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**Knowledge, Power, Identity
Palestinian Intellectuals and the Discourse of a One-State Solution**

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**Knowledge, Power, Identity: Palestinian
Intellectuals and the Discourse of a One-State
Solution**

Neil Charlton Dawson

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Philosophy in War Studies Research,
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Abstract

This study examines the discourse of a one-state solution and the Palestinian intellectuals who produce it. It draws on Pierre Bourdieu's field theory and uses a discourse analytic methodology to address the following questions. What is the function of the discourse of a one-state solution in Palestinian politics and why has it taken certain forms? Why do intellectuals intervene in political struggles, an intervention that in this instance has occurred at a transnational level? How is it that the contentious practice of these intellectuals remains largely abstract and not otherwise? And finally, what role can these intellectuals play in converting their critique into an actual generalised historical form? The central thesis of this study is that the discourse of a one-state solution is a competing vision of Palestinian social reality which opposes the dominant discourse in Palestinian politics and which incorporates the particular standpoints of those intellectuals who produce it. These intellectuals seek to impose this vision on the Palestinian political field through challenging the authority of established elites and so claiming a position of symbolic power for themselves. They do this primarily through claims to possess politically indispensable knowledge and through claims to be the legitimate spokespersons of the Palestinian people. The precise manner in which this bid for symbolic power is performed has effects that contingently deny the possibility of these intellectuals playing a political role beyond their present mode of engagement. This study contends that it is important politically to reflect on the limits of critical thought and knowledge production, though how one does this is problematised and taken as a starting point for future research on reflexive practice. In addition, this study suggests

that different perspectives in a given social structure are necessary for the formation of a collective political subject.

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Introduction

The Palestinian national movement is at an impasse and is suffering a crisis of political legitimacy and direction. Despite retaining its official title as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) barely functions. Much of what had previously bound disparate Palestinian trajectories into a relatively coherent political framework has long since been undermined, with this process occurring through a combination of military defeat, neglect, marginalisation and the co-option of national institutions by increasingly unaccountable and authoritarian elites. The creation of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in 1994 contributed to this marginalisation of the PLO, as the former effectively replaced the latter as the main national institution in the Palestinian arena.¹ Though the establishment of the PA was widely regarded as a final step towards the Palestinians' official goal of independent statehood in the context of a negotiated two-state solution to their conflict with Israel, it too at present is in a critical condition.² It is economically dependent on external sources of funding, divided geographically and politically between the rival factions of Fateh and Hamas, and likewise is increasingly authoritarian in its mode of governance over aspects of Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.³

¹ Doumani, Beshara, Palestine versus the Palestinians? The Iron Laws and the Ironies of a People Denied, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 36, No.4, Summer 2007, pp. 49-64, pp. 54-60; Frisch, Hillel, The Death of the PLO, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 2, March 2009, pp. 243-261; Rubinstein, Danny, One State/Two States: Rethinking Israel and Palestine, *Dissent*, Summer 2010, <http://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/one-statetwo-states-rethinking-israel-and-palestine>, accessed 31/04/2013; Sayigh, Yezid, Arafat and the Anatomy of a Revolt, *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 3, Autumn 2001, pp. 47-60, pp. 51-2; Sayigh, Yezid, The Palestinian Strategic Impasse, *Survival*, Vol. 44, No. 4, Winter 2002-03, pp. 7-21, p. 15

² Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, Oneworld, Oxford, 2009 (2007), pp. 150-1

³ Brown, Nathan J., Gaza Five Years On: Hamas Settles In, *The Carnegie Papers*, The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 2012; Le More, Anne, *International Assistance to the Palestinians after Oslo: Political guilt, wasted money*, Routledge, London and New York, 2008;

Moreover, the relative paralysis of the Palestinian political field, and growing authoritarian trends, has taken place within the context of Israel's ongoing occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, which by implication has prevented the realisation of an independent Palestinian state and a two-state solution to the conflict. For many analysts the current 'prospects for a two-state solution are as dim as ever'.⁴ Bodies such as the European Union (EU) have warned that the extensiveness of Israel's occupation, including its continuing practices of dispossession and land expropriation, is threatening 'to make a two-state solution impossible'.⁵ The Oslo peace process, which was initiated by the PLO and Israel in the early 1990s, appears to be moribund and effectively has been since the collapse of the Camp David Summit in July 2000 and the start of the second Palestinian *intifada* shortly afterwards. According to authoritative accounts, Palestinians generally are disillusioned and disaffected with the 'peace process as they have grown to know it'.⁶ Popular resistance among Palestinians to Israel's structural violence against them is ongoing, but this remains heavily localised or tactical.⁷ There is, in short, currently no strategic and programmatic alternative in the Palestinian political field. The 'strategic impasse' continues.⁸

Le More, Anne, Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state, *International Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 5, 2005, pp. 981-999, pp. 986-94; Parsons, Nigel, *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority: From Oslo to Al-Aqsa*, Routledge, New York and London, 2005; Sayigh, Yezid, Policing the People, Building the State: Authoritarian Transformation in the West Bank and Gaza, *The Carnegie Papers*, The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 2011.

⁴ International Crisis Group, The Emperor has no Clothes: Palestinians and the End of the Peace Process, *Middle East Report*, No. 122, 7 May 2012, p. i (executive summary)

⁵ Sherwood, Harriet, "Israel putting any two-state peace deal at risk, says EU", *The Guardian*, Monday 14 May, 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/14/israel-two-state-risk-eu?INTCMP=SRCH>, accessed 17/05/2012.

⁶ International Crisis Group, Tipping Point? Palestinians and the Search for a New Strategy, *Middle East Report*, No. 95, 26 April 2010, p. i (executive summary)

⁷ Ibid., pp. 25-30. See also, Hammami, Rema, and, Tamari, Salim, Anatomy of Another Rebellion, *Middle East Report*, Vol. 30, No. 217, Winter 2000,

<http://www.merip.org/mer/mer217/anatomy-another-rebellion>, accessed 20/01/2013

⁸ Sayigh, Yezid, The Palestinian Strategic Impasse, *Survival*, pp. 7-21

It is within this context that certain intellectuals have articulated a discourse calling for a one-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This discourse, which will be labelled the discourse of one-state,⁹ has polarised debate on the Palestine issue largely around ‘a two-state versus one-state solution’ dichotomy.¹⁰ From the point of view of these intellectuals, the one-state solution would entail establishing a single state on all of Mandate Palestine – present day Israel, the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem – in which Israeli Jews and Palestinians would coexist on an equal basis. Equality is conceived as equal ‘civil, political, social and cultural rights for all citizens’ of the state; this includes all those who currently live within the boundaries of what was Mandate Palestine, as well as all those who have been ‘expelled or exiled from it since 1948’.¹¹ The actual institutional structure and identity of this state remains unclear, with various and often contradictory ideas of unitary statehood, binationalism, federalism and so on being proposed, but the underlying principles of coexistence, equality and inclusion are articulated consistently.¹²

The vision of coexistence and equality informing the discourse of one-state distinguishes it from other versions of a one-state solution, and it is this distinction that warrants it being analysed separately from these. Hamas, for example, maintains that its ultimate objective is to establish a single state on all

⁹ The phrase “one-state solution” is typically used interchangeably with terms such as “binational state”, “secular, democratic state”, “unitary state”, and “single state” in the discourse of one-state. There are differences between all these terms. However, unless stated otherwise they will be taken to denote the generic “one-state solution” when used in this study.

¹⁰ Roy, Sara, quoted in, Le More, Anne, Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state, *International Affairs*, p. 998

¹¹ Abunimah, Ali, Aruri, Naseer, Barghouti, Omar, Ben-Dor, Oren, Bisharat, George, Bresheeth, Haim, Cook, Jonathan, Falah, Ghazi, Farsakh, Leila, Jad, Islah, Massad, Joseph, Pappé, Ilan, Prieto del Campo, Carlos, Rouhana, Nadim, and, The London One-State Group, *The One-State Declaration*, 29 November, 2007, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article9134.shtml>, accessed 25/02/2010. This will be cited as *The One State Declaration* from now on.

¹² Adam, Heribert, and, Moodley, Kogila, *Seeking Mandela: Peacemaking Between Israelis and Palestinians*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 2005, p. 179; Sussman, Gary, Is the Two-State Solution Dead?, *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, Vol. 103, No. 669, January 2004, pp. 37-43, p. 37

the territory of what was Mandate Palestine. Yet, in contrast to the discourse of one-state, its vision of a one-state solution is imagined 'in terms of an Islamic state in which non-Muslims would be tolerated minorities'.¹³ Non-Muslims are thus conceived of as occupants of a subordinate status in this vision of the future; they are not to be included on an equal basis. Therefore, as such versions of a one-state solution are clearly different from the one incorporated in the discourse of one-state, they are not going to be explored any further in this study.

Furthermore, though the intellectuals producing the discourse of one-state do at times discuss the modalities, institutional design and identity of the state they envision, a close reading of their texts reveals that these issues are not taken to be as important as contesting hegemonic discourse and established elites. The two most common models of a one-state solution promoted in the discourse of one-state are the binational approach and the unitary democratic state approach. The former is predicated on recognising the 'collective entitlements' of two national communities 'within one political entity', while the latter is a formula for recognising individual rights only and is premised on the principle of one person, one vote.¹⁴ Occasionally this discourse speculates more specifically on federalist, consociationalist, and cantonalist models as suitable formulas for implementing a single state in Palestine-Israel, but again these ideas remain undeveloped.¹⁵ Indeed, all these models remain rather nebulous in this discourse and are typically framed as potential blueprints to be decided upon at a later date.

According to the intellectuals advocating a one-state solution, what is crucial at

¹³Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, p. 209

¹⁴Sussman, Gary, Is the Two-State Solution Dead?, *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, p. 37. See also, Dumper, Mick, A false dichotomy? The binationalism debate and the future of divided Jerusalem, *International Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 3, 2011, pp. 671-685, pp. 673-75

¹⁵See, for example, Abunimah, Ali, A Curious Case of Exceptionalism: Non-partitionist Approaches to Ethnic Conflict Regulation and the Question of Palestine, *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 10, Nos. 3-4, September-November 2011, pp. 431-444.

this stage is not whether a single state is modelled as a 'binational solution, a federal system or a cantonal system',¹⁶ but rather the struggle against political orthodoxy and the provision of 'an alternative vision ... based on equality and inclusion'.¹⁷ It is because of this prioritisation, and resultant deferral of discussion of what a one-state solution would actually entail, that analysis is limited here to an in depth exploration of the alternative political stance adopted by these intellectuals and their present mode of contestation. It is on these grounds, that is to say, that the decision has been made not to consider the issue of models of a one-state solution any further.

Most of the intellectuals who are publicly intervening with the discourse of one-state are Palestinian; and while the target of their discursive practice clearly includes Israelis, it is at present primarily directed at other Palestinians. It is principally concerned with the issue of renewing the Palestinian national movement following its effective collapse over the last twenty years. It is due to this concern, along with the fact that most proponents of a one-state solution are Palestinian, that analysis is restricted here to the Palestinian context. This restriction should not be read as implying that non-Palestinian advocates of a one-state solution are insignificant, or that the Palestinian context is the only important one.¹⁸ Rather, it simply reflects the decision to prioritise depth over breadth and engage with a major aspect of the discourse of one-state in detail instead of dealing with all aspects of it superficially. A lengthier study would hope to redress this imbalance, and this limitation should be kept in mind by the reader.

¹⁶Aruri, Naseer H., The incidental fruit of Oslo, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 13-19 August, 1998, Issue No. 390, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1998/390/pa11.htm>, accessed 30/04/2009

¹⁷Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, Bloomsbury, London, 2004, p. 56

¹⁸ For an example of non-Palestinian advocacy of a one-state solution see: Tilley, Virginia, *The one-state solution: A breakthrough for peace in the Israeli-Palestinian deadlock*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2005

More specifically, within the Palestinian context, the intellectuals who construct the discourse of one-state tend to be university-based academics. The most prominent Palestinian exponent of this position, Edward Said, was, before his untimely death in 2003, Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. Lama Abu-Odeh is Professor of Law at Georgetown University; Naseer Aruri is Emeritus Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. George Bisharat is Professor of Law at the University of California's Hastings Law School; Seif Da'Na is Associate Professor of Sociology and International Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Parkside; Haidar Eid is Associate Professor of Postcolonial and Postmodern Literature at Al Aqsa University, Gaza; Sharif Elmusa is Associate Professor of Political Science at the American University in Cairo; Noura Erakat is Adjunct Assistant Professor of International Human Rights Law at Georgetown University and Abraham L. Freedman Teaching Fellow at Beasley School of Law, Temple University; Ghazi Falah is Professor of Geography at the University of Akron; Leila Farsakh is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts, Boston; As'ad Ghanem is Professor of Political Science at Haifa University; Islah Jad is Assistant Professor of Gender and Development at Birzeit University; Ghada Karmi is Honorary Research Fellow and Assistant Lecturer at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter; Saree Makdisi is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at University of California, Los Angeles; Nur Masalha is Professor of Religion, Politics and Conflict Resolution at St Mary's University College, London; Joseph Massad is Associate Professor of Modern Arab Politics and Intellectual History at Columbia University; Karma Nabulsi is Fellow in Politics at St Edmund Hall,

Oxford University, and is Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Oxford University; Mazin Qumsiyeh is Adjunct Professor of Molecular Genetics at Birzeit University, Professor of Biotechnology at Bethlehem University and Professor of Biology, Environmental Science and Human Rights at Al Quds University; and Nadim Rouhana is Professor of International Negotiation and Conflict Studies at Tufts University.

Further, a number of proponents of a one-state solution have held professional academic positions in the past, and presently are employed in occupations that are typically regarded as having an intellectualist orientation. Ali Abunimah was previously a Researcher in Social Policy at the University of Chicago and currently is a writer and journalist. Salman Abu Sitta was a Professor of Engineering and now is President of the Palestine Land Society, a 'scholarly society devoted to research an information on Palestine land and people'.¹⁹ Ramzy Baroud used to teach Mass Communication at Australia's Curtin University of Technology and is a journalist, author, and Editor-in-Chief of the *Palestine Chronicle*. Azmi Bishara was Professor of Philosophy and History of Political Thought at Birzeit University and is General Director of the Arab Center (sic) for Research and Policy Studies in Doha, Qatar. Jamil Hilal previously lectured at the University of Durham, was a Research Fellow at Oxford University, was a Non-Resident Senior Researcher at the Development Studies Programme, the Institute of Women's Studies, and the Law Institute at Birzeit University, was Associate Research Fellow at Muwatin, the Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, and is currently an independent sociologist.

Other Palestinian intellectuals producing the discourse of one-state include: Susan Abulhawa, who is a novelist; Omar Barghouti, who is an independent

¹⁹*Palestine Land Society*, <http://www.plands.org/>, accessed, 08/01/2014

researcher and commentator; Farid Farid, who is a PhD Candidate at the University of Western Sydney and freelance writer; Nadia Hijab, who is a political analyst, journalist, and Senior Fellow at the Institute of Palestine Studies in Washington D.C.; Ahmed Moor, who is a PhD Candidate in the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and freelance journalist; Samah Sabawi, who is a playwright, poet and political analyst; and Michael Tarazi, who is a lawyer and currently Senior Financial Sector Specialist for the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) – a consultancy that seeks to 'improve the lives of poor people' through increasing their access to financial services.²⁰

As these professional occupations imply, the Palestinian intellectuals who construct the discourse of one-state are typically holders of advanced educational qualifications. These, moreover, have been often gained from universities widely recognised as prestigious.

Edward Said held of PhD in English Literature from Harvard University, as well as a MA from Harvard University and a BA from Princeton University. Susan Abulhawa holds a MSc in Neuroscience from the University of Southern California; Ali Abunimah holds a BA from Princeton University and a MA from Chicago University; Lama Abu-Oden has a SJD from Harvard University; Salman Abu Sitta holds a PhD in Civil Engineering from University College London; Naseer Aruri holds a PhD from the University of Massachusetts Amherst; Omar Barghouti holds a MSc and BSc in Electrical Engineering from Columbia University, as well as a MA in Philosophy (Ethics) from Tel Aviv University; Azmi Bishara has a PhD and MA in Philosophy from Humboldt University in Berlin; George Bisharat holds a PhD in Anthropology and Middle East Studies from Harvard University, is a Graduate *cum laude* of Harvard Law

²⁰Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, <http://www.cgap.org/about>, accessed, 08/01/2014

School, and has a MA from Georgetown University and a BA from the University of California, Berkeley; Seif Da'Na holds a PhD from Kansas State University; Haidar Eid holds a PhD in English Literature and Philosophy from Rand's Afrikaan University in Johannesburg; Sharif Elmusa has a PhD in Interdisciplinary Regional Development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Noura Erakat holds a JD in International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law from Berkeley Law School, as well as a LLM in National Security from Georgetown University Law Center and a BA in International Development from the University of California, Berkeley; Ghazi Falah has a PhD in Geography from Durham University; Leila Farsakh has a PhD in Economics from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (SOAS), a MPhil in Politics and Sociology of Development from Cambridge University, and a BA in Politics and Society from the University of Exeter; Nadia Hijab holds a MA and BA in English Literature from the American University of Beirut; Jamil Hilal has a MPhil in Political Sociology from Durham University; Islah Jad has a PhD in Gender and Development Studies from SOAS; Ghada Karmi has a PhD in Medieval Islamic Medicine from SOAS and a MD from Bristol University; Saree Makdisi holds a PhD in English Literature from Duke University; Nur Masalha holds a PhD in Middle Eastern Politics from SOAS; Joseph Massad holds a PhD in Political Science from Columbia University; Karma Nabulsi holds a DPhil and MPhil in Politics from Oxford University; Mazin Qumsiyeh has a PhD in Zoology and Genetics from Texas Technological University and did a Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Clinical Molecular Genetics at Duke University; Nadim Rouhana holds a PhD in Social Psychology from Wayne State University and did a Post-Doctoral Fellowship at Harvard

University; Samah Sabawi holds a Bachelor's degree from Monash University; and Michael Tarazi has a Bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a Law Degree from Harvard Law School.

The above information indicates that the number of Palestinian intellectuals involved in formulating and publicly articulating the discourse of one-state is small. Indeed, as one of these intellectuals declares, only a 'very small number of proponents' are engaged in this specific practice of public articulation. Yet, as this same figure further comments, these proponents have managed to put the 'one-state option ... on the world's agenda', even if, as noted above, this has been so far only achieved at the level of debate, and not as an actual political agenda.²¹ Though the context of impasse and crisis of legitimacy has contributed to this discursive intervention, the agency enabling this conduct is bound up with the institutional position of those engaged in it and the advanced educational qualifications they hold. It is primarily as *intellectuals* that they are publicly intervening with the discourse of one-state; and the legitimacy of their intervention largely rests on and is sought through the mobilisation of their specific claims to sophisticated knowledge and competence. Though these figures might not always be part of a cultural elite within the particular intellectual settings in which they are occupied, it is their possession of cultural capital that is crucial to their engagement in the Palestinian political field.

As this information also suggests, most of the Palestinian intellectuals calling for a one-state solution are located outside the geographical boundaries of what was Mandate Palestine. They tend to reside in North America or the United Kingdom (UK). Edward Said lived in New York; Susan Abulhawa lives in

²¹Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York and London, 2010 (2008), pp. xxvi (author's note)

Pennsylvania; Ali Abunimah lives in Chicago; Lama Abu-Odeh lives in Washington D.C.; Salman Abu Sitta lives in London; Naseer Aruri lives in Boston; Ramzy Baroud lives in Seattle, Washington; George Bisharat lives in San Francisco; Seifa Da'NA is based in Wisconsin; Sharif Elmusa lives in Cairo and Washington D.C.; Noura Erakat lives in Washington D.C.; Ghazi Falah lives in Ohio and Toronto; Leila Farsakh lives in Boston; Nadia Hijab lives in New York; Ghada Karmi lives in London; Saree Makdisi lives in Los Angeles; Nur Masalha lives in London; Joseph Massad lives in New York; Karma Nabulsi lives in Oxford; Nadim Rouhana lives in Medford, Massachusetts; and Michael Tarazi lives in New York. Other intellectuals who do not live in either North America, the UK, or within the geographical boundaries of what was Mandate Palestine include Azmi Bishara and Sama Sabawi. Bishara lives in Doha, Qatar, though was until 2007 a citizen of Israel who lived in Nazareth. Sabawi lives in Sydney, Australia, and previously lived in Canada.

The remaining intellectuals looked at here currently live within either the occupied territories or Israel, though it should be stressed that they too usually have experienced living in a number of different locations. Omar Barghouti lives in Ramallah, but was born in Qatar, grew up in Egypt and studied in the United States of America (USA); Haidar Eid lives in Gaza, and studied in South Africa and Turkish Cyprus; As'ad Ghanem lives in Tamra, Haