refrigerator was off, cause of the electricity. My mother made beans. It was good, but after a couple of days it started to get bad. So soon there was no food and everyone was so hungry.

The tone of fear is more than perceptible in Lubna's narrative; it is rooted in the concrete experience of existential insecurity at the mercy of the Israeli army. The invasion left Lubna psychologically scarred, with images of dead bodies in the Old City once the "massacre" had ended and the curfew lifted. Images of death and destruction pervade Lubna's life story,

given the traumatic salience of the military incursions into Nablus that have been frequent

since the start of the intifada.

> The most part I remember [after the invasion], when I went to my school, almost
> destroyed. ...You know, the maps, they see Palestine, they cut it off. In the
> playground, there were tanks and they took all the people there that they want to take
> to jail. They stay there, and ruin the playground. And now the school will have to
> clean all of it.

A once stable institution and the most significant physical site in her social ecology apart

from home—the school—now lay in ruins, with the maps of Palestine desecrated,

symbolizing for Lubna the desire to negate Palestinian identity entirely.

Unfortunately, the 2002 invasion of Nablus was not a momentary disruption in

Lubna's life story. Since that invasion, there have been numerous others, and more memories

of fear, death, and destruction. As a consequence, no trope is more significant in Lubna's

narrative than that of existential insecurity. Her life as an adolescent under military

occupation and almost constant siege has cultivated within her the consciousness of a fragile

existence and a threatened identity. She has witnessed, time and time again, the loss of

friends either to imprisonment or martyrdom.

In its tragic form and its traumatic tone of fear and insecurity, Lubna's story

conforms closely to the Palestinian master narrative. The tropes of loss, unjust dispossession,

and existential insecurity are as pervasive in her personal narrative as they are in the master

narrative of collective identity. She summarizes the sense of injustice constructed by the

Israeli occupation in a desperate plea for the restoration of rights and dignity to Palestinians.

> The Palestinian children always have the wish to live and the right to eat, to travel, to
> live freely in their cities and their country, and like every other people in the world,
> just wish to go to the playground. ...Why we always ask for the rights which we
> should have...for a school to study in, to be safe in there. ...Everyday we ask God to
> bring us back our liberty..., and we are always thinking about the idea of my friend
> and his arrested brother or sister.

Ideologically, then, Lubna identifies strongly with the injustice of the Palestinian condition. She views the continued occupation as a source of fear, insecurity, and trauma in her own life story, as in the stories of those around her.

Interestingly, her narrative diverges from the master narrative in two key ways, quite similarly to Adara. First, she speaks little of resistance as a legitimate response to the occupation. But she is conflicted on the legitimacy of resistance. She is torn between the ideology of her parents, who are "living peacefully," as she says, and her friends, who "live the resistance." But her narrative contains little in the way of expressing support for any kind of armed resistance, and she advocates for a negotiated two-state solution to the conflict. Her ideological confusion is well-summarized in this excerpt from her life story.

> ...So maybe I'm not against the negotiations, and I'm also not against the self-defense.... It's our destiny, to live side by side with Israel. If you want to live peacefully, you have to give up some things. ...You know my mother once told me, it's like Japan, when they were beaten in the second World War, after the two bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they gave up. It's not that they are weak, but they were fighting against the strongest power in the world. So they gave up. Until now they're beating many countries in economics, cars. ...I'm not against to go and fight, but not like people do it sometimes. If they have to do this thing, they can go to the settlements.

Though she identifies the Palestinian cause as just, she also seems to acquiesce to its inevitable failure, at least ideologically. Lubna acknowledges the existence of Israel and implicitly accepts its right to exist and, hence, the legitimacy of an Israeli identity "side by side" with a Palestinian identity. These ideological convictions naturally lead her to seek opportunities for intergroup contact with Israelis, for she genuinely believes in the possibility of a peaceful negotiated solution.

We see in Lubna's life story the tragic narrative of a Palestinian adolescent whose life experience has prominently featured unpredictability and existential uncertainty. Hers is a life course interrupted, with curfews and schools in ruins. While these traumatic experiences

have guaranteed the internalization of key elements of the Palestinian master narrative—its tragic form and thematic content—there are fundamental ways in which Lubna's ideological identifications diverge from the master narrative. Owing mostly to the influence of her pragmatic, secular parents, Lubna has come to see Palestinian resistance as a losing cause and one that seems only to increase the suffering of Palestinians. Yet as the ideology of her peers competes for attention in Lubna's narrative, she remains conflicted, her ideological setting not fully formed.

Summary: The Cultural Psychology of Palestinian Adolescence

The stories of Ali, Adara, Luca, and Lubna reveal points of both convergence and divergence with the master narrative of Palestinian identity. As adolescents in the midst of negotiating ideological identifications, consolidating commitments, and scripting preliminary life stories, they are in the process of constructing a narrative that will anchor the course of their lives. The personal narratives they ultimately come to construct will serve as an interpretive lens in their daily lives, filtering their cognitions, emotions, and behaviors through a seat of personal and social meaning.

Most fundamentally, these youth have internalized the central historical narrative of Palestinian identity that has framed their collective struggle for national liberation in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. This narrative is a decidedly tragic one, replete with tropes of loss and unjust dispossession. This sense of loss is connected not only to the physical land itself, but also to the perception of existential threat that the trauma of continued loss has cultivated. Although these youth all identify with the historical narrative of Palestinian dispossession, it is perhaps the trope of existential insecurity that is most salient in the stories of contemporary youth, their lives in relatively regular danger owing to Israeli military operations in Palestine since the start of the second intifada.

Interestingly, two central themes in the master narrative seem to be contested among contemporary Palestinian youth. The legitimacy of armed struggle and resistance to the Israeli occupation is not universally appropriated by youth as they construct their personal narratives. Though few are outright critical of Palestinian resistance, they all allude to the problematic nature of it, particularly in its current common form of suicide bombing. Some youth, like Adara and Lubna, seek a peaceful, negotiated solution that does not require armed struggle. But even these youth are conflicted, recognizing that resistance is simply "self-defense" for all of the atrocities committed against Palestinians by Israel. From this conflict about the legitimacy of resistance naturally flows an acceptance of Israeli identity. That is, to concede that resistance and liberation of all of mandate Palestine is futile, as youth like Adara and Lubna do, and to embrace the possibility of a peaceful resolution through negotiation and a two-state solution, one necessarily acknowledges the legitimacy of Israeli identity. So the second significant point of divergence from the master narrative of Palestinian identity seems to center on a willingness to acknowledge the existence of a Jewish state and an Israeli national identity, so long as such acknowledgment is reciprocated by the Israeli willingness to legitimize Palestinian identity.

An additional interesting source of divergence among youth centered on their internalization of either a traditional *secular* narrative of liberation—the ideological setting of the Palestinian master narrative as it emerged through the discourse of Fatah and the PLO—or an *Islamist* narrative that has emerged with the growth of organizations like Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Interestingly, among the cases presented here, it was Ali, the son of very secular Muslims, who had internalized the Islamist narrative of liberating all of mandate Palestine in the name of Islam. Adara, the daughter of devout Muslims from a very religious village, seemed to set her personal narrative more in the secular ideology of Fatah,

recognizing the religious pluralism of the Palestinian people. In Ali, we might see a kind of "reaction formation" to his parents' own rabid secularism, and his discomfort with that. And we may also see his need to somehow "prove" his Palestinian identity through appropriation of the most polarizing discourse available, for he does not truly "feel" like an authentic Palestinian, with his sense of privilege. Regardless of the individual motives for Ali and Adara, though, what the contrast in their stories reveals is the extent to which the *ideological basis* of the Palestinian master narrative is very much in question among contemporary youth. The ideology of Fatah has not provided the kinds of significant gains that Palestinians have longed for, and the way in which they ran the PA is sharply criticized among Palestinians, now that the immunity of Yasser Arafat has vanished with his own erasure from the political scene. As a result, many Palestinians are currently investing in the possibility of Hamas, whether or not they embrace its exclusionary Islamist narrative of resistance. That youth are increasingly exposed to this alternate narrative with great frequency is a given, and the ideological setting of the Palestinian master narrative itself is thus a point of large-scale contestation.

Several caveats must be noted as we interpret points of divergence from the master narrative among the youth in this study. First, although it is tempting to draw conclusions and generalizations about Palestinian youth from the narratives collected for this study, we must recall that the participants in this study constitute a unique group. They are not a "representative" sample of youth, and therefore we must consider the ways in which their particularity may influence the data they provide. To speculate, we might consider the fact that they are all in some way motivated to participate in intergroup contact, which suggests *some* acknowledgment of outgroup identity immediately. To enter into dialogue with an outgroup, one must accept the fact that the outgroup exists. Therefore, the youth in this study

may be more likely to diverge from the master narrative on the delegitimization of Israeli identity. Second, and perhaps even more obviously, the youth in this study are seeking out the opportunity for intergroup contact through dialogue. It makes sense, then, that they might all question the viability of armed resistance as a response to the Israeli occupation. They might, rather, view dialogue as a more effective means of achieving their ends. So there is a "selection bias" in the sample that might explain the presence or absence of certain themes in the narratives of youth.

But let us not forget that Ali and Luca are both avid defenders of the use of armed resistance and that both call into question the legitimacy of Israeli identity in some way. What we may also be witnessing as we consider the thematic content of these narratives is a gender effect. Since its origins in the master narrative of Palestinian identity, resistance has been more typically associated with males, perhaps because of the common connection between masculinity and nationalism (Nagel, 1998). The Palestinian life course has commonly diverged along the lines of gender, with imprisonment serving as an important rite of passage for young Palestinian men who participated in the first intifada (Barber, 1999b; Peteet, 1994). With some notable exceptions (Victor, 2003), Palestinian women have been even less involved in resistance during the second intifada (Johnson & Kuttab, 2001). The structure of the conflict, particularly since the permanent closure of the territories that commenced with the signing of the Oslo accords, seems to construct these gender differentials through political and economic obstacles for young Palestinian men (Johnson & Kuttab, 2001). The inability of young men to secure sustainable employment and thus to provide economically destabilizes their sense of power and, with that, their perception of masculinity. Participation in resistance might be the only method for them to reclaim a sense of power and manhood in their lives. By contrast, Palestinian women do not necessarily experience the same sense of

gender insecurity, as their traditional roles in the family are less disrupted by the Israeli occupation. As such, they may be less likely to endorse armed resistance. The gender gap in attitudes toward peace and the legitimacy of resistance has long been present, with women more likely to favor peace through negotiations and to express doubts about armed resistance (Johnson & Kuttab, 2001).

We can, therefore, interpret the thematic content of the stories presented here—narratives of Palestinian identity in formation—only speculatively. We can readily see the ways in which the Palestinian master narrative is reproduced in the personal narratives of youth, particularly in its tragic tone and form. The mechanism of reproduction may be discursive, but it is also secured in the continued confrontation with the structural conditions of the conflict that Palestinian youth continue to endure. That is, identity polarization among Palestinian youth is not *merely* reproduced through discourse, though we see in the stories of these youth powerful identifications with the stories available in the larger culture. It is, rather, reproduced and rendered salient in the experiences with *personal* loss and insecurity that characterize the ongoing activity of the Israeli occupation. The stories of youth are saturated with intimate experience with the conflict itself, even among those who encounter the structure of the conflict with less frequency, such as Ali.

Though in many ways the reproduction of the Palestinian master narrative seems at first to be quite successful, the fact that some of its thematic content is currently contested reveals the extent to which it is also being repudiated among youth. If the most polarizing content in any master narrative of a group in conflict centers on the delegitimization of the outgroup identity, we can see in the acknowledgment of these adolescents' narratives the existence and, in some cases, legitimacy of an Israeli identity great progress in the potential reduction of conflict. Furthermore, if Palestinian resistance and continued Israeli military

occupation represent the two structural *behaviors* that seem to endlessly reproduce identity polarization and the conditions of conflict itself, the fact that some Palestinian youth are questioning the efficacy of resistance is encouraging, for those who would seek a reduction of structural violence on both sides of the conflict.

The cultural psychology of Palestinian adolescence is thus characterized by a dynamic engagement with a tragic master narrative of collective identity. Its contents resonate with youth because of their continued personal experience with the Israeli occupation. The personal narratives of youth in their early stages of formation suggest a strong identification with the master narrative, both in terms of form and content, and the ideological settings of these life stories reveal possibilities for both identity polarization and identity transcendence. Yet these narratives also reveal important ways in which the master narrative is currently contested among youth, and the ways in which the master narrative itself might be evolving toward a less polarized position ideologically, perhaps mirroring the increase in pragmatism that has framed the general evolution of Palestinian politics under the PLO and Fatah-led PA (Mohamad, 2001).

But the structure of the conflict remains, with its barriers to economic and social development, its "caging in" of the Palestinians, its consistent threat to Palestinian existence (Roy, 2004). The development of Palestinian identity therefore relies upon the conflict and its reproduction, for it is the conflict that consumes its master narrative, as well as the identities of youth (Elbedour, Bastein, & Center, 1997). The narratives of Palestinian youth presented here reveal this deep connection between identity and the conflict, between self and context, between person and culture, co-created through discourse and social practice, and embodied in narratives of personal and social identity.

"MY ROOTS ARE PALESTINIAN":

NARRATIVES OF PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI YOUTH

In his semi-autobiographical novel, *Dancing Arabs* (2004), Sayed Kashua's "anti-hero" protagonist, a young Palestinian citizen of Israel, reflects on his experience at a predominantly Jewish high school.

> In twelfth grade I understood for the first time what '48 was. That it's called the War of Independence. In twelfth grade I understood that a Zionist was what we called *Sahyuni*, and it wasn't a swearword. I knew the word. That's how we used to curse one another. I'd been sure that a *Sahyuni* was a kind of fat guy, like a bear. Suddenly I understood that Zionism is an ideology. In civics lessons and Jewish history classes, I started to understand that my aunt from Tulkarm is called a refugee, that the Arabs in Israel are called a minority. In twelfth grade I understood that the problem was serious. I understood what a national homeland was, what anti-Semitism was. I heard for the first time about "two thousand years of exile" and how the Jews had fought against the Arabs and the British. I didn't believe it. No way. The English had wanted the Jews here, after all. In Bible class, I discovered that Abraham was Isaac's father. In twelfth grade I discovered that it was Isaac, not Ishmael, who'd been replaced with a sheep.
>
> In twelfth grade, the kids in my class started running in the parking lot, getting into shape for the army. They were taken to all sorts of installations and training camps, and I received a bus pass and a ticket to the Israel Museum. Sometimes soldiers in uniform came to our school to talk with students, and I wasn't allowed to take part. Our teacher always apologized. He was embarrassed to have to tell me it wasn't for me. In twelfth grade I understood I wouldn't be a pilot even if I wanted to be, not only because I wasn't fit and my grades weren't good enough. There was no way they would even call me up for the screening tests. I sure had a good laugh at my father. (pp. 117-118)

For the Palestinian citizens of Israel, there are two narrative realities: the one of their upbringing, and the one that becomes apparent as they engage with the majority (i.e., Jewish) culture. Kashua's protagonist does not fully internalize the discourse of his larger society until twelfth grade, when he becomes aware only through his encounter with Jewish Israelis of the narrative of the dominant culture.

This passage from Kashua's novel highlights not only the disparate discursive realities of Israeli society, but also the differential life course of Israel's Arab citizens.

Kashua's protagonist will not, despite his dream of doing so, become a pilot, for he is not permitted because of his Arab identity. So certain features of the Palestinian-Israeli story are readily apparent here: disparate narratives, maintained through segregation of Arabs from Jews; constrained life-course possibilities for Arab citizens, who are kept at a distance from fundamental identity-building institutions like the IDF. The Palestinian-Israeli story is thus one of *exclusion*—from the dominant culture, its national narrative, its institutions, its normative life course. Yet territorially the Palestinian citizens are a part of Israel, and thus their master narrative is characterized by the frustration of exclusion and all of its implications for their own life-course possibilities.

The Master Narrative of Palestinian-Israeli Identity

Beyond exclusion, the story of the Palestinian citizens of Israel is a tale of dispossession and containment, of quiet struggle and determination, of prodigious identity complexity. Unlike the Palestinian narrative, it is not a story of resistance and national liberation. The roughly 160,000 Palestinians who remained in the territory that became Israel overnight in 1948 underwent a radical disruption in their master narrative of identity. One night, a majority in their homeland; the next, a minority in a new one. Discursively stripped of their Palestinian identity through the creation of a new identity label—"Israeli Arab" (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005), the new "Palestinians in Israel" were granted citizenship but were ruled by a military administration until 1966. Though they were secured citizenship and its essential benefits, there were and continue to be a number of ways in which they are institutionally discriminated against and not equal to Israel's Jewish citizens (Peleg, 2004; Sa'di, 2004; Tessler & Grant, 1998).

Since 1948, the Palestinian citizens of Israel thus experienced the trauma of *al-Nakba*, the "Catastrophe," with all of its displacement and dispossession. Families were split

into pieces, with members fleeing to neighboring countries, all of which remained hostile to

Israel. The consequence was devastating for families, who could not reunite (Rabinowitz &

Abu-Baker, 2005). Their new life in the Israeli state was characterized by military rule of

their towns and villages, with lack of freedom in mobility. Their story since the end of

military administration in 1966 has been one of quiet struggle for equal rights inside Israel.

Though as a group their efforts have nearly always been non-violent (Hareven, 2002), they

experienced two quite significant further traumas at the hands of the Israeli military. The first

of these occurred on March 30, 1976. Protesting the state's expropriation of Arab lands,

which had continued unabated since 1948, organized groups of Palestinian citizens in several

locales came together (and have every year since) in the event known as "Land Day." That

fateful day was met with numerous Arab deaths.

In October of 2000, just after the initiation of the second Palestinian intifada in

Jerusalem, Palestinian citizens organized protests in the north of Israel. These protests were

met with a harsh Israeli military response, resulting in the death of 12 young Arab citizens,

one of whom was a politically active alumnus of Seeds of Peace. In bitter irony, he was

struck down while wearing his green Seeds of Peace t-shirt. The "October events," as they are

commonly called, represented a major trauma for the Palestinian citizens of Israel (Ekaik,

2002), a moment at which their helplessness and existential insecurity was once again

highlighted and proven salient to a new generation of youth (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker,

2005).

The story of the Palestinian-Israelis is thus, like the story of the Palestinians, a great

tragedy (see Figure 3.13). Yet its tragic slope is somehow not quite as accentuated as that of

the Palestinian master narrative, for daily life for the Palestinian-Israelis does not compare to

daily life in continued military occupation. The Palestinian-Israelis today tend to live in

towns and villages entirely separate from Jewish citizens, or within larger cities in segregated neighborhoods. But they move freely throughout Israel, and many of them work with Jewish Israelis. Relative to the Palestinians in the territories, the Palestinian-Israelis have benefited economically from being Israeli citizens, and their quality of life is generally much higher than that of their Palestinian brethren (Ghanem, 2002). They do not, however, possess equal rights compared with their fellow Jewish citizens of the state and thus experience discrimination and marginalization as a minority group whose identity continues to be, for Jewish Israelis, "the enemy."
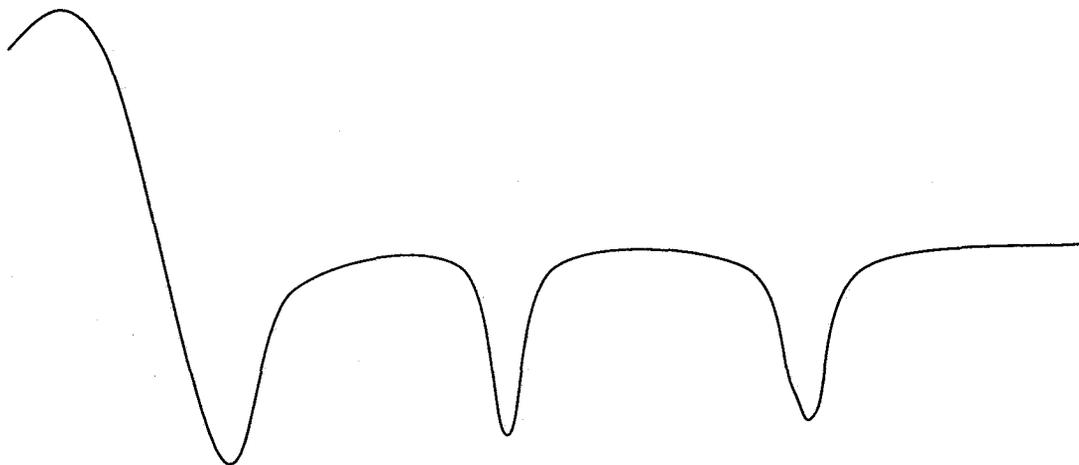
Figure 3.13. Visual plot of the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative.

Formally, then, we witness an immediate similarity between the Palestinian master narrative and that of the Palestinian-Israelis: the trauma of 1948. The beginning of the story is characterized by the seemingly mythical harmony of life in Palestine before 1948. The ethos was peaceful, and the stories of family celebrations reveal the ability of cultural expression

before Israel. Israel, then, is a major disruption in the story of Palestinian-Israelis (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005; Tessler & Grant, 1998), just as it is for Palestinians in the territories. 1948 and its immediate aftermath is therefore tragic in the Palestinian-Israeli story, but it is not without some measure of recovery, and it is in this ascent that the master narrative begins to diverge from that of the Palestinians.

With time, and perhaps with some level of resignation, the master narrative ascends and stabilizes, as the Palestinian-Israelis adjust to being citizens in a new state. The two further disruptions in the master narrative represent Land Day of 1976 and October of 2000. Although these are by no means the only events during which the Palestinian-Israelis have attempted to protest and struggle against the perceived injustices of the Israeli state and been met with a violent response, they are the most central events in the contemporary Palestinian-Israeli consciousness. Yet, despite these disruptions, the narrative continues to stabilize, albeit never to a level comparable to pre-Israel.

The master narrative describes a story with several salient themes. I will highlight three of these themes, though there is a high degree of intercorrelation among them. First, the Palestinian-Israeli experience is one of discrimination and marginalization, rooted in their minority status and their identity as Palestinian citizens who are, for a number of reasons, considered "threatening" to Israel. Second, because of this unique minority status, Palestinian-Israelis undergo a most complex identity development process in which they must somehow reconcile their disparate civic and cultural identities as Israeli citizens who are Palestinian. Finally, and once again connected to their identity itself, Palestinian-Israelis experience existential insecurity, rooted in their experiences with the majority culture.

Discrimination and Marginalization

Although Israel is recognized as a democracy and generally meets the criteria for that label, it is in fact a "peculiar" democracy (Sa'di, 2002). According to a number of political scientists who have examined the Israeli political system, Israel is best characterized as an "ethnic" democracy (Smooha, 2002), an "ethnically hegemonic" democracy (Peleg, 2004), or an "illiberal" democracy (Sa'di, 2002). The Israeli Proclamation of Independence (1948/2001) indeed promises to "uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of religion, race, or sex" (pp. 82-83), yet it defines Israel as an ethnic Jewish state and, as such, ideologically privileges Jewish over Arab citizens.

Smooha (2002) argues that this kind of political system is really best described as an "ethnic democracy." *Liberal* democracy, represented by nations such as France and the United States, is characterized by the equal treatment of all citizens, and the state attempts not to recognize "ethnicity" institutionally. In *consociational* democracy, the state recognizes ethnic groups and institutionalizes systems to reduce conflict among groups through power-sharing. Smooha (2002) suggests Belgium and Switzerland as examples, but we may also consider Lebanon and the American-occupied Iraq as examples. By contrast to these two types of democracies, an *ethnic* democracy is one in which a single ethnic group claims a territory as its homeland, and "national" or "ethnic" identity is considered distinct from "civic" identity. That is, one can be a citizen while belonging to an ethnic group distinct from the one in ideological control of the state. An ethnic democracy relies upon a primordial notion of national identity (Suny, 2001) and therefore identifies non-citizens of the state who are members of the ethnic group as part of the ethnic "nation" (i.e., members of the nation either live in the state or in the diaspora).

Israel represents the archetypal ethnic democracy, although Smooha argues that other states are assuming this model (e.g., Estonia and Slovakia). Although the political system is indeed democratic, non-members of the ethnic nation do not receive the same rights as members, which creates a citizenship hierarchy. Indeed, Peleg (2004) argues that Israel is best understood as an ethnically hegemonic democracy. Through a number of calculated measures, including the massive expropriation of land undertaken by the new Israeli state after 1948, the Palestinian citizens currently own only 3.5% of the land in Israel, although they comprise approximately 18% of the population.

Systematic discrimination against the Arab citizens has been well-documented, particularly with regard to land expropriation, unequal resource allocation compared with Jewish communities, inequalities in education and economic attainment, differential treatment in the justice system, and exclusion from influential aspects of government (Abu-Saad, 2004; Al-Haj, 2002; Ghanem, 2002; Ghanem & Rouhana, 2001; Hareven, 2002; Lustick, 1980; Peleg, 2004; Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005; Rouhana, 1997; Sa'di, 2002, 2004; Soen, 2002; Tessler & Grant, 1998; Torstrick, 1995). Sociologists and political scientists have documented that these disparities are not, as some might prefer to suggest, rooted in cultural differences between Jews and Arabs. Rather, there is ample evidence that the state in fact supports conditions in which the Arabs are guaranteed a lesser social position.

According to Peleg (2004), Israel is best understood politically as an *exclusivist*, rather than an *accommodationist*, regime. Exclusivist regimes inherently create hegemony, either through majority or minority rule of a population. Israel is an example of an exclusivist regime with a majority hegemony, whereas Iraq pre-American occupation could be considered an exclusivist regime with a minority regime (though Iraq of course did not have a democratic political system). The hegemonic nature of Israel, which influences all of its state

institutions and their preferential treatment of Jews over Arabs, gives it the distinction of being an "illiberal" democracy (Peleg, 2004; Sa'di, 2002).

The Palestinian citizens of Israel thus, like any minority group living in a political system that is institutionally hegemonic, experience discrimination in a number of basic routine life events. They are accorded the status of "second class" citizens as they engage with their Jewish fellow citizens, stared at for speaking Arabic on the street, passed up for jobs, implicitly denied jobs from employers advertising for applicants "after army" only (the Arabs are prohibited from serving in the IDF). The interesting question for our present purpose is, of course, how this experience of social marginalization impacts identity. As it turns out, the Palestinian-Israelis have indeed undergone a most unique experience in this regard.

"Double Marginality": Reconciling Disparate Identities

It is useful to consider the Palestinian-Israeli identity as a *negative* identity (Erikson, 1968) in the larger context of Israeli society, or as a *spoiled* identity, in Goffman's (1963) classic sense. In Israel, an Arab identity is an inferior, stigmatized identity, and therefore a significantly *discrediting* personal characteristic. Conditions of hegemonic relations such as those that characterize the social and political ecology of Israel naturally set up an identity matrix in which stigma thrives. (Incidentally, the Mizrahim share this stigma with the Arabs to some extent, though they are redeemed by their Jewish identity and hence belonging to the ethnic nation.) The Arabs provide for the Jews a perfect mirror image, their differential identity status as members of the *losing* (though still threatening) group supplying a necessary contrast that casts the Jewish Israeli identity as *the* positive identity. As Erikson (1968) so eloquently stated, "Our God-given identities often live off the degradation of others" (p. 299).

Understanding how the stigmatized—the individual who possesses a spoiled identity by virtue of his social identity and his personal biography—responds to the condition of marginalization and internalized inferiority is precisely the empirical question of the Palestinian-Israelis. At minimum, we must recognize that a fundamental process (if not *the* fundamental process) in the identity development of Palestinian-Israelis is the reconciliation of their disparate national and civic identities as Palestinians who are also Israeli citizens (Suleiman, 2002a, 2002b; Suleiman & Beit-Hallahmi, 1997). What is perhaps most interesting about this reconciliation, as we will see when we consider the narratives of youth, is that it is somewhat unpredictable.

The ways in which Palestinian-Israelis have negotiated their "double marginality"—as "Israelis" who are not *fully* Israeli, owing to their Arab identity, and as "Palestinians" who are not fully Palestinian because of their "submission" to the "Zionist enemy"—is in fact a generational matter. As already noted, there was a deliberate attempt to erase the *Palestinian* identity from those who remained inside the borders of Israel after 1948 through the discursive construction of the term "Israeli Arab" (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). Erasure of the linguistic term *Palestinian* was indeed a discursive project of the early state (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). But beyond the state's attempt at identity restructuring, at least insofar as labels were concerned, what is interesting is the extent to which the Palestinian-Israelis in fact internalized this term to describe themselves.

In Peres and Yuval-Davis' (1969) study of Palestinian citizens just prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the majority of participants ranked their self-categorization preferences as follows: (1) Israeli, (2) Israeli-Arab, (3) Arab, (4) Palestinian, and (5) Muslim or Christian. In their follow-up after the war, the ordering had changed significantly: (1) Arab, (2) Muslim or Christian, (3) Israeli-Arab, (4) Palestinian, and (5) Israeli. In 1975, only 12% of the

population preferred either the term "Israeli-Palestinian" or "Palestinian-Israeli"; by 1987 the figure had increased to 40% (Smooha, 1988). And it continues to increase since the second intifada and the events of October 2000.

Suleiman and his colleagues have proposed a bidimensional model of identity among Palestinian-Israelis in which their national-ethnic and civic identities are considered entirely separate (Suleiman, 2002b; Suleiman & Beit-Hallahmi, 1997). Their findings revealed that Palestinian-Israelis rate their Palestinian cultural identity as more salient than their Israeli civic identity and evaluate their civic identity negatively in terms of political and social dimensions.

Compositionally, then, the Palestinian-Israelis have undergone a process of growing national consciousness since the rupture of 1948, in which out of fear, intimidation, and helplessness, they surrendered not just their homes but their identities. Under a restrictive military administration, they came to identify with their new civic identities, perhaps because of the success of Israel's systematic program of thwarting the rebirth of Palestinian nationalism among them (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). But after the military administration, their integration into Israel's society was somehow rendered permanently incomplete. The hostility of the majority, coupled with the eventual realization that their status was not going to improve dramatically under Israel's hegemonic democracy, perhaps served to revitalize their desire for connection with the *ideological*, not just *cultural*, expression of their Palestinian identities. The generation of "Survivors"—those who witnessed firsthand the terrible losses of 1948—gave way to a generation who sought to impact the Israeli political system from within (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005).

Smooha (1988) declared the existence of a "new Arab" identity in Israel—one which successfully integrates his multiple identities and is both bilingual and bicultural. In his study

with Arab students at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Schiff (2003) collected life-story narratives and examined the balance of multiple affiliations and multicultural interaction that characterized these students' lives. Arguing for the primacy of social relationships in the life story, Schiff suggested that it was the uneven power dynamic between Jews and Arabs that served to complicate the identities of Arab students. As Arab students enter into a context in which they are no longer segregated from Jews, as Kashua's protagonist reflects upon in his twelfth-grade experience, they undergo a complex process of making decisions about "identity-talk"—the way in which they will engage with their Jewish peers around issues of collective identity. Schiff's (2003) study reveals that Arab citizens, by virtue of their spoiled identity, must go through a process of what Goffman (1963) called "information control" in order to minimize conflict and personal discrimination based on their stigma. But the most interesting and relevant finding in Schiff's (2003) study for our own purposes is the great variability in the life-story narratives of his Arab students. Ibrahim, for example, "lives" the Palestinian narrative, having appropriated a discourse of dissent and resistance into his own life story. Amjad's story displays significant confusion in his own collective identity, not sure whether to fully embrace the Palestinian narrative or to continue the struggle for legitimacy within Israel. The responses of Israel's Palestinian citizens to their liminal status is anything but monolithic, as Schiff's (2003) study affirms.

The continued neglect of minority rights, symbolized most tragically in the October 2000 events, in addition to the continued occupation of the Palestinian territories and the encroaching permanent "disengagement" from them, has created new complications for Palestinian-Israeli identity development. The negotiation and reconciliation of disparate identities continues to consume this process, but its success is so dependent on the social

context of the larger conflict in whatever its particular phase as to render the overall process entirely historically contingent.

It is perhaps historical contingency that best characterizes the identity development process of the Palestinian-Israelis. And this contingency is readily apparent in the labeling surveys conducted over the years. For our present purpose, what is vitally important is a consideration of the particular generation of youth who entered adolescence with the second Palestinian intifada and the events of October 2000 as moments of generational construction (Mannheim, 1928). Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker (2005), in what is arguably the most accessible and compelling treatise on the Palestinian citizens of Israel, refer to this generation as the "Stand Tall" generation for their political activism. The emergence of this generation, with its own particular fusion of cultural and civic identities, owes much to the culmination of tragic events in the master narrative of Palestinian-Israeli identity.

Existential Insecurity

The theme of existential insecurity in the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative takes two forms. First, it is symbolic, referring to the systematic attempt to eradicate the Palestinian cultural identity of Israel's Arab citizens, through discursive tactics such as re-labeling, as well as through the state-controlled and monitored educational system which fails to educate youth about Palestinian history and culture before Israel (Abu-Saad, 2004; Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). Second, the trope of existential insecurity is rooted in the very real experience with defenselessness at the mercy of the state and its security institutions, which have proven themselves capable of indiscriminate murder (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005).

Since its creation in 1948, the Israeli state has adhered to a policy of separation, control, and subordination for its Arab citizens. Fear and intimidation motivated many in the generation of Survivors to conform to the state's expectations, by assuming the new identity

label "Israeli Arab" and avoiding political discourse associated with Palestinian liberation or independence. But the state's attempt to eradicate a Palestinian cultural identity among its Arab citizens was systematic, most readily apparent in the educational system (Abu-Saad, 2004). In his comparative study of Arab and Jewish education in Israel, Al-Haj (2002) concluded that Arab education can legitimately be considered "multicultural," whereas Jewish education cannot. While the Jewish curriculum contains a comprehensive section on Jewish national consciousness, there is no parallel section for Arab youth. In fact, much of the Arab curriculum emphasizes the significance of Jewish contributions and identity while referring only to a diffuse "Arab" identity. There is no reference, really, to a Palestinian culture and a Palestinian identity.

None of this ought to surprise us in the least. For Israel, Palestinian identity is inherently threatening, given that it represents the rival nationalism for control of the territory once known as Palestine. So it makes sense that its new, formerly "Palestinian" citizens ought to be resocialized, their identities reformulated so as to minimize the possibility of existential threat to the state and its national identity as Jewish. But in attempting to safeguard their own seemingly fragile identity as a new nation, the Jewish-controlled state in fact expropriated more than just the land of their Arab citizens. The growing consciousness of this systematic attempt to "dislocate" the Palestinian citizens from their cultural and historical origins has characterized the identities of the Stand Tall generation. Yet the impact of identity restructuring is far from monolithic.

These measures undertaken by the state are best conceptualized as existentially threatening to the Palestinian-Israelis not only for their *possible* impact on identity but also for their *actual* effect. Drawing again on the idea of dual identity development, Smooha (1999) argues that Israel's Palestinian citizens undergo two parallel socialization processes,

what he calls "Israelization" and "Palestinization." While he argues that Palestinization has increased significantly since the 1967 war, what is most striking about Smooha's (1999) findings is the extent to which Israelization was demonstrated to have occurred among the Palestinian-Israelis. The systematic increase in cultural indicators of Israelization (Table 3.1) reveals its success.

	1976	1980	1985	1988	1995
Speak Hebrew	62.3	69.9	68.8	74.2	80.8
Read Hebrew newspapers	27.1	42.4	49.8	53.1	65.4
Accept Israel's right to exist as a Jewish-Zionist state	*	*	37.9	36.8	64.6
Regard Israel's flag as representing themselves	*	*	*	*	71.3
Define self as Palestinian, Palestinian Arab	32.9	25.7	29.2	27.1	10.3
Define self as Israeli, Israeli Arab, Arab	54.7	45.4	32.1	33.2	53.6

Table 3.1. Indicators of Israelization among Arab citizens of Israel, 1976-1995 (percent). Adapted from Smooha (1999). (*) Indicates question was not asked.

The survey results in this table reveal a general pattern of Israelization among the Palestinian citizens, with increases in Hebrew language use and fluency, acceptance of Israel as a Jewish state, and acceptance of the Israeli identity label as some component of identity (although note that "Arab" was also considered in this same question, which complicates the results). Smooha's data also demonstrates a powerful decrease in self-definition as Palestinian. All of this suggests the great success of Israelization and the gradual eradication of a strong Palestinian consciousness among the Arab citizens before the second intifada. But it is important to note that this data does not extend beyond 1995 and thus does not include

the period of the second intifada and the responses of the Stand Tall generation, who would have been too young to participate in Smooha's surveys in the 1990s. (Their members were born during the first intifada.) It is also important to bear in mind the historical context of the 1990s as a time when the possibility of genuine peace with the Palestinians and the fulfillment of Palestinian national identity at last seemed to be emerging, which may have impacted these indicators.

Caveats aside, the data do suggest that Israelization is a process that indeed occurs among the Palestinian citizens and that the state's systematic program of identity restructuring was, by and large, successful. Yet the period of the second intifada and the sentiments of the Stand Tall generation suggest a new Palestinian cultural consciousness and the recognition of the state's unjust attempts at blocking the development of this consciousness among its Palestinian citizens (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). The reclamation of the Palestinian identity label is telling enough.

Beyond discourse and attempts at cultural resocialization, the state has used force to threaten the existential security of its Palestinian citizens. The brutal responses to Arab demonstrations have served to convince them of their own fragile existence. This realization has taken its most recent form following the October 2000 events. Ekaik (2002) characterized the response of her own community in Taybeh as decidedly "post-traumatic." Ekaik argues that the October events served to create a deep feeling of insecurity among Israel's Arab citizens and a sense that they were no longer welcome in Israeli society. This period was characterized by a number of clashes between Jews and Arabs in Israel, with police response generally favoring the Jewish communities and penalizing the Arabs (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005; Slone, 2003). Most poignantly, Ekaik (2002) refers to the Arab community's inability to recover from the October trauma as connected to the "unresolved ongoing trauma

of the Arab Palestinian as a minority in Israel" (p. 12). The October events are, according to

Ekaik, just another chapter in the "tragic and traumatic history" of the Palestinian-Israelis.

Summary: The Palestinian-Israeli Master Narrative

In many ways, the master narrative of Palestinian-Israeli identity is far less

monolithic than that of both Jewish Israelis and Palestinians. Perhaps its seeming contingency

is directly connected to its definitive minority status in the context of a hegemonic system of

social and political relations. The blocking of full agency in this community has perhaps

determined the extent to which an ingroup identity narrative can really direct its own course.

So we see in the master narrative significant intergenerational variance, rooted almost entirely

in the sociopolitical context of the time.

But certain elements of the master narrative seem to remain constant. 1948 will

always be considered a great trauma, as will Land Day and the October 2000 events. The tone

and form of the narrative will never recover to a pre-1948 level, as the group's permanent

minority status in a hegemony will always be hierarchically determined. The themes of

discrimination and marginalization, of dual and conflicting identities, and of existential

insecurity are relatively stable across generations, though each generation confronts these

tropes with new interpretive frames determined by the particular sociopolitical context.

We can speculate that what might vary the most, or what is truly the most interesting

and important empirical question about Palestinian-Israeli identity, is the process of dual-

identity reconciliation. What aspects of identity are accentuated at any given time shed light

on this process. The extent to which the master narrative is internalized or perhaps rejected in

favor of the majority culture, as Kashua's protagonist was quite tempted to do, reveals the

content of this most complex process.

The stories of Jibril, Rania, and Sami reveal the ways in which youth of the Stand Tall generation are negotiating the process of identity development in the midst of a new phase of internal conflict between Jews and Arabs. Collected between 2003 and 2004, these life stories possess little temporal distance from the October events, and the place of these events and of the second intifada more generally figures prominently in my analysis. The presentation of only three life stories—necessary more for the maintenance of a reasonable dissertation length than for the absence of other interesting cases for presentation and analysis—is admittedly incomplete in its ability to reveal anything comprehensive about the relationship between the master narrative and the identity development of contemporary youth. I trust the reader will appreciate a consideration of these life stories as exemplars of the numerous other stories collected, more of which will be discussed in Chapter 4. As I have maintained throughout this chapter, the specification of ingroup master narratives is vital to our examination of the impact of intergroup contact on identity. I trust the reader will consider these three final stories in this vein.

The Story of Jibril

A 15-year-old heavyset Muslim boy with glasses and an inviting smile, Jibril is from Taybeh, the Arab city that borders the West Bank in what is known in Israel as "the Triangle." He narrated his life story to me for the first time in the placid woods of Maine, where the routine sounds of apache helicopters conducting an operation in the West Bank city of Tulkarm were now muted, in the summer of 2003. His narrative reveals the extraordinary complexity that consumes the identity development of Palestinian-Israeli youth.

Formally, Jibril's narrative (Figure 3.14) more closely resembles the descent-and-gain pattern of the Jewish Israeli master narrative than anything approaching the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative.
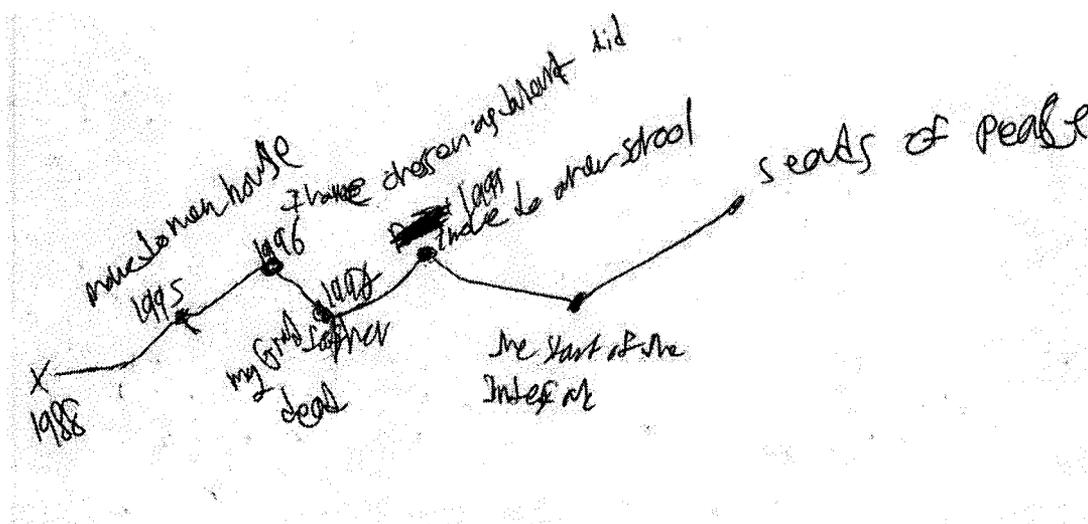
Figure 3.14. Jibril's life-line, 2003.

Jibril begins his life story by telling me that his family has always lived in Taybeh. There are

no stories of disruption and dislocation, just a linear account in which his life is now in

continuity with that of his extended family. It could easily be the case that Jibril's family did

indeed experience relatively less dislocation and disruption compared with other Palestinians

in 1948, for Taybeh was a pre-existing village that survived the war.

His life-line begins to ascend with the move to a new, nicer home in Taybeh. It

continues its ascent to the following year, as Jibril is selected as a "talented" student at his

school. The first descent in his life story occurs at the death of his grandfather in 1997. In

1999, he switches schools and recalls this transition as a positive one in which he made new

friends. The final descent in his narrative is a significant one: the start of the second

Palestinian intifada in 2000. Jibril identifies this moment as a turning point in his life story,

for its profound impact on his behavioral possibilities.

> The start of the intifada in 2000, this was really terrible for my life because, you
> know, before the intifada my family and I would go to the West Bank. And we could
> go to the restaurants, and to buy clothes and vegetables. And this stopped. If you
> remember in October, Arab Israelis were killed because they were part of some

brotherhood of Palestinians living in Israel. So Arabs start to make a demonstration, and the Israeli soldiers killed 13 of them, and this was terrible. Fortunately, in my town nobody was killed.

...Before the intifada, we would go to the Jewish cities. There was freedom. But since the intifada, the people in the Jewish cities do not accept Arabs. They think all Arabs are terrorists. So when we went to this Jewish city, about 15 people attacked us, my family. Fortunately, there was a police car there, and they stopped them. And after the intifada, the relationship between Arabs and Jews changed so much. Before the intifada, the Jews would go to the West Bank to eat or shop.

...Before the intifada, people from the West Bank would come through the checkpoints, and nobody would talk to them. They were just going to work. Now the police won't let people from the West Bank work in Israel. The relationship between Arabs has changed too, because some people say we should say we're Palestinian, they're our brothers, these kinds of things. Others think we can't, that this is not a good idea.

As a major historical turning point in the conflict, the second intifada indeed altered the relational possibilities between Arabs and Jews, both inside Israel and between Israel and Palestine. From Israel's occupation of the territories captured in 1967 until the implementation of the Oslo accords, movement was essentially open between Israel proper and the territories. The IDF was not deployed *within* the territories, as it is today, but along strategic points along the borders with Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). What this openness meant was in fact a high degree of interaction between Palestinian citizens and non-citizens in the occupied territories, despite some tension between the "'48 Arabs" (i.e., Palestinian-Israelis) whom the "'67 Arabs" (i.e., Palestinians in the territories) saw as resigning themselves to Israeli rule. This openness began to reduce during the Oslo period, when Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker (2005) argue the actual *military* occupation of the territories began in earnest, with the infusion of the IDF inside of them, closely monitoring and restricting movement.

For Jibril, who relished the opportunity to visit Palestinian communities in the West Bank as a child, the intifada permanently ended his interaction with non-citizen Palestinians.

But its relational impact seems even more profound for Jibril in the way in which it impacted

his treatment in Israel as an Arab. His family's existential security has even been threatened

as they have attempted to visit a Jewish city. This spike in intergroup conflict has, it seems,

served to polarize Jewish and Palestinian Israelis to levels previously unimaginable—and

tragic—to Jibril. A particularly upsetting experience post-intifada occurred when Jibril and

his father attended a soccer game.

> ...The crowds in the soccer games, they curse. After the intifada, they started to curse Arab players. They're Arab players from Israel! After the intifada, they start to make bad songs about the Arab players, cursing them. They say things like "terrorist." This was really hard. All these people from Likud, they start to say "Death for Arabs!" ...This is hard for the Arabs and the Jews.

Jibril is a sensitive adolescent, and one who is genuinely peace-seeking. He clearly displays

empathy for *both* Jews and Arabs in his narrative of the intifada, suggesting that they both

suffer from this recent upsurge in violence. He suffers from an increase in anti-Arab racism

and discrimination within Israel, quite clear from his life story.

Not surprisingly, the issue of identity labeling in fact consumes a fair amount of

Jibril's current life story, likely primed by his participation in intergroup contact, in which he

must describe himself in some way. The choice of labels reflects current attempts at cultural-

civic identity reconciliation for Palestinian-Israeli youth. At the present moment in Jibril's

life, he describes his choice as follows.

> My identity is Arab Israeli. I am Israeli first; I have no question about this. I live in Israel. Israel is my country. I'm proud of being Israeli, and I'm proud of my country. When an Arab Israeli says, "I'm Palestinian," it's because somebody has told them: "You are a Palestinian living in Israel. You must remember your brothers who have been killed," or something like this. And this happened with me, in the first day of camp. Somebody came and asked me, "Who are you?" I said, "I'm Jibril, I'm from Israel. I'm Arab." He said, "How can you say you're from Israel!? You're a Palestinian!" I said, "No. I'm Israeli!" He said to me, "You forgot your brothers, you forgot what the Jews did to us." These kinds of things, this doesn't help make peace. This makes it harder!

At the moment, Jibril chooses to accentuate his Israeli civic identity and to see that as, in fact, his national identity. He does not identify with Palestinian identity at all and views attempts to make him do so as manipulative. Rather, he sees himself as a legitimate member of Israeli society, with no reference to his differential rights or status as an Arab citizen, except in reference to the post-intifada changes in relations between Jews and Arabs.

Jibril's narrative offers a fascinating case of a young Palestinian citizen who struggles to make sense of his disparate identities. Rather than truly coming to some kind of pragmatic reconciliation of them, he abandons one entirely. Curiously, it is his Palestinian cultural identity. As I have related Jibril's story time and time again to both Israeli and Palestinian colleagues, they have been both surprised and skeptical, as if somehow a young man like Jibril could not possibly exist. Before I offer some of my field-informed insights into why Jibril's narrative is not all that surprising to me, which we will see is intimately connected to the *local* context of Taybeh, let me offer some examples of how Jibril's choice to embrace an Israeli identity colors some of his impressions of critical events in his life. In particular, Jibril's account of the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of the origins of the second intifada reveal a closer proximity to the Jewish Israeli master narrative on these events.

Recall that the Jewish Israeli master narrative frames the Zionist conquest of Palestine as a progressive endeavor. Jewish control of the land liberated its economic possibilities and, subsequently, its stature in the world order. Jibril has internalized this basic narrative when he discusses the origins of the conflict:

> Because the Jews came to Palestine at that time, it was the start of the conflict. It was the twentieth century. The Jews built the country, but the Arabs didn't accept what the Jews said. So there was a war between the Arabs and the Jews, and the Jews won. But there were six Arab countries against the Jews, and the Jews won! ...[The conflict,] it's not between Jews and Arabs. It's between *Israelis* and *some* Arabs—

not all Arabs. Because I'm Arab, and they don't have a problem with me. I'm not involved.

Jibril has internalized the Zionist narrative of "developing" the land, along with Arab rejectionism as the basis for the prolonged armed conflict, although he does identify Jewish immigration to Palestine as the ultimate catalyst of the conflict. He seeks to distance himself from the Palestinian idea of liberation and resistance, constructing for himself an identity of peace apart from the Arabs who struggle against Israel.

Jibril's narrative can be viewed as a great distance from that of the Palestinian master narrative in its ideological and interpretive content regarding the conflict. He essentializes Palestinian education as, at base, education to fight against Israel—a common view of Jewish Israelis. In describing his own education in Israel, he says,

> I learn about Islam, and the French Revolution, and the Holocaust. So I think the Jews just don't want to teach about what happened here in Israel, cause they would have to say something against the Palestinians, and they can't. So they just avoid teaching about our history here.

> ...The [school] books don't have anything about the conflict. The Hebrew book has stories about peace between Muslims and Jews. But they don't have things like this in Palestine. They're taught to be against Israel. They learn really bad things about Israel. Everybody there is against Israel. The European Union gave Palestine money to make new books, but they were really bad books. All their books are about war, and against Israel. ...Teaching hate for Israelis will not help. We don't learn anything against Arabs in the Israeli schools. ...I don't know why the Arabs do it against the Jews.

In his personal narrative of his own education, the state-sponsored curriculum is presented as benevolent and avoiding the conflict and Palestinian history only to ensure that anti-Arab sentiment is not expressed. Rather than interpreting this omission as part of the systematic attempt to reduce the salience (or even existence) of a Palestinian identity among its Arab citizens, Jibril sees the neglect of these subjects as entirely legitimate, and not equally met

among Palestinians. Unlike Israelis, in Jibril's view, Palestinians are taught to hate, and it is this hate that reproduces the conflict and the need for identity polarization.

Nowhere is Jibril's internalization of the Jewish Israeli narrative of the conflict more readily apparent than in his characterization of the intifada's commencement. Recall that the intifada represents the most significant turning point in Jibril's life story. It has disrupted his narrative, infusing it with a negative tone and with new painful constraints on his life experience. Even attending the soccer match is an opportunity for anti-Arab discrimination. Rather than viewing the discrimination he now receives as a continuation of Israel's systematic marginalization of its Arab citizens, complete with its inherent institutional racism (Abu-Saad, 2004), as the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative would have encouraged him to do, Jibril sees the discrimination he faces as an Arab as a result of the Palestinian intifada. And the blame for his hardship falls squarely on the Palestinians as a result. In speaking about the origins of the intifada, he says,

> It's what the Palestinians say, because Ariel Sharon entered al-Aqsa Mosque. But a lot of Jews enter the Mosque, so why exactly this man? They say because he is a killer. He killed a lot of Arabs or something like this. But they were just waiting for something to start the intifada—the terror organization, I think. Because if there is no war, there is no work for the terror organization.

Interestingly, instead of viewing the impetus for the intifada as the culmination of the lack of Israel to offer credible progress toward peace in the eyes of Palestinians, and as the culmination of frustration at the unrelenting occupation, Jibril internalizes the Jewish Israeli perspective that the intifada was in fact a coordinated uprising orchestrated by Palestinian "terrorists." The very fact that he has appropriated the discourse of "terrorism" to describe Palestinian resistance reveals how distant his narrative is from the Palestinian master narrative in its construction.

The disruption of the intifada was thus, in Jibril's view, instigated by the Palestinians. It has had disastrous consequences for the way in which Jewish Israelis now view him as an Arab. Describing the nadir in his life story, he says,

> The intifada, because before we came here in the airport, they treated me different from the Jewish kids. All the Arabs, they searched our bags, put them through the machine, asked us a lot of questions. Why? Because of the intifada, because they think that Arab Israelis are going to do something bad. I'm not really sad about this. They do it because the airplane must be secure. So that's OK that they check me. But the intifada is a really bad thing that happened in my life. ...I see on the news the intifada is dying—they write it in Arabic. I feel good, that it's dying.

Jibril interprets the blatant discrimination he receives at the airport because of his Arab identity as both legitimate and a response to Palestinian terrorism. It seems to be, in his mind, entirely justifiable. In this way, through these narrative interpretations of his life events as an Arab citizen, Jibril appropriates the mainstream Jewish Israeli discourse on the conflict.

We see in Jibril's life-story narrative the great dilemma of Palestinian-Israeli identity. The form of his narrative fails to resemble that of the master narrative and assumes more of the classic descent-and-gain pattern of Jewish Israeli youth. Naturally, the experience of the intifada and its impact on his life story is quite significant, given the increase in anti-Arab discrimination and marginalization it has caused him. Yet we do not find in his story traces of the tropes that comprise the master narrative of the Palestinian-Israeli experience. His experience with discrimination is more attributable in his mind to the Palestinians and their aggression against Israel, his home country. Jibril, it seems, has been fully "Israelized." Rather than seeming like a member of the Stand Tall generation, he seems more like a member of a new "Stand Down" generation, entirely relinquishing his Palestinian identity with willful pleasure.

One of the first things that struck me about my good friend and colleague Amal, who also happens to be a Palestinian citizen from Taybeh, was her adept skill at identity

adaptation. Far from someone ideologically polarized or divisive, she possessed an incredibly "accommodating" identity. There was no doubt that she was Arab, but she traversed Israel's highways on a daily basis, coming into contact with Jewish Israelis with great frequency. She had a perfect command of both Arabic and Hebrew, as well as English and Spanish, and had a unique way of making Jews, Arabs, Americans—whomever—totally comfortable. She seemed to fit Smooha's (1988) notion of the "new Arab" in Israel, one for whom a genuine multicultural identity thrived.

While there is much about my dear friend and colleague that is unique to her infinitely generous personality, there is also something unique about her city of origin, the home city of Jibril as well: Taybeh. I discovered this on a number of my field visits to Israel in 2004 and 2005. When I asked one of my Seeds of Peace colleagues at one point why so many Arab participants seem to hail from Taybeh, she explained that the Israeli government had always preferred Taybeh's students to others because of their greater expressed affiliation with an Israeli identity and their criticism of the Palestinians. Suddenly Jibril's story began to make more sense when contextualizing it in a local identity narrative.

The residents of Taybeh are culturally Palestinian, and the city itself, as I described in Chapter 2, resembles a West Bank city much more than any other city in Israel. But in Taybeh, parents encourage their children not to talk about politics. Their memories of the Israeli *Shabak* (secret service) remain from the early years of the state. Many adults commute outside of Taybeh for work and for university, to places in Israel. Even one young man I stayed with on one of my field trips there was a student at a university in Ariel—the infamous massive West Bank settlement. How ironic, I thought, for a Palestinian citizen of Israel to be attending that school. But in the "integrational" context of Taybeh, whose inhabitants long to

be included in an Israeli identity and do not mourn the loss of Palestine in anything other than nostalgia, such activity is not so surprising.

The content of Jibril's story, then, ought to be considered in relation to his local developmental context. Taybeh is a city that has seen little protest and little direct disruption in the course of the conflict. It is a town without painful stories of loss and suffering. It is, if you will, a very peaceful place, and a place whose inhabitants prefer to stay out of trouble and live their lives. Do not be misled by my characterization, though. This inclination toward passivity when it comes to the conflict, both within and outside of Israel, is resented among many of Taybeh's youth, and they deal with this resentment in different ways.

Let us conclude Jibril's story by noting that his narrative is far from fully scripted. We will return to it, as I did, one year after his participation at Seeds of Peace. But now, as he embarks on this adventure in intergroup contact, he has deeply internalized a narrative that fuses his civic and national identities into one harmonious Israeli identity. His Arab identity is problematic only insofar as the Palestinians polarize the Jewish Israeli public. The form, content, and ideological setting of his life story reveals considerable divergence from the master narrative of Palestinian-Israeli identity, and there are in fact more connections between his personal narrative and the Jewish Israeli master narrative. But ultimately Jibril is a young man who craves peaceful coexistence. His ideological setting may favor the interpretation of events promulgated in the Jewish Israeli discourse, yet it is hardly unsympathetic to the Palestinians.

The Story of Rania

Now abundantly clear based on the narratives considered thus far, one of the most striking features of Israeli and Palestinian life stories is the extent to which they reveal the significance of *local* identity. The local context of the city or village, kibbutz or moshav,

seems to bring with it a distinct ideological context in both Israel and Palestine. Typically, the influence of local identity on youth is not all-consuming, narratively speaking. We have seen that Jewish Israelis and Palestinians from a number of diverse local contexts in fact share much with one another and with the particular master narrative of their own ingroup. Jibril's life story and its initially surprising ideological content is uninterpretable without knowing something of Taybeh and its inhabitants. In his case, as in many others, we witness the value of an approach that combines interviewing and fieldwork to access a complete window into the lives of youth.

Rania's story offers an excellent contrast to Jibril's and highlights the salience of local identity for Palestinian-Israeli youth. While some traditionally "mixed" cities like Haifa and Jaffa (now essentially subsumed by Tel Aviv) continue to have significant Arab populations, two geographical regions are known for the denseness of their Arab population: the Triangle, of which Taybeh is a part, and the Galilee, in the north of the country. The Galilee consists of villages and cities that remained intact in 1948, their inhabitants re-branded Israelis overnight. The Galilee remains to this day an area with an Arab population that is in the majority in Israel.

The Galilee, and Rania's small village in particular, was in fact a focal point of the dissent that occurred in October 2000, with a major protest. It is not surprising, then, that Rania's narrative conforms more closely to what Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker (2005) refer to as the "Stand Tall" generation of Palestinian-Israelis. She is a proud Palestinian, struggling to transform Israel from a "Jewish state" to a "state of its citizens"—from an *ethnic* democracy to a genuinely *liberal* democracy.

Rania's life story (Figure 3.15) begins with stability and achieves a healthy ascent

with her graduation from one school and transition to another. It is a time of great happiness

and success for Rania.

> It was really great, because I feel I'm growing. Going to another school, it's a new experience for me. I got the highest marks in my class, even though I'm the youngest. I'll go to a high school now in another village, for a better school.

Rania's achievements create in her a sense of personal growth and gain. She feels rewarded

to now attend a better school and to advance herself academically.
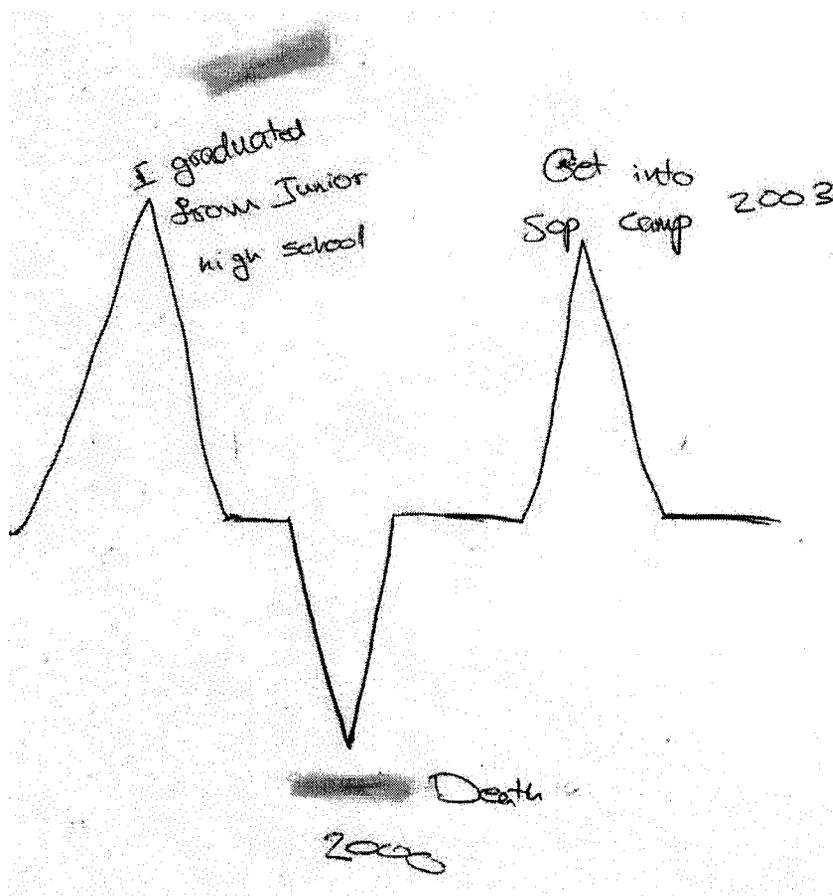

Figure 3.15. Rania's life-line, 2003.

For members of the Stand Tall generation, the October 2000 events represent a

defining moment and are in fact largely responsible for enhancing a collective Palestinian

consciousness (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). Rania's engagement with the October

events offers the nadir of her life story.

> It started with a demonstration, and that's when my cousin was killed. From my home, you could see everything, mountains of people. I didn't see anyone get shot, but I heard them. The first one was a guy in the village, dead immediately. Then we heard another shot. We thought it was someone else, and then we realized that it was my cousin. When the demonstration started, I just had this strange feeling that something bad's gonna happen. When I saw the policemen and the soldiers, I was convinced that something bad was gonna happen, and it happened.

> ...I have a great connection with my cousin's family. He went to Seeds of Peace and would talk about it all the time. He was always so happy and talking with his new friends from camp, and my mom saw this and said to me, I'll bet you're gonna get there too. So when he died, I felt like I will go no matter what—for him and for me. He was killed in front of his family's eyes, wearing his Seeds of Peace t-shirt. It was covered with blood. It was really, really disgusting. The Israeli soldiers killed him. I felt very, very sorry. There was so much sadness. This made me stronger, though. I'm very proud of him. Everyone who knew him, they were really proud of him. He was a genius.

The trauma of the October events and the death of her cousin have created for Rania an

entirely new consciousness. Coping with the trauma by channeling her narrative toward

meaningful activity—action that would serve the cause of her cousin, a staunch supporter of

coexistence through dialogue—Rania's life story takes its strength in tone from the events of

October. In collective trauma, she finds the source of collective identity as a Palestinian-

Israeli. The ability to fulfill her mission—to continue her cousin's legacy and, therefore, his

very identity—results in the ascent of her life-line, with her acceptance to Seeds of Peace.

As the master narrative would suggest, then, the October events are indeed *the*

formative events of a new generation of youth, politicized and mobilized toward securing and

defending their rights as a minority whose existence is threatened. The political action and

collective mobilization of the Stand Tall generation toward some purposive end naturally

requires a specific method of dual-identity reconciliation: the powerful identification with

their Palestinian national identity, and their resistance to "Israelization." Jibril stands out as

the ultimate counter-example, a young man so convinced of his belonging to the Jewish state.

Rania, on the other hand, is the archetypal member of the Stand Tall generation.

Coming to Seeds of Peace and at last given the *choice* to self-label the way she

wants, rather than fearing for the consequences of that act, Rania describes the dilemma she

faced:

> I have a great connection with the Israelis. I live with them; I have an Israeli passport. ...I also have a great connection with the Palestinians, because, you know, we are originally from Israel—the Palestinians. So in this camp I say that I'm Palestinian, but when I travel everywhere I say I'm Israeli.

> ...It's the only place I can do it safely, to call myself a Palestinian. ...I had a war with myself. To make peace, you have to go to war with yourself. And I made it, and I think I made the right choice. ...I am with the Palestinians. I understand how they feel. ...Even if I say I'm from Israel, I can't lie to my heart, to say I'm not Palestinian. So I made that choice, to say I'm Palestinian.

At the time of narrating her life story to me, at age 14, in the serene woods of Maine, far from

the social structure that disempowers her, Rania is at last free to go through the struggle of

self-identification. And, more importantly, owing to the new social structure in which she

finds herself, she possesses the agency to come to her own decision about that self-

identification and to implement it in her discourse with others. She has struggled, yet she

knows "in her heart" that her true identity is Palestinian; her connection to Israel is official

but ultimately meaningless in her own budding national consciousness. Excluded,

marginalized, threatened, assaulted, and collectively traumatized, the Stand Tall generation

reveals Israel's success at cultivating a new generation of youth who do not see themselves as

part of the state. Yet, for them, it is not they who are temporary inhabitants, but the state

itself, in a land that was once theirs. They are, without question, Palestinian.

In its form, Rania's life story again assumes a descent-and-gain pattern that

resembles the master narrative of Palestinian-Israeli identity only more recently, with the

salience of the intifada period most integrated. In its content, Rania's narrative reveals positive gains, yet it is haunted by the great nadir of her cousin's death. Her post-traumatic response, though, is one which restores meaning to her story. Her cousin, the martyr, lives on through her and her social practice. She seeks to emulate him and, in this way, to preserve his memory and restore his own narrative of peaceful struggle.

The ideological setting of Rania's life story is thus consistent with the ideological project of the master narrative: the struggle for justice and equal rights for Arabs within Israel. She does not speak of "liberating" the whole of Palestine, for such liberation is viewed within the Palestinian-Israeli narrative as utterly futile, given Israel's demonstrated military superiority (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). Rather, she speaks of a two-state solution:

> I think in this region there are two peoples. There must be two states, and one future for them. That's the only way to come to peace. …The intifada is about the Palestinians wanting their own land and their own state, cause they have the right to have their own country. They don't have the right to leave their village…. There are all these tanks and guns, and every day there is someone who is killed.

In her narrative, Rania expresses complete support for the Palestinians and their cause of national liberation, yet she believes that Israel will continue to exist. She recognizes the infeasibility of a one-state solution.

We see in Rania a young member of a new generation of Palestinian-Israelis, one for whom the master narrative is salient. It is a generation whose Palestinian identity has become accentuated out of collective necessity, to ensure the continuation of its existence. It is a generation that resists Israel's systematic attempts at identity re-structuring. It is a generation of whom Rania is a part, but Jibril is not—yet.

The Story of Sami

Though it fails to figure prominently—or at all, really—in their life stories, it is noteworthy that Jibril and Rania are both Muslims. Both identify their families as generally

non-observant. The Palestinian-Israelis in small cities and villages tend, by and large, to be

Muslim. Palestinian-Israeli Christians, by contrast, tend to inhabit the larger cities of

Nazareth and Haifa. Sami, a 16-year-old Christian Arab, is from Haifa, well-known in Israel

for its designation as "the city of coexistence."

Jews and Arabs do indeed jointly inhabit Haifa, though the city remains quite

segregated, both residentially and commercially. As it turns out, though, Sami is someone

whose family has defied the structural constraints of voluntary segregation and chosen to "de-

segregate" themselves. They live in a predominantly Jewish neighborhood. In discussing his

contact with Jews, Sami relates the ways in which this experience has impacted his life.

> I've never had any close Jewish friends, because of the environment. The place, the
> neighborhood that I lived in when I was young was mostly Arab. I moved to this
> house in the seventh grade, and here it is exactly the opposite. Most of the
> neighborhood is Jewish, except for a few Arab students. ...I'm not allowed to hang
> out on the street here, so I keep going back to my old neighborhood, with my old
> friends.

During one of my visits to Sami's welcoming home, his mother related stories of their

struggles with Jewish neighbors, even though they have good relations with most of them.

She recalls an incident in which her neighbor had a death in the family and she visited to pay

her respects. The neighbor was most grateful, but her adult children, who live on a West Bank

settlement, refused to even acknowledge her presence in the home. Sami's mother was

incredibly offended, feeling a deep sense of existential insecurity in the moment.

Though relations with Jews may be unpredictable for the Arab citizens of Haifa like

Sami and his family, such relations do nevertheless occur, which makes these Palestinian-

Israelis a unique group. Palestinian citizens like Jibril and Rania rarely encounter Jews as

children or adolescents. Only when the inhabitants of places like Taybeh go to university or

to work in Jewish cities like Netanya or Tel Aviv do they finally engage in regular social

interactions with Jews. Such is not the case for Haifa's Arab residents, no matter how separate their lives may be from the Jewish residents. These lives necessarily intersect, and it is difficult to live one's life in complete segregation from the "other."

Even though the cosmopolitanism of Haifa's bustling Arab commercial street, Ben-Gurion (ironically named), seems to resemble the Arab cosmopolitanism of Ramallah, it feels closer to what I perceive as a European cosmopolitanism than a distinctly Arab one. Once again, we must consider the significance of local identity. Haifa's Arab residents are quite diverse, though there are a large number of Christians in the city. But given the level of economic development of the city, they are by and large doing well relative to their peers in the villages, and certainly relative to Palestinians in the territories. They are, generally speaking, a people who are more interested in living a peaceful life than in sacrificing themselves in the name of "liberation." Bear in mind that many of Haifa's contemporary Arabs are descendants of those Palestinians who chose to remain in 1948.

Arab culture in Haifa, then, should be considered for what it is: cosmopolitan and gazing Westward. There are elite private schools, and families vacation in Europe. They are connected to the West in part out of their assumption of the Israeli identity, as their passports are not welcome in much of the East to this very day. Sami's story must be contextualized in this way: as a young Haifa resident, whose family is financially secure and seeks for him a life of great success, measured mostly in educational and economic terms.

It should come as little surprise then that Sami's life story is, to date, a narrative of progress (see Figure 3.16). As he begins his narrative, he says,

> As I remember it, I was happy most of the time, so it was all up. And then as I got to, I first went to school, so things got steady. Life took a regular path. It doesn't have many changes, and here it was the first tough thing in my life. And then it picks up again.

The narrative tone of Sami's story is, at base, very positive. He interprets his life as characterized primarily by happiness up to this point, taking a "regular path."

Sami's story begins with gradual ascent and stability, disrupted by an accident in childhood. A frightening time in his life, and a time in which he was suddenly made aware of his own mortality, Sami describes it as follows: "When I was a kid we were driving down the hill, and a bus hit us and pulled us. ...Life didn't go back like it was before, after the accident."
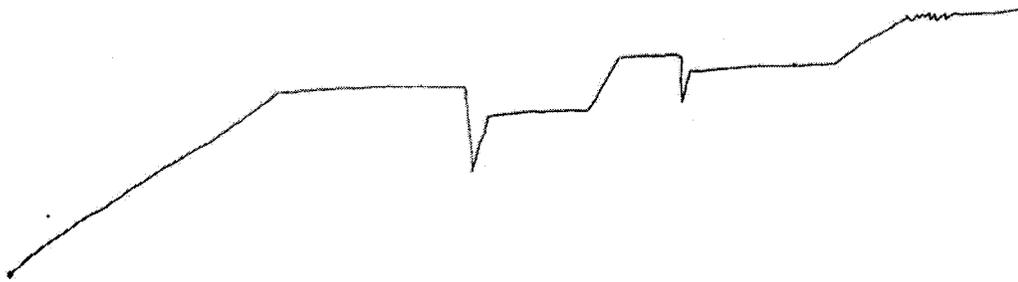
Figure 3.16. Sami's life-line, 2004.

His childhood car accident serves as the nadir in Sami's life story, and it is an event he is loath to re-visit emotionally. The remaining peaks and valleys in his story relate to school transitions and adjustments, all of which Sami has ultimately mastered. In describing his general attitude toward life's necessary transitions, he says, "...I got used to the changes in life. A person needs to adjust more quickly, and this is what I learned."

The form of Sami's narrative is best characterized as *progressive*, with a descent-and-gain embedded pattern. Once more, we witness no connection whatsoever with the master narrative of Palestinian-Israeli identity in terms of form. Sami has no stories of great tragic loss, and no stories of marginalization emerge unsolicited in his narrative. Even in its content, then, Sami's story seems to contain little, if any, internalization of the major themes of the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative.

Events related to the conflict are, like many Jewish Israeli life stories, absent in the spontaneous narration of Sami's story. With probing, some emerge but are clearly tangential to the daily experience of Sami's adolescent life. That is, the conflict has little tangible impact on his life, which is again unique to the social and political ecology of Haifa.

When asked directly about any perceptions of discrimination in Israel based on his Arab identity, Sami says,

> I think that if I'm going to be discriminated against, I still don't feel it. Like my parents tell me that when you go to the university, they have a certain percentage of Arabs in every course. They don't allow more, even if you are qualified.... I think that the state of Israel doesn't consider me as a full citizen, let's say, it will prefer to have a Jewish citizen more than an Arab-Israeli citizen. But until now, I don't feel it.

For Sami, anti-Arab discrimination is more of a hypothesis than an actuality. He has experienced nothing of it, and it has only been internalized in his consciousness through discourse—the discourse of his family, who seek to prepare him for an adult life of marginalization.

On my last visit to Haifa, the subject of Sami's career came up while we were all enjoying pre-dinner drinks and discussion. (The fact that Sami's family is Christian meant that dinner was always preceded by aperitifs and accompanied by wine.) While Sami at this point expresses an interest in technology, his mother says to me, "He should be a doctor, shouldn't he?" I note that medicine is certainly a noble profession, and confess that my own

father is in fact a physician. But Sami's mother has another justification for her suggestion: "If he is a doctor, they cannot discriminate against him for being Arab. It's too noble of a profession, and it's too difficult to become a doctor. Once he has become a doctor, they will have no choice but to accept him."

Sami's family, it turns out, has gone to great lengths to shield him from discrimination as a child. They have enrolled him in the best private schools in Haifa for Arabs, and they do not permit him to associate in their predominantly Jewish neighborhood. Sami has yet to fully engage with the majority culture, living for the moment in comfortable segregation from them. His parents prepare him for what they consider to be the inevitable: his experience of discrimination upon the more complete engagement with mainstream Israeli society as an adult.

Yet perhaps more than just physical segregation protects Sami for the time being. His life story presents an ideological setting that is tolerable in Israeli society. It is not polarizing or divisive; it does not call for the illegitimacy of Zionism or the destruction of Israel. It does not even highlight the tragic conditions of either the Palestinians or the Arabs in Israel to any considerable length. The great recent tragedy in the Palestinian-Israeli narrative—the October events—is not even referenced by Sami.

Let us consider that all too common identity predicament for Israel's Palestinian citizens—the choice of an identity label. Sami has only begun this process of identity reconciliation as a 16-year-old, but for now, he says,

> I feel some kind of connection [to the Palestinians], but it doesn't necessarily mean that I support their actions. I am part of this people, this nation.
>
> Q: Which nation?
>
> The Palestinian *and* the Israeli. I don't belong to one part. I am divided between the two. When they reach a point when they can achieve peace, I will be whole. Then I

won't need to keep struggling with myself. I'm not connected to this side or that. This gives me an inner conflict.

Q: So what identity label do you prefer?

I guess Arab Israeli, because I live in Israel, and I am a Palestinian. To that question, when I think about it twice, I think I would prefer to be called Palestinian-Israeli or Israeli-Palestinian. Maybe that can be achieved after peace.

This excerpt from Sami's narrative reveals the current conflict within himself over his very

identity. This conflict, which extends beyond labels and infuses his entire narrative and his

interpretive frame of political events, is intimately connected to the larger conflict between

Israel and the Palestinians in the territories. It is, as Sami relates, preventing a complete

integration of his identities. As scholars have noted, the Arab-Jewish conflict inside of Israel

cannot begin to fully be addressed until Israel is at peace with her Arab neighbors, and with

the Palestinians *outside* of Israel proper (Tessler & Grant, 1998).

For now, we ought to consider Sami to be really in the beginning stages of this

process of identity discovery. He recognizes some connection to the Palestinians, nationally

and culturally, yet he does not fully approve of their actions against his home state of Israel.

The ideological setting of his life story, as revealed in his discussion of the history of the

conflict and his thoughts on its current phase, suggests a closer identification with Jewish

Israelis than with Palestinians. Let us first consider his historical narrative of the conflict.

The conflict began with the Balfour Declaration, when the British promised the Jews to give them Palestine. And the Palestinians who were living here didn't know. And, actually, I remember my grandparents telling me that even before that, Jews used to live here side by side with the Palestinians, sharing bathrooms and having one bathroom for two apartments in the old houses. ...And then, after the Balfour Declaration, after the British occupation, the Jews started coming from all over the world. They came here and settled here and this was the starting of the Independence War in 1948. Then a lot of Palestinians fled out of the country, including some of my family members. ...And some of the Palestinians stayed here, in their homes, and some went to the West Bank because, and when the Israelis, when the Jews came here, they started building the country. And that's how some Arab Israelis got here. They didn't flee to some other place. Like me and my family.

> And then we had the '67 war, when Egypt, Syria and Jordan, I think, attacked, at once, Israel. Israel had to defend the territory and some of them they have taken them, territories from the other countries.

At first glance, this brief historical narrative is certainly accurate enough in its basic accounting of actual events, especially for an adolescent for whom the subject is avoided in formal educational contexts. (Recall that the state-approved curriculum, even for private schools, does not include a direct education about the history of the conflict.) Yet, as we begin to consider Sami's account in its interpretive frame—that is, the particular ways in which these historical events are assembled into a coherent narrative—we can begin to see his internalization of an Israeli, rather than a Palestinian, perspective on the conflict.

First, Sami traces the origins of the conflict not to *the Jews* or to Zionism (which, incidentally, is not mentioned at all in his narrative), but rather to *the British*. Rather than seeing the British as a "tool" for Zionist colonialism, as the Palestinian narrative would, Sami sees the British as largely responsible for mass Jewish immigration. (Note, however, that absent in Sami's narrative is any mention of Jewish persecution and suffering in Europe, so he has not fully internalized that narrative but has instead adopted a more "in-between" stance.) Although we see a glimpse of that Palestinian narrative of the harmony between Jews, Muslims, and Christians before Zionism, as Sami recalls his grandparents' account, he refers to 1948 as the "War for Independence"—a label that is entirely rejected in the Palestinian narrative in favor of *al-Nakba*, the "Catastrophe." Referring to 1948, Sami also describes Arabs as "fleeing" Palestine, without any suggestion that their evacuation may have been forced by Jews. The Palestinian narrative insists that the refugees were violently expelled from Palestine, whereas the Israeli narrative insists that they left willingly (Abdel-Nour, 2004).

Perhaps most shockingly, Sami's account of the 1967 war between Israel and her Arab neighbors represents in its entirety the Israeli narrative. In that war, Israel in fact destroyed the capabilities of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan pre-emptively in response to their clear intent and preparation for war (Smith, 2001). The actual historical facts of this war are, for our purposes, irrelevant. What is relevant is the narrative constructed by individuals about those events, and for Sami to describe the 1967 war as a "defensive" war on Israel's part, in specific response to an attack by the neighboring Arab states, reveals most decidedly his identification with an historical narrative of the conflict that is far closer to that of Jewish Israelis than of Palestinians.

In terms of the most current phase of the conflict—the second intifada—Sami's narrative reveals the internal conflict created by his dual identity. On the one hand, he sympathizes with the Palestinians. On the other, he is radically opposed to suicide bombing. Describing the origins of the intifada, he says,

> I think that it was started when the Israeli prime minister—or, he was the defense minister—entered al-Aqsa and the Muslims didn't agree to that. So they started with the intifada. That wasn't the only reason—they were in poverty, their economic situation was getting bad, and it was getting worse, so they didn't have other things to do. It was the only solution. So they started sending suicide bombers to Israel.

As he begins his narrative of the current context of conflict, suddenly Sami seems more aligned with the Palestinians. Jewish Israelis and pro-Israel advocates tend to argue that the intifada was entirely coordinated and planned to coincide with the failure of Camp David, so as to elicit more sympathy for the Palestinians and, hopefully, get them an even better deal than what Barak had "generously" offered (e.g., Dershowitz, 2003; see Bar-Tal, 1998a). But Sami does not make this argument. He does acknowledge that, while Sharon's infamous visit to the Temple Mount may have been the catalyst, the intifada has its origins in the economic suffering of the Palestinians.

While he identifies the emergence of the intifada in the structure of Israel's occupation, with all its economic consequences, he does not support the tactics of the uprising. Yet he is able to fuse both Israeli and Palestinian perspectives on suicide bombers in his own account.

> Suicide bombers, I think they undergo a mind-wash, brainwash. Yeah, they get into a very bad situation. Their family, some members of the family are dead during this conflict, so they feel like they have no choice. They feel like they can't do anything else, so they decide to sacrifice their life. But it's not exactly a sacrifice, because when someone sacrifices something, he does it to benefit other people, and I don't see they are benefiting the Palestinian people as they come here and kill innocent civilians. So Israel needs to strike back, more strongly. This is also a circle of violence.

Interestingly, Sami's narrative of suicide bombing integrates popular accounts of both Israeli and Palestinian discourse. Characterizing the bombers as "brainwashed" is certainly consistent with the Israeli narrative, which positions the bomber as a tool of the larger "terrorist infrastructure" committed to Israel's annihilation. Also, the notion that the tactic of suicide bombing in fact does nothing to actually *help* the Palestinians—the idea of its futility and its misguidedness—is very much characteristic of the mainstream Israeli interpretation. Sami does, however, identify the motive to become a bomber in the condition of collective helplessness and loss that characterizes the Palestinian struggle under occupation. In this way, he reveals a measure of identification with the Palestinian narrative. Overall, though, we can say in his fusion of narratives he has in fact constructed an account that legitimizes both polarized accounts, thereby providing a pragmatic, integrated narrative of mutual acknowledgment.

Ideologically, then, Sami's identity is more closely positioned with the discourse of the majority culture in Israel, yet his narrative reveals an affiliation with the Palestinians that forces him to consider their narrative quite seriously. In his views on the conflict and its

history, we see the internalization of a Jewish Israeli perspective. But when we turn to the current context, Sami demonstrates a higher level of narrative integration in his ability to consider disparate accounts and recognize their mutual legitimacy.

Sami's narrative must, like all of the narratives examined in this chapter, be viewed as a psychosocial project in its beginning stages. As he strives to organize his life events and ideological convictions into a story that possesses credibility and integrity, he is in the midst of confronting his dual identity. For the moment, his identity as an Israeli citizen is quite salient. Culturally, he recognizes his connection to the Palestinians, yet he has not integrated that connection into his personal narrative in such a way that influences its ideological setting with much significance. The stories of discrimination based on his Arab identity are just that to him—nothing more than stories. Prejudice is not, for him, readily perceptible in his life to date, and so he feels a connection to the majority culture in which he is embedded and, in his mind, accepted as a legitimate member. To Sami, the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative is just an abstraction. It is a collection of negative stories and struggles that have no connection to his peaceful, pleasant life in Haifa. And so in Sami we see little, if any, identification with this master narrative.

Summary: The Cultural Psychology of Palestinian-Israeli Adolescence

The stories of Jibril, Rania, and Sami reveal one remarkably powerful and unifying theme in the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative: the significance of dual identity status. Yet what these narratives reveal quite strikingly is that youth do not undergo a fully linear process of identity development that results in conformity to the master narrative of Palestinian-Israeli identity. Whether youth indeed come to fully identify with their Palestinian cultural and national identity, over and above their Israeli civic identities, as the master narrative would suggest is the most tolerable solution to the dilemma of "double marginality," is truly

an empirical question, and one that will be taken up in Chapter 4 as we consider the impact of intergroup contact.

The general statement we might make about the cultural psychology of Palestinian-Israeli adolescence is that it is characterized by this fundamental process of identity negotiation and reconciliation. The narratives of these three youth present their identities as entirely static, as any kind of empirical data necessarily does. Considered more for their implications for developmental *process*, these narratives suggest that Palestinian-Israeli youth are actively making decisions about how to negotiate the disparate discourse to which they are exposed in their identity development. While we will reserve our query of this process for Chapter 4, where longitudinal data will be considered, we can at this point note that the process of dual identity negotiation is most salient for Palestinian-Israeli youth and consumes their narratives, influencing the form, content, and ideological setting.

We can also summarize by saying that Palestinian-Israeli adolescents are anything but monolithic in their identities. The master narrative is deceptively simplistic, and it possesses sensibility. Yet we cannot perceive the ways in which a *context* of dual identity, of competing "Israelization" and "Palestinization," truly impacts the development of personal identity without the kind of direct empirical inquiry that this dissertation, with its narrative methods, provides. More than either of the two identity groups implicated directly in this conflict, the Palestinian-Israeli youth fail to conform to a master narrative of collective social identity. But this is precisely because of the competition of narratives that exists in their discursive field of reference.

Unlike Palestinians in the territories, Palestinian-Israelis do indeed inhabit an Israeli culture. They speak Hebrew, watch Hebrew TV programs, and venture to Jewish cities, in addition to speaking Arabic, watching Arabic TV programs, and (before the intifada)

venturing to Palestinian villages for a hearty traditional meal or to go shopping. They are, more than either Jewish Israelis or Palestinians, multicultural citizens (Al-Haj, 2002), and this exposure to multiple cultural realities creates a degree of narrative complexity for their life-story construction. The management of this complexity indeed, in my view, characterizes the cultural psychology of Palestinian-Israeli adolescence.

CONCLUSION: NARRATIVE AND THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN ADOLESCENCE

The Israeli psychologist Daniel Bar-Tal (2004b) argues that the study of social psychology, relegated to the artificial world of laboratory experimentation in the latter half of the twentieth century, must return to the direct observation of human social behavior in a naturalistic setting if it is to provide useful and meaningful information. Sadly, he goes on to argue, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict presents the investigator of human social behavior with an ideal naturalistic laboratory for such inquiry. As an authentic social ecology in which behavior and development may be observed, the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict allows us to address questions about the contextual specificity of human development. It allows us to query the variability of psychological experience. As such, it allows us to contribute to the intellectual project of cultural psychology, with its metatheory of human diversity in the mental life.

In this chapter, we have examined the first research problem with which this dissertation has been concerned: the cultural specificity of identity in the context of conflict. Yet in our query, we have done something so "unnatural" and yet so common, and indeed requisite, in the social sciences: we have treated identity as something static, an *outcome* rather than a *process*. We did so out of necessity as well as convention: the reification of observable human behavior through empirical description necessarily obscures the temporal

conditionality of the mental life. Social science is inherently a reifying endeavor. Nowhere is this most painfully obvious as in the use of the "ethnographic present" in cultural anthropology, or the reliance on context-independent quantification in much sociological and psychological research. Life-course sociology takes the contextualization of empirical data quite seriously, grounding observation in temporal specificity (e.g., Elder, 1974; Elder & Conger, 2000; Schneider & Stevenson, 1999). And contemporary anthropology has embraced a more historically sensitive methodology, while maintaining the ethnographic present.

In this chapter, I hope we reminded ourselves of the artificial stasis which the presentation of narratives collected at a particular historical moment naturally created. The telling of a life story, or elements of it, has demonstrated remarkable variability across even short durations of time, and it appears to be impacted by contextual priming (Mishler, 2004). In this chapter, we considered in each case the fact that the life stories of youth were very much in the making. In this way, we acknowledged that identity is more process than outcome, more dynamic than static. And in our analysis of life stories, we in fact were able to offer some description of the cultural psychology of identity.

The cultural psychology of adolescence is a paradigm that offers more than a "description" of a particular life-course moment in cultural context. It is, rather, a paradigm that queries the very process of social reproduction that characterizes not just the experiences of individuals, but of the regeneration of an entire society, with its norms, values, structural features, and, of course, identities. We ought, then, to view the life stories presented in this chapter as an important part of this intellectual project, as a window into the reproduction of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself. As Fatah once argued as part of its official ideological platform, only a youth "polarized around the revolution" can secure the sustenance of identity.

We have considered the process of identity development through the lens of personal narrative. Identity is given structure and meaning through the construction of a coherent integrative narrative (Cohler, 1982; McAdams, 1990), and its ideological content reveals identification with a particular social identity—a group to whose discourse youth turn in constructing a setting for the life story. The mapping of that discourse through the concept of a "master" narrative of ingroup social identity provided us with a source of analytic comparison for the life stories of contemporary youth. The salience of discourse and power, I trust, became obvious in that analysis. The narration of one's identity—particularly to an interested foreigner of some "prestige"—is necessarily an empowering experience, and the selection of ideological identification that empowers youth is likely.

The life stories of contemporary Israeli and Palestinian adolescents reveal the extent to which discourse is in fact routinely contested within these respective societies. The unpredictability of sociopolitical context invariably destabilizes narratives of collective identity, permitting their contestation. But in some sense Israeli and Palestinian societies are both "liberal" societies, in the classic sense of that term. They are societies which possess a democratic political system, no matter how "flawed" or "incomplete." As such, they are societies in which new discursive fields are constantly emerging. One day, the control of a "right-wing" (Likud) discourse in the Knesset; the next day, a "moderate" (Kadima) one. A secular nationalist ideology (Fatah) can give way to radical Islamism (Hamas) in the blink of an eye.

While identity polarization can certainly endure in the midst of these shifts in discourse, the narratives of contemporary youth reveal, in their repudiation of some aspects of the master narrative, the possibility of identity transcendence or, at minimum, the destabilization of identity polarization. Conflict itself, in its structure, necessarily creates

great psychological distance between its parties (Bar-Tal, 1990). In the case of great intractability, conflict can become embedded into a culture, serving to define identity itself (Elbedour et al., 1997).

The cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian adolescence is characterized by the construction of personal narratives that both reproduce and repudiate master narratives of social identity. In the case of Jewish Israeli and Palestinian youth, the tone and form of the master narrative tends to be reproduced, along with themes of existential insecurity. Ideologically, though, the narratives of these youth reveal (a) the salience of local identity, and (b) the contestation of delegitimizing discourse that characterizes identity polarization. While most youth report some level of existential insecurity, they long to see an end to the conflict. They recognize in delegitimization of the outgroup identity a kind of narrative stalemate, and so most reject this theme in the master narrative in favor of mutual acknowledgment, mirroring the mutual recognition that occurred at the structural level in the Oslo Accords. Some Jewish Israeli youth, like Noa, challenge the justness of the occupation; some Palestinian youth, like Adara, question the utility of resistance. But few youth question the existential legitimacy of the outgroup, even if the recognition of outgroup identity remains tainted by stereotypes, ethnocentrism, and ingroup favoritism.

Nowhere is the contestation of a master narrative more apparent than among young Palestinian citizens of Israel, members of the so-called "Stand Tall" generation. While I do not argue against the vitality of that master narrative or its preponderance among Arab communities inside of Israel, the life stories of Palestinian-Israeli youth demonstrate the complexity of narrative identification for this group. Adolescents in the process of beginning to appropriate discourses accessible to them in their social ecologies of development will naturally experiment with various identifications. One day, an "Israeli Arab," the next a

"Palestinian." What the life stories of Jibril, Sami, and Rania reveal is that Palestinian-Israeli youth indeed undergo a unique process of identity discovery, and their identity distinctiveness ought not to be overlooked in the context of this conflict. At the same time, as is the case for Jewish Israeli and Palestinian youth, the promulgation of a master narrative of collective social identity fails to represent the authentic diversity that occurs in identity development, suggesting instead a kind of monolithic process.

That a coherent master narrative is constantly reproduced in both public and academic discourse on Israel/Palestine and assumingly internalized by the subjects of a given social identity is rendered problematic by the data presented in this chapter. A narrative approach to the cultural psychology of identity has, in this case, illuminated individual processes obscured by the hegemony of a collective master narrative and its promulgation by "elites." At base, what the narratives of youth reveal is the extent to which identification with master narratives of social identity is fundamentally a process of intrapsychic negotiation. There is not, as some might prefer to suggest, an inherent linear relationship between a social identity and its adolescent "subjects," particularly when youth are indeed exposed to competing discourse.

While the narratives of youth reveal points of contestation, they also reveal instances of powerful identification with master narratives. In this chapter, I have suggested that proximity to a master narrative of social identity reflects a high degree of identity polarization. Were we to consider only these master narratives and their vast psychological distance from one another, in spite of a number of overlapping thematic elements, we would remain entirely pessimistic about the possibility of conflict reduction. But if we look to the narratives of youth, and thus to probe most directly the process of social reproduction, we witness simultaneous processes of *appropriation* and *contestation*, *integration* and

differentiation (Adams & Marshall, 1996). The simultaneous need for belongingness and some measure of autonomy—perhaps sufficiently generalizable as to be considered "universals" of human development—is readily apparent in the narratives of youth. We see the internalization of narrative elements that cause identity polarization, yet we also identify points of divergence for contemporary youth from divisive discourse.

As we consider the impact of intergroup contact on personal narratives of identity in Chapter 4, we ought to bear in mind the optimism that such contestation creates. We ought to see in youth great possibility for a different kind of social regeneration: one in which peace is acquired through narrative reconciliation, and a rupture in the stalemate between Palestinian and Israeli identities. Yet we must also resist the utopian lure of intergroup contact (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2005), and we must be willing to query the process of identity formation through social interaction by means of "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). We must restrain the interpretive influence of our own cosmopolitan identities, as liberal scholars, optimistic practitioners, or as multicultural citizens, as we embark on an analysis of intergroup contact that possesses both integrity and credibility.

CHAPTER FOUR

COSMOPOLITANISM IN PRACTICE:

NARRATIVES OF COEXISTENCE

"Can a loyalty to mankind be fashioned before interracial warfare breaks out? ...While the national orbit is the largest circle of loyalty that most children learn, there is no necessity for the process to stop there. ...When such a sense of reciprocity is firmly established, the way is prepared for the integrated conception of larger and larger units of mankind, to all of which the young person can be loyal without losing his earlier attachments."

—Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954), pp. 44, 46

"Each person you know about and can affect is someone to whom you have responsibilities: to say this is just to affirm the very idea of morality. The challenge, then, is to take minds and hearts formed over the long millennia of living in local troops and equip them with ideas and institutions that will allow us to live together as the global tribe we have become."

—Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (2006), p. xiii

Although I have known him for a year, it is my first visit to Ali's home in East

Jerusalem. It is the summer of 2004, and the fighting of the intifada has calmed, however

tenuously. Compared to the homes of other Palestinians, and Israelis as well, Ali's is quite

impressive. It is spacious and clean, bedrooms for each of the children, several bathrooms.

The living room is massive, with a big-screen TV and several luxuriant sofas. As he takes me

on the tour of his home, we pass the kitchen, where our feast of a lunch is being prepared not

by Ali's mother but by the family's servant, to whom I offer my hand before I realize the

impropriety of the gesture. She turns to her work, as I withdraw it, somewhat embarrassed by

my sudden amnesia on the rules of Palestinian culture.

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Minutes later, I am in Ali's room, which contains a full-size bed, desk, computer, weight-lifting machine, and posters of Eminem, 50 Cent, and Britney Spears. Ali is anxious to show me his collection of pirated DVDs, burned from the internet. He is also anxious to show me the contents of a particular folder on his computer—the folder that contains scores of images of death and destruction since the second intifada. "Remember when I met you last summer, I told you there was so much to see here. I wanna show you now, what we, the Palestinians, go through." A 30-minute prelude to our follow-up interview, to be conducted one year after his participation in Hands of Peace and two years after his participation in Seeds of Peace, it utterly confused me that Ali could continue to be so ideologically polarized in his thinking, so determined to "prove" his identity to me as a Palestinian, and to maintain a fervent anti-Israel stance, even after his experiences in these programs. And yet the more I considered our knowledge of the social psychology of intergroup contact, as well as the unique context of Israeli-Palestinian relations, the less elusive his post-program behavior and identity became to me.

The contact hypothesis offers an incredibly appealing idea to the cosmopolitan liberal pluralist—the individual who, like Gordon Allport in his time and both Kwame Appiah and John Wallach in our own time, possesses a genuine sensibility for human coexistence through mutual recognition and ongoing conversation. Originating in the social psychology of the post-War United States, as the Civil Rights Movement began to brew and the immorality and injustice of institutionalized racism became increasingly recognized in American liberal discourse, the contact hypothesis seemed deceptively simple. Allport, who is typically credited with its original articulation, argued that contact between groups could, under certain conditions, reduce the prejudice within individuals that serves to secure the maintenance of intergroup conflict. The key phrase, of course, is "under certain conditions."

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The excerpt from Allport's (1954) seminal volume that specifies the hypothetical

conditions by which intergroup contact is deemed "effective" is, like the idea of contact itself,

deceptively simple:

> Prejudice...may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority
> groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact
> is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e., by law, custom or local atmosphere), and
> provided it is of a sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common
> humanity between members of the two groups. (p. 281)

From these two sentences, social psychologists have extracted four basic "principles" of

effective intergroup contact, although the conditions for "optimal" intergroup contact have

essentially become a catalogue of conditions unattainable in any authentic social setting

(Dixon et al., 2005). These four key conditions are: (1) equal status between groups in the

encounter, (2) an active pursuit of common goals, (3) facilitation of cooperation, rather than

competition, between groups, and (4) external support for the aims of intergroup contact.

Translation from the idealistic laboratory analogue to the real-world context of

improving interethnic relations almost immediately called the contact hypothesis into

question (Amir, 1969). A cursory consideration of Allport's original conditions suggests that

the contact hypothesis is, unfortunately, a social psychological approach of little value in the

context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. First, the asymmetrical status of Israelis and

Palestinians, at least in terms of demonstrated group "power," makes the first condition

seemingly insurmountable. Although efforts to create symmetry of power in the intergroup

encounter are, in fact, successful in many cases in Israel (Maoz, 2004), the structural reality

of asymmetry is unyielding, revealing such a power equilibrium as entirely ephemeral. The

second and third conditions specified by the original hypothesis are also problematic, given

that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is at base a *competition of identities*. It stands to reason

that engineering contact toward the pursuit of some common goal, and in some cooperative

way, would be quite difficult, since it does not serve the interests of either group in their efforts to "win" the conflict through securing the legitimacy of their national identity. Yet such a statement ignores the possibility of revising the end-goal, and thus deflating the zero-sum nature of the conflict. Although the official position of Israelis and Palestinians may not as yet endorse such a revision (although one might argue that a two-state solution is inherently a revision of the original goals of the rival nationalisms; see Kelman, 1978), certainly many individuals on both sides of the conflict do.

It is the fourth and final condition specified by Allport's original hypothesis that appears the most problematic, for it specifies the need for cultural support of intergroup contact. While institutional support certainly exists in both Israeli and Palestinian societies in some measure (recall that both governments officially support Seeds of Peace and select participants for the program), whether or not the *culture* of these two societies indeed supports the identity transcendence which contact may seek is questionable. At base, the cultures of Israel and Palestine are themselves rooted in the existence of conflict, with compulsory army service, resistance fighting, fences and walls, segregation and polarization.

The contact hypothesis has been the subject of great debate within social psychology (for reviews, see Amir, 1969; Brewer, 1996; Gaertner et al., 2000; Hewstone & Brown, 1986a, 1986b; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Messick & Mackie, 1989; Miller, 2002; Pettigrew, 1998; Tajfel, 1982b; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986), and it is not our place here to outline the numerous critiques and modifications that have led to its current, relatively untenable incarnation (Dixon et al., 2005). We must accept as simply given that the ideological foundation of the coexistence programs themselves is rooted in the idealism of the idea of contact and its emergence in the American narrative as a response to racism and institutionalized segregation. Our concern centers on how this experiment in American

benevolence and redemption (McAdams, 2006) strikes its chord in the narratives of Palestinian and Israeli youth. Thus our basic empirical question centers on the life-story narratives constructed by youth after they have participated in such a program.

In this chapter, we will explicitly consider the impact of intergroup contact on the identity formation process of Israeli and Palestinian youth through the examination of narratives collected up to two years following participation. Relying upon the social psychological literature on identity and intergroup contact, I will consider the post-program narratives of youth according to a particular taxonomy. Specifically, the extent to which these programs are successful in cultivating a sustainable, enduring common identity supplement that de-polarizes identity—as they so aim—will be examined.

I will argue that while the programs do indeed demonstrate remarkable success at achieving their goal of identity transcendence immediately following participation, the long-term sustainability of this outcome is limited by the structural conditions of conflict itself. That is, the pervasiveness of identity threat that maintains the conflict, with all of its accompanying acts of structural violence between groups, necessitates the psychological distance between groups that identity polarization enables. The narratives of youth considered up to two years following participation reveal a distinctive pattern of identity accentuation, which secures the reproduction of the conflict in the next generation. What this process reveals more generally about human development, I will argue here and in Chapter 5, is the power of social structure over individual experience, particularly in the context of perceived existential threat. Let us begin, though, as the story does in social psychology: with the cosmopolitan idea of contact.

IDENTITY AND INTERGROUP CONTACT

Initially the idea of intergroup contact had little to say about "identity." Allport favored the concept of "personality" as a superordinate psychological system that organizes attitudes, behaviors, and cognitions (e.g., Allport, 1937; cf. McAdams & Pals, 2006). As such, he theorized that the problem of intergroup conflict was ultimately a problem of the prejudiced individual (Allport, 1954). The cultivation of "tolerant" personalities was to be the hallmark of a new era of intergroup harmony, in his cosmopolitan vision. As such, what became fundamental to the contact hypothesis was the study of attitudes as indicators of prejudice and ingroup bias (e.g., Amir, 1969). As the study of intergroup relations turned its gaze toward the *cognitive* foundations of attitudes and personality (Brewer & Kramer, 1985), a new focus on identity emerged.

Having long been viewed for its functional role by sociologists (e.g., Coser, 1956; Simmel, 1908/1955), psychologists began to question notions of "realistic" conflict that could be reduced through cooperative measures (e.g., LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Sherif, 1966; Sherif & Sherif, 1966; Sherif et al., 1961) in favor of identity-based conflict with relatively unyielding endurance (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). Work in the "social identity theory" (SIT) model of the Bristol School posited and empirically demonstrated that cognitive categorization of self and other is a fundamental and salient process of human interaction (e.g., Tajfel, 1978, 1981, 1982a; Turner, 1982, 1987). This work argued that affiliation with a particular group in the form of a social identity enhances individual self-esteem, although other derivatives of the theory have proposed numerous mechanisms. Contact, according to the SIT framework, accentuates social identity out of this fundamental need for group affiliation and its affective and cognitive significance (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986).

The dominant contemporary models of intergroup contact all derive from SIT in some way. Brewer's (1996) review identifies the three major models by the identity-related processes they are theorized to elicit. First, the *personalization* model seeks to elicit a process of identity *decategorization* (Brewer & Miller, 1984; Miller, 2002). This model, which was developed largely to promote the identity "restructuring" efforts of desegregation in the United States, posits that contact is most effective when there is ample opportunity for interpersonal interaction between group members. The emphasis of the encounter is interpersonal in its aim to reduce prejudice between groups and debunk stereotypes by initiating a process of decategorization. Members of the outgroup, once viewed according to a particular salient categorization which maintains intergroup conflict, become differentiated and no longer viewed with homogeneity. Contact that follows the personalization model is structured so as to reduce the salience of category distinctions and, hence, of cognitive representations of ingroup and outgroup identity.

The *subcategorization* process of the mutual intergroup differentiation (MID) model (Hewstone & Brown, 1986b) assumes the opposite approach of the personalization model. The MID model conceptualizes contact as an inter*group* experience rather than an interpersonal one. That is, this perspective views the salience of social identity as relatively irreducible and, in fact, beneficial to intergroup relations. Contact in this approach is viewed as most beneficial when the social identities in conflict undergo a process of mutual differentiation such that members of one group come to value a differentiated subcategorization of the other. Distinctiveness between subcategories is highlighted, rather than being targeted for reduction in the personalization model. What is targeted for transformation in the MID framework is the intergroup schema, which becomes viewed as a relationship of *positive* rather than *negative* interdependence. This transformation is possible,

according to this view, only when the legitimacy of intergroup distinctions is preserved, thereby minimizing the perception of identity threat in the intergroup encounter.

A third identity-based model is the common ingroup identity (CII) model (e.g., Gaertner et al., 1993, 1999, 2000; Gaertner, Dovidio, et al., 1996; Gaertner, Rust, et al., 1996; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), which views the outcome of optimal intergroup contact as characterized by a process of *recategorization*. The CII approach seeks to facilitate the recategorization of identity according to a superordinate level that is inclusive of both ingroup and outgroup. Members of the groups in conflict come to decrease the salience of the ingroup categorization that maintains conflict and to identify with a new, superordinate, transcendent identity. In order to accomplish this process, the contact situation must be "engineered" to evoke a process of recategorization.

Brewer (1996) argues that all three of these models are ultimately "unstable" because they fail to fully consider the fundamental significance of ingroup identity. Specifically, they fail to recognize that human beings strive to achieve a level of "optimal distinctiveness" in their identity development. Optimal distinctiveness theory posits that we seek an equilibrium between *assimilation* and *differentiation* as we develop our social identities (Brewer, 1991, 1996). As such, we naturally balance the need for a strong sense of ingroup identification— the extent to which we as individuals "fit" into the ingroup categorical identity—with a need for self-distinction. Optimal distinctiveness theory closely resembles the developmental social psychology of identity approach posited by Adams and Marshall (1996), who argue that competing needs for integration and differentiation characterize the identity formation process.

As we compare these models of intergroup contact and the underlying process of optimal distinctiveness, it is wise to consider the likelihood that identity is not formed with

reference merely to the contact situation but rather in a larger sociocultural context. As

Brewer (1996) notes,

> ...In the real world, it is impossible to ignore existing beliefs about the history of
> intergroup relations. Functions and roles in a new polity cannot be arbitrarily
> assigned without recognizing longstanding differences between groups.... (p. 301)

In our case, we know that the perception of identity threat is pervasive in both Palestinian and

Israeli cultural contexts. The pivotal question is how the contextual specificity of identity—

perceived as unstable for both groups under consideration here—impacts the contact

experience.

THE IDEA OF ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN COEXISTENCE

If both Israeli and Palestinian identities are characterized by the perception of

existential threat, what possibilities for "productive" intergroup contact can exist? In their

integrative model of subgroup relations, Hornsey and Hogg (2000) argue that harmonious

relations between groups are only possible with the minimization of "distinctiveness threat."

That is, groups need to feel secure in the sustenance of their social identities as a prerequisite

to improving intergroup relations. They argue for an integration of a classic SIT approach in

line with the MID model—that social identities must be fully recognized and valued on a

mutual intergroup basis—and the CII approach through the cultivation of a superordinate

identity that can mutually value both social identities in competition.

What the seemingly idealistic derivatives of contact theory all share in common is an

ideological perspective that privileges cosmopolitanism. Hornsey and Hogg's (2000) model

seems most sensible in the context of a Western liberal democracy trying to manage issues of

immigration and multiculturalism. Imagine an encounter group between European and

Hispanic Americans as a site of (perhaps gradual) mutual intergroup recognition and of

superordinate recategorization, as both groups come to recognize their common identity as

"liberal Americans interested in multicultural harmony" or simply "Americans." Imagine Arab immigrants in France and native Frenchmen and women engaging in an intergroup encounter in which, over time, the need for subgroup distinctiveness that is secure is gradually recognized by each group. The native French come to recognize the immigrants' need to maintain a distinct ethnic and perhaps religious identity as something that is psychologically requisite rather than representative of some rebellion against French assimilationism. The immigrants, for their part, come to understand the way in which their desire to express a distinctive social identity is legitimately perceived as threatening to the larger French identity. Then both groups come to recognize their common fate as residents of France, or of the European Union, or of the human race, all of whose members are engaged in a quest for psychological and ontological security.

It should come as little surprise that the emergence of coexistence programs in Israel was characterized by an appropriation of these social psychological models developed in the West, and the United States in particular (Abu-Nimer, 1999, 2004). Practitioners of coexistence embraced the "prejudice reduction" model of classic contact theory, seeking to fashion a new generation of "tolerant" personalities. Halabi and Sonnenschein (2004b) present a typology for understanding the various coexistence programs that have emerged in Israel. They suggest that the philosophy of programs can be classified according to two continua. On the first continuum, programs can be classified according to the extent to which they employ a "human relations" model, in which the emphasis is on facilitating personal acquaintanceship or friendship across groups (the personalization model), or a "conflict resolution" model, in which the emphasis is on discussing the reality of the conflict and seeking ways of possible resolution. On the second continuum, programs either employ a contact approach, in which basic contact in the classic prejudice-reduction model is sought, or

an intergroup approach, in which contact is viewed more in line with the MID model and individuals approach the encounter as group members.

While many programs in Israel continue to operate on a human relations model, with a focus on personalization through contact (see Abu-Nimer, 1999; Bargal, 2004; Maoz, 2000a), a number of programs have increasingly adopted a conflict-resolution approach that conceptualizes the encounter as an intergroup, rather than interpersonal, one (e.g., Halabi, 2004; Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004a, 2004b; Suleiman, 2004a, 2004b). According to the typology more common in the classic social psychological literature on contact, early programs relied almost exclusively on a decategorization approach rooted in the personalization model. Many programs continue to operate in this tradition today. However, the subcategorization approach of the MID model has come to assume greater popularity among practitioners, in large measure because of the realization that threatened identities do not yield well to attempted dismantling. A practical approach that better conforms to the reality of mutual identity threat is, quite naturally, an approach that can help to enhance the security of identity. Mutual recognition, this new approach argues, is a necessary first step to genuine reconciliation and the reduction of intergroup conflict.

Education for coexistence, as Bar-Tal (2004a) argues, is most effective in the context of ethnocentrism, not intractable conflict. Societies characterized by ethnocentrism suffer from systems of intergroup discrimination that center on beliefs and ideologies which can be altered through education. But in the context of conflict, those beliefs, ideological positions, and identities themselves are molded by the structural conditions of conflict. Thus, in the context of conflict, coexistence education can only assume a supporting role in effecting social change. The reduction of conflict is ultimately a *structural* concern and can only be addressed at the level of political leadership.

In sum, both the idea of intergroup contact and Israeli-Palestinian coexistence seem more like ideal abstractions than attainable realities. Yet there is reason to withhold judgment. These convergent intellectual and practical endeavors remain works in progress, and it is only through accumulated knowledge about the design and process of these efforts that we can come to critically evaluate them. Thus let us first review the implications of these introductory comments for the specific programs under current consideration, then examine the experiences of youth through the lens of individual narratives.

Both Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace represent classic ventures in intergroup contact. They are both modeled on a traditional contact perspective and, in their own artificially constructed social systems, meet the criteria for optimal contact posited by Allport (1954). They rely to some extent upon a "mixed" model of contact, in that decategorization, subcategorization, and recategorization are all encouraged in various ways and at various points of participation (reviewed in Chapter 2; see also Maddy-Weitzman, 2005). Yet, as I argued in Chapter 2, both programs are infused with the ideology of cosmopolitanism, recategorization into a transcendent identity their ultimate aim. The solution to conflict, in the folk theories that underlie their efforts, lies in the cultivation of a generation capable of identity transcendence and cosmopolitan cognition.

In the remainder of this chapter, the narratives of youth will be examined according to a basic typology that conforms to the social psychological theories of intergroup contact. *Identity transcendence* is characterized by a reduction in salience of ingroup identity and the assumption of a common ingroup identity that is inclusive of the outgroup. I will refer to identity transcendence as a categorical outcome, although I believe it is risky to speak of identity "outcomes" in this context, for identity is an ongoing construction across the life course (Cohler, 1982). For adolescents, it is "measured" through a consideration of the

ideological setting of the life story and the extent to which elements of the outgroup narrative are incorporated into the self-narrative. *Identity accentuation*, by contrast, is characterized by polarization. That is, it describes a high salience of ingroup social identity, typically simultaneous with at least some delegitimization of outgroup identity. Conformity to a master narrative of ingroup social identity is common in a state of identity accentuation. As in Chapter 3, a fusion of holistic and categorical content analysis is employed in the examination of narratives, with an emphasis on (a) the place of contact in the life story, and (b) the impact of contact on its ideological setting.

IDENTITY TRANSCENDENCE

In his 1999 essay, Kelman argues that the key to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lies in the development of a transcendent identity for the two peoples. Israelis and Palestinians, in his view, must come to transcend the condition of negative interdependence inherent in their polarized, irreconcilable narratives of history and identity. They must come to view their histories and identities as irreversibly intertwined; they must come to recognize that they share a common fate as peoples who cannot be so easily "disengaged" from each other. This transcendent identity must not threaten the particularity of each national identity, but it must be cultivated in order to recognize the potential for positive interdependence between Palestinians and Israelis.

Kelman's thesis parallels the tenets of common ingroup identity theory and the notion of recategorization. Israelis and Palestinians must, in his view, come to recognize the higher level of category inclusiveness that exists between them. They must fashion new social identities that recognize the legitimacy of the other in such a way as to reduce the potential ingroup identity threat that transcendence commands.

The idea of recategorization and identity transcendence is incredibly alluring for those who seek coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians. It offers an optimistic, deceptively simplistic solution to what has become an intractable problem. As I argued in Chapter 2, both Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace are founded on the premise of contact as a mechanism of identity transformation. That the primary social psychological "press" of the programs is for a recategorization of identity, and therefore the transcendence of identity polarization, is readily apparent in the culture of these programs, with their rituals and social structures. Yet the empirical question remains: To what extent does identity transcendence indeed occur, and how is it manifest in the narratives of youth?

Before I present three life stories that demonstrate the outcome of identity transcendence, let us more precisely elaborate upon its meaning. It seems inconceivable to speak of the transcendence of identity, particularly during adolescence, when a coherent sense of identity is only in its nascence. So when I speak of identity transcendence, I do not refer to such a totalizing kind of phenomenon. Rather, I mean by the term an apparent cognitive ability to consider the existence, legitimacy, and identity needs of the outgroup. Identity transcendence is visible in the emerging life-story narrative with the recognition of the outgroup and its existential needs. It also refers to a willingness to challenge the master narrative of ingroup social identity, the ideological contents of which were presented for each group in Chapter 3. Although a transcendent identity suggests an ingroup identity critique, or at least a *willingness* for critique, by no means does it suggest an abandonment of ingroup ideology. The individual with a transcendent identity has, rather, discovered a way of integrating both ingroup and outgroup into the life-story narrative in such a way that does not threaten the ingroup and his or her identification with it. Very concretely, we can speak of a reduction in the salience of ingroup identity, or at least in the salience and identification with

the polarizing components of the ingroup master narrative, when we speak of identity transcendence.

Let us now consider three life stories which reveal the outcome of identity transcendence: the stories of Liat, Laila, and Noa. I wish to immediately draw attention to the reader that these three stories are, most notably, the stories of young women. Second, I wish to note that two of these young women (Liat and Noa) are Jewish Israeli and one is Palestinian-Israeli (Laila). These demographic considerations are significant, though I will reserve a discussion of why the life stories of males and of Palestinians altogether seem not to display this identity outcome.

"I Had Never Even Spoken to an Arab": The Story of Liat

Liat is a 16-year-old blonde-haired, blue-eyed Jewish Israeli from Ashkelon, the largest Israeli city in close proximity to the Gaza Strip in the south, on the Mediterranean Sea. Like many in the multicultural "melting pot" of Israel, Liat was born outside of the country, in South Africa. Liat's family immigrated to Israel when she was 10 years old because, as she describes it, "my father is a Zionist." Her extended family, with origins in Lithuania and Russia, is now dispersed across the globe, in South Africa and Australia. Only their tiny branch of the extended family chose to settle in Israel.

Liat's narrative at age 16 (Figure 4.1), like most Israeli youth in this study, closely conforms to the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity in its form. It is a story of descent and gain, of valleys and peaks, of challenges and triumphs. The ultimate gain for Liat thus far in her life has indeed been her participation in Seeds of Peace—an experience which both enabled Liat to examine her identity and to witness the possibility of identity transcendence.
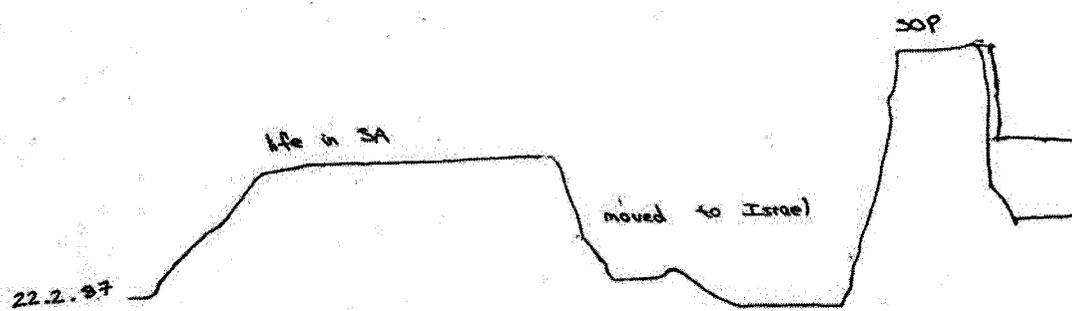
Figure 4.1. Liat's life-line, 2003.

Narrating her life story to me one year after her participation in Seeds of Peace, Liat

expresses concerns about Zionism, which she connects to the difficulties she felt upon the

family's immigration to Israel.

> My life in South Africa, everything was great. I had many friends. I went to a Jewish school.... I don't know, it was just great. And moving to Israel, it was really exciting at the beginning. But it was a different country. I didn't really fit in cause it took me three years to learn the language. ...I had a few close friends here and there, mostly English speakers, not really Israelis. ...Even till this moment, my best friends are Lithuanian and Russian. I don't know what it is with the Israelis. I don't really connect with them.

> ...I'm now in Israel, and I know it's the state *of* the Jews. It doesn't mean it has to be the state just *for* the Jews. It *is* the state of the Jews—Israel. Everyone calls it Israel, not Palestine or something. But it's not about Jews *only* or something. It's not realistic at all.

First of all, Liat claims to have never "felt" fully Israeli. She refers to Israelis in the third

person to this day, six years after her family's arrival. The move to Israel is the nadir in her

life story, for its challenges to her identity. The language in particular is a source of identity

dissonance for Liat. She yearns for an inclusive Israeli state, one in which she, and the non-

Jewish inhabitants of the land, will feel a part.

Yet as Liat arrived at Seeds of Peace, suddenly her ingroup social identity was primed, and she reports a strong feeling of connection to the other Israelis at the camp. She describes the cognitive process she underwent, from her own salient self-categorization to decategorization of the other and recategorization of self.

> Before Seeds, I couldn't connect with Israelis. Then suddenly with Seeds, the people I am obviously most connected with is the Israelis. And then those people became my *really* good friends, not like my friends in Ashkelon. That's why the first two weeks, the Israelis just stay with the Israelis. Then the last week of camp, we started interacting with the other countries, and it was fine, cause then we were one big group. ...It didn't happen right away at camp, but pretty soon I ended up making friends with Arabs and Palestinians, and it ended up totally changing my life. After camp, my views about everything had changed so radically. I suddenly became the defender of Arabs in front of my family and friends. ...The history of the hatred of the Jews has been forever, from the Germans to these and that, and now it's with the Arabs, what we're doing to them. ...I just became so much more aware of what's really going on—the injustices. And making friends—I mean, *real* friends—from the other side, it totally changed me. Now when something happens in the West Bank, I worry. I think, what if my friend is hurt?

> ...And this whole year was just great cause I stayed in touch with all the friends I met, not only the Israelis but the Palestinians too. I go twice a month to Jerusalem or to Haifa for Seeds of Peace. ...Camp is like a dream. It's our second home. We were so happy!

In this important excerpt from Liat's life story, a number of significant psychological processes related to her participation in Seeds of Peace emerge. First, the initial experience of intergroup contact primes a process of salient categorization in which Liat comes to identify more closely with her ingroup social identity as a Jewish Israeli—an identity which she had previously felt somewhat unidentified with. Contact gradually activates a process of decategorization of the outgroup, as Liat professes to befriend Palestinians and to begin to see them as distinct individuals. Consistent with Pettigrew's (1997, 1998) reformulation of the contact hypothesis, the development of cross-group friendship appears to be the key mechanism of psychological transformation. Such a mechanism reveals the significance of social relationships in the construction of self (e.g., Gergen, 1994). Ultimately, as Liat's

account of her own process of participation reveals, recategorization of self and other occurred, and she came to view herself as deeply connected to the Palestinians, united in the common identity of a "Seed." Continued social practice in the program back home has enabled Liat to continue to develop this transcendent identity in a safe and supportive context.

Yet the end of this particular portion of Liat's narrative reveals the problematic nature of identity transcendence, for the context in which it has begun to develop is ultimately a false reality, a place of utopian coexistence. But for now, one year after her initial participation, Liat is able to practice her new social identity as a "Seed." In accordance with common ingroup identity theory, being a Seed seems to represent for Liat an identity supplement—a superordinate level of categorization in which both Israelis and Palestinians can comfortably coexist. Her new identity contains empathy for the outgroup, rooted in the friendships she developed in the context of participation at camp, and it is sustained through active social practice, such as presentations about Arabs that she makes in Jewish schools in Israel, attempting to educate Jewish Israelis about coexistence.

Liat's life story reveals the possibility of identity transcendence as an outcome of participation at Seeds of Peace. In her narrative, she acknowledges her own psychological process of identity transformation, which culminates in the recategorization of both ingroup and outgroup into a new, common identity. Yet Liat's story raises a number of questions about this process. To what extent is her ability to undergo a process of recategorization related to her already low level of ingroup identity salience prior to participation? How sustainable is her identity transcendence should the opportunity for social practice, such as the 2006 closure of the Seeds of Peace Center in Jerusalem, diminish? As temporary windows into the development of an identity, the collection of a life story at a particular time and place

is always constrained by the ever-evolving forces of history. Yet Liat's narrative suggests great possibility for contact between Israelis and Palestinians.

"I Have Been Changed a Lot": The Story of Laila

A 16-year-old vivacious Muslim from Taybeh, Laila is a Palestinian citizen of Israel. Motivated by her interest in politics, but also by the thrill of a trip to the United States, Laila identifies participation in Seeds of Peace as the peak experience of her narrative. With the birth of her political consciousness, which she claims to occur around age 11, Laila's life story begins its great ascent (see Figure 4.2). Even as the second intifada begins, when Laila is 14, this ascent continues, as the political happenings motivate her to become active in her community.

> I didn't have any interest in political things till I was 11. From 11 to 14, I became very interested, in the intifada and in the history of Palestine. And Israel, but more Palestine. ...Actually, when I was 9 and Rabin died, I became really interested in the Israeli government. And I was really sad when he died because he really wanted peace. ...When I was 14, the intifada began. And I started being interested more and more in the situation and more in the history and what it is about.

The social ecology of Laila's development is saturated with political events, which awaken a passion for politics and history in Laila in early adolescence. Like many Jewish Israeli youth of her generation, she mourns the loss of Yitzhak Rabin (Raviv, Raviv, Sadeh, & Silberstein, 1998; Raviv, Sadeh, Raviv, Silberstein, & Diver, 2000), his death a defining moment in the tragic course of the conflict but also a motivating factor in the birth of Laila's political consciousness. Considered in its totality, Laila's story is a basic narrative of progress and ascent, her life experience culminating in her participation at Seeds of Peace.
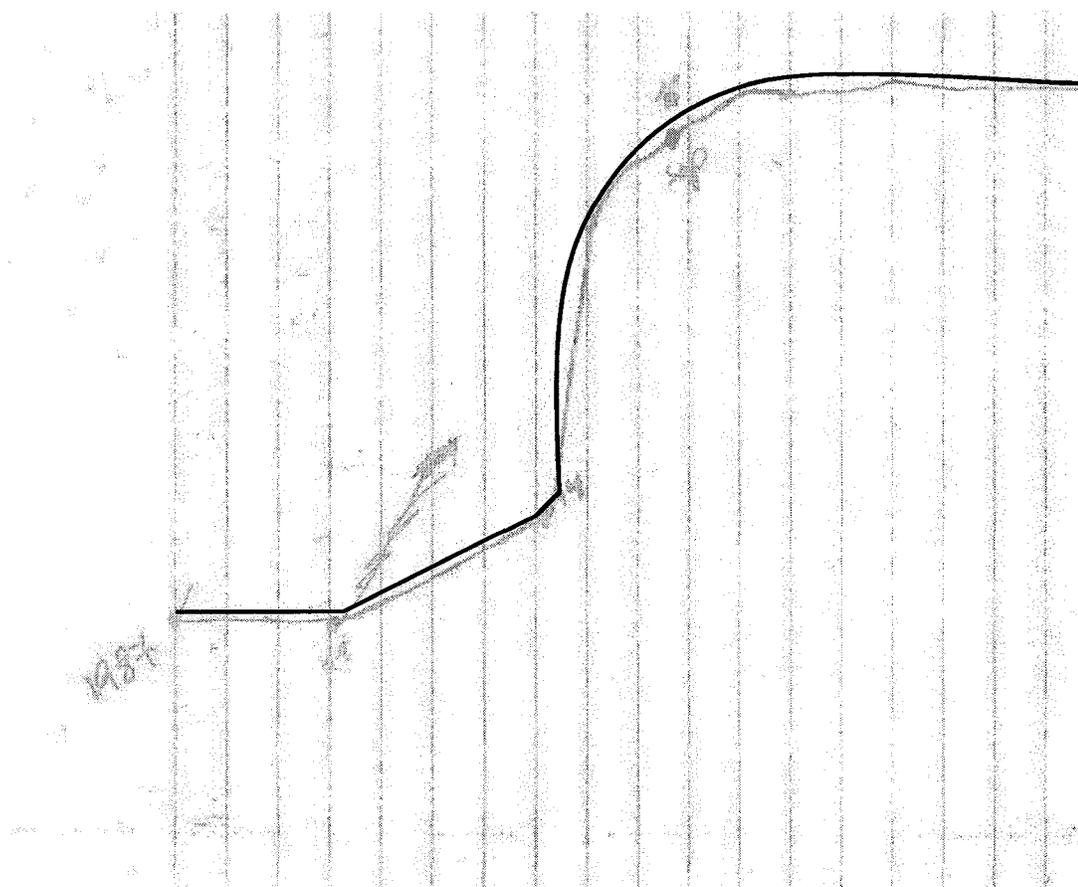
Figure 4.2. Laila's life-line, 2003. (Image adjusted for clarity.)

Laila's experience at Seeds of Peace represents both a peak and a turning point in her

life story. She describes the major transformation that occurred in her ideological perspective

by referring to her views on the use of suicide bombing.

> My grandma was telling me stories about how they lived before '48, their traditions,
> the songs they were hearing, their houses, how they left their houses. She told me a
> story about a family that was eating, and they told them to get out from their houses.
> They were eating a family dinner, so they got out. And the food was still warm. So
> the new Jewish family entered the house, saw the food, sat and started eating! When I
> heard this story, I cried a lot. How is *that*—that people left their houses and others
> who have nothing to do with those houses just come in?!

> And I had these opinions—these political opinions—about the suicide bombers, after
> the terrible situation was going on.... I really was agreeing with all the suicide
> bombing and the things they were doing in the Jewish cities. I really agreed with

them. Kill! I don't care! They're doing the same! They kill babies, they kill women and men in Gaza and in the territories, so I don't care.

Laila begins her narrative of the way in which Seeds of Peace has impacted her political beliefs with a family story of the Nakba—a story which, regardless of its veracity, carries tremendous symbolism for the relationship between Israeli and Palestinian identities. Laila's internalization of this story, along with the many stories of Palestinian suffering she has seen or heard since the outbreak of the intifada, has created within her a sense of solidarity with the use of suicide bombers to harm Israelis. Conforming to the Palestinian master narrative in her ideological commitments, Laila once viewed suicide bombing as a legitimate form of resistance to Israeli occupation. But with her participation at Seeds of Peace, those commitments have been reconfigured.

The turning point for Laila at Seeds of Peace results in a reversal of ideological setting for the life story, but it is also interpreted by her as a transformation from a "prejudiced" to a "logical" individual.

> Before I came to Seeds of Peace, I had a lot of racist ideas. After Seeds of Peace, I have been changed a lot. I *really* agreed with the suicide bombings, like my family and like most of the Arabs in Israel. But after Seeds of Peace, I totally disagreed. Because, you know, I don't see any human thing in the suicide bombing. And I don't think this is the kind of *jihad* that Islam talks about. And suicide bombing gives the world the reason to take Islam in the wrong way, to misunderstand Islam. So I totally disagree with it now. And after I had a lot of friends, *Jewish* friends, after Seeds of Peace, I would see the news and I kept thinking, how would that be if a Jewish friend of mine would die in a suicide bombing? How would I respond? Everyone can be hurt. Even me, I'm an Arab Israeli, but I can be hurt by a suicide bomber. So I've been changed a lot, and I have to say that after Seeds of Peace.

> ...I didn't care whether it was logical or not, I just *hated* the Jewish, you know. This *hatred*, I just couldn't change it. After Seeds of Peace, I realized, when you understand someone, you can like him. So when I respected them and when I played with them in Color Games and had this coexistence with them, ate with them, and slept next to each other, it changed it a bit, you know.

A key component of her ideological identification with the Palestinian master narrative—the

legitimate use of violence as a means of resistance and liberation—has vanished as a

consequence of her participation in Seeds of Peace. Again, as for Liat, the primary

mechanism of transformation appears to be the development of cross-group friendships,

which provoke a sense of empathy and an ability to see the perspective of the other,

considered to be an indication of higher moral development (Kohlberg, 1976; Piaget, 1932;

see also Batson et al., 1997; DeTurk, 2001; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). The other, in

some ways, becomes part of the self (Aron, Aron, Tudor, & Nelson, 1991), as the polarization

of ingroup identity is transcended.

Laila's story to this point suggests a process of personalization and decategorization

of the outgroup, and her self-reported ideological change fits well with classic perspectives

on intergroup relations which emphasize the prejudiced individual as the root cause of

conflict (e.g., Allport, 1954). Laila herself presents a contrast between two social ecologies,

one which promotes "hatred" and one which promotes "logic." Not surprisingly, the former is

Israel/Palestine, the latter Seeds of Peace. So while decategorization appears to be a

significant social psychological process in Laila's life-story transformation, it is ultimately

the process of *re*categorization that serves to instill identity transcendence in Laila's

narrative.

> ...As you see, Seeds of Peace gives the opportunity and the freedom for everyone to
> express himself. In the end, there's a kind of impact that Seeds of Peace has.... I
> don't know how it happens, but I think it's about learning to be logical. Here, it's not
> about disagreeing, and who's right and who's wrong. It's about learning to be logical
> and being human. Humanity is the most important thing in Seeds.

Laila attributes the impact of the program to the development of a "logical," presumably

more rational and less emotional, perspective on the conflict. But she also acknowledges the

significance of the recognition of a higher level of category inclusiveness for both Israelis and

Palestinians—that of human being. The notion of "common humanity," so central to the culture of Seeds of Peace, provides a clear category to which all participants can achieve a sense of belonging.

Yet the strength of a common ingroup identity extends beyond Laila's simple claim that "humanity is the most important thing in Seeds." Laila reports a process of identity assumption, of full acculturation to the Seeds identity, in her life-story narrative.

> Yeah, there's a lot of equality at Seeds of Peace. That makes you feel really comfortable. Discrimination is not bred here. You can find it maybe in the house, in the family, everywhere. I feel as a young girl I am discriminated against because I'm young. But not here. I mean right here, at Seeds of Peace, I don't think anyone right here feels discriminated against. I don't think. I don't believe. Because even the clothes, everyone has the same! And the bunks, the showers, the coexistence, even the schedule, it's equal. Everything. Everyone has to do the things they have to do. Everyone gets the rights that they're supposed to get, which makes us all feel really comfortable to be here and talk with others. Here, if I'm talking with someone who's Jewish or Palestinian, it doesn't matter. I don't care if he's Palestinian. I don't look at him *as* a Palestinian. And I don't look at him as an Israeli. I just look at him as a *Seed*. I see the green t-shirt in front of me, and that's what I care about.
>
> ...The most important part of my identity is being a Seed, but at the same time being Muslim, because they're connected somehow. ...The first thing really is being a Seed. I so *feel* Seed in being everything I am. Being a Muslim, I still feel Seed.

The sense of equality and absence of discrimination that Laila experiences at camp reveals the extent to which the program is successful in satisfying the condition of an equal-status encounter. For Laila, a member of the Arab minority in a Jewish state, this sense of equality is euphoric. It is symbolically realized in the camp uniform, but for Laila, it has a deeper psychological impact. The homogenizing effect of recategorization allows Laila to view her peers as united in a common identity as "Seeds." This process of recategorization is both cognitive and emotional, as Laila reports to "feel Seed." Yet Laila is quite clear that this new common identity does not replace her other social identities: she remains a Muslim, an Arab, a Palestinian citizen of Israel. But "feeling Seed" influences these other identities. In this

way, recategorization and the assumption of a non-threatening superordinate identity indeed seems to characterize Laila's process of identity transformation.

In expressing her view on how the conflict might indeed be resolved, Laila reveals the new, transcendent ideological setting of her life story.

> I think the Israelis have to give freedom to the Palestinians. The refugees, if they want to go back, to be able to go back. It's their land. But the Israelis can't leave their land, which is what the Palestinians want. They can't. This is the reality. I just want to feel that both sides will live, and just stop the killings, stop the bloodshed, stop all these stupid things that's going on. Just let the Palestinians feel freedom, at least smell the freedom. So they can be in their homes without thinking right now the roof might crash over my head. And also so the Israelis won't be afraid to leave their houses. There are so many people who are afraid. Even me and my sister, we'll be afraid to take the bus! Or even be next to the bus! I would really like to have this day, when people will not be afraid to leave their houses, and not be afraid to say what they think, to not lie to ourselves. Just the right to live, this is what both groups need. Living in safety.

Although obviously quite sympathetic to the Palestinian desire for full independence and self-determination, Laila nonetheless expresses a genuine understanding for the security concerns of Israelis. Her narrative reveals her support for the legitimacy of both Israelis and Palestinians, with their seemingly intractable ideological perspectives. The solution to the conflict, in Laila's transcendent vision, is one in which the needs of both groups—needs for both existential security and the complete recognition of identity—are fully realized. She has accomplished this ambitious task within herself; she has reconciled these disparate needs within her own narrative, at least for the time being. In her desire to extend this reconciliation beyond herself and her own personal narrative, she has in the year since camp sought to influence friends and family members.

One of the implicit premises of intergroup contact is that the newly tolerant and un-prejudiced individual will positively contribute to conflict and prejudice reduction simply by sharing his or her experience with family or friends. The "extended contact effect," whereby

knowledge that an ingroup member has outgroup friends in and of itself causes positive

intergroup attitudes, has been empirically demonstrated in experimental and survey research

(e.g., Wright, Aron, McLaughin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997). In the context of Seeds of Peace,

there is an explicit desire to see the youth participants share the possibility of coexistence in

their home communities and to, as a consequence, perhaps create a web of ever-expanding

transcendent identities. In her life story, Laila directly discusses her own efforts to contribute

to this aim of the program.

> Actually, I faced a difficult reality back at home. ...I understand that *I* am the one who changed, not my family, not the situation back here. ...So when I went back home, I expressed to my family and friends that I disagreed with suicide bombing. But they disagreed and supported suicide bombing. I went back home, and I tried to change them and to convince them that it's not good, that it's hurting people, you could be hurt and I could be hurt. Everyone can be hurt. The suicide bomber—when he gets into a mall—he doesn't care if there's an Arab Israeli or a baby or a woman. He just wants to do it, you know. But they were not convinced at all. So I had this really, really big problem of convincing them, and successfully I could. My family right now, they totally disagree with suicide bombing. When I spoke with my parents and told them about my experience here and my opinions, what my reactions were to the news. You know how they would react to the news of a suicide bombing? They would say, "Oh great! How many killed? Only two? Oh no." I was like, oh my God, is this my family? I don't know, it was just really weird. It's like, where's the humanity of my family? They really love me, and they're a really warm family, but I still felt so far away from them somehow. But when you tell someone your experience here, I mean in detail, about how it was you slept together and lived together and ate together, and how I expressed myself as an Arab Israeli, they were kind of proud of me. Even though I'm young, they were interested to hear more, and I have a lot of things to tell them, even though I'm young. I've had an experience that they haven't. ...I feel that I did something, and I feel really good about it.

Just as Liat became the defender of Arabs in the face of her friends' racist jokes, Laila has

charged herself with the defense of the common humanity of the Jews. She believes her

experience at Seeds of Peace not only provides her with a distinctive identity within her

family, as a young woman having gone through an emotionally challenging experience

independently, but also has enabled her to argue for the immorality of suicide bombing in a

compelling and credible way. She claims ultimately to have had an impact on her family's thinking, to have transformed their ardent support for suicide bombing at least partially.

Laila's identity transcendence and awakening to the possibility of thinking of Israelis and Palestinians in terms of their common humanity are central to her narrative of progress. As she acknowledges, her primary social identity is, for the moment, being a Seed. Her narrative is thus told to present a coherent account of how that identity came to be, and how it offers her the opportunity to contribute positively to her social ecology of development. As a Palestinian-Israeli, already a member of a group "predisposed" to integrate the existential and ideological legitimacy of both sides, Laila's post-program narrative is hardly surprising. "Becoming a Seed" has provided Laila with the identity coherence she has never been able to achieve as a Palestinian-Israeli, trapped in some liminal state of existence. Adopting the language and ideology of her new identity as a Seed, Laila reveals the possibility of identity transcendence. We will return to her story once more, to trace its evolution over time. But for now, let us return to a familiar character in our story of Israeli-Palestinian coexistence.

"Maybe They are the Victim, the Real Victim": The Story of Noa

I returned to the Gilboa in the summer of 2005 to interview Noa and other youth from the area. Recall that in 2004, prior to her participation in Hands of Peace, Noa's life story offered a classic account of descent and gain, closely mirroring the Jewish Israeli master narrative. Yet in the salience of her local identity as a child of the kibbutz, and therefore a true "pioneer," Noa resisted some of the most ideologically polarizing components of the master narrative. Owing largely to her family and the stories of her brothers' army service, Noa was quite sympathetic to the Palestinians before having ever met one. She identified as a "left-winger," and her solution to the stalemate of the conflict was for Israel to simply return all lands captured in the 1967 war. About this point, she seemed to possess little uncertainty.

The key to peace was with Israel and the bold action of complete withdrawal, not with the Palestinians.

The contents of her baseline narrative are already suggestive of a kind of identity transcendence—a recognition of the existence and legitimacy of the outgroup and its own ideological position, an open critique of the ingroup narrative that contributes to the conflict. But regardless of the openness apparent in Noa's pre-program narrative, as I observed her in the early stages of participation in 2004, there was no question that contact forced her to more closely connect with her ingroup identity as a Jewish Israeli. In dialogue sessions, she often became the passionate defender of the Israeli interpretation of history, with its emphasis on the constant rejection of a Jewish state by the Arabs. Yet one year later, Noa has crafted a narrative that has enabled a complete integration of the experience of contact, and she has, like Liat and Laila, assumed a new identity supplement through her participation in Hands of Peace.

First, it is interesting to re-examine the form of Noa's narrative (Figure 4.3; cf. Figure 3.4), scripted now at the age of 15. The jagged and dramatic form that characterized her story one year prior has now smoothed itself out, as if a kind of personal peace has come to consume her interpretation of life's challenges. The experiential contents that characterize Noa's story have changed very little since 2004. The first descent still represents the divorce of her parents, the ascent her recovery and recognition that she has the social skills to find support from peers, rather than her family. The peak of her narrative consists of the last year, when her sense of self-confidence has been at its highest. The peak experience of her story, last year's Purim celebration, is a Jewish holiday which, as Noa describes it, is "such a happy holiday because someone tried to kill all the Jews and we won." The holiday commemorates the rescue of Persian Jews from the threat of extermination in ancient times.
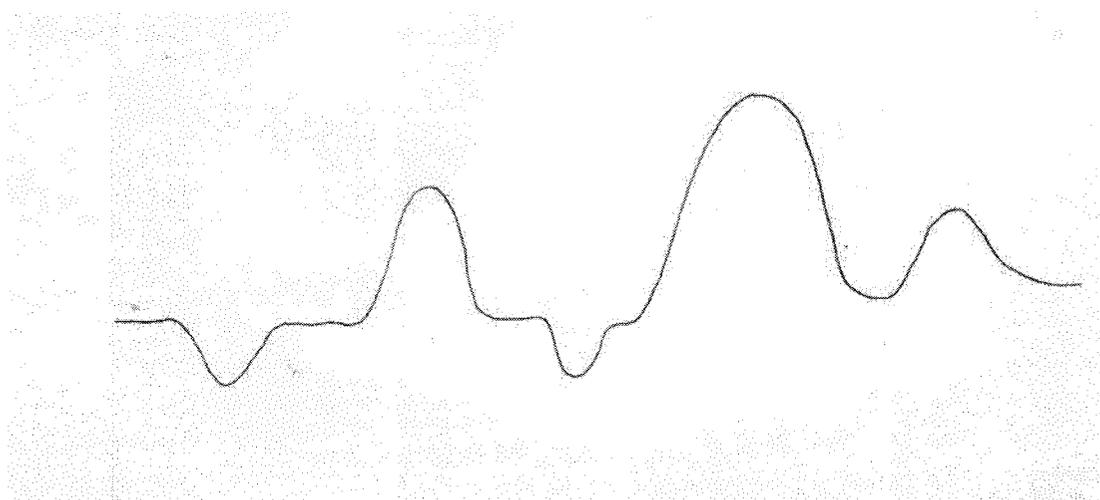
Figure 4.3. Noa's life-line, 2005.

What is most significant for our consideration of the effect of Hands of Peace on

Noa's narrative is that she identifies her participation in the program as a major turning point

in her life story.

> ...Every time I think about something big that happened in my life, or a big thing that
> changed my way of thinking, I think of Hands of Peace. ...I used to think of myself
> that I'm not a person who's really good at listening and being quiet. In Hands of
> Peace, I just listened, I learned to listen. And I know that just hearing a lot of things
> you haven't heard before and listening to the stories, it wasn't so comfortable and
> nice to listen to. So I got to think a lot with myself, about myself. I think it changed
> me in a way. I learned how to listen and let other people talk and not saying all the
> time what I'm thinking and what's my opinion, because sometimes this isn't the most
> important thing.

For Noa, the turning point is most connected to a shift in self-perception through the

acquisition of new skills—listening skills—that she identifies as beneficial. Though already

an "open" person, based on her pre-program narrative, Noa underwent a process of challenge

in which, initially at least, she had difficulty listening to and accepting the stories of her

Palestinian peers.

> I remember Aya, she was telling a story about her friend that got killed by a soldier at
> a party or something. And first of all, I thought, What? In a party? What are you
> talking about? People in my army don't just come to parties and kill innocent people!

> But when I saw her reaction as she told the story, I realized it had to be real. She couldn't be lying or making it up. When she started crying, I knew it was real. It was hard to listen to someone talking about her friend that died. She just said that she lost a friend. And I felt sorry for her as a friend and, in a way, ashamed.

Noa initially struggles with the challenge to her sense of ingroup identity that stories of Palestinians like Aya, who have lived their entire lives under Israeli military occupation, create. Though she initially rejects or at least questions the veracity of such accounts, it is in her empathy with Aya's emotional response that Noa finds the importance of being able to listen and fully process these stories. Though they may create a sense of shame in her, for the suffering of the outgroup at the hands of members of her own ingroup, Noa accepts this difficult emotional place for both herself and for Aya, and she does not retreat to identity polarization. Her response is transcendent in that, in the moment, she recognizes the common humanity of both herself and of Aya, and she legitimizes Aya's narrative, even as this legitimacy threatens to destabilize her own identity.

Yet we must recall that Noa entered the program already questioning the master narrative of her ingroup. She was already exposed to the suffering of Palestinians in the territories through the stories of her brothers whose army service took them there, and into the homes of Palestinians. So for Noa, the path to recategorization was destined to be a short one. Hearing the stories of Palestinians with this preconception of their legitimacy facilitated the path to identity transcendence that had already begun in Noa before she had even met a Palestinian.

> With Aya, she said these experiences she had made her hate all Jews, and this was very difficult for her, but even in Hands of Peace she couldn't say that she didn't hate or blame all the Jews. And I thought to myself, I don't feel that way about Arabs or Palestinians. That's when I realized she feels that way maybe because she suffered the most. She had the biggest loss, much bigger than any of mine. She was the closest. She was closer to the conflict. She was closer to death.

Noa attributes Aya's hatred of Jews as connected to her experience of life under Israeli occupation, rather than to some inherent and unshakeable prejudice. Israel's existential security is threatened by its military occupation of the Palestinians, not by the natural attitude of the Palestinians toward Jews, in Noa's view. Hands of Peace has pushed Noa to identify even more strongly with this left-wing ideology which calls for an end to the occupation.

> Hands of Peace made me definitely more left-wing. I was in the left wing when I came to Hands of Peace, but it makes me more extreme. Hearing all those stories of the Palestinians and Arab Israeli kids and I thought, OK, I'm right. They are more right than me. Their stories are more like, I remember being there, in the dialogue session we used to say to them, you're not the only victim because our soldiers get killed and our innocent people get killed all the time. But then, after hearing all their stories, I thought, maybe they are the victim, the real victim. Maybe they suffer more than we do. I came there and I thought that they might suffer more than we do, but after Hands of Peace, I knew that for sure.

Acknowledging that she entered the program with a willingness to accept the legitimacy of Palestinian stories, and with that to transcend her own national identity to some extent, Noa reveals her process of coming to view the Palestinians as the "real victim" in this current phase of conflict. She has come to reject the notion that the Israelis suffer just as much at the hands of Palestinians. Once again, she identifies the occupation, and hence Israel, as the root cause of the current suffering of both groups. So she is able to cast a critical gaze toward herself, and to her own ingroup.

The extent to which Hands of Peace in fact "caused" Noa to undergo this level of identity transcendence is difficult to discern. Noa may have continued along the ideological trajectory which her pre-program narrative suggested. But the experience of Hands of Peace has, for Noa, provided her with the "evidence" of her ideological convictions through the stories of her Palestinian peers. Her advice to future Hands of Peace participants: "The most important, try to listen, because you're gonna here lots of things you never heard before. You're gonna learn a lot."

That at age 15 Noa's life-story narrative reveals, in its ideological setting, a measure of identity transcendence is hardly surprising. The seeds of transcendence were apparent at age 14, and Noa comes from a left-wing family critical of Israel's policies toward the Palestinians. Hands of Peace can probably best be considered a "facilitator" of the ideological trajectory of Noa's narrative. The experience of contact, while it certainly created moments in which Noa agrees she felt the need to "defend Israel," ultimately increased her level of sympathy for the outgroup, for Noa is keenly aware of the power asymmetry that infuses Israeli-Palestinian relations. Seeing herself as a member of a powerful ingroup—a group that ultimately can control the outcome of the conflict—she is prepared to sacrifice that power for peace.

Summary: The Problem of Transcendence

The stories of Liat, Laila, and Noa reveal narratives of transcendence through recategorization of self and other. In all three cases, the absence of identity polarization in the life-story narrative one year after intergroup contact is attributable to at least some extent to the willingness to accept the legitimacy of the outgroup narrative. With the recognition of legitimacy of the outgroup and its narrative necessarily comes a transcendence of the rigid master narrative, with its tendency to reproduce a status-quo state of conflict. All three young women have come to reject the most polarizing aspects of the master narrative—that Israel's need for security outweighs the Palestinians' need for self-determination; that suicide bombing is a legitimate form of resistance; that the outgroup is somehow less "civilized," and therefore less human, than the ingroup.

Particularly in the cases of Liat and Laila, the experience of contact has resulted in the assumption of a superordinate identity as a "Seed." They have internalized what I earlier referred to as the "third narrative," the narrative of coexistence, with all of its ritualistic

mythology tied to the camp culture itself. It does not seem to be coincidental that, although Hands of Peace participants like Noa reveal a measure of identity transcendence and have undergone a cognitive process of recategorization, the indoctrination of a superordinate identity seems less powerful for Hands of Peace participants. Recall that Hands of Peace does not occur in the context of a carefully manipulated isolated camp, but rather in the real-world setting of suburban Chicago. While it does indeed seek to construct a kind of culture in which recategorization will occur, it does so perhaps less dramatically than Seeds of Peace.

If the optimistic outcome of transcendence seems somehow fragile and untenable to the reader, I would suggest that he or she has come to appreciate the psychological depth of intergroup conflict, and perhaps of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular, and to not be easily swayed by the possibility of coexistence. The reader surely has also kept in mind that the outcome of identity transcendence seems to rely on the political psychology of demography. The absence of young men and of Palestinians at all in this categorical outcome is not by accident, for if we recognize the great threat of identity transcendence to nationalism, and the fragility of national identity in the context of Israel and Palestine, and finally the connection between men, masculinity, and nationalism (Nagel, 1998), the incapability of men to construct a narrative of transcendence is expectable. The role of men in reproducing the conflict, whether as soldiers or as "freedom fighters," cannot be overlooked (e.g., Johnson & Kuttab, 2001; Peteet, 1994; Sasson-Levy, 2003).

If we recall that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a site of contested national identities (Kelman, 1978), still unresolved, then we must consider that those individuals whose transcendence would be too destabilizing, too threatening to the outcome of the contest, are destined to remain in a state of identity polarization—or perhaps, to become only further polarized by contact. It makes sense that for adolescent males the need to identify with the

master narrative is simply too powerful to be thwarted, for were these males to relinquish their ideological adherence to the ingroup, the power dynamics of the conflict could be destabilized. It also makes sense that we would witness no examples of identity transcendence for Palestinians, for recall that in this contest of identities, they continue to be the losers. As such, they approach the experience of contact with a particular aim: to argue for the legitimacy of their national identity, still unrealized in the achievement of territorial sovereignty. With this end still unaccomplished, the Palestinians cannot so easily transcend the narrative that makes them so unique, for their distinction as a group—their identity—is what is most at stake for them. To put it in social psychological terms, Israelis and Palestinians possess divergent levels of optimal distinctiveness, since there is divergence in the recognition and "fulfillment" of their respective national identities.

But regardless of the sources of variability in identity transcendence as a narrative outcome of contact, we must also query our own—and the programs'—expectation of such an outcome. Even though Kelman (1999) suggests the need for identity transcendence at the structural level in order for a genuine, sustainable resolution to be secured, the design of his interactive problem-solving workshops with high-status Israeli and Palestinian leaders reveals the limitations of transcendence at the individual psychological level (e.g., Kelman, 1993, 1997). Kelman's work has focused on the building of coalitions among influential Israelis and Palestinians, but he argues that these coalitions must necessarily be "uneasy" ones, and it is this important observation that reveals the key problem with identity transcendence.

The reality of the conflict is a reality of polarization between groups. It is a reality of division, separation, insulation, and "unengagement." The problem with intergroup contact in a new reality, with a new system of power and categorization, is that, if an individual group member somehow denies this inherent state of identity polarization and too readily engages in

a recategorization process, his credibility as a member of that group is somehow diminished. In other words, if the "coalition," as Kelman calls it, becomes too strong, its effectiveness is lost. If group members sacrifice their ingroup credibility for a cohesive coalition among participants, if they indeed recategorize too rapidly and allow that superordinate identity to overshadow the commitments of their distinct social identities, they sacrifice their political effectiveness upon re-entry to the context of conflict (Kelman, 1993). Participants in such endeavors in intergroup contact must not "become so strongly bonded to each other that they jeopardize their relationship with their own national communities" (Kelman, 1993, p. 254), for the goal of such encounters ought not to be the construction of an entirely new social identity, lacking in any national or geographic fulfillment. Rather, as Kelman and others whose focus is increasingly on an approach to contact that is grounded in the structural reality of the conflict (e.g., Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004b; Suleiman, 2004b) contend, the outcome of such encounters must be consonant with the possibility of mutual identity recognition. With this idea in mind—this inherent problem with the *demand* of identity transcendence— we consider another, far more common outcome of participation: identity accentuation.

IDENTITY ACCENTUATION

We have already characterized the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a problem of polarized identities, of negatively interdependent historical narratives, and of asymmetrical power dynamics. Tracing the origins of intractability to the mutual perception of existential insecurity, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is maintained through the reproduction of narratives, the polarizing elements of which are accentuated. Such is the condition of the "narrative stalemate" to which I have referred.

The social psychology of identity is characterized by the need to balance competing needs for integration and differentiation of the social ecology into the self-narrative (Adams

& Marshall, 1996), all the while achieving some level of optimal distinctiveness within a given social identity or between social identities (Brewer, 1991). Contact between groups in conflict may lead to a process of recategorization that does not threaten this need for optimal distinctiveness (Brewer, 1996), but more often contact in itself only contributes to greater polarization between groups (e.g., Hewstone & Brown, 1986b; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The psychological mechanism of this process of increased identification and polarization, which I will call *identity accentuation*, is likely a combination of affective and cognitive factors, such as the emotional salience of group belongingness (see Baumeister & Leary, 1995), enhanced self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), or simply the fundamental cognitive need to *categorize* self and other (Brewer, 1991), and in that process to fulfill some basic human function for creating cohesion in the social ecology or "life space" (Lewin, 1951). If identity is a fundamental process of human development in its own right, a psychological need that in fact drives development in some way, then the idea of categorization as an epiphenomenon of mere existence is increasingly credible.

Precisely by constructing a social context in which identity is primed, the experience of contact between Israelis and Palestinians necessarily activates the need for narrative exploration. As an outcome of this process, identity accentuation refers to an increase in the salience of identification with the ingroup and its master narrative. It represents, for the most part, the ultimate antithesis to the desired outcome of these American-based programs, with their ideology of cosmopolitanism. And yet, that contact is most likely to result in this kind of identity response has long been known in social psychology, beginning with the work of Henri Tajfel and his colleagues. Contact invariably increases the perception of identity threat, through the pressures of both decategorization and recategorization. With this threat may emerge, particularly during adolescence when an individual is only beginning to reconcile the

relationship between self and society (Erikson, 1968), a kind of identity defense that restores coherence to the life story.

If we accept the premise that contact is inherently challenging and threatening to the ingroup narrative of identity with which all youth are called to identify, the outcome of *increased* polarization, of a *greater* accentuation of ingroup identity (and therefore the distinctiveness of social identities), is easy to foresee. I will present three stories that suggest a process of identity accentuation as a consequence of contact. As their voices have thus far been silent in this chapter, let us begin with a consideration of a Palestinian.

The Fatalist: The Story of Mohammed

In my field notes, I came to describe Mohammed and his family as fiercely anti-ideological. Unlike my experiences with families in the West Bank, Mohammed's East Jerusalemite family seemed to avoid discussions of politics at every turn. Secular Muslims, they are the model of a family whose members have been deeply impacted by the forces of globalization. Decidedly middle class, they all speak near-flawless English, among other languages besides Arabic and Hebrew, routinely surf the internet, and have an adult daughter living in the United States with a family of her own. Mohammed, like Ali, has countless pirated DVDs of American films, downloaded from the web. He listens to American pop, rap, and hip-hop, in addition to Arabic pop from Lebanon, Egypt, and the Gulf. The family is just as likely to watch an American film on their satellite TV—without subtitles, since they claim the English is always mistranslated into Arabic—as they are to watch the Arabic version of *American Idol*, featuring competitors from throughout the Arab world.

Like many Jerusalemite families, whose national identities have been obscured by their exclusion from both Israeli citizenship (recall that they were all granted "permanent residency" status after Israel's unrecognized annexation of East Jerusalem following the 1967

war, with no possibility for obtaining citizenship) and the auspices of the Palestinian

Authority, which has no jurisdiction over Jerusalem, Mohammed's family lives a "liminal"

existence, residing somehow between identities (Turner, 1967; see also van Gennep, 1960).

Their Jerusalemite identity, which confers upon them a kind of "structural invisibility" or

ambiguity (Turner, 1967), limits the degree to which they see themselves as "fully

Palestinian." We considered this problem in Chapter 3 with the narrative of Ali. Let me offer

a very concrete example from my field observations with Mohammed's family that reveals

the extent of their identity ambiguity.

I tended to take copious field notes about my meals in Israel and Palestine, not

simply for the hope of somehow replicating the delectable quality of the cuisine upon my

departure but also because distinctions in my meals seemed to provide important data about

my research "subjects." In Qadas, the food was always either far too salty or far too sweet for

my tastes. In this small village of desperation, was this tendency connected to the extremes of

the place, or simply the need for stimulation that seemed to characterize the eternal

eventlessness of the place? It was interesting that, at the home of Ofra in Haifa, her mother

claimed not to know how to make a single Indian dish, even though she herself grew up there

and did not immigrate to Israel until she was an adolescent. Was her need to make food that

was distinctly "Israeli" (I will always recall her delicious, massive "Israeli breakfast," which

she would serve to me with such pride) a reflection of her need to express an Israeli identity,

and to, like so many Mizrahi immigrants to Israel, reveal her commitment to an Israeli

identity through the rejection of her former culture? Such questions invariably arose over the

simple act of consuming a meal in Israel or Palestine.

For a deeper window into Mohammed's identity, let us consider my own breakfast

experience in his household. While I do not recall receiving any breakfast other than fresh

hummus, labne (a yogurt dip), zatar (a thyme spice mixture), bread, olives, eggs, and an assortment of homemade pickles while residing with my host families in the West Bank, my breakfast at Mohammed's revealed the complexity of his family's cultural location. While my first morning I was typically offered labne, pickles, zatar, and bread, most mornings I was offered Corn Flakes and Nescafe. Based on my field experience, I doubt very much that many Palestinian homes in the West Bank possess an accessible supply of Nescafe. Yet every Israeli family with whom I stayed would customarily offer me precisely this beverage in the morning. Some Israeli families would offer me cereal for breakfast, but such a breakfast was still quite uncommon. But in general, the infusion of Palestinian, Israeli, and American customs into the family breakfast at Mohammed's home, I believe, says much about the family's sense of identity.

Mohammed's family is a subject of globalization, and as such naturally exudes a kind of cosmopolitanism—a predisposition for conversation between cultures. Mohammed's family members typically expressed a great openness to the world as a result. Unlike in the West Bank, where in homes I would be subject to routine diatribes on the injustice of the occupation, the immorality of Zionism, and the legitimacy of resistance, Mohammed's family only seemed to seek a stable economic place in the world—a place to be comfortable and content, a cultural context conducive to an unburdened existence. Mohammed's mother and two older brothers, all of whom served as important models for Mohammed (his father did not live with the family), were always very clear with me in their desire to avoid political discourse in the home, or in life in general for that matter. It is in this decidedly anti-ideological context that the ideological setting of Mohammed's life story was beginning to be formed.

In the summer of 2005, two years after participating in Seeds of Peace and one year

after participating in Hands of Peace, Mohammed narrated his life story to me, the view of

East Jerusalem in the background outside his home, sights of the separation barrier visible in

the distance. True to the Palestinian master narrative, Mohammed's narrative (Figure 4.4)

takes the form of a tragedy.
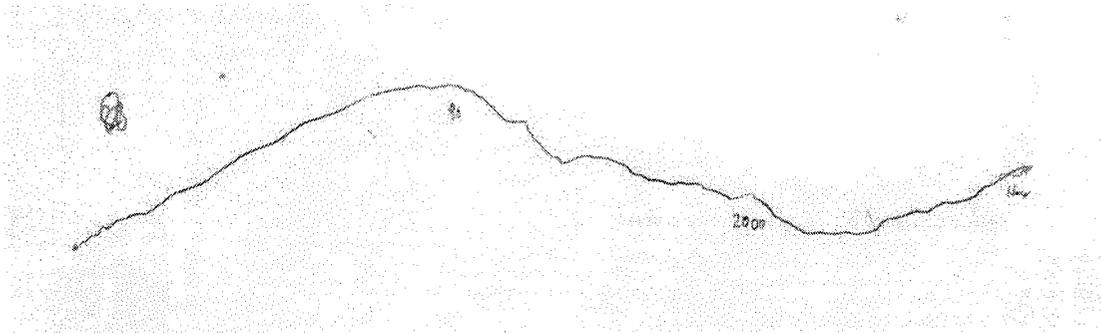
Figure 4.4. Mohammed's life-line, 2005.

Mohammed's narrative ascends only during his period of professed social unconsciousness,

and its tragic descent begins as problems within his family become unavoidable.

> I was born in 1988, I was like a kid that didn't understand nothing at all, so everyone
> was giving me attention, growing up, in my family. So everything was like happy and
> normal.... Then when I was like eight years old, I start to really understand that
> there's like school and I have to study, there are a lot of things going on in life....
> And the family had tough times at that time, when I was eight years old, my parents
> started having problems, and they got divorced. ...I was always depressed with
> changes in my family.

The euphoria of childhood, in which Mohammed's life centered on himself and his own

pleasures, ends dramatically with the family disruption of divorce. Organizing his life story

into chapters, Mohammed describes the trajectory of this early period with the chapter titles

"Being Born in the Family," "Living in Childhood," and "Realizing Things: The Family

Problem."

Mohammed's transition into early adolescence occurs at the commencement of the second intifada, and his story takes a series of interesting turns as a consequence. Describing that period and the emergence of his political consciousness, Mohammed professes confusion about what his role in the conflict ought to be.

> At that time, I started thinking, "Should I do something, or should I not? Should I just stay here?" So pretty much I kept on talking to my mom about it and she said, "If you want to do something, you'll only ruin your life." So I just stayed here and watched. It's bigger than all of us. It's out of each one of our power. So this wasn't like any other teenage life.

The intifada created a crisis for Mohammed's identity. Was he to be a fighter, a protester, a helper? Ultimately, his identity as a *fatalist*, someone deeply committed to the belief that much of life lies beyond his control, emerged in response to this crisis. Unwilling to participate in the political action of the intifada, he chose instead to become an audience member to the great tragedy that would characterize the collective experience of the Palestinians, once more.

But Mohammed did indeed take action—a kind of action atypical of young Palestinians at the time. He chose to participate in Seeds of Peace. For him, it represented a way of "doing something" about the situation. Two years after this experience, now at age 16, Mohammed offers this account:

> And then by chance I went to Seeds of Peace, deciding that I'm meeting Israelis. And the thing is, I wasn't like changing, or like I accept them or anything, or what they say, it's like, I feel *more* like I'm the real owner of this land. I understand why they say what they say, but even, I was like *more* Palestinian when I came back—I *felt* more Palestinian. So I just came back, new, fresh Palestinian....

> ...Like being in dialogue with them, seeing them and knowing that a lot of them really don't care... When I hear them say things, and I was like, nothing's gonna change. There's no hope.... Also if you convince some of them, they'll be back here and remix with their society and it won't stay. So I was like, nothing's gonna change. Nothing like Seeds of Peace will help. So I just stay focused, and never like give up something because you are the legitimate owner of this land.

...So now we're living here, at this time, in the conflict. I don't know, I'm trying to avoid remembering that I'm in conflict. It's like I want life to like go on, seriously, and reach the best point I can in life, and live my life.... I know that people are suffering.... I always say, "A day will come and everything will be like the way it should be from the beginning"—we'll have our land back, our country back. And if not, the end of the world will come soon, and people will be judged for what they did. That's it, I'm just living here.

The experience of intergroup contact has, in Mohammed's interpretation, served to *enhance* his solidarity with a Palestinian identity. Contact facilitated his differentiation of self and other: "...It doesn't really matter if we agree or not, but it's like each other was raised in a different way of life and each one should be different because we are in a conflict. So we won't agree on everything; it's impossible."

Ideologically, contact has increased his identification with the Palestinian master narrative, with its focus on the significance of the land and its liberation. Mohammed now delegitimizes the Israeli narrative entirely, having become convinced of the legitimacy of the Palestinian narrative and its basis in ultimate truth. Coming together with other Palestinians from the West Bank during Seeds of Peace, and having to navigate a rejecting reintegration home, let us not dismiss the possibility that Mohammed's need to identify so thoroughly with the ideology of the Palestinian master narrative may be connected to his need to "prove" his identity, to himself and to others. Mohammed in fact identifies the nadir of his life story as his return home from the U.S. after participating in Seeds of Peace.

I don't know, coming back from the U.S.A. and from Seeds, trying to put it in the spot, where most of the people say you did something wrong. That was the lowest point for me in my life. Cause sometimes I thought, "Yeah, it was wrong." Here I'm living with Jews, I have no other choice. But there I went willing and chose to live with them. But it was like, I had to do something, I thought. There were no choices.

When people gave me a hard time for it, I was like, well, I tried something for myself. I wasn't brainwashed—I'm more Palestinian, I figured out that there's a difference, that's obvious. They have their own truth, their own books, their own history that they wrote themselves. ...It was for my good, I gave a strong idea about the Palestinian people. I didn't send a wrong message. I told them we're a people

whose land was occupied, we're sent out, we're forced out of the country, forced to do that. And we are people who want education, want to read, want to live a peaceful life, and that's not happening now. So I don't think I did something wrong. I wasn't there for having fun and forgetting the main things. I'm Palestinian, everybody's gonna look at me as Palestinian.... So I gave a good message, and whether it was wrong or right, I think for me, it helps me a lot, realizing more things and working on my personality.

Mohammed's participation at Seeds of Peace indeed creates an identity "crisis" for him, for his society views this action as "conspirational" in nature. The only acceptable form of narrative integration for such an experience is thus to frame its purpose as (a) faithfully representing the Palestinian cause, and (b) securing his own connection to his Palestinian identity. Mohammed's participation has fulfilled both of these aims, according to his account.

Are Mohammed's new commitments to the Palestinian master narrative motivated by a sense of guilt at participation, or by a feeling that, because of his privileged Jerusalemite identity, he is in fact "less Palestinian" than his West Bank peers? When we deal with the retrospection of narrative, we can do no more than speculate about the deep psychological motives for ideological identifications and commitments. It is without question that Mohammed's "globalized," Jerusalemite identity makes him a prime candidate for identity accentuation during adolescence. His need to manage the distinctiveness of his personal identity, so that it is at the very least consonant with an authentically Palestinian lifeway, is certainly primed by the experience of intergroup contact. But contact with Israelis—who in this century-old conflict have been represented in Palestinian collective consciousness as dark enemies in their quest for the basic right of self-determination—is psychologically dissonant for Palestinians. In order to make meaning of their will to partake in such an endeavor, they must, it would seem, construct an acceptable narrative that secures their place as "legitimate" Palestinians doing their part for the liberation of the Palestinian nation.

I call Mohammed the "Fatalist" precisely because of this attitude of resignation which he espouses in this and other parts of his life story. Mohammed has come to accept the powerlessness of his existence as a Palestinian, with no citizenship in a sovereign state he can readily claim as culturally and historically salient. He sees the events of the world as beyond his control, and even more so, as beyond *everyone's* control. He has internalized a skeptical, fatalistic view of the world and of political events in particular, believing instead that "one day, everything will be as it should." What I had initially mistaken for a kind of anti-ideological stance in Mohammed and his family was, in fact, an extraordinary degree of fatalism, which extended even to a boycott of Palestinian Authority elections, not out of protest but simply because, as Mohammed's mother told me, "It's fixed; it's already been decided."

Seeds of Peace, then, has served to accentuate Mohammed's Palestinian identity and to instill in him a deep sense of distinction between this identity and an Israeli one. It has contributed to the polarization between himself—his identity—and his Israeli peers. It has affirmed the story of his ingroup as the just and accurate story of the conflict. It has exposed the Israeli narrative as a work of fiction, a falsehood constructed only for the psychological benefit of its citizens. Most significantly, it has provided Mohammed with an acceptable *role* that contributes to the Palestinian cause; it has provided him with a relatively safe outlet for social practice as a Palestinian, to become connected to his identity and to express that commitment. In this way, Seeds of Peace offers a lifeway for Mohammed during his adolescence that he can meaningfully identify as valuable to his own identity development, even as it seems to affect his identity in ways counter to the program's underlying cosmopolitan ideology.

Yet Mohammed's unwillingness to fully legitimize the Israeli narrative is perhaps not so problematic, for a blind cosmopolitanism is an empty one. It denies the reality of identity, when the security of the world relies on the recognition of identity diversity (Fukuda-Parr, 2004). Mohammed's experience with contact contributed to his ability to differentiate between identities, and to make the existence of his identity as a Palestinian fully known. Given the power asymmetry of the conflict, in which a conflict over rival nationalisms has, in fact, only allowed for the fulfillment of one and not both, perhaps this kind of outcome is the most realistic possibility for Israeli and Palestinian youth. As practitioners at the School for Peace in Israel have argued, perhaps the need for Israelis to fully accept the legitimacy of Palestinian identity must *precede* the kind of mutual acceptance that so many of these programs benevolently pursue (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004a, 2004b; Nadler, 2004; Suleiman, 2004b). We will consider this idea further in Chapter 5, but for now we must recognize that for Mohammed, like virtually all Palestinian youth in this study, identity accentuation is the inevitable, psychologically manageable narrative outcome of contact with Israelis. To make meaning of their experience, they must somehow integrate it in the collective narrative of liberation and identity fulfillment that consumes Palestinian discourse.

The aims of these American-based programs may not, in fact, conform well to the reality of the conflict, with its unique system of structural relations. We will consider this notion quite thoroughly as well in Chapter 5, but for the moment let us acknowledge that contact has only further polarized Mohammed's identity. It has enhanced the salience of his ingroup identity as a Palestinian; it has accentuated this social identity above all other aspects of his identity. It has not "decategorized" or "recategorized," for Mohammed has resisted those "presses" of the Seeds of Peace experience. It has, rather, enabled him to more readily see the ideological distinctions between Palestinians and Israelis. It has exposed him to the

very basis of the conflict, its origins in the actual distinction between identities and narratives of the past, present, and future.

Fatalism is not, for Mohammed, an idiosyncratic personality characteristic. It is, rather, an interpretive tool that allows him to confront the challenge of his Palestinian identity in a way that is psychologically manageable. In his narrative of the present, of his current project of self-development, Mohammed is trying to manage the uncertainty of his life as a Palestinian, and he is attempting to integrate his sense of fatalism with his aspirations for a good life.

> It's like, nowadays, I'm trying to change myself. I don't want to put obstacles in my way, those are already thrown in, being a Palestinian. It's like really hard, not so easy as everyone thinks. So I'm trying to avoid everything, avoid thinking and avoid worrying. ...And like the current situation, it's no way I can stay here. And nothing's gonna change for a while. I'm not waiting for anything to change in the meantime, and I don't know if it's gonna change or not. You got yourself and you got to live your life on your own and like live as if there's nothing going on.

> The biggest challenge in my life is being a better person. I work on myself being a better person, so strong as to face all of these difficulties and pass through all these obstacles that are thrown in the way just because of one reason, which is my nationality. This is a challenge. I want to be better, because of that. This is not going to make me less than any other person. This has to make me better.

Having come to fully embrace his Palestinian identity, with all its existential challenges, Mohammed's life project now centers on the need to channel the experience of oppression and subordination into personal and collective strength. He refuses to allow his national identity, or lack thereof, to limit life's possibilities. Although his identity constructs obstacles and challenges—the greatest challenge of his life, in fact, greater than the traumatic rupture of his family with the divorce of his parents—Mohammed seeks to maneuver his lifeway around them.

Mohammed is a 16-year-old secular Muslim from East Jerusalem. He is the subject of a globalized world, and his cultural practices reveal his desire to be a part of the

cosmopolitan universe of globalization. But he cannot escape the accentuation of his social identity, for it is a source of existential threat and ontological insecurity (Giddens, 1991). His ability to fully embrace the idea of a cosmopolitan worldview is limited by the liminality of his national identity. And he cannot come to legitimize the Israeli narrative of identity in the absence of his own identity fulfillment, for the universal recognition of Palestine as a distinct nation remains elusive. Is it at all surprising, given the psychological dynamics of the conflict and of Palestinian identity, that the transcendence of identity represents the ultimate threat to the realization of Palestine as a recognizable national entity? Recognition and ontological security must precede the possibility of transcendence, which makes Mohammed's identity accentuation and perception of intergroup differentiation not only a comprehensible outcome, but also perhaps the most "realistic" of any possible identity outcome.

The Settler: Revisiting the Story of Roai

Let us now return to a familiar character in our story of Israeli and Palestinian youth, to the story of Roai, the Mizrahi Israeli from a West Bank settlement. Like Mohammed, Roai is a subject of globalization. The son of immigrants from Iraq and Morocco, Roai and his family have embraced the liberal cosmopolitan values of the West. He is well-traveled in Europe and North America; he feverishly consumes American films and pop music. He spends each evening chatting on MSN with friends from around the globe. Roai is someone genuinely interested in intercultural conversation. For this reason, like Mohammed, Roai seems a fitting candidate for intergroup contact.

At age 16, his pre-program narrative revealed a measure of ideological confusion, as he strived to integrate his support for the idea of Palestinian statehood with his emphasis on Israel's need for both security and a Jewish majority. His recognition of the legitimacy of Palestinian identity was conditional upon their abandonment of the savage "terrorism" that

consumed their struggle for independence. A compromise was only possible if the
Palestinians were able to make the first move, to reject the use of violence against Israelis and
to dismantle the "terrorist" organizations inside of the occupied territories.

When I first met Roai, he was two years shy of his compulsory military service and
still in the process of solidifying his ideological commitments. Recall that he was exposed to
two distinct ideological realities: the "extremism" of his home community on the settlement,
in which the idea of a Palestinian identity was essentially rejected, and the left-wing
sentiments of his peers at a liberal elite secondary school in Jerusalem, whose anti-settlement
ideology in some ways delegitimized Roai's very existence. Ideologically, then, Roai's
narrative was set in a very unstable place; it possessed the potential to be pulled one way or
another.

Like many Jewish Israeli participants in Hands of Peace and Seeds of Peace, Roai
was distressed by the destabilization of the power dynamics that frame the conflict at home.
In his immediate post-program interview, he reported feeling a sense of identity insecurity as
a consequence of participation.

> First of all, I felt like the program was somehow not equal, that somehow the
> Palestinians were more powerful and we heard so much of only their suffering and
> not *our* suffering as Israelis. What surprised me most about the program, talking with
> Palestinians, is the facts. I mean, I know facts, and they know facts, but it's not the
> same facts. They're changing the facts! I know the facts! I believe Israelis don't
> change the facts. They want the world to see the Israelis as bad people, but I know
> that what they say is not true. Like in Lebanon, they say Sharon ordered the Sabra
> and Shatilla massacres, and it's not true! ...I didn't change my mind about anything
> listening to the Palestinians, but it was interesting.

Roai's experience of contact is essentially an all-out assault on the Israeli narrative of the
conflict. He is unwilling to acknowledge the potential legitimacy of the Palestinian historical
narrative, instead suggesting that only the Israeli narrative represents actual "facts." In
addition, he sees the psychosocial pull of the program toward a common identity as a threat to

his Israeli identity when he posits that the program is somehow "unequal." In all likelihood, the notion of a common identity is far too threatening to the identity distinctiveness that is perceptible among youth who engage in contact.

One year after his experience in contact with Palestinians and Palestinian-Israelis, Roai's life story has retained its basic form (Figure 4.5). His narrative continues to follow the basic descent-and-gain pattern of the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity. His remains a story of resilience in spite of significant challenge and adversity.
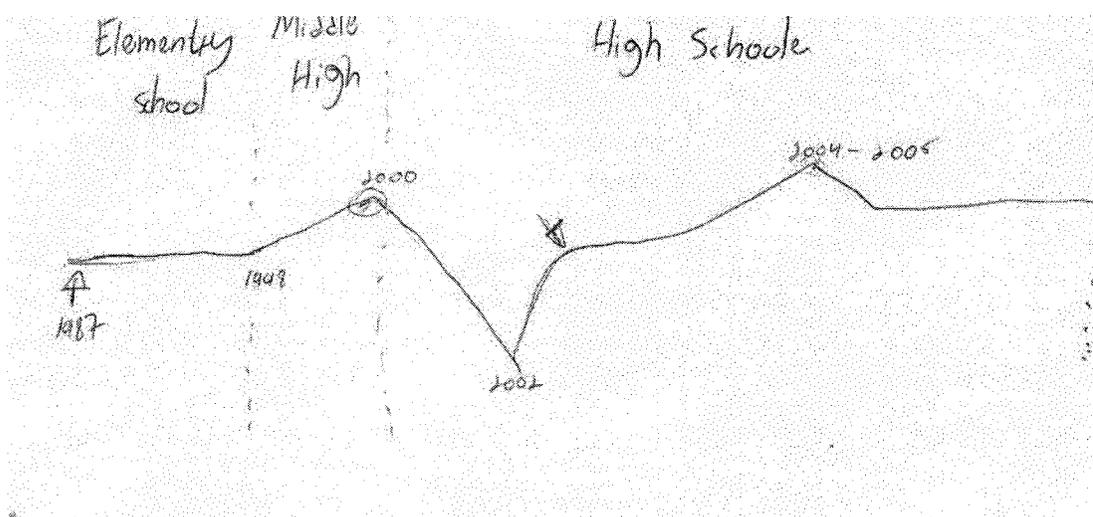
Figure 4.5. Roai's life-line, 2005.

The peak experience of his story remains his pre-intifada travel to the United States, where his observations of a different cultural reality revealed the possibility of an unthreatened existence. The great nadir in his narrative, his father's untimely death in 2002, is salient, but his recovery from this trauma reinforces his sense of personal resilience.

Ideologically, Roai's narrative is now infused with a deeper sense of loyalty to his national identity, his experience in contact having provided him with a more "realistic" vision of the Palestinian narrative.

> It was really different from what I expected because of their opinions. ...I thought they were very militaristic. I thought that there were things that they don't think, only the old people think about. But after I came to Hands of Peace, I realized that even the young people get education to think and to do what the old people tell them. ...It's not very realistic to think that old people forgot. My reality has totally changed. In some ways it was disappointing, but you should see the reality. You shouldn't see something else.

Roai was surprised to hear the stories and the political views of the Arabs at Hands of Peace because they seemed only to support the negative stereotypes about the rigidity of their narrative which he had hoped time would erode. Instead, he perceived the generational reproduction of an inflexible ideological position, and this perception has influenced his own political views.

At age 17, Roai now explicitly identifies as "right-wing." His willingness to recognize Palestinian identity and its fulfillment in territorial sovereignty remains conditional upon Israel's security, and he is reluctant to meet some of the most basic demands of the Palestinian position.

> I think that we should solve the problems in a way in which we shouldn't give up on our security.... We need to fight about it, and send soldiers and do something, that's the way we will do it. There's no other way to do it.

> I think they should get a country of their own. The Palestinians should get a country of their own, not all the territories we have now, but the majority of them. And we should remove all the settlements from the area, but some of them should remain. I don't think they should have a capital city in Jerusalem. That's not what I think. And the right of return, I don't think they'll get it. Actually I am sure they won't get it, because ever since 1948 when we give up something, they also need to do it.

Even though he identifies as right-wing, Roai would probably best be considered "center-right" in the realm of Israeli politics. His willingness to grant Palestinian independence in a "majority" of the occupied territories distinguishes him ideologically from most in the right wing. Yet Roai's conditional acceptance of the legitimacy of Palestinian aspirations—which,

by and large, has remained constant in his narrative over the course of the year—continues to be infused with a discourse of classic Orientalism.

Roai's narrative of success, in spite of formidable struggle, mirrors the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity closely and contributes to his belief in the exceptionality of Israel as a nation. When asked to identify a film that has impacted him significantly, Roai does not hesitate to nominate *Forrest Gump*.

> If you think about it, it's a really good movie that proves that you can, even when people think you're an idiot, you can do great things if you believe in yourself. If you want something so much, you can get it. …It shows the life of a person that, when he traveled, nobody liked him. He was raised just by his mother and people thought he was an idiot. And when you watch the movie, you see his life story, after the army, what he did in his life. And you see he was a really successful man, even though people thought he was an idiot. He always wanted success and to do what he believed in.

Roai's identification with this film and its protagonist reflects his own desire for success and resilience in spite of tragedy. Other influential stories, such as those passed down from Roai's family, all center on this theme of success and strength in the face of obstacle.

> The story of my grandmother, when they moved to Israel, that had a big effect on me. One of them lived in Morocco and one of them lived in northern Iraq, in Kurdistan. When they moved to Israel it was really difficult, they didn't have a lot of money, they were newcomers, they didn't know the language. And they treated my parents very well. And even though they didn't have all the money and the education, they did a great job and all of them are very successful.

Finally, Roai identifies the story of the Jewish people as a significant source of strength in his own life-story narrative.

> Being Jewish, I think it is really special than other religions in the world. There are a really small group of people, and I've seen that even though we have a lot of problems, as the world is going on, today we are still strong.

Roai's identification with a narrative of success and resilience, along with his belief in Israeli exceptionality, is critical to understanding the ideological setting of his current life story, with its foundation in an Orientalist conception of the Palestinians.

The internalization of Orientalism is problematic for Israeli-Palestinian relations in an intergroup encounter because it interferes with the possibility of power redistribution. It allows the relationship between "occupier" and "occupied" to be inevitably reproduced.

> The source of the conflict is the land. They think it is their land, and we think it's our land. ...But we brought development to the area, we built the country. That's the problem. We built the country in our territories and now they want it back.

The brevity of Roai's admitted Orientalism in our interview was striking to me, particularly since he spoke quite candidly about his view of the inferiority of Arabs during my stay in his home. One evening after dinner, we had a long discussion about politics. The Palestinians had just elected Mahmoud Abbas as the new president of the Palestinian Authority, and Roai and I were watching the election report on television.

> I say give them their country. Give them the West Bank and Gaza—not all of it, but most, and none of Jerusalem. They will destroy themselves anyway. The Arabs, they're a disorganized people, a naturally violent culture. So why should we still be taking care of them all these years? Just give them a country, and we'll see how they can handle it.

Roai's views on the Arabs are most clearly infused with an Orientalist frame in these "off-the-record" conversations we have during my stay with his family. He takes great care to tell me how loathsome Arabic music is, and how Israel would be much better off without any Arabs at all. When I query him about some of the educated Arabs he befriended at Hands of Peace, he says, "Those Arabs weren't representative, they were exceptions."

In the absence of viewing outgroup members as representative, a process of decategorization is largely impossible (Hewstone & Brown, 1986b). And without an initial process of decategorization, recategorization is unlikely. Ideologically, it seems that Hands of Peace has done little to alter the trajectory of Roai's life story. He admits that his participation was primarily "useful" in his acquisition of information about the outgroup and its ideological perspective.

> I realized their reality is not my reality and what they think is not what I think. I think that's the effect Hands of Peace had on me. It's very hard to tell them, "Why do you think like that?" Maybe it's the right way for you, then they hear what I have to say about that. That's the process.

Roai's experience is consistent with the mutual intergroup differentiation model that characterizes the School for Peace approach in Israel (Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004a, 2004b; Hewstone & Brown, 1986b). Intergroup contact has facilitated his ability to differentiate self from other through hearing the stories and ideological perspectives of the outgroup. It has, in this way, facilitated the consolidation of his own ideological identifications into a more coherent narrative.

Yet what is most problematic about this consolidation is that it has only reinforced Roai's own identity polarization. His experience in intergroup contact has legitimated the need for psychological distance from the Palestinians, for theirs is a story of consistent failure in the face of struggle, in marked contrast to the story of Roai and his people. His is a story of progress, theirs a story of regress. And so Roai's exposure to the stories of his Palestinian and Palestinian-Israeli peers seems only to have reinforced his need for ingroup insulation. Most important, though, Roai does not believe his own ideological perspective, and his expressed psychological needs as a Jewish Israeli, has been fully legitimated by the outgroup.

> Like the right of return. They really believe in the right of return! They don't think it's impossible. When you describe the reality to these people about the right of return, they don't see where is the problem. They don't understand that this is *our* land, and this is the country of the Jewish people. They don't seem to recognize that Israel is a country. They believe that, in some way, they will rule this land and we will go out of here.

> With Hands of Peace, I didn't like change my political opinions or anything, but I got more information about what they think. ...And especially the Arab Israelis. I thought that the Arab Israelis that they feel like an Israeli, that they belong in this country. But when I came to Hands of Peace I realized they feel more Palestinian than Israeli. They support, totally, with their brothers, the Palestinians, instead of the Israelis. And they are here just because in some ways it's better to be an Arab Israeli, a Palestinian Israeli—that's what they call themselves—instead of a Palestinian.

They have more rights, they have more opportunities to be successful and they're just using Israel as a tool for their life. It was a big shock.

Contact has provided Roai with useful information about the outgroup. It has reinforced his perceived need for his own kind of identity polarization. He finds the Palestinian insistence on the right of return for the refugees—a critical and seemingly unshakeable demand in the Palestinian ideological position—extremely threatening to Israel. The inability of the Palestinians to recognize the demographic consequences of Israel's acceptance of such an agreement—that Israel would, out of necessity to remain a legitimate democracy, cease to be a distinctly Jewish state if the refugees should return—seems to create in Roai a perception of existential insecurity. It seems to demonstrate to him that the Palestinians continue to deny the legitimate existence of a Jewish state in what was Palestine. The "information" that Roai obtained through contact has contributed to a process of intergroup differentiation, perhaps most of all in his view of the Palestinian-Israelis.

Roai's story of coexistence is strikingly similar to Mohammed's. Contact with the outgroup provides him with the opportunity to fully differentiate his own ingroup identity from that of the outgroup. It has highlighted the distinctions between himself and the Palestinians. It has placed him in a natural position of ingroup defense, which has served to align him even more closely to the master narrative. Roai experienced the coexistence program as "interesting" in this end but also very threatening, for the program's attempt to engineer a common identity was a source of great resistance for him. Roai preferred to remain inside the "reality" of Israeli-Palestinian relations and to use the opportunity to develop a strong identification with his own ingroup narrative, ultimately reproducing a state of identity polarization. Considering the narratives of Roai and Mohammed together, the stalemate of narratives between Israelis and Palestinians becomes quite lucid. To meet the

ideological needs of the outgroup threatens the *existence* of one's ingroup identity, and the absence of secure narratives seems to limit the potential outcomes of contact and to facilitate the reproduction of identity polarization.

The New Palestinian: Revisiting the Story of Jibril

"My identity is Arab Israeli. I am Israeli first; I have no question about this. I live in Israel. Israel is my country. I'm proud of being Israeli, and I'm proud of my country." These were the words of Jibril describing his identity when I first interviewed him, at age 15 in the summer of 2003 while participating at Seeds of Peace. The experience of contact had created a crisis for Jibril, an affable young man whose integrity was transparent in his handshake and warm smile. Was he Palestinian? Was he Israeli? These were questions generally avoided in his family and his local community of Taybeh. But at Seeds of Peace, they commanded a resolution.

The Palestinian citizens of Israel indeed undergo a unique process of identity development. As we considered at length in Chapter 3, Palestinian-Israelis must reconcile their Israeli civic identities with their cultural identities as Palestinians, all the while negotiating a master narrative that highlights their experiences with loss and discrimination. Contemporary scholars of Palestinian-Israeli identity tend to view the way in which Palestinian-Israelis traverse this challenging process in a highly linear form, historically speaking (e.g., Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). They tend to see the increasing collective accentuation of their Palestinian cultural identity and the rejection of their Israeli identity—a consequence of their disempowerment and inequality within the state's institutions—as an indicator of gradual re-identification with a Palestinian identity. But Jibril's story challenged that notion by revealing that Palestinian-Israeli youth may in fact prefer to accentuate their Israeli identities at different times and places in their life course. The multiple identity status

of Palestinian-Israelis suggests that they undergo a far more complex and individual process of identity reconciliation than most scholars seem to suggest.

The extent of "Israelization" readily apparent in Jibril's narrative at age 15 revealed his preferred way of reconciliation at that particular moment, and it infused the entire character of his life story, from its form (which resembled the Jewish Israeli master narrative much more than the Palestinian-Israeli) to its ideological setting. Regarding ideology, recall that Jibril, like his Jewish Israeli peers, tended to view the central problem in the current phase of the conflict as Palestinian "terror." The Israeli occupation was certainly problematic according to Jibril's narrative, but it was Palestinian action that had increased the fighting to its current level of intractability. It was Palestinian action that was to blame for the new levels of daily suffering for ordinary Palestinians, and it was Palestinian action that was responsible for changing Jibril's life, for increasing the Jews' hostility toward Arabs, for preventing Jibril and his family from visiting the shops and restaurants of Tulkarm. Ironically, it was Palestinian action—or, more accurately, Jibril's interpretation of that action—that complicated Jibril's ability to identify with Palestinian culture, for it now prevented him from associating with Palestinians in the territories. The polarization of Palestinians and Israelis during the second intifada transformed identity for Palestinian-Israelis like Jibril from a process of developmental complexity to a zero-sum affair. The accentuation of the distinction between identities that has occurred since the start of the second intifada has meant that Palestinian-Israelis can no longer comfortably ontologically reside in the center of these poles but must instead make an uncompromising choice.

If Jibril's narrative at age 15 revealed the salience of his Israeli identity, in the midst of his experience with intergroup contact, how did this experience seem to impact his process of identity development? Jibril narrated his life story to me again at age 16, one year after his

participation at Seeds of Peace. As we sat in his house in Taybeh, I saw before me a very different looking young man. At age 15, Jibril was confident but uncomfortably stocky in build. At age 16, his shoulders had broadened, he had gained several inches in height, and he had lost much of his previously stocky frame. As he narrated his life story to me once again, with the memory of his first lingering in my mind, as it had for virtually the entire year that separated our meetings, I realized that far more than Jibril's appearance had changed.

Jibril's story retained its descent-and-gain form (Figure 4.6), with Seeds of Peace now representing the peak experience in his narrative. For Jibril, contact served as an opportunity for personal gain through identity exploration. In fact, for Jibril and other Palestinian-Israelis, contact with Jewish Israelis and with Palestinians activates a process of identity *discovery* in which they come to accentuate their Palestinian cultural identities *over and above* their Israeli civic identities. The cultural significance and salience of their Palestinian identities becomes readily apparent, while they come to question and challenge the extent to which they truly are "Israeli." This process of identity discovery is particularly apparent in Jibril's narrative one year after contact.
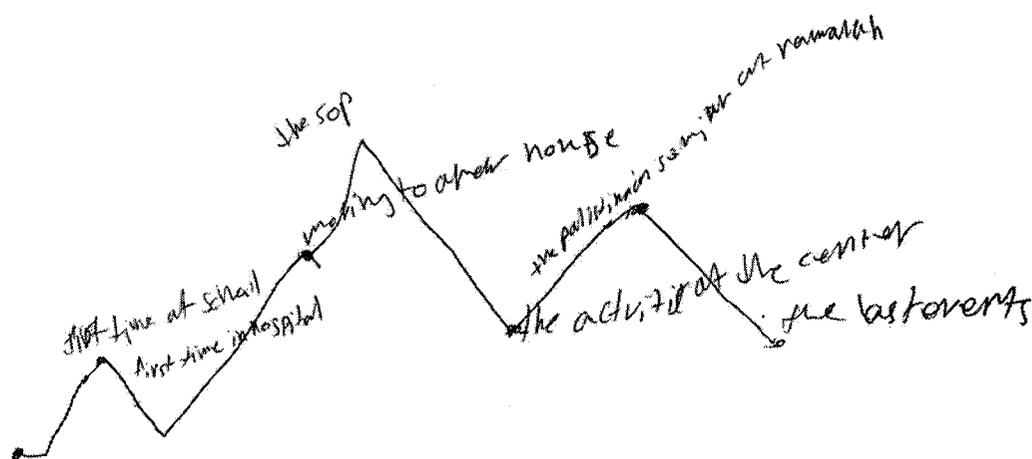
Figure 4.6. Jibril's life-line, 2004.

Jibril's life story, with its peaks and valleys, represents a narrative of highs and lows, of the inherent challenges and successes of life's uncontrollable events. Speaking of his experience at Seeds of Peace, Jibril immediately reflects on how this event shaped his own identity consciousness.

> I think after Seeds of Peace, I feel now I understand where I am on the map in this conflict. I know now how the Jews think about me, and how do the Palestinians think about me. After the camp, I know how to work with people from Palestine and also Jews.

> I know I'm in the middle because sometimes I am driven to Palestine and I belong to Israel and I'm in a big dilemma, what to do, and at Seeds of Peace, I come to realize how I want to think, and what I want to do. And also at Seeds of Peace, Seeds of Peace gives us more self-confidence to talk, to share our opinions....

> I still feel confused sometimes, but now I understand that I'm Palestinian, and how important that is. After I came together with everyone involved, Palestinians, Israelis, and other Arab Israelis like me, I realize I'm more Palestinian than Israeli. The Palestinians understand me, and I understand them. I side with them cause I'm Palestinian, and now I have a better sense of that.

The experience of intergroup contact has facilitated a process of mutual intergroup differentiation for Jibril. His categorization of self and other(s) has proceeded from a place of abstraction to concrete perception. The identities of the conflict have now become fully cognized for him, and hence differentiated. He also has now come to locate himself within this matrix of categories; he has come to cognize his own identity in a way that possesses both meaning and security. His identity commitment has shifted from "Israeli" to "middle" or, perhaps more accurately, "Palestinian."

Jibril identifies the motivating factor in this identity formation process for him as, at least in part, the acceptance he received from Palestinians versus the rejection he perceives from Jewish Israelis. Two experiences from his current life-story narrative are illustrative. Reflecting on a meeting of Seeds of Peace participants with Palestinian Authority officials in Ramallah in the past year (the peak in his life-line following Seeds of Peace; see Figure 4.6), Jibril describes his experience with Palestinians.

> I went to the seminar in Ramallah, and I wanted the Palestinians to know me. There was me and like two other people from Taybeh, and like three other Arab Israelis. There, I felt like I was Palestinian. Each one there welcomed us, and we were with Arafat. Somebody told Arafat that there were five people from Israel there, like Arab Israelis, so he said, "You are with us, we are with you." I felt the Palestinian with me, and the Palestinians support me. How do I support them? And it was a good thing, somebody to support you, that's a good thing. ...A man there said, "We will stand with you, ...you will be our people in Israel." So we support them and they support us. ...At the Palestinian seminar, I felt I am more Palestinian because they stand with me and they support me, so after Seeds of Peace I feel more Palestinian than Israeli.

> ...You know, the Palestinians, I want the feeling. I can't sing the Israeli anthem because it doesn't belong to me. I can't have the Israeli flag, also I cannot have the Palestinian flag, so you know this is a bad thing—to feel like you don't belong to anybody. So in the Palestinian seminar, I feel like I belong.

From individuals in authority, Jibril perceives support for his unique identity among Palestinians. In contrast to some of his experiences at camp, in which the Palestinians assailed him for even identifying as "Israeli" in any way, Jibril perceives complete

acceptance—and support—from the PA officials whom he meets in Ramallah. This experiences stands in contrast to his perception of acceptance and support from Jewish Israelis.

> There was a Knesset member who said that in a few years the Arabs will be transferred from Israel. There is no one in Palestine saying that thing about the Jews! It was Jews saying this about Arab Israelis. This makes me feel separated from the Israelis. If I said in the news, I want to kick all the Jews out in the sea, everybody will be against me, but if one of them says like this, nothing happens.

Exposure to political discourse that advocates the transfer of Arabs from Israel obviously induces a perception of vulnerability, insecurity, and inferiority—particularly among a powerless minority group like the Palestinian-Israelis. This feeling of rejection, of discrimination, has become more salient in Jibril's post-program narrative, and it has been planted in the narrative by actual experiences with discrimination.

The perception of discrimination and marginalization, so salient in the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative but initially missing from Jibril's narrative at age 15, now contributes significantly to Jibril's de-accentuation of his Israeli identity. In large part, this change seems connected to an increase in experiences with discrimination, or at least a heightened sensitivity to the possibility of such experiences based on his acknowledged minority status in the Jewish state. Jibril's return to Israel from the United States offers just such an experience.

> I find I am discriminated against as an Arab, that Jews look at me as not part of their country. Like in the airport when we left New York, they told each Jew in security "Just go, go." Just me, because I am Arab, he stopped me for like 10 minutes…. They asked me lots of questions, "What did you do in the U.S.? What did you do in the camp?" …It made me feel like they don't want me in the country cause I'm Arab. …I am part of the country! I'm Israeli, why are they doing this to me?

While the debate on "ethnic profiling" in the United States has gradually begun to favor its implementation, as the perception of security needs seems to somehow outweigh the premises of a liberal multicultural democracy, it is perhaps the psychological impact of such a system

that has been most overlooked. The experience of being "singled out" in contexts such as the airport serves to "discredit" the identity of the experiencer through a process of stigmatization (Goffman, 1963). The individuals *not* being singled out for additional security are done so by nature of their non-threatening identity. To be considered a threat among one's own society is to possess a "delegitimized" social identity, and what appears initially to be a benign instance of marginalization can sensitize the individual to an expansive network of social marginalization, discrimination, and rejection. The encounter at the airport is anything but benign for Jibril. It is symbolic of the structure of social identities in Israel, and it is a reminder of the extent to which his identity is entirely discreditable within the context of his own society.

We must view the change in Jibril's narrative from age 15 to 16 in at least two ways. First, we can identify the change in his own sense of self-categorization from "Israeli" to "Palestinian" as connected to the experience of intergroup contact. As hypothesized by the MID model (Hewstone & Brown, 1986b), and supported by some of the most basic premises of social identity theory (e.g., Tajfel, 1981), contact has resulted in the ability for Jibril to clearly differentiate among groups implicated in the conflict. In this process of mutual intergroup differentiation, Jibril has come to locate himself. This process is by no means complete for Jibril, as his life story continues to be in a process of only initial construction. But now, at age 16, he has come to a new place of identity reconciliation as a consequence of contact: he has come to see himself as "more Palestinian"; he has come to "feel" more Palestinian. He seems to have undergone no process of "decategorization" or "recategorization." Rather, he has differentiated among the categories of self and other that are cognitively relevant to his own identity. He has undergone a process of *subcategorization* (see Brewer, 1996). In this cognitive process, he has been motivated by his perceived

acceptance among Palestinians and his perceived rejection among Jewish Israelis, affectively nesting within him a "feeling" of affiliation with the Palestinians.

I claimed that this process occurred within Jibril "as a consequence" of contact, but that is really an impossible claim to make, for field research such as this can do nothing to "control" the host of other variables that likely has led Jibril's narrative to possess its current form and content. This acknowledgment leads me to the second view I believe we must take when considering the "evolution" of identity among Palestinian-Israeli youth. It is perhaps the increasing experience with discrimination and marginalization that begins to fully activate an identification with the Palestinian-Israeli master narrative of identity. And so, in the year following contact, Jibril's admitted increase in such experiences likely contributes to his growing discontent with an Israeli civic identity. For him, there is an alternative narrative with which he can identify, one in which his identity is infused with the legitimacy and the "credibility" it seems so robbed of in the daily experience of majority-minority relations in Israel.

So at age 16 we see the nascence of a new identity for Jibril, his narrative having taken new turns as the experiential possibilities of his life have multiplied. Though we cannot isolate the precise "impact" of contact on his developing narrative, we can discern its place in his process of identity development. For Jibril, contact offered an opportunity for identity discovery through intergroup differentiation. He came to ascribe meaning to the social identities "Israeli" and "Palestinian," thereby attempting to situate his own fragile and discreditable identity as a minority in the Jewish state within some comfortable place of ideological compromise. But such idealism proved untenable for Jibril's narrative. Ultimately, he came to view his own identity as unequally valued by Jewish Israelis and Palestinians, the former identifying him as symbolic of their own existential threat, the latter

accepting him and providing him with a sense of legitimacy and value. This process of identity discovery is thus incredibly complex and has its basis in the need to make meaning of his own lived experience, to construct an account that is coherent, credible, and empowering. To accept his devalued and discreditable status in Israeli society as an "end" to identity is simply impossible for Jibril, as it is for most Palestinian-Israelis I have encountered in this study. Such resignation lacks any kind of coherent identity that is simultaneously empowering.

To summarize and to generalize, however cautiously, the experience of Jibril, we can comfortably say that Palestinian-Israelis undergo a distinct process of identity discovery following intergroup contact. I prefer to highlight this process as one of "discovery" since the gradual accentuation of their Palestinian cultural identities can only be viewed as a kind of re-awakening of a narrative possibility once forsaken for the possibility of equal citizenship in the Jewish state. So we witness the transition from Jibril's seeming conformity to the majority narrative of identity, in some desperate attempt to "assimilate" into a lifeway that is entirely inaccessible to him, to the very resistance of such identification. He has relinquished his "Stand Down" generational identity for a more recognizable "Stand Tall" one (Rabinowitz & Abu-Baker, 2005). Through his own recognition of his intrinsic distinctiveness from the majority in Israel, as well as his increased experiences with the symbolic interaction of systematic stigmatization, Jibril has begun to script a new narrative for his life—one that maintains his uniquely liminal status in the conflict while simultaneously affording him a degree of existential authority that the resignation to minority status as an "Arab Israeli" obstructs.

FROM TRANSCENDENCE TO ACCENTUATION:

AN ANALYSIS OF TWO NARRATIVES OVER TIME

I have presented the outcomes of transcendence and accentuation as if they were somehow independent, as if perhaps different individuals, by virtue of their level of "readiness" or their particular value orientations (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995), simply reacted disparately to the experience of contact. But this kind of outcome pattern is too "clean." In actuality, many youth undergo processes of both transcendence and accentuation over time, as they weave the experience of contact into their life-story narratives and locate axes of meaning.

Much to the delight of the programs themselves, many youth I have encountered in my three years of fieldwork do indeed display all the signs of recategorization immediately post-contact. They speak of their common humanity, and of the possibility of peaceful coexistence realized through this encounter. Yet we know that Israel and Palestine provide actual social ecologies, with particular social structures and cultural models of self and other. The cultures of Israel and Palestine represent the reality of daily existence for these youth, not the foreign culture of these two programs, ideologically and culturally distant from the reality that polarizes Palestinians and Israelis. The challenge of integrating the experience of contact into the life story upon return home—to the culture of polarization—can interfere with the maintenance of a recategorized sense of self and other.

As Kelman (1993) argues, if the recategorization of self and other conflicts too much with the actual cultural categories acceptable in Israel and Palestine, it will prove entirely untenable. The delicate balance lies in forming a coalition with members of the outgroup without sacrificing the distinctiveness of one's ingroup identity. But such is not the psychosocial "press" of these programs, as I have argued extensively in Chapter 2.

Recategorization is their ultimate social psychological aim. So it is useful to consider two cases familiar to us to consider the *process* of identity change that occurs after contact, from initial transcendence to ultimate accentuation.

The Cosmopolitan: Revisiting the Story of Ayelet

The path to identity accentuation as an outcome of contact can be a rather simple trajectory, such as that of Mohammed and Roai, or it can be a more complex and unpredictable one, as the story of Ayelet reveals. Recall that Ayelet is from Tel Aviv, the cosmopolis of Israel, that her primary identity at age 16 was that of "surfer," and that her pre-program narrative followed a classic pattern of descent and gain. The conflict had barely touched her life and did not enter her life story unsolicited. Ideologically, she displayed a remarkable level of ambivalence at age 16. On the one hand, her narrative revealed already a degree of identity transcendence in her willingness to assume a very critical stance toward her ingroup. On the other, she did not recognize the need for a Palestinian state, as she viewed Arabs with an extraordinary level of homogeneity.

During Hands of Peace, Ayelet underwent a significant process of identity exploration. She immediately identified with the stories of her Palestinian peers, having been, in her view, sheltered from the actions that her government had taken against them. At one point during the program, she said to Israa, a West Bank Palestinian who had become her best friend in the program,

> I can't believe my people are doing to you what was done to us. We didn't learn anything from the Holocaust, and it's wrong. When I go home, I'm gonna make a change for you guys.

Ayelet has come to view the behavior of her ingroup with disdain and vows to engage in action that will work to improve the lives of Palestinians. Her immediate post-program interview reveals a significant degree of identity transcendence.

When I go home, I wanna tell everyone about all the Arab friends I made, and what amazing people they are, and how they're just like us. There's no difference really between Jews and Arabs. Everybody should come to this program to realize this. Listening to all of the stories of the Arabs, it made me realize why they do those things [like bombings]. I realize if I go to the army, it'll be just so I can see what it's like, what happens in the army—but not to give a hand for the war against the Palestinians. I will change anything that my leaders in the army will think of, like slapping an Arab just because he's an Arab. What's *that* about? I don't care to stand up to my commanders and talk freely. They might be commanders, but they might be foolish too. If I go to the army, it'll be to change it, to be more human. We are all human beings. ...Growing up in Israel, I always knew there was a war, and suicide bombings, but I never understood the reason. Now, listening to the Palestinians, I realized my country is totally wrong. It's nothing to be ashamed of, to admit you're wrong. It takes a lot of courage and maturity. Now I see the whole picture, and now I understand myself and I'm proud of myself.

Through intergroup friendship, Ayelet has undergone a significant process of outgroup decategorization. But her psychological process of transformation does not appear to stop there. She demonstrates a clear process of recategorization in her claim that "there's no difference really between Jews and Arabs." She has come to see Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, as united in a common identity. She has *integrated*, rather than differentiated, the identities of Israelis and Palestinians into a new narrative of coexistence. It is precisely this outcome—of coming to see the other as deeply human and, at base, more alike than different from oneself—that these programs seek to elicit, implicitly if not always explicitly. Hers, then, is an identity outcome seemingly quite divergent from Mohammed or Roai. It seems, rather, more like the classic identity transcendence displayed by Liat and Laila. Ayelet has come to view the Palestinian narrative with great legitimacy, and in fact perhaps a level of moral superiority compared with her own ingroup. She identifies the crux of the conflict as a problem of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, not, as others like Roai argue, a problem of Palestinian unwillingness to recognize the legitimacy of a Jewish state. And perhaps most crucially, she vows to engage in social practice that will hopefully secure a better life for the Palestinians.

Immediately after her experience in Hands of Peace, Ayelet's ideological ambivalence would appear to be relegated to her own personal history. She has now become ardently left-wing, identifying the root cause of the conflict's intractability in the policies of her own ingroup. But let us consider for a moment Roai's perspective on Hands of Peace, and his view of its most problematic feature.

> The problem with the program is that, when you come back and end this program, you are going back to reality, and your reality is not the way it was in the program. The biggest problem is taking us out of Israel, and I think this is the main difference, in the reality of the program versus the reality in Israel. To be with the Palestinians inside a bubble, you know things and you remember things but in some way you can't hear things that are going on. But we're not touching. So when you're back here, you forget about things. The environment there is really kind and peaceful. You think in another way there than here.

One year after his experience in contact, Roai reflects on the differential reality of the program versus Israel/Palestine, and he suggests that one's cognition and behavior are entirely dependent on the unique social ecology of the program itself. His insight is significant, as it speaks to the salience of the larger cultural context in one's narrative construction.

With this idea in mind—this "problem," as Roai calls it—let us return to Ayelet's story. Despite her insistence that she intended to actively work for social change in Israel, Ayelet failed to attend a single follow-up meeting organized by the program in the year following her participation. She also did not participate in the online listserv which provided a forum for program participants to communicate. In the summer of 2005, I almost failed to secure a follow-up interview with her, as she struggled to balance her social calendar with our meeting. In the challenge of setting up our interview, I sensed a kind of avoidance, perhaps with the memory of her identity transcendence lingering in her consciousness. The content of

her life story, narrated to me at age 17 in a trendy Tel Aviv café on a hot summer night,

suggested a motivation for such avoidance.

Formally, Ayelet's life story has changed very little in the past year (Figure 4.7). It is

initially a narrative of stability punctuated by periods of descent, all of which relate to the

discord between her parents, who divorced when Ayelet was quite young. It is, in this form, a

story of descent and gain, mirroring the tone and form of the master narrative. But Ayelet's

story now contains a formidable spike over the past year, in which she describes great

progress in her life story.
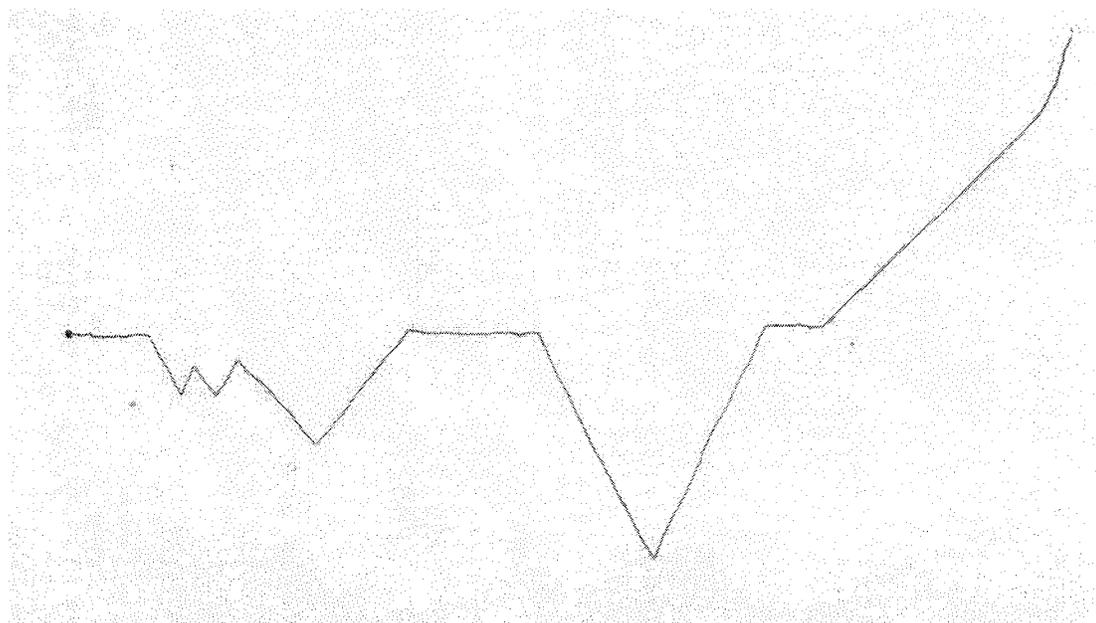
Figure 4.7. Ayelet's life-line, 2005.

The progress of the last year is, for Ayelet, connected to gains in self-confidence with peers

and romantic relationships.

> This is the period of time that I got out and getting used to stuff and now eleventh
> grade is always starting to be up. ...I feel like since I became 17, I totally changed.
> Every year I'm getting older and bigger and more mature. And I'm having a love this
> year. I have a boyfriend. It's great. We were like best friends for like two and a half
> years and somewhere he came up with the opinion that he's in love with me, and I

> was like, damn it, me too. …Yeah, and we decided that that's it, and he's a surfer, and he's a great surfer. He surfs amazingly, and he knows a lot, he's twentysomething, he's 25.

> …And now I'm very happy. My school is getting better and better everyday. I'm getting amazing grades that I never thought I would be able to…, and I got first place in the contest of Quicksilver, and so I signed a contract for one year, so I'm making my dreams come true, basically.

This small portion of Ayelet's narrative reveals her story as infused with the positive tone of cumulative gain. She sees her life on an ever-ascending slope, which is connected to her ability to master life's challenges (e.g., her parents' divorce) through individual successes in work and love, in school, surfing, and relationships.

Absent from Ayelet's narrative at age 17 is any integration whatsoever of her experience in contact with Palestinians and Palestinian-Israelis at Hands of Peace. The event fails to receive even the most minor of places in her life story, until I query its absence.

> As a Jewish Israeli girl who, all her life, been here, my bubble burst last summer. You know, you get out sometimes abroad, but growing up in Israel, I grew up and am still growing up in a place where you don't get much of Arabs around.

> …I know that we're not angels and…that we have bad things we do. But they have so much stuff that we did bad to them, and I heard so many things that I think I would never hear. And the whole picture, I didn't know where I live. I mean, all my life, I've been in Israel and don't even know what Israel means. I didn't know what Ramallah means. I didn't know what the West Bank or West Jerusalem means. It didn't say anything to me—I mean, it's a name, of a place, that's it, I didn't know who's coming from there.

> …Israa and Sylvia mostly changed my mind toward a new point of view of life to me, how it feels to be an Arab, in a small way, just to understand that. As much as I was on their side, I felt like we are the same, it's the same blood.

In this initial narrative of her participation, Ayelet begins by acknowledging the segregation of her social ecology, that as a Jew she rarely interacts with an Arab. She has also retained a degree of transcendence in her willingness to view the actions of her ingroup critically and in her view that she and her Palestinian peers share "the same blood." Finally, Ayelet identifies

intergroup differentiation as an outcome of contact. Once obscure names of places, the meaning of local identities now possesses a level of familiarity for her—places like Ramallah and the West Bank in particular. The "bubble" of her local Tel Aviv identity, with its insular brand of cosmopolitanism, began to fade as Ayelet's knowledge of other identities increased.

As evident from her own initial omission of the experience of contact from her life story, Ayelet continues to struggle to integrate the experience into a coherent personal narrative. The ideological setting of her life story, once riddled with ambivalence but a clear willingness to consider the Palestinian perspective, has now proceeded from a place of transcendence immediately post-contact to one of increased confusion and, ultimately, ingroup accentuation. That is, while at first *decreasing* the psychological distance between ingroup and outgroup for Ayelet, contact seems to have ultimately resulted in a further degree of identity polarization, as indicated by the ideological commitments she now espouses.

> I came back so confused. I didn't know which side to pick and what is my opinion. ...And there are so many plusses on taking the other side but so many minuses, and I can't give up on my minuses.

> ...When I got back, I told my friends what all the Palestinians had said and they said to me there's no way it could all be true. Like what they said about the checkpoints and what goes on there, the injustices, or other stuff that goes on in the West Bank with the army and stuff, it's just not true. I think they were just exaggerating it.

> ...I've been, my country, my people have been through the Holocaust, the most horrible thing ever. Israel is a place that nobody can ever touch us again and do what Hitler did. ...As much as I want to understand them, I can't give up my country. I can't give up Jerusalem. As much as I don't live there and I don't really go to the Wall and everything and don't pray and I'm not that religious.

> ...Basically, I feel confusion. You want to be a friend with them, but there are so many things that they don't let you be friendly with them because they want too much.

Ayelet's initial attempts to transform her new transcendent identity into action upon her return to Israel were met with skepticism from her peers. As someone who has come to rely

on her peers, rather than her family, for emotional support and a sense of self-confidence and coherence, Ayelet is perhaps particularly susceptible to such negative responses. But the reaction of her peers has engendered a sense of ideological confusion. On the one hand, she wants so badly to see beyond the frame of identity polarization. On the other, she "can't give up" her national identity to realize such transcendence. And herein lies the dilemma that I refer to as a "narrative stalemate": to transcend identity polarization is inexorably linked to a sacrifice in nationalism, an acknowledgment of the social construction of national identity, and a willingness to script a new national narrative in the interest of conflict resolution. But to ask for such a re-scripting of collective narrative during adolescence is to betray the most fundamental understanding of the cultural psychology of youth and its functional role in social evolution. In a state of perceived collective identity threat, a state of ontological insecurity and existential anxiety, the reproduction of social identity is perceived by youth as essential to the survival of the group. And so in considering the evolution of Ayelet's personal narrative, we can readily witness the impossibility of identity transcendence for youth, the call to narrative reproduction, rather than repudiation, entirely transparent.

As we consider the ideological setting of Ayelet's life story at age 17, that relatively unchanging commitment to a value-laden interpretive frame, we see the salience of ingroup identity, at the cost of outgroup reconciliation.

> ...We need to live equally, quietly with them, next to each other. They don't need a country. We need to kill all the extremely, extremely right-wing Arabs that want to kill all the Jews. Yeah, if those people seriously didn't exist, probably the peace will be here. ...If the Palestinians want to stay here, that's a problem, because you need to find a territory to put them. You can't cut from Israel anything. She's small enough.

> ...The West Bank, I don't know, it's places that don't mean anything to me. But probably there are Jews in Israel who it's important to. I live in Tel Aviv, I don't even relate to those places. But probably there are Jews that are related to those places.

Once willing to relinquish half of Jerusalem for peace, Ayelet now opposes a two-state solution to the conflict. She has a vision of "Greater Israel" that could potentially involve some "Palestinian territory," should they "want to stay." She sees the absence of peace as connected to Arab "extremists" rather than as she had just after contact, when she identified the actions of her own ingroup and the occupation of Palestinian territory as the fundamental obstacle to peace. Though she personally feels no connection to the occupied territories or necessarily to the idea of Greater Israel, it is because of her increased affiliation with her ingroup and the master narrative of Jewish Israeli identity that she is unwilling to accept a two-state solution. Though it is her local identity that is most salient, she now feels the need to ideologically position herself according to the (potential) desires of others in her ingroup. Hence the territories may hold no significance for her personally, but because they matter to *other* Jewish Israelis, she feels the need not to relinquish Israel's control of them.

When we consider the evolution of Ayelet's life story, the accentuation of her social identity is quite striking. In the absence of any comparison group of non-participants, we cannot say with any certainty that contact has in fact "caused" this gradual process of increasing identification with the ingroup. Such a process may indeed characterize the identity development process of Israeli and Palestinian adolescents regardless of the experience of contact. But the social psychology of intergroup contact suggests that such an outcome is indeed possible, if not highly probable, following contact. In particular, with the formidable discrepancy between the culture of the programs and their recategorizing agenda and the reality of identity polarization in Israel and Palestine, a crisis is created for youth who participate in such encounters. Are they to resist recategorization, as Mohammed and Roai do, and undergo a process of intergroup differentiation, increasing ingroup identity salience? Or are they to be taken with the allure of identity transcendence, as Ayelet was, only to face a

crisis of identity upon their return home? Before we comment further on the "generalizability" of these kinds of outcomes, let us consider a second case by revisiting the narrative of another familiar character in our story: Laila.

The Realist: Revisiting the Story of Laila

When Laila narrated her life story to me one year after Seeds of Peace, I was struck by the seeming success of the program's attempts at recategorization. It was one of my first post-program interviews, and the experience of collecting that life story left me with a tremendous sense of optimism. But it was only 2003, and I had just begun my fieldwork in the coexistence programs. I had yet to realize that Laila's narrative of transcendence, the inculcation of her new "Seed" identity supplement, was relatively uncommon for most youth. I also had yet to realize just how ephemeral that particular narrative would be for her personally.

I met Laila again in the summer of 2004, in her home in Taybeh. She was now 17 years old and had grown in inches and poise. Laila possessed an eloquent grace that made her such an exceptional representative of the Palestinian-Israeli experience. Two years after her initial experience in contact, the tone and form of Laila's narrative had shifted considerably (Figure 4.8). At age 16, hers was a narrative of great progress, with its perpetual ascent. She had, in her view, overcome the polarizing temptation of "hatred" for the Jews and had, as a consequence of Seeds of Peace, now embraced a narrative of coexistence based on shared humanity. But now at age 17, the great possibility realized in her identity transcendence had faded from her personal narrative.

| | | 1989 | 1991 | 1993 | 1995 | 2000 | 2002 | 2004 |
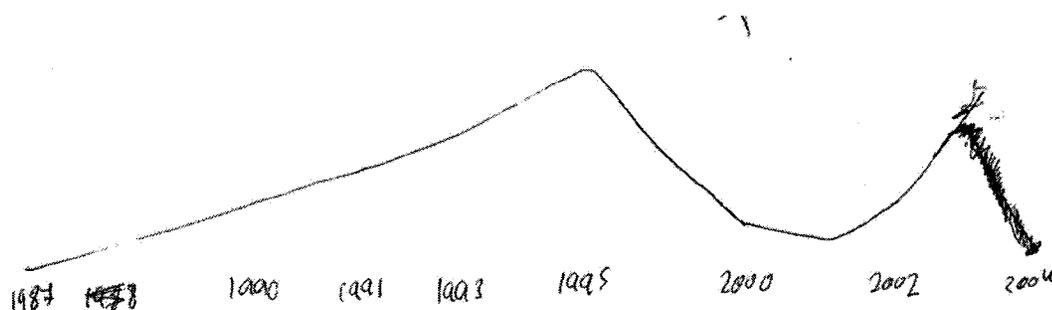
Figure 4.8. Laila's life-line, 2004.

In 2004, when Laila narrated her life story to me at age 17, the intifada was raging

on, which had severely compromised the ability of Seeds of Peace to run a comprehensive

and inclusive follow-up program. The political trajectory seemed to be operating against the

current for youth like Laila, who had embraced the ideology of peaceful coexistence. Laila

describes the crisis that such discrepancies created for her.

> This year is really hard for me, for all the Seeds, for all the people, the citizens, the
> Arabs, Palestinians, Jews, it's really hard. It's kind of depressing for us. The last four
> months, or maybe more, I'm so hopeless, and I don't believe in Seeds of Peace
> anymore.

> ...I thought about Seeds of Peace and my experience, and I thought about the
> situation, and I had this point where I realized the situation and the reality is much
> harder and much stronger than Seeds of Peace. ...The influence of the reality is
> much stronger than the influence of Seeds of Peace.... We are seeing things, seeing
> facts on TV, in radio, in internet, but Seeds of Peace, it's just words you learned at
> camp. ...I really regret the idea that I was in Seeds of Peace, but the thing is I just felt
> that it's going nowhere. I was really depressed and hopeless.

While once "being Seed" influenced every aspect of her identity, now her "Seeds" identity is

a source of shame, frustration, depression, and hopelessness. Laila now views her experience

at camp as a venture in fantasy, its culture far too removed from the reality of conflict that

characterizes Israeli-Palestinian relationships.

For Laila, the eventual rejection of her Seeds identity is connected to the inability of

that identity to effect any meaningful change in the conflict or in her own social ecology.

> I couldn't change anything. I just went to camp and I returned from camp and it's, everything is just for nothing, politically. I mean, I know it affected me personally. I met so many intelligent people, and it affected my language, lots of things. And my social things, but it's still, the political thing is not going anywhere.

In conflict, the individual comes to lose his or her unique identity and to assume the identity of the group. This phenomenon is one of the most well-documented in social psychology, though it comes in different names, like "conformity" (Asch, 1956), "groupthink" (Janis, 1982), "group polarization" (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969), and "mutual differentiation" (Hewstone & Brown, 1986b). If this phenomenon occurs in the laboratory, or in the field, why ought we not to assume that it can occur at the level of culture? For Laila, the context of conflict erases the possibility of a truly distinctive identity. She is unable to engage in meaningful social practice that, in her view, actually contributes to social change. The reproduction of identity polarization is inevitable, so long as the social structure of the conflict remains undeterred. In this way, the internalization of a transcendent identity narrative that has any sustainability is, in Laila's terminology, "unrealistic."

With her rejection of a Seeds identity comes the return of Laila's "hatred" for the Jews—a sentiment that had so dramatically been eradicated after her experience in contact with Jewish Israelis.

> ...I watched this program about the checkpoints, and this year and last year, and what they're doing to the citizens, us, the Palestinians. I felt, you know, I'm still Palestinian. I can't just not feel anything. I feel hatred. Not to my friends, which is weird, not to my Jewish friends, because I know this is not their fault, but to the Jews. ...When I watch TV and I see how they treat people so unhuman, I just feel this kind of "Oh my God, I just want to kill this soldier." Just like this. I feel this hatred inside. But not all the Jews. You know what I mean? *Those* Jews.

The fact that Laila's "hatred" fails to extend to her Jewish friends suggests that personalization and decategorization have indeed had a lasting impact on Laila. She now

views the outgroup with greater heterogeneity, although she clearly continues to struggle to uphold that view in her everyday cognition.

As another shift in the ideological setting of her life story, consider Laila's current attitude toward suicide bombing. Recall that she had, after Seeds of Peace, entirely reversed her moral and ideological perspective on this method and had even successfully convinced friends and family of its problematic nature. Now, two years after contact, her own narrative has shifted once again.

> I know that suicide bombing is not good, but it's the only way they have. Yeah, I mean, what way do they have to react? If you are a Palestinian and you don't have an army and you don't have a government, and you just want to defend yourself, how can you defend yourself? I'm just asking, how can you? I'm trying to think sometimes, how can Palestinians defend themselves, after the killing of their, this hopeless life they have. I just think about that. ...Jihad is good. I mean, it's better if it won't be, but jihad is not bad for our religion. Jihad is to kill the one who came to take your land, the one who came to take your money, if you have money, to take your honor. By defending those things, you have to defend yourself by killing him.

Once viewing suicide bombing as "totally wrong," Laila has now internalized the classic Palestinian narrative of moral justification for the bombings—that they are acts of desperation, symbolic of Palestinian hopelessness, committed because they represent the "only way" of "defense" against Israel.

But Laila's identity is a subject of great complexity, for she is a Palestinian citizen of Israel, existentially fixated in a liminal position between Israel and Palestine. That she has internalized some of the "Islamist" discourse of contemporary Palestinian struggle is hardly surprising; contact has enabled her interaction with Palestinians from the occupied territories—something previously impossible. So she is, as any truly liminal identity would prescribe, ideologically divided within herself. The assumption of the Seeds identity helped to resolve the crisis of her Palestinian-Israeli identity by offering a third narrative that was

inclusive of all—including her. But now that she has lost confidence in the viability of this identity, she must come to a new resolution within herself of her disparate identities.

> You have just to manage the conflict in yourself, that there are two things—the reality and Seeds of Peace. ...And the conflict in myself, I still have two conflicts, my self, between the conflict and Seeds of Peace, and the conflict that I am living in, as an Arab Israeli, as a Palestinian.

> ...You know I thank God that I have a better life than anyone in Palestine. But I still sometimes feel that, how come I don't have a country? I don't feel that I have a country. I don't feel like I belong right here, although it is my land. I feel like I belong to my land when I sit with my grandpa, he just tells me about all the things, the stories. I feel some belonging to this land, but not to this country. Walking in the malls and the streets, and everyone is just staring at you, because you are Arab, it's so different.

> ...I don't know, I'm so confused, you know. About the situation, about myself, about my identity. Palestinians, Israelis, my city, my country.

The inability of her Seeds identity to resolve the conflict of her liminal status has, for Laila, activated a renewed identity crisis. She struggles to reconcile her Israeli and Palestinian identities, which creates significant ideological confusion for her present life story. She feels entirely disconnected from her Israeli identity, and yet she does not want to live the Palestinian experience.

> They're not my society, the Jews. We are different societies right here, the Arabs and the Jews. And I cannot think of myself as one of their society because they won't take me, they won't accept me.

Like Jibril, Laila identifies the source of her identity confusion as rooted in the discreditability of her Arab identity within Israel. Hers is a stigmatized identity in an ethnic Jewish state (Rouhana, 1997), and her current narrative reveals the internal struggle she is waging to reconcile the consequences of this experience.

Laila's path from transcendence to accentuation of her Palestinian identity illuminates the relationship between the social structure of conflict and youth experience. The reversal in ideological setting of Laila's story, from polarization to transcendence, relied upon

her internalization of the Seeds of Peace narrative—a narrative of liberal cosmopolitan coexistence. As a Palestinian-Israeli, Laila was able to embrace this new narrative as a means to reconcile her own inevitable identity crisis as an Arab citizen of the Jewish state. The internalization of this narrative specified a particular lifeway for Laila: one in which social practice tied to a cosmopolitan ideology might in fact affect the course of the conflict, her own identity transcendence expanding like a web across the region.

Yet two years beyond contact, Laila has come to acknowledge the limits of a cosmopolitan narrative in the reality of the conflict. She has become a realist, if a confused one. Contact has, at this point in her evolving personal narrative, only contributed to her identity confusion, creating another crisis for her to reconcile. She has come to see the extent to which Seeds of Peace diverges in its culture from the reality of the conflict. With this revelation comes the rejection of the third narrative, now dubbed "just words" by Laila. Discourse in the absence of viable social practice to sustain it is, as exemplified by Laila's narrative, ephemeral at best. While youth such as Roai immediately identify the instability of the narrative of coexistence and essentially reject it immediately, youth like Laila undergo a challenging process of gradual acknowledgment of the untenable nature of this narrative. They proceed from transcendence and all of its great possibilities gradually to a place of compulsory accentuation, for conflict commands conformity to a master narrative. Palestinian-Israelis, perceiving themselves rejected from the Israeli master narrative, like both Laila and Jibril, come to accentuate their Palestinian identities over time.

CONCLUSION: CONTACT AND IDENTITY

Let us now briefly summarize the findings reported in this chapter and reserve a more substantive discussion of their implications for Chapter 5. This chapter addressed the second research question with which this dissertation is consumed: What is the impact of intergroup

contact on the identity development of Palestinian and Israeli youth? Through the lens of personal narratives, we considered the identity outcomes of participation in an American-based coexistence program. Though we speak of "outcomes," we must recognize that identity is always a *process* and that the narratives presented here provide only brief windows into the identity development processes of youth.

The idea of intergroup contact is both incredibly alluring and cosmopolitan in its foundational ideology. It is rooted in the desire to transform cultural realities—racism, intolerance, prejudice, conflict—through a dialogue of identities. Yet when we consider the context of Israeli-Palestinian relations, we must recognize that these identities lack existential security; the social identities implicated in this conflict are most at stake, most threatened (Pettigrew, 2003). The insecurity and instability of identity is an important variable we must consider when we evaluate the outcome of contact for Palestinian and Israeli youth, for threatened identities do not yield well to attempts at recategorization, as this study suggests.

Influenced by classic perspectives on intergroup contact, both Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace seek to elicit processes of decategorization and recategorization through the design of their programs. This distinctly *American* approach finds itself uncomfortably transported across cultures (Abu-Nimer, 1999), as the findings reported in this chapter confirm, for conflict's inevitable identity polarization prevents such cognitive processes from having any lasting effect. Such intervention strategies may be useful in the cultural context of ethnocentrism and racism, as they were in the United States, but they have little value in the context of intractable conflict (Bar-Tal, 2004a).

The narratives of youth examined in this study indeed reveal that identity transcendence is an attainable end for such programs, but it is entirely untenable in the actual cultural context of conflict. So it begins to fade over time, as youth come to deeply internalize

the ingroup narrative of identity. In this process, the programs came to represents sites of identity "essentialization" (Helman, 2002) in which youth only affirmed stereotypes in their defense of ingroup narratives. While "dialogic moments" (Steinberg & Bar-On, 2002) certainly occurred, they could not be sustained in any kind of substantive way in the life-story narratives of youth. The "discourse of nation" (Bekerman, 2002) could not be subverted. Consistent with social psychological theory, contact in this case seems to elicit a powerful process of mutual intergroup differentiation, whereby youth come to differentiate among the identities implicated in the conflict, and in that process to locate themselves within a particular narrative. We witnessed this process in the narratives of Mohammed, Roai, Jibril, Ayelet, and Laila.

As I alluded to, and as we will consider at greater length in the following chapter, the outcome of mutual differentiation ought not to be viewed as a "failure," although it is certainly not the desired outcome of these programs. A sustainable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will likely require as a psychological prerequisite the perceived security of identities, and a dialogue between secure identities may be a more fitting aim for such programs (Nadler, 2004). The process of intergroup contact may facilitate the growth of knowledge in ingroup-outgroup distinctiveness, thereby instilling the realization of a need for mutual identity recognition and fulfillment. If the conflict has indeed represented a clash of competing national movements in which each group has sought to "delegitimize" the national identity of the other, then perhaps contact as a means of cultivating an awareness of and appreciation for identity distinctiveness represents a useful contribution to the long quest for resolution and reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PROBLEM WITH PEACE: CONFLICT

AND THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF IDENTITY

Malak, Palestinian Muslim female (August 11, 2006): Hi everybody, I hope that all of you are OK and safe. As you know the situation now is very difficult. During this war there was Qana, and other massacres, and there is no word that can express the pictures that I have seen. It's a very shameful situation to kill all these innocent people.... All the people in Palestine now are talking about Hezbollah and are on their side, because they saw the Israeli army targeting children under 10 years old, but the other side is targeting soldiers. How can we change? How can we create a better situation?

Orli, Jewish Israeli female (August 11, 2006): Hi everyone! How are you all? I can't even describe how much I miss you! It's so weird to go back to Israel. I feel like I woke up to a new reality, a dark reality. It's so hard to wake up in the morning from a radio that reports about soldiers and people who got killed from both sides. It's so hard to have all these nightmares every day. ...I want to do something.

Walid, Palestinian Muslim male (August 14): Hey guys, how are you? I hope everybody is doing well and everything is going well too. Israel is a terrorist state. Israel is trying just to hit the civilians, that's what I see everyday in the news. I did not see for one time that IDF killed one struggler from Hezbollah. Israel is just killing the civilians, the innocent people. They are not killing anybody from Hezbollah and they did not stop. They know that they are killing innocent people and they just continue in killing them and I'm wondering why they are doing this. ...The legend that the Israeli army can't be defeated has been ended by Hezbollah. Hezbollah showed the world that they can defend their land.

Ariel, Jewish Israeli male (August 14): Walid, if Israel wishes to defeat an enemy, it won't take a month nor a year, it'll take two hours or less. ...I'm just tired of the fact that it's really comfortable to blame it all on the Jews. ...It makes me frustrated that we are fighting a barbarian enemy. It's the twenty-first century! I mean, look, we declared a cease-fire and they see it as a victory. Israel will not be silent this time. It's time to stand tall. Ariel, Proud ISRAEL.

Kamal, Palestinian Muslim male (August 14): I think that after 34 days of hard war with the Israelis, the invaders of Lebanon, Hezbollah achieved many things. One of these things and the best was that Hezbollah stood in the face of the most powerful army. ...The Palestinians too know there is a hope and a thing that makes it possible to destroy Israel. ...So I just want to say it's right in front of you, Israel is loooooooooooooooooosing and now it's possible to end the thing which is called "Israel." And let all the world know that we are not slaves, and each day a mother lays a fighter and a struggler, and that all the people have a country to live in but we have a country that lives inside us. So may God be with you. Salaam, peace, shalom. Palestine and Lebanon always, until the end.

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Eyal, Jewish Israeli male (August 15): Kamal and his friends, I've read your email and like Ariel I didn't know if I should laugh or cry. You really think that Hezbollah can defeat Israel? You know what, you're so sure and confident that those terror organizations can get into Tel Aviv so easily? I hope that you all do realize that if something will happen in Tel Aviv, especially now with the cease-fire, the army will actually erase Lebanon. If we want to kill all of the Lebanese like you think, you are wrong. If the IDF want to do it, it won't take more than five hours.

Malak (August 15): Hezbollah are brave people.... You have to listen to the interviews with the soldiers who returned from the war. When they talked, I just become 100% sure that it is possible to destroy the most powerful army. ...Ariel, you said that it is time to stand tall and it is time for not being silent. OK, what was that? A game??????????????????? Or were you preparing yourself for the real war? I don't think so. You are really a funny guy, or maybe you are shocked right now because you can't deal with your huge loss. I am sorry for you. ...I am talking right now to all of the Israeli guys, you really deserve the Nobel prize for playing the poor and victim part. HEZBOLLAH OWNS SOMETHING THAT YOU DON'T HAVE WHICH IS THE COURAGE, BRAVERY, FAITH, AND HONOR. HEZBOLLAH HAS RETURNED SOME OF OUR DIGNITY AND HONOR.

In the summer of 2006, the fourth annual Hands of Peace coexistence program commenced amidst the backdrop of a brutal war between Israel and Hezbollah. As youth from Palestine and Israel arrived in Chicago, they left behind families taking up temporary dwellings in basement bomb shelters, seeking refuge from the daily barrage of Hezbollah's Kassam rockets into northern Israel. Somewhat surprisingly, during the two weeks of intensive dialogue and social interaction that had come to characterize this experiment in identity "restructuring," the topic of Lebanon hardly came up at all. As the youth assimilated into a new reality, one in which the security of everyday life was anything but threatened, they gradually removed themselves from the psychological reality of war and conflict.

As I observed the process that this group of participants underwent in contact with representatives of their national enemy, what struck me most was the extent to which these youth, unlike the youth of other years of my fieldwork, resisted the program's press for identity recategorization. Yet even as they resisted the assumption of a common identity and maintained a strong sense of ingroup identification, they came to attach themselves

emotionally to the ideology of peaceful coexistence. They came to long for the reality of Hands of Peace, for its possible authenticity. And so their return to Israel and to Palestine was exceedingly traumatic, perhaps more so than in previous years for the "nightmare," as Orli calls it, to which they were returning.

The above email exchange among a group of Israeli and Palestinian youth occurred soon after their departure from Chicago. While the exchange may have begun with expressions of the emotional trauma they were experiencing—the trauma of losing the social ecology of peace and mutual recognition that Hands of Peace had succeeded in providing for two weeks—it soon returned to ideology, and the discourse of identity polarization came to consume the sentiments of youth just as rapidly as the context of coexistence seemed to liberate them from ideological insulation. Renewed exposure to their own national discourse, with its particular interpretive frame of the events of the Israel-Hezbollah war, seemed to bring them back to a place of psychological distance from one another imperceptible just a week before, as their parting of ways was accompanied with the tears and hugs that characterize the feeling of collective accomplishment.

And so Walid, who had become a close friend to Ariel, in spite of the antagonism between their peoples, now describes Israel as a "terrorist state" and seems to revel in what he perceives as a formidable humiliation for the IDF in this war. Ariel, for his part, must reclaim a sense of power that psychologically ensures his own existential security, expressed in his proclamation that it is time for Israel to "stand tall." And the cycle of identity polarization ensures its pernicious survival into another generation. The jockeying of power that consumes the mutual antagonism between Israelis and Palestinians, both of whom seek only the mutual identity recognition and national self-fulfillment which the age of postcolonialism seemed to guarantee, sustains itself through the ideologies of a new generation of youth, one for whom

the contest of identities has been played out once again through uprisings and wars, through the experience of collective loss, and the tangible insecurity of daily existence.

I began this chapter, the conclusion of this dissertation, with a record of this conversation for two reasons. First, I wanted to demonstrate just how rapidly the success of identity recategorization can be eradicated through the structural reality of conflict and the genuine absence of peaceful coexistence. That youth are so vulnerable to the lure of ideology and so consumed with reproducing a national narrative, absent its unshakeable security, is so blatantly transparent in even this small exchange. The point I mean to make here is that identity polarization is quite inevitable in the context of war and conflict, particularly when the basis of antagonism centers on the mutual recognition of identities themselves. The need for a restoration of "honor" and "dignity" which the perceived victory of Hezbollah seemed to represent for Palestinian youth can best be viewed as an attempt to re-write the narrative of Israeli-Palestinian relations. In effect, a return to the context of conflict is a return to the lure of identity polarization, for polarization guarantees a level of ingroup solidarity so comforting to youth.

But I also began with this excerpt in order to contextualize this dissertation very much in the present day, and to highlight just how fragile the contextualization of identity is for this research problem. I began this research in 2003, at the peak of the second Palestinian intifada. While so many seemingly incredible historical events have unfolded since then—the loss of both Yasser Arafat and Ariel Sharon in the political arena, the de-facto end of the intifada, the ascendance of Hamas as a political party, the Israeli disengagement from Gaza— it seems that so little has changed in the structural reality of the conflict. The Palestinian territories remain occupied by Israel. The Palestinian Authority remains only a quasi-governmental body, and an increasingly impotent one at that. Israelis continue to feel very

much alone in the Middle East, a people whose existence is at stake, all the more perceptible with the inability to defeat Hezbollah. Jews and Arabs continue to view one another, generally speaking, with fear, suspicion, and a deep hostility. Indeed the impasse between Palestine and Israel seems so immune from intervention. It is, as I have suggested, characterized by a stalemate of narratives.

In this concluding chapter, I will return to the three specific questions this research sought to address, revealing the "answers," however partial, provided in the life stories of youth. First, I will review the findings related to the cultural *specificity* of identity—those particularities in the life-story narratives of youth that seem connected to master narratives of collective history and identity. Second, I will consider the question of intergroup contact and its impact on identity through the stories of youth, in the process offering a pragmatic but critical assessment of the American project of cosmopolitanism with which these two programs seemed so consumed. Finally, I will elaborate on the implications of this study's findings for theorizing the relationship among globalization, the life course, and social change. More concretely, I will explore the extent to which youth possess a kind of transcultural power to effect social change by embracing the multicultural, cosmopolitan discourse of globalization. I will argue that the tendency for youth to reproduce the narrative conditions of conflict by internalizing a discourse of identity polarization—in spite of intervention—suggests the limits of agency in human development, and the cultural psychology of adolescence more generally.

The central argument I wish to make as I conclude this dissertation is that the cultural context of human development, with its particular narrative possibilities and set of sanctioned lifeways, determines the identities of youth. Culture provides the index of meaning for identity, and it provides the narrative context in which individual life stories begin to be

fashioned. These individual life stories reflect master narratives of collective identity, for it is through youth identity that a culture and its dominant narrative are in fact reproduced. Agency is not illusory in this process, but its strength is context-dependent. The particular context of conflict, which is characterized by identity threat and thus a collective sense of existential insecurity, minimizes the extent to which youth possess the power to construct personal narratives that deviate from the master narrative in any substantive way. That is, conflict interferes with the possibility of repudiating a particular social order, given the social *function* of conflict to enhance the salience of identity distinction and the solidarity of affiliation (e.g., Coser, 1956). The cultural psychology of adolescence as a paradigm queries both the possibilities and limitations of the power of youth in a given cultural context, with its social, economic, and ideological order. In the case of Israel and Palestine, we see quite profoundly the power of social structure over the individual experience of youth, for the call to identify strongly with an ingroup narrative—with its negative interdependence—seems to outweigh the lure of a cosmopolitan code of identity "ethics."

In critically summarizing the findings of this study with particular reference to the seeming sustenance of identity polarization, as so clearly demonstrated in the narratives of youth presented in Chapter 4, I will also argue that the American quest for identity intervention in this case is most misguided. It is, in fact, more likely connected to our own psychological needs and to our own national narrative, with its particular problem of multicultural accommodation. What is most problematic about American interventionism in practice—here represented by the cosmopolitan attempts of these coexistence programs—is that it fails to recognize the cultural psychology of identity, the idea that identity carries with it deep cultural meaning and serves a pivotal role in the reproduction of a social order. American interventionism seeks rather, in its universalistic quest for a cosmopolitan

accommodation of "difference," to overlook the narrative particularity of cultural identities. While I do not wish to develop and to extend this argument to other efforts at American interventionism of larger scale, for such concerns are truly far beyond the more modest scope of this dissertation, I believe there is indeed a connection among such efforts. What I hope that the evidence presented in this dissertation reveals is the utility of a paradigm that can illuminate the specificity of narratives of identity and what those narratives reveal about the needs and idiosyncrasies of a given culture, of a people with some sense of collective meaning and interconnection.

As I argue for the significance of the cultural psychology of identity, I will also argue that the study of adolescence through the paradigm of cultural psychology is extremely significant for its ability to shed light on a most important process of sociohistorical regeneration. This argument is not entirely novel, as of course Erikson's pioneering work on youth very much promulgated this very notion. And yet I believe now we are better prepared, with the intellectual vantage of cultural psychology, to reveal the possibility of a cultural psychology of adolescence in application.

THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF IDENTITY:

THE VITALITY OF AN APPROACH

"A culturally sensitive psychology...is and must be based not only upon what people actually *do*, but what they *say* they do and what they *say* caused them to do what they did."

—Jerome Bruner (1990), *Acts of Meaning*, p. 16

The revitalized paradigm of cultural psychology is deeply concerned with *meaning* and the ways in which human development is driven by processes of meaningful, mediated activity (e.g., D'Andrade, 1984; Shore, 1991, 1996; Shweder, 1991; Strauss & Quinn, 1997).

It is culture, after all, that provides localized sites of meaning-making. It is in a particular culture that discourse is deployed, typically in the service of some political interest. And it is in the cultures of their social ecology that youth come to internalize and identify with master narratives of identity. As Bruner suggests, human behavior is the product of our own *narrative intelligibility*—of our need to make meaning of experience through language, through some inner voice that constructs a coherent and sensible story of *why* we think, feel, and do what we think, feel, and do. Cultural psychology queries just this process, searching for patterns amidst the diversity of lived experience.

The life stories of Israeli and Palestinian youth presented in this dissertation have, I hope, revealed the vitality of a narrative approach in examining the cultural psychology of identity. A narrative approach allows us to query the meaning youth make of their lived experience, as active participants in a particular culture. In the case of Israeli and Palestinian youth, we saw the ways in which youth both assimilate and repudiate elements of the master narrative of collective identity, and we identified some of the factors that seemed to intervene in the process of ideological identification (e.g., gender). Apart from thematic similarity or dissimilarity from master narratives, though, what was perhaps most striking was the match in *tone* and *form* between master narratives and personal narratives. The narratives of Israeli youth clearly possessed a tone of resilient success, in spite of the historical legacy of persecution. Theirs were stories of progress and redemption. The narratives of Palestinian youth were saturated with sentiments of despair and despondence, ripe for the call to some hopeful ideology, some discourse that might imbue their life stories with a greater sense of meaning and purpose. Their stories were great tragedies whose endings revealed little hope for a resolution. Palestinian-Israeli youth revealed in their life stories the disparate narratives

to which they have access, and their liminality was marked by a quiet torment over the question of identity.

The narratives of youth revealed their ideological identifications, their interpretations of life's successes and traumas, and their realization of goals and concerns in and through social practice. The interpretive approach to identity that cultural psychology commands us to take provides glimpses of an answer to the question of conflict, of its need to exist and to insidiously reproduce itself generation after generation. It is clear from the stories of youth that they long to realize the identities into which they have been born; they are compelled by the lure of solidarity to identify with a master narrative that serves the interests of conflict reproduction.

The narratives of Jewish Israeli youth who participated in this study revealed points of both convergence and divergence with the master narrative of identity. Formally, they reflected the tone of resilience and redemption that permeates the master narrative. Experientially, the impact of a distinctly *local* identity seemed to determine the extent to which the conflict assumed primacy in their life stories. Youth from the conflict epicenter of Jerusalem were more likely to be impacted by the course of the conflict; other Jewish Israeli youth were able to present narratives whose contents conformed to life's more expectable transitions—divorce, changes in school or home, and the like.

Thematically, the narratives of Jewish Israeli youth revealed the extent to which a coherent Israeli identity is both enduring and in a process of renewed negotiation. In particular, the youth in this study tended to reject the delegitimization of Palestinian identity that once infused the Jewish Israeli master narrative. Most of them seemed to recognize, even the most "polarized" among them, that the existence of a Palestinian state is simply a matter of historical fulfillment. As such, most acknowledged that there are indeed Palestinians and

that the Palestinian identity is one that, like the Israeli identity, deserves fulfillment in the form of an independent, sovereign state. Yet most Jewish Israeli youth offered a "conditional" acceptance of the right of Palestinian self-determination, predicated upon fulfillment of their own security needs. And still other youth continued to maintain that the need for a Jewish state somehow outweighs that of a distinctly Palestinian one and that, in fact, there exists significant cultural homogeneity between the Palestinians and the Egyptians, Syrians, and Jordanians.

The theme of Palestinian delegitimization is, for this particular group of youth, more readily contested than it is unconditionally endorsed. Yet a belief in the *need* for continued military occupation—if indeed that status was even fully acknowledged by youth—of Palestinian territories seemed to endure, and few youth were so "radical" as to suggest that the key to peace might lie in the cessation of Israel's occupation. In this way, while we can view this element of the master narrative as at least partially contested, it is difficult to see in the contestation of youth anything revolutionary, for ultimately the adaptation of this theme maintains the status quo of Israeli-Palestinian relations.

The inability to fully acknowledge the problematic nature of the occupation, for the narrative conditions it creates for the Palestinians if for nothing else, is connected to the continued perception of existential insecurity among Jewish Israeli youth. The narratives of youth strongly reflected this trope in the Jewish Israeli master narrative, in spite of the successful inculcation of a New Jewish identity as Fighter. While the narratives of youth proclaimed great strength and resilience, they also displayed fear, anxiety, and uncertainty— about their daily lives and about the sustenance of their own collective existence.

The narratives of Palestinian youth were saturated with the negative emotional tone and content of the master narrative, with its focus on loss, despair, and desperation. The

theme of *resistance*, so embraced by the youth in this study as a legitimate response to the brutality of Israeli occupation, represents a response to collective struggle that infuses the stories of youth with a sense of meaning and purpose. Stories of collective loss and trauma are mirrored in the narratives of youth as they recount their experiences with checkpoints, curfews, invasions, and the loss of friends and family members at the hands of the IDF. To make meaning of such losses, Palestinian youth come to embrace the master narrative, with its ideological focus on the just mission of national liberation.

Stories of the Palestinian youth in this study generally took the form of tragedies, in stark contrast to the resilient and "triumphant" form of Jewish Israeli stories. The historical legacy of loss and dispossession converged with the present-day structural reality of occupation to inject the narratives of youth with a great sense of existential insecurity, offering a thematic parallel to the narratives of Jewish Israeli youth. Two points of contestation in the master narrative that the stories of Palestinian youth in this study suggested were (a) the delegitimization of an Israeli identity, and (b) the legitimacy of armed struggle as a means of resistance to the occupation. These points of contestation, which appear to be sex-specific (i.e., occur more often in the narratives of females), may be connected to the uniqueness of this sample, which is not representative of the larger Palestinian population. However, if we are to lend credence to Palestinian public opinion surveys, the willingness to recognize a Jewish state next to an independent Palestinian state has been increasingly documented. Thus it seems that indeed the master narrative of Palestinian identity may be shifting to accommodate the existential possibility of Israel and of a two-state solution to the conflict over what was once Palestine.

Narratives of Palestinian-Israeli youth present a number of interesting challenges to the study of minority identity development in this particular context. The Palestinian-Israeli

identity is very much a "spoiled" (Goffman, 1963) or "negative" (Erikson, 1968) identity in the classic sociological and psychological sense; it is devalued and discrediting as an index of social location. While the master narrative of Palestinian-Israeli identity would thus anticipate powerful themes of discrimination and marginalization, the youth in this study appeared largely sheltered from such experiences. In part this likely stems from the fact that they have grown up in largely segregated communities and do not experience discrimination until their encounter with Jewish Israelis begins in earnest later in adolescence. Even the theme of existential insecurity—a trope that seems to create a common bond among all the identity groups implicated in this pernicious conflict—seemed only minimally salient in the narratives of Palestinian-Israeli youth. Rather, the most salient feature of the narratives of Palestinian-Israeli youth was their deep division, for it is the bifurcation of identity that seems most pervasive—and most problematic—for these youth. They struggle to integrate two very disparate and opposing cultures, with their particularly polarized ideologies. Their stories reveal internal conflict and the challenges of integrating such divisive discourses. At this particular point in their life course, they tended to identify with one narrative over the other, clearly in the early stages of narrative integration. Thus for the Palestinian-Israelis, a unique challenge in the initial construction of the life-story narrative centers precisely on the need to somehow reconcile and integrate their diametrically opposed identities as, on the one hand, culturally Palestinian but, on the other, non-Jewish subjects of the Jewish state.

Through the lens of individual narratives, this study has examined the particularity of identity in the context of conflict. The narratives of Israeli and Palestinian youth reveal strong connections to master narratives of collective history and identity, but they also reveal patterns of individual variation that are connected to distinctly *local* sites of identity. Situated in a particular time and place, the narratives of youth presented in this study provided a

description of the cultural psychology of identity—its variability in experiential and ideological content, the particularity of its very *meaning*.

The first concern of this dissertation—the specificity of youth identity in the context of conflict—reveals the salience of identification with master narratives of ingroup identity. The cultural context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is characterized by the polarization of identities, by a stalemate of narratives. As youth come to engage directly with the discourse of their cultural context, with its reliance on a mutual perception of collective identity insecurity, they navigate the ideological challenges created by polarization. While they seek to construct a sense of agency in their own life-story development, they ultimately reveal strong connections to master narratives of identity in those developing stories.

In considering the relationship between culture and identity, as revealed through the stories youth begin to construct about themselves to make meaning and coherence of life's events, the context of conflict reveals the context-dependence of life-story construction as an enculturated psychosocial process. More specifically, it reveals the ways in which the "dialogic" nature of identity (Hermans, 2001; Hermans et al., 1992) can be rendered uniquely "monologic" in its inward focus on the maintenance of a social identity under existential threat (Bekerman & Maoz, 2005). Here I do not mean to unequivocally argue that culture *constructs* identity, for culture relies upon the agency of its subjects for its own reproductive force. Rather, I argue that culture provides sites of discourse and meaning which are appropriated or repudiated by individuals as they construct their own personal narratives. In cultures characterized by the fragility of identities, such as Palestine and Israel, culture may place particular discursive limitations on identity through social structures designed to promote and protect threatened identities. Agency is not absent in the context of conflict, but

it is perhaps severely limited in its ability to lodge itself into the narratives of youth in any way resembling the "revolution" necessary to transform Israeli and Palestinian relations.

In the reified form of the individual life story, the narratives of youth in this study indeed suggested a basic conformity to the master narrative of ingroup identity. Yet beyond the statisticity of a narrative and its ideological setting, collected at a very ephemeral moment in the course of an individual life, this dissertation sought to examine the construction of a life-story narrative over time, thereby recognizing identity not solely as some *outcome* of development, but as a dynamic *process* dependent on social practice (Peacock & Holland, 1993). As such, the charting of narratives over time, in relation to the experience of intergroup contact, represented the second major mission of this study. And it is precisely this consideration that reveals the sustenance of identity polarization in cultures of conflict.

THE COSMOPOLITAN ALLURE:

PITFALLS AND POSSIBILITIES

Palestine and Israel are both products of, or perhaps more appropriately "victims" of, the primordialism that so consumed the age of nationalism, the era of post-imperialism in which groups of people might at last come to determine their own political and economic destinies, thereby gaining control over their own history. Primordialism commanded the construction and cultivation of narratives of identity that were emotionally compelling, narratives that imbued the concept of nationality with a quality of indefinite and identifiable historical lineage (Suny, 2001). Out of the global dissemination of this ideology emerged Zionism, itself a reaction to the painfully exclusionary national movements of nineteenth and twentieth century Europe. From Zionism sprang Palestinian nationalism and the emergence of the "country inside" Palestinians, as so eloquently stated by Kamal.

The United States could not, of course, find itself a part of primordialism, for the uniqueness of its own national creation and the separation of national identity from anything inherently "ethnic" had been guaranteed in the founding ideology of the country, even if inadvertently. Yet, over the twentieth century, America struggled to write a coherent national narrative as it painfully accommodated multiculturalism and adopted the necessary national discourse—both legally and vernacularly—to support such accommodation. The contact hypothesis, which emerged as the dominant social psychology "solution" to problems of intergroup relations *in the United States* beginning in the 1940s and 1950s, is itself a product of an American master narrative of redemption (see McAdams, 2006), of a need for atonement of a deeply racist and ethnocentric past (and present).

Programs like Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace, founded on the idealistic premises of the original contact hypothesis, are very much outgrowths of the ideology that came to consume a new American discourse. It is an ideology of "tolerance" and "acceptance" of human diversity; it is characterized by a superficial discourse of liberal pluralism and a willingness to view human beings as, at base, culturally "different" from one another. But through this difference there can emerge a universal code of human ethics—an ethics of *cosmopolitanism* (Appiah, 2005, 2006). There can even emerge, in the postmodern confrontation with numerous, hybrid, and constantly permutating discourses, the "protean" identity (Lifton, 1993)—a state of resilient coherence and adaptation in the midst of rapid fragmentation.

Both Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace are best understood as experiments in the construction of cosmopolitan identities, protean forms of being and behaving that accommodate the legitimate distinction among identities. But the possibility of a cosmopolitan identity narrative relies upon the security of identity and the fulfillment of a

coherent national identity, both of which have been largely denied Palestinians and Israelis. While cosmopolitanism does not negate a sense of national identity, it is rooted in at least the partial transcendence of ingroup interest. It recognizes the legitimate value in "otherness," a phenomenon that can only be experienced once the needs for security and identity recognition have been fully satisfied.

The second major question that drove this study centered on the success of cosmopolitanism. As I began this work, I found the thesis of cosmopolitanism, and its manifestation in these American-based ventures in intergroup contact, incredibly alluring. Yet as I collected the narratives of youth beyond their participation in these ventures—these experiments in identity intervention—I began to realize the limits of a cosmopolitan code of identity ethics, and the great idealism of the cosmopolitan thesis lay exposed before me.

When we consider the narratives of youth over time, as they come to integrate the experience of intergroup contact into their life stories, it is readily apparent that the need to identify fully with one's ingroup and its master narrative of collective identity outweighs the ephemeral satisfaction of identity transcendence. Although many youth do indeed display the features of identity recategorization we would expect from such an experience—the emotional connection to a new narrative of coexistence and the embrace of a new ideology of identity transcendence—the long-term effect of such identity transformation appears negligible at best, based on the narratives of youth collected up to two years after contact. Many youth in fact seem to develop a kind of "reaction formation" (Freud, 1923/1962) to the experience of contact, coming to identify all the more strongly with their ingroup, as their coalition with the "other" crosses the line of acceptable intergroup cooperation.

In Chapter 4, we witnessed variability in the narrative outcomes of contact, but most youth came to accentuate their ingroup identities over time. That is, contact did not appear to

achieve the goal of recategorization that both Hands of Peace and Seeds of Peace sought to achieve. Youth often temporarily embraced a narrative of cosmopolitan coexistence, but ultimately the narratives of youth seemed to return to a place of identity polarization. The social psychological process that seemed to best characterize the process of contact for these youth was not *recategorization* but rather *subcategorization* (Brewer, 1996; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000), or *mutual intergroup differentiation* (Hewstone & Brown, 1986b). Contact afforded them the opportunity to fully recognize the distinctiveness of self and other, thereby providing youth with the *rationale* for identity polarization. What had once been only discourse *within* their own societies was now laid out plainly before them, as they confronted directly the ideologies that characterized the stalemate of narratives between themselves and their national "enemy."

What we do not know from this study is the extent to which the intervention of intergroup contact is *more likely* to enhance the desire for identity accentuation over and above its "natural" level in the context of conflict. That is, does intergroup contact in fact *cause* a higher level of ingroup identity accentuation than would have occurred absent such intervention? To answer this important question, a comparative design with youth who do not participate in intergroup contact would of course be necessary. One of the central limitations of this study is in fact its absence of a comparison group to answer such questions.

But the problem is not identity polarization per se, for even absent intractable conflict we know that intergroup behavior is characterized by an accentuation of social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). We should *expect* contact to lead to a process of mutual differentiation, and this process would not be problematic were it not for the persistence of conflict between groups. The problem, then, is not the social psychological *process* of identity accentuation as an outcome of contact; it is rather the *content* of Israeli and

Palestinian identities themselves. The problem lies in the *inherent* stalemate of narratives that currently exists between Palestinians and Israelis. If any intervention is to be successful in genuinely effecting social change in this most pernicious situation, it is an intervention in the *master narratives themselves.* What is needed, then, is not so much *individual* change but rather *structural* change (cf. Bekerman & Maoz, 2005).

The cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian identities is characterized by a state of polarization, of vast psychological distance, and of narrative irreconcilability. This study has examined the ways in which youth navigate the challenges of such a developmental context, specifying the contents of their developing life-story narratives. As a whole, the findings of this study suggest that the need to reproduce master narratives of collective identity is quite significant for Israeli and Palestinian youth. They ascribe meaning and purpose to their life events through the prism of this master narrative, with its story of collective historical experience. In capturing the process of meaning-making in cultural context, the analysis of life-story narratives provides a window into the psychological dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its interminable reproduction.

The psychological context of conflict creates a crisis of collective identity, for it is precisely the fate of identity that is most at stake. The themes of existential insecurity that create a common link between the narratives of Palestinian and Israeli youth reveal the mechanism of conflict reproduction in the perception of threatened identities. Only identities that are guaranteed the security of *recognition* are amenable to the challenges of youth. Absent such security, we ought only to expect a desperate affiliation with master narratives, for youth long for the satisfaction of feeling themselves connected to the mission of a common cause (Erikson, 1968). In the intersection of the psychological *needs* of youth with

the narrative framework of conflict, they can only contribute to a regeneration of the social order in its bitter and enduring status quo.

We can discern from the evidence presented in this dissertation that mutual differentiation indeed comes to represent the dominant social psychological process following contact between Palestinian and Israeli youth, and in this process a complete reproduction of the identity conditions that maintain the conflict seems quite ensured. Contact thus seems to serve a reproductive function for the "monologic" national identities in conflict (Bekerman & Maoz, 2005). But it is useful, and most practical, to ask ourselves *why* this process occurs, or perhaps more to the point, why these American-based coexistence programs fail in their missions to cultivate cosmopolitan identities of ideological transcendence. I will offer two very basic reasons. First, the programs fail to assume a sufficiently *intracultural* approach and rely largely on an American cultural model of adolescence and intergroup relations. Second, in their desire for political "neutrality," the programs fail to address issues of power asymmetry that deeply influence the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In so doing, they inhibit the extent to which issues of structural reality can be acknowledged and addressed by youth.

American Intervention as a "Civilizing" Project

The primary factor that seems to limit the extent to which these American-based programs can fulfill their missions of identity recategorization centers on their misguided application of an American cultural model of intergroup relations and adolescence to their project. At first, to levy such a criticism may sound somewhat nonsensical, for these programs are, after all, *American*. But in rather blindly applying notions of moral and psychological universalism, they inhibit their own possibilities for effecting social change.

We find in the American intervention described in this dissertation the collision of narratives, not only the collision of Palestinian and Israeli national narratives of identity and history, but also the collision of those narratives with the American narrative of cosmopolitanism as a solution to intergroup conflict. Both Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace attempt an *exogenous* solution to a most *indigenous* problem, for Israel and Palestine have not realized the kind of sustained identity security necessary for any measure of collective transcendence. In making such a claim, I do not wish to privilege cosmopolitanism or the American response to its own project of multicultural accommodation. Rather, I wish only to suggest that in their faith in the viability of a cosmopolitan consciousness, these programs essentially *deny* the structural reality of Israel and Palestine, thereby erroneously applying an American context of intergroup relations—one in which *ethnocentrism*, rather than *intractable conflict* (Bar-Tal, 2004a), is the dominant problem—to a widely divergent cultural context. In their quest to instill a narrative of cosmopolitanism, the organizers of these programs are seeking to fulfill their own psychological needs to redeem themselves from the legacy of American racism. The development and implementation of these programs might have more to do, then, with the fulfillment of their own master narratives of redemption (McAdams, 2006) through cosmopolitanism.

To clarify my argument, let me clearly state that I do not intend to somehow delegitimize the theses of either liberal pluralism or cosmopolitanism as mechanisms of multicultural accommodation. Nor do I refute the possibility of protean identities more generally as an individual response to globalization and postmodernity. Rather, what I mean to suggest is that the utility of political, legal, and social ideological systems such as those promulgated by these theses are context-dependent. They require certain cultural preconditions, not the least of which is a deployment of discourse that identifies such a code

of identity ethics as somehow desirable. The context of conflict, I would argue based on the findings of this study, does not produce such a discursive possibility with enough power to attract the youth of a culture *en masse*. The inculcation of identities attuned to a cosmopolitan code of ethics requires a certain structural reality in a culture, one in which diversity in identity is both recognized and valued. But absent mutual recognition and the guarantee of identity security, how can we realistically expect the cultural context of either Israel or Palestine to represent such a context?

We ought also to note that, although I have used the term "liberal pluralism" almost synonymously with cosmopolitanism, the political philosophy described by Galston (2002), based on the ideas of Berlin and others, is much more radical than cosmopolitanism. I think the true radicalism of liberal pluralism is expressed by Galston (2002) when he says, "To demand that every acceptable way of life reflect a conscious awareness of value pluralism is to affirm what value pluralism denies—the existence of a universally dominant value" (p. 53). Liberal pluralism is not meant to create a hierarchy of meaning in social, national, or political organization, for it recognizes at its core the legitimacy of plurality in the ways in which lives are culturally organized and lived.

Yet cosmopolitanism, as an ideological derivative of liberal political philosophy, is a value-laden concept, for it privileges a distinctly American way of cultural being. To embrace liberal pluralism in all of its authenticity would destabilize the value hierarchy set up by cosmopolitanism, for as its own ideology, it recognizes its *absence* as problematic. That is, cosmopolitanism as posited by Appiah (2006) and as manifest in the cultures of these American-based coexistence programs is framed as *the* solution to the problem of intergroup conflict and multicultural accommodation that characterizes our time. In this way, it is a betrayal of the tenets of liberal pluralism, for liberal pluralism seeks precisely to avoid a

hierarchy of ideologies through its rejection of universalism in values. It is beyond both my concern and my competence to extend this argument further, for I am a cultural psychologist and not a political philosopher. But I think it important to identify the distinction between cosmopolitanism and liberal pluralism as ideologies that mutually infuse the American project of psychological intervention in the identities of Israeli and Palestinian youth. Suffice it to say that the organizers of these programs view themselves as highly cosmopolitan endorsers of liberal pluralism, in spite of their seeming failure to fully embody what it is that such a commitment entails.

Hands of Peace and Seeds of Peace rely on an American narrative of intergroup relations, manifested in their faith in the idealism of the original contact hypothesis and the idea of cosmopolitanism, but they also rely on a distinctly American cultural model of *adolescence* itself. We can credit Erik Erikson, Margaret Mead, and other scholars of the 1960s and 1970s with the elaboration and popularization of a model of adolescence which imbues this life-course moment with a prodigious sense of cultural power. I believe these scholars were right to describe youth as the psychosocial moment of cultural regeneration, yet the promulgation and popularization of such a model suggested that adolescents possessed unparalleled power to effect social change. The perspectives of these scholars were of course developed in a particular historical context in the United States—one in which the social order was indeed being questioned and, ultimately, repudiated by a generation of youth. So it made sense to fashion a theory of adolescence that accorded sufficient cultural power.

While I agree with the premise that youth is always and everywhere the moment at which a given social order is either reproduced or repudiated—the primary assumption of a cultural psychology of adolescence—I would argue that the extent to which youth do or do not reproduce a given social order is not entirely within the realm of their own collective

agency. I believe that the clear process of social reproduction that occurs in the case of Israel and Palestine, as evident in the narratives of youth subject to an intervention to specifically *prevent* just that reproduction, reveals the limits of agency in the context of existential threat that characterizes conflict.

Both Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace promulgate visions of social change through the leadership of a new generation. They argue that "peace is made by people, not governments." Is this not a decidedly *American* perspective on the way in which social change occurs? Does this not somehow suggest that governments "serve" their people—a distinctly American premise? These American-based programs subscribe to a "bottom-up" theory of social change, but in so doing, they deny the cultural psychology of adolescence itself, for the power of youth to effect social change is anything but universal.

I do not question that the context of conflict in which Israeli and Palestinian youth find themselves today is an utterly unacceptable and unjust social order. Intuitively, it makes sense that encouraging the revolution of youth might somehow represent the best chance for a new psychosocial "regime." And yet we find in the "revolution" of Zionism itself, as well as that of Palestinian nationalism, not the ideologies of youth but of *adults*—individuals deeply dissatisfied with a given status quo, whether it be the anti-Semitic context of Europe or the occupation of Palestinian territory. Israel and Palestine consist of cultures whose discourses have long been governed by powerful ruling elites, not by the whimsical rebellion of youth. In such an ideological context, why ought we to expect youth to possess significant power for social change? Are the ideologies of both Israeli and Palestinian nationalism not *so entirely consumed* with instilling in youth the moral legitimacy of their struggles, whether through the IDF or the political youth movements of Fatah or Hamas, that they prove quite irresistible to

youth? Are these master narratives not so *compelling* and *comforting* as to appeal directly to youth as they consolidate their ideological commitments?

Unfortunately, both Hands of Peace and Seeds of Peace, because of their misguided assumption of a universal code of identity ethics, appear to be consumed with the project of American "missionary progressivism" (Shweder, 2004) that has come to infuse American foreign policy in the early twenty-first century. Quite benevolently, the missions of these programs are embedded in a discourse of American cosmopolitanism, one which is largely irrelevant to the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, the reliance on youth to forge a revolution in the realm of identity betrays the idea of pluralism itself—that human development assumes a diversity of forms connected to local meanings and interpretations of group history and identity. That the *process* of youth identity development is indeed universal, as some kind of transitional moment between the eccentricities of childhood and the demands of adulthood is a constant feature of human development, is not what is at stake here. Rather, it is the idea of adolescence as somehow a period of inevitable rebellion—an idea that was refuted so long ago by Margaret Mead (1928/2001) herself—that is most misdirected in this case, for Israeli and Palestinian youth seem to possess a *need* to conform to master narratives of identity, for the sustenance of those narratives are very much at stake.

The inability of these programs to "succeed" in the long-term thus has much to do with their blind adoption of an American cultural model of both adolescence and intergroup relations. The unchallenged assumption that such a model applies to Israeli and Palestinian youth reveals the extent to which a discourse of *American* exceptionalism (McAdams, 2006) has perhaps been internalized by the organizers of these programs. The ideology of these programs themselves—indeed the ideology of cosmopolitanism—seems somehow reflective of an ongoing "civilizing" project (Shweder, 2003), in which the West might somehow pass

on its enlightened discovery of pluralism as an accommodation of cultural difference. But in this philosophical dilemma, these programs have conflated the narrative of their own cultural context with that of Israel and Palestine, thereby blindsiding the structural distinctions among the United States, Israel, and Palestine.

The Problem of Power and Social Structure

The second major deficiency in these American-based coexistence programs is directly related to their reliance on an American cultural model. In their quest to "pass" as somehow politically "neutral," they ignore the structural realties of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself. Most notably, they neglect issues of power that exist in the conflict, thereby preventing youth from exploring ways in which they can realistically serve as agents of social change in their cultures of origin. As Pettigrew (1986) notes in his critical review of the contact hypothesis, *"The use of intergroup contact as a means of alleviating conflict is largely dependent on the societal structure that patterns relations between the groups"* (p. 191, italics in original). Efforts at intergroup contact cannot avoid the social structure and power dynamics that characterize the *actual* context of intergroup relations (Brewer, 1996), which suggests the need for a model of intergroup contact that is grounded in a cultural approach.

Like subjects of an experiment, participants in Hands of Peace and Seeds of Peace are encouraged to reduce the salience of their ingroup identities, for the sake of mutual identity recognition and coexistence. But the seeds of identity *non*-recognition run deep in Israel and Palestine, and mutual denial of identity is a source of empowerment for those who vie for control over this rather diminutive piece of the globe. In the case of Israel and Palestine, power is neither symmetrical between nor within the two respective societies, and the failure of these programs to take a critical stance toward the power dynamics that seem to

contribute to the conflict's intractability inhibits the ability of youth to challenge master narratives of identity.

Israeli and Palestinian practitioners in the field of coexistence education and intergroup contact have increasingly embraced approaches that lean more toward both mutual differentiation and the exploration of power dynamics as end goals (e.g., Abu-Nimer, 2004; Bekerman & Maoz, 2005; Halabi & Sonnenschein, 2004a, 2004b; Maoz, 2000b, 2001; Rouhana, 2004; Suleiman, 2004a, 2004b), for a resolution to the conflict requires *at minimum* mutual identity recognition. Rather than relying on an American model developed for a different purpose—namely, racial integration—programs that bring Israeli and Palestinian youth together must directly confront the structural reality of a conflict rooted in needs for both security and the recognition of identity. In such an approach, recategorization would be eliminated as an aim for identity intervention and replaced by an emphasis on mutual intergroup differentiation.

Beyond differentiation, though, youth must come to acknowledge the power dynamics that characterize the narrative stalemate of their identities. Quite simply, if Israelis and Palestinians are to *share* control of the land that was mandate Palestine, they must recognize the need to create power symmetry between them. I do not think it at all "political" to recognize the power asymmetry that exists between the master narratives of Israelis and Palestinians. It is not the Israeli master narrative that must be re-written, for it is already a story of success, however perceptibly fragile. Rather, the key to peace, or at least to a situation of intergroup contact in which the power asymmetry and structural inequality that characterize the conflict have been transformed, lies in a transformation of the Palestinian master narrative, from a story of resistance to one of realization. But the context of physical occupation prohibits the realization of a Palestinian identity that can ascribe meaning to the

practice and fulfillment of a culture, rather than to the quest for liberation from the chains of domination. It is this recognition, so carefully *avoided* in both of these programs, that is increasingly identified as essential by practitioners in Israel. The recognition of social structure and its relation to systems of conflict maintenance is simply a basic need for the experience of intergroup contact to carry sufficient experiential meaning that can be fully integrated into the personal narrative of identity.

The Meaning of Contact: Toward a Cultural Approach

What I hope this study most directly reveals is the importance of a cultural approach in research and practice on intergroup contact. After decades of work on designing an "optimal" strategy for intergroup contact, practitioners are now presented with a list of utterly unattainable conditions to ensure "success" (Dixon et al., 2005). Rather than seeking some kind of universal means to improve intergroup relations, it is probably more appropriate, though admittedly infinitely more cumbersome, to take a cultural approach that examines the *specificity* of the contact situation and sets *realistic* goals accordingly. I believe the evidence presented in this dissertation supports such a reformulation of the practice of intergroup contact. What must be considered most prominently is the *meaning* of the contact situation and its level of threat to ingroup identity.

In their significant review of over 50 years of research on the contact hypothesis, Dixon and his colleagues (2005) argue precisely for such an approach. Their paper, aptly subtitled "A Reality Check for the Contact Hypothesis," identifies the metatheoretical origins of the contact hypothesis in utopianism and individualism. The assumption is that prejudiced *individuals*, as opposed to *social structures* that foster power imbalances among groups, represent the root cause of conflict. As such, intervention in the process of individual cognition and behavior has long been the dominant emphasis of contact. The programs

examined in this study are no exception to this traditional focus. In focusing primarily on the promotion of individual change, practitioners of intergroup contact have typically overlooked the reality of structural relations among groups and the political needs those relations achieve. They traditionally fail to consider the ways in which intergroup conflict is connected to the reproduction of a particular social order, with a particular power dynamic.

If the contact hypothesis is to remain viable, as Dixon et al. (2005) argue, it must transcend its metatheoretical reliance on a utopian notion of intergroup relations and instead embrace an approach that fuses the psychological, sociological, and political implications of intergroup contact. In the case of Seeds of Peace and Hands of Peace, if they are to evolve into sites of social interaction between Palestinians and Israelis that are politically "useful" in contributing to the eradication of conflict, they must also abandon the comforting narrative of the original contact hypothesis. They must instead engage more directly with the *actual* sociopolitical reality of Israeli-Palestinian relations. Were they to somehow refashion their missions, goals, ideologies, and rites of passage in such a way as to *facilitate,* rather than to *complicate,* integration of the experience of contact into the life-story narrative, I would argue they would do a far greater service to the possibility of peace, for peace between Palestinians and Israelis must be grounded in the concrete reality of mutual recognition and the transformation from *negative* to *positive* interdependence. Such an end cannot be achieved through the "transcendence" of ingroup identity; it is possible only with the re-scripting of narratives whose existential viability relies on the negation of the other.

If peace education relies on the mutual recognition of collective narratives (Salomon & Nevo, 2001), approaches to intergroup contact that embrace mutual differentiation as a great possibility for eventual coexistence seem both beneficial and necessary. In fact, such approaches, which may emphasize the development of "cultural fluency" over identity

decategorization or recategorization (Glazier, 2003), are more in line with the tenets of liberal pluralism, for they recognize the legitimacy of diversity in thought, feeling, and value—in the process of meaning-making itself. A genuine pragmatism cannot emerge in Israeli-Palestinian relations before the fundamental task of mutual acknowledgment and recognition has occurred (Kelman, 2000). As such, efforts at intergroup contact must resist the lure of cosmopolitanism and instead come to embrace the authenticity of liberal pluralism, with its grounding in the radicalism of pluralistic recognition.

GLOBALIZATION AND THE LIFE COURSE: IMPLICATIONS FOR PROCESSES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

The findings of this dissertation illuminate the cultural psychology of identity and the impact of intergroup contact on youth identity, but they also reveal the cultural specificity of the life course itself and the ways in which human development is deeply embedded in systems of cultural meaning. At a time when processes of increasing intercultural contact threaten the stability of local and national identities, we see in the youth of Israel and Palestine a great commitment to collective identity reproduction. This study thus suggests that youth in fact often serve as guardians, rather than rebels, of identity, and in this relationship, we see the variable role that youth as a life-course moment indeed assumes across cultures.

As leading adolescent psychologists Jeffrey Arnett (2002) and Reed Larson (2002) have argued, adolescents assume a significant role in larger cultural processes of globalization. Since globalization is fueled by technologies that are typically of most interest to youth, it is they who must come to negotiate the identity dilemmas created by exposure to a proliferation of moral discourses. In this way, both Larson and Arnett argue, it is youth who drive the social change connected to globalization.

In this thesis on the relationship between youth and social change, we see shadows of a uniquely American cultural model of adolescence. While I do not deny that in a number of cultures currently impacted by processes of globalization (e.g., India), youth indeed appear to possess tremendous power to transform the conditions of their cultural realities, I believe that the findings of this study reveal the limitations of such a perspective. This study suggests that the power of youth to effect social change is, in fact, neither transcultural nor transhistorical.

The youth in this study were indeed subjects of globalization. They were middle and upper-middle class. They all spoke fluent English, consumed American film, television, and music, and were avid participants in the interactive connectionism created by the internet. Arnett (2002) cautions that globalization creates a greater likelihood of identity *crisis* for youth, both as the Western life course becomes increasingly "exported" and as youth negotiate local and global sites of meaning and interpretation. Conflict, for all its repulsiveness, seems to in fact shield Israeli and Palestinian youth from such crises of meaning.

The context of conflict is a context of identity insecurity which compels youth to embrace, rather than to challenge, local and national identity narratives. Their participation in the global youth culture must be kept distinct from their own process of ideological identification, as their fragile identities cannot be contested by the challenge of multiplicity. Palestinian and Israeli youth are shielded from the identity conflicts created by globalization just as assuredly as they are immune to the embrace of proteanism in their life-story narratives, for theirs is an insecure identity worth preserving in its most "pure" form. Hybrid identities are not an option for Israeli and Palestinian youth, for there is simply too much at stake in abandoning a master narrative and its comforting configuration.

So as we consider the relationship between globalization—certainly the *raison d'être* for a renewed intellectual interest in human identity—and youth, we must recognize the cultural psychology of that very relationship. While there *is* a universal process of youth identity development, it is by no means uniform in its content. The relationship between youth identity and social change is dependent upon the *meaning* of social reproduction in a given cultural context. It is dependent upon the extent to which a given social order is deemed contestable by enough of its members to ignite in youth the desire for revolution. Absent a discourse of tolerable contestation, youth are not empowered to effect social change, for the ideology of contestation is not accessible to them in their *discursive* ecology of development. Without access to a *narrative* of revolution, they have no language to embrace it.

In the context of Israel and Palestine, youth engage with the forces of globalization but resist its pressures on identity. They seem, rather, to pick and choose from those features of globalization that are non-threatening. Palestinian youth, in fluent English, speak of studying in America but of returning to Palestine "to serve my country." For both Palestinians and Israelis, locked in a narrative stalemate that is as much rooted in the politics of demography as it is the polarization of ideology, abandonment of the physical culture is a serious violation. Should we expect any less of deviation from the master narrative and its reproduction of the status quo?

In sum, the third question with which this dissertation was concerned was a theoretical one about the relationship between youth identity and processes of social change. The inability, or the unwillingness, of the youth in this study to infuse a narrative of cosmopolitanism into their life stories suggests an immunity from sources of ideological influence that deviate from the master narrative of ingroup identity. But it also reveals the impotence of youth identity in the context of conflict to repudiate the social order, no matter

how unacceptable, for it is the endurance of ingroup identity that is at stake in conflict. Absent sufficient identity security, neither Palestinian nor Israeli youth can internalize a discourse that is truly revolutionary. And in this inability, we find a major limitation to the thesis of globalization and the life course, with its reliance on youth-driven social change.

Just as for the thesis of cosmopolitanism, my intent in contesting the thesis of youth-driven social change is not to somehow expose its fallibility. Rather, I wish only to suggest a qualification for these theses, and one which has been illuminated through our examination of the cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian adolescence. The theory of youth empowerment is just as contextually bound as any psychological theory, and it is the *variability* in pattern that is most interesting, for it specifies the conditions of our theorizing, sharpening and refining our ability to make sense of the life course and its meaning to both individual and cultural coherence.

As Elder (1998) has noted, the life course is always historically embedded and thus linked to the possibilities of a time and place. What the cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian adolescence, as revealed in the narratives of youth, specifies is the limits to human agency that the context of conflict creates. Youth are tempted by the allure of global cosmopolitanism, and yet the situated possibilities of their life course do not seem to afford them the agency to construct life stories that deviate from the needs of their threatened ingroups. The findings of this study, in their challenge to universal notions of cosmopolitanism and the relationship between youth identity and social change, argue for the vitality of a cultural approach to the study of human development, for it is only through the lens of culture that the life course is exposed in all of its dynamic lived specificity.

THE FUTURE OF A RESEARCH PROBLEM

The findings of this study provide a number of important insights into the cultural psychology of conflict, identity, and adolescence, as well as the impact of a particular venture in intergroup contact on identity. But, fortunately for the young researcher, there seem to be just as many remaining questions as there were answers in this investigation. Most significantly, for both of the primary research questions with which this study was concerned, what is the "generalizability" of findings? In using a theoretical sample, it is difficult to make unqualified claims about the extent to which Israeli and Palestinian youth reproduce or reflect a master narrative in their own life-story construction. A larger study with a more representative sample of youth in Israel and Palestine would help to address the question of generalizability of findings.

Second, as already mentioned, a comparative design would help to identify the narrative outcomes of intergroup contact with more precision. In particular, this notion of whether or not contact in fact polarizes youth to a *greater* extent than their identities would be if left apart from intervention is extremely important for further investigation. It is also a relatively simple project, given sufficient resources.

These are the most obvious projects in a continued research program on this topic, but there are others. For example, although a longitudinal design allows for a consideration of *process*, always notably absent in studies of intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 1998), an observational design of the *immediate* experience of contact might also illuminate the process of psychological experience that occurs in contact. That is, additional systematic observation of the contact setting might provide greater experiential specificity on the psychological processes occurring. For example, the use of innovative time-sampling techniques such as the Experience Sampling Method (ESM; Larson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1983) may illuminate the

subjective experience of identity challenge that occurs in contact, along with its emotional and cognitive correlates. Such information may be useful in considering the design and implementation of a new curriculum for such programs that focuses on mutual differentiation.

Finally, there is perhaps another important direction, which is a distinctly *developmental* one. We have been concerned, just as the organizers of Hands of Peace and Seeds of Peace were, with *adolescence* as a moment of identity intervention. This developmental choice was, not surprisingly, rooted in the extent to which the American cultural model of the life course is deeply embedded within our own theorizing about *when* to intervene in development. And yet Arnett (2000, 2004) argues that a new stage in the life course—that of *emerging adulthood*—has really become the "age of identity exploration" in the postindustrial world. The cross-cultural "validity" of this "new" life-course moment notwithstanding, his theory raises interesting questions for this research. Is the problem with the "effectiveness" of contact not so much in the context of conflict itself but in the *life-course moment of intervention*? That is, were these programs to work with "emerging adults" instead of adolescents, how might the narrative impact of contact be different? Might it be more "successful," as emerging adults may possess less of a *need* to identify with the master narrative? For Jewish Israeli youth in particular, might it not be better to delay participation in such endeavors until *after* their military service? Before their service, it is perhaps more challenging for them to critique a master narrative they are about to so faithfully defend.

The developmental question is a very important one, and one which specifies another, ambitious line of research. Future research on this problem should carefully examine the age of assessment and intervention, for the life course is, of course, an ever-shifting index of human development. The human life course is intimately connected to the social and economic needs of a particular culture, and a concern with the power of adolescence in fact

can be linked to changing economic conditions of Western society (e.g., Kett, 1977). Do "adolescence" and "youth" really conceptually coexist in the Israeli and Palestinian respective life course? Or, rather, is a period of "emerging adulthood," if indeed it actually *occurs* in Israel and Palestine, really more emblematic of the possibilities of youth? Is it during this new phase in the life course, rendered more likely in the economic conditions of postindustrialism (Arnett, 2000), that the challenges to a social order occur, instead of that very *American* idea of adolescence as the age of social challenge? These are the distinctly *developmental* questions for future research, and they are perhaps the most important remaining questions for this research problem.

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THE REVOLUTION OF PEACE:

TOWARD NARRATIVE RECONCILABILITY

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The research problem under investigation in this study began with the deceptively simple aim of documenting the diversity of human development manifest in the identities of Israeli and Palestinian youth. But, owing to its interdisciplinary foundations, it could not eschew its own burgeoning complexity. So questions of the relationship between youth and society, of the problem of globalization and identity, of the viability of intergroup contact as a "solution" to the problem of multiculturalism and conflict, were inevitable as we considered the narratives of Palestinian and Israeli youth. I view the problem of Israel-Palestine as deeply connected to issues of history and to the problem of postcolonial identity, so these are also issues that naturally emerge from the data presented here but lie outside of its intellectual scope.

As Kenneth Gergen (1973) long ago noted, the knowledge produced by social psychology is ultimately *historical* knowledge. That is, when we study human social behavior, relegated to the cultural and historical moment of its observation, we are witnesses

to history unfolding. We become active participants in shaping that history to the extent that the information we disseminate about human social behavior in fact impacts the future of that very behavior. I believe the call for social and cultural psychologists of our time, having abandoned notions of psychic universalism and decontextualized knowledge, is to specify the diversity of human experience in ways that contribute to positive human development and the betterment of life-course possibilities, however pluralistically those are defined. With the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as, unfortunately, a living "laboratory" for the observation of human social behavior (Bar-Tal, 2004b), this research has sought to contribute to such an aim by exposing both the problem of identity polarization and its inevitable connection to the social structure of conflict. The narratives of youth were infused with meaning, purpose, and coherence as they reproduced this social structure, in spite of intervention to thwart just that process.

One of the challenges of human development in the twenty-first century concerns the collision of narratives. Globalization has indeed created a context in which intercultural contact is both increasingly common and inevitable. The "postmodern" dilemma of cultural accommodation, of balancing the needs of an existing social order with its rapidly evolving discursive framework, intersects with a very "modern" problem perpetually unresolved in Israel and Palestine. What remains unsettled is of course the question of identity, of the full recognition of an Israeli *and* Palestinian national identity, and their viability in a postcolonial, postmodern, "postnational" context.

The problem of Israel-Palestine is a modern one, concerned with the politics of national recognition, but the identity politics of a global world order intersect with this "indigenous" problem when the ideology of cosmopolitanism is blindly applied. Out of our own need for redemption, we seek to fashion Israeli and Palestinian identities that are attuned

to the harmony of difference, but what we fail to acknowledge is that a stable sense of *sameness within* is required before the appreciation of difference can legitimately be cultivated, if indeed it ever "ought" to be. What is most needed, then, is the complete recognition of identity, with all its accompanying social and political institutions, for both parties. As long as Palestinian identity remains only "inside" of Palestinian youth, and never legitimately existing in the external social ecology, the delegitimization of an Israeli identity, with its accompanying resistance, will remain a purposive activity for youth.

As the findings of this dissertation suggest, the cultivation of identities attuned to peaceful coexistence is not a simple matter of individual intervention, or simply of the individual repudiation of a master narrative. Peace is, rather, a revolutionary aim, and successful revolutions require a larger consensus on the contestation of a master narrative than is provided by these experiments in Israeli-Palestinian coexistence. The revolution to which the youth of Israel and Palestine are called is indeed a revolution in the narrative stalemate that has come to plague the security and sustainability of their competing identities. But narrative reconcilability cannot emerge from the efforts of youth, for youth must be guided by some *existing* ideology in order to forge a revolution.

In the space between the innocence of childhood and the resignation of adulthood there is indeed a possibility for revolution, for a contestation of master narratives, for an intervention in the interminable process of social reproduction. But the contestation of master narratives is predicated on a dissatisfaction that can only be embraced by youth once they have been fully *fulfilled* and attained a clear security from without. For narrative reconcilability between Israelis and Palestinians to begin, the secure fulfillment of each is vital. A long process of reconciliation can only begin once the narratives which youth begin to construct are infused with the measure of ideological possibility that conditions of peace

and security naturally bring about. If the narratives of youth presented in this study suggest anything about the evolution of peace in Israel and Palestine, it is that peace does *not* emerge from *below* but from *above*, as the structural conditions of conflict inhibit the possibilities of life-story construction.

Peace requires, then, first and foremost, narrative reconcilability. But the master narratives to which youth are exposed are slaves to their own reproduction, for those in power *rely* on the structural conditions of conflict to maintain that power. It is only with the demise of that social structure that the narratives of youth can be liberated from the grip of identity polarization, but the means by which *that* revolution will be achieved is a matter for another, quite different dissertation.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE NARRATIVE STALEMATE: CONFLICT, IDENTITY AND

THE CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY OF ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN ADOLESCENCE

VOLUME THREE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

BY

PHILLIP L. HAMMACK

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

DECEMBER 2006

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

VERBAL ASSENT SCRIPT

Dear Interviewee,

I am a graduate student in Human Development at the University of Chicago. One of the things I study is the life experience of youth like yourself, and I am doing some interviews here to learn more about what it's like to be young and living in a part of the world where there's a lot of conflict.

Before we do an interview, I want to tell you a little more about me and why I'm doing this and make sure you're OK with us doing the interview. I want to tell you too that you can stop me at any time and tell me if you have any questions.

I'm doing these interviews for a big paper I have to do for school called a doctoral thesis or dissertation. I'll use these interviews to write that paper, and parts of the interviews may be published as part of an article or book. Parts of the interviews may also be presented at academic conferences. Any time I'm talking about an interview, I'll never use your real name. I'll always use another made-up name, and I'll do everything I can to protect your identity, so people who read it won't know who you are. You should know too that everything you tell me is just between you and me. I won't be talking about the interview with anyone else at camp or in the program. When I do talk about the interview with people outside of camp, like one of my teachers or something, I'll again never use your real name.

Doing the interview will probably take between one and two hours, and it's totally voluntary, meaning you don't need to do it. Doing the interview has nothing to do with [Seeds of Peace or Hands of Peace], in the sense that the interview won't be shared with anybody here [at camp or in the program]. Plus it's not a requirement of coexistence or being at camp to do the interview. I just want to make sure you understand that doing the interview is just for me and for my studies, and to give you a chance to share some of your ideas and opinions with somebody one-on-one, totally confidentially. A lot of times people like to talk one-on-one with somebody about their lives and their opinions, especially when it's hard to talk about some of the things we talk about here [at camp or in the program], like the conflict, without being really concerned about what other people will think of us if we share our real feelings. So this will give you a chance to really talk about what you *personally* feel and think.

I should say too that I am American, of European background. My father's roots are distantly British, and my mother is Italian. I was raised Catholic, a kind of Christianity. I am not of either Jewish or Arab background, so I don't really have any strong feelings one way or the other about the conflict. So I hope you'll feel comfortable being completely honest with me.

If at any time, for any reason, you would prefer not to answer a question, please feel free not to. If at any time you would like to stop the interview, please feel free to do so. We can take a break, stop and continue later, or we can stop altogether.

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I would like to tape-record this interview so I make sure I get everything you say, and so I can focus on listening to you instead of taking notes. I will keep these tapes with me in Chicago, where I live, and I won't be sharing them with anyone except maybe someone who will transcribe them for me. To protect your privacy, I won't put your name on the tape. Instead, I'll use a fake name.

If you have any questions, you are free to ask them now. If you have questions later, at any time in the future, you can always email me at phammack@uchicago.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in my research, you can contact the University of Chicago at this address:

Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board
University of Chicago
5835 S. Kimbark – Judd Hall, Room 122
Chicago, Illinois 60637
USA
Phone: 773.834.5805
Fax: 773.834.8700
Email: sbsirb@ura.uchicago.edu

[The following closing questions needed to be responded to clearly in the affirmative in order for the interview to proceed.]

Are you interested in participating in this study by allowing me to conduct the interview?

May I record this interview?

Again, I may wish to quote from this interview either in presentations or articles resulting from this work. When I quote, as I said earlier, I'll never use your real name. I'll always make up a name.

Do you agree to allow me to quote from this interview?

Do you understand this agreement and allow me to begin the interview?

APPENDIX 2

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent,

We are seeking permission for your child to participate in a scientific research project being conducted by Mr. Phillip Hammack, who is pursuing his doctorate in human development at the University of Chicago. Mr. Hammack's research examines the attitudes and values of youth who grow up in the difficult context of conflict. Mr. Hammack is a psychologist who has worked for three years with Israeli and Palestinian youth. For this research project, your child will be interviewed for approximately one hour and will complete a paper survey, which takes about 10 minutes to complete. In both the interview and survey, your child will be asked questions about personal opinions and attitudes related to the conflict, as well as questions about his or her personality and general experience in everyday life. Participation is entirely voluntary and may be stopped at any time. Your child may decline to answer any question. Participation in this research is not a requirement of the Hands of Peace or Seeds of Peace program.

We understand that such questions can be very sensitive, especially for children who grow up in difficult situations of political conflict. Therefore, **we are doing everything possible to ensure that your child's responses will be completely confidential.** For example, after your child completes the survey, we will remove any identifying information such as name and replace it with a pseudonym and a confidential identification number. Names, pseudonyms, and identification numbers will be linked in a special file kept in a separate location than the surveys themselves, only for purposes of possible future follow-up with your child. Audiotapes of interviews will be marked by pseudonym and identification number, not your child's name. **No documents with your child's name will be connected with either the interview or the survey, so his or her answers will be completely confidential.** Your child's responses will be recorded by American researchers who have no personal or family connection to the conflict and who therefore are as unbiased as possible.

It is our hope that this study will contribute to the scientific study of youth development in difficult contexts, such as the conflict in which you and your family live. There are minimal risks associated with completing the survey and interview, such as those involved in the endorsement of political opinions, but the benefits to completing it may be substantial to society, as the results can help to inform policy related to youth development. In addition, our efforts to maintain strict confidentiality with the data your child provides should significantly minimize the potential for risk. As with all research, the information obtained will be presented in academic publications and presentations. In all such situations, confidentiality of subjects will be carefully maintained.

We would be most grateful to have you agree for your child to be a part of this important research project. Please sign below if you are willing to allow your child to participate.

_____

Signature of Parent or Adult Guardian

_____

Printed Name (in English) of Parent or Adult Guardian

_____

Date of reading and signing this form

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Principal Investigator: **Dr. Bertram J. Cohler, University of Chicago, 001.773.955.6950, bert@uchicago.edu**
Student Investigator: **Phillip L. Hammack, University of Chicago, 001.773.398.5660,**
phammack@uchicago.edu
University of Chicago Institutional Review Board: **5835 S. Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60637, USA.**
Email: **sbsirb@ura.uchicago.edu**. Phone: **001.773.834.7835**

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APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Part 1: Review of the Life-Line
In this part of the interview, subjects were asked to tell the story of their life by explaining the events they charted on the life-line. Events were probed significantly if subjects did not volunteer information (e.g., feelings surrounding particular events).

Part 2: Basic Demographic Information
As was the case for the entire protocol, the order of questions varied, depending on whether or not the information had been obtained in another part of the interview. The items in this entire protocol were used as a guide to ensure substantive information on the life story was collected.

1. Where are you from in [Israel/Palestine]?

2. How old are you today and what is your date of birth?

3. You said you're from [X]. Tell me when your family started living there? Were they originally from somewhere else?

4. What religion are you and how observant are you? Are you as observant as your family, or do they practice religion more or less than you?

5. Tell me how you found out about [Seeds of Peace/Hands of Peace] and why you wanted to come.

Part 3: Life Story Interview
This part of the interview was modeled after McAdams' (1995a) protocol.

1. Life Chapters. I would like you to think about your life as a story, like a story in a movie or a book. Imagine your life is a story and, like all stories, it has chapters or parts. Take a few minutes now and look at your life-line and see if you can organize it into chapters. Tell me how many chapters there would be and give each chapter a name, just like you would see in a book. Describe the contents of each chapter.

2. Critical Events. Now that you've organized your life into chapters, I'd like us to focus on a few key events that happened to you in your life. For each event, please try to describe in detail what was happening, where you were, who you were with, and what you were thinking and feeling at the moment. Try to be as specific as you can.

   a. Peak Experience. Think of the time in your life that is really the highest point in your life story, a time when you were just so happy and felt at peace with

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the world. Describe in as much detail as you can the experience in your life when you felt this way.

b. <u>Nadir Experience</u>. Now think of the time in your life when you felt the lowest, a time that was the opposite of the event you just described. It can be a time when you felt a lot of negative emotions, like sadness, despair, fear, or anger. Describe this event in as much detail as you can.

c. <u>Turning Point</u>. Now I'd like to ask you about a "turning point" in your life. A turning point is a time in which something happened and it really changed you as a person. Think of a particular event in your life that had this kind of impact on you, when before this event happened, you thought of yourself one way, then the event happened and you thought of yourself in an entirely different way. Again, describe the event in as much detail as you can.

d. <u>Earliest Memory</u>. Now I'd like to ask you about your first memory, the very first thing you can remember in life. Tell me as much detail as you can about this memory.

e. <u>Other Important Experiences</u>. Are there any other very important experiences in your childhood or adolescence so far that we haven't covered so far? Are there other experiences you've had that you think have really impacted you as a person, the way you understand yourself. If so, tell me about them, again in as much detail as you can remember.

3. <u>Typical Day.</u> Now I'd like to ask you about a typical day in your life today. Walk me through what such a day is like for you now, where you live in your community. Tell me as much detail as you can about what you go through.

4. <u>Life Challenge.</u> Looking back over your life, tell me what you think has been the single greatest challenge you have faced so far in life. Tell me how you have handled or dealt with this challenge, and how you think having to deal with this challenge has impacted you as a person.

5. <u>Influences on the Life Story.</u> Now I'd like to ask you to think about individuals or groups of people who have had a big impact on you in your life.

a. <u>Positive Influences.</u> Please identify the single person or group of people who have had the most positive influence on you in life. Please explain how this person or group of people have positively impacted you.

b. <u>Negative Influences.</u> Please identify the single person or group of people who have had the most negative influence on you in life. Please explain how this person or group of people have negatively impacted you.

6. Stories and the Life Story. Now I'd like to ask you about stories that have had an impact on your own life story and on how you think about yourself.

    a. Television/Movie. Are there any stories from TV or the movies which have had a big impact on you in life? *[Probed for details.]*

    b. Books/Magazines/News. Are there any stories from books, magazines, or the news in general that have had a big impact on you in life? *[Probed for details.]*

    c. Family/Friend Stories. Are there any stories from your family, like stories passed down in the family, that have had a big impact on you in your life? *[For Jewish Israelis, probed for stories related to the Holocaust or anti-Semitism before arriving in Israel. For Palestinians and Palestinian Israelis, probed for stories of the wars or dislocation.]* Are there any stories from friends that have had a big impact on you? *[Probed for details.]*

7. Ingroup/Outgroup Identity and Experience. I'd like to ask you some questions about your identity as a [Jewish Israeli/Palestinian Israeli/Palestinian] and about your experiences with [Arabs/Jews].

    a. First, tell me what it means to you to be a [ingroup identity member]. What defines what it means to be a [ingroup identity member]? What does it mean to be a "good" versus a "bad" [ingroup identity member]?

    b. Tell me about your experience with [outgroup identity members]. Who have you known and what kinds of experiences have you had before coming to the coexistence program? What does it mean to be a [outgroup identity member]? What are most of them like in your opinion? What is the difference between a "good" and a "bad" [outgroup identity member]?

    c. Have your feelings about the [outgroup] always been like this, or did they change in some way because of some experience?

8. Personal and Political Ideology. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about your personal and political beliefs, your values, and your specific opinions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Remember, if you are uncomfortable with a question, you do not need to answer it. Just tell me and we'll move onto another question.

    a. First tell me religious, ethical, or spiritual values. What principles do you use to live your life?

    b. What do you think is the most important value in human living?

    c. Tell me about your basic political perspective. Do you associate with a particular political party?

    d. I'd like to talk a bit now about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict very specifically. First, can you tell me just briefly what you see as the history of the conflict? That is, please tell me how you think the whole conflict started, and what has happened in it, like the wars and so on. This isn't a test of how much you know about historical events. I just want to understand how you make sense of why it came about and what has happened.

    e. Now I'd like to ask you what you think are the most important issues that relate to the conflict and its resolution. Tell me your perspective on these issues.

    f. How do you feel about the possibility for peace between Israelis and Palestinians? Do you believe it is possible in your lifetime?

    g. How has participating in a coexistence program impacted your political perspective on the conflict?

    h. What do you think is the political perspective of the [outgroup]? What is your opinion of their ideology based on? Have you always felt this way about their perspective, or was there a time when you thought differently about it?

9. <u>Life Theme.</u> Looking back over your life, and again thinking about it as a story, can you see a certain theme, message, or idea that runs throughout it? If your life were a story or a book, and someone was reading it, what would be the main message they would take from it?

10. <u>Futures for the Life Story.</u> Now I'd like you to imagine two possible futures for your life story. First, tell me about a possible future that is not so good, one that you really don't want to happen, a more negative future. Now tell me a positive future for your story, where you hope it'll go from here.

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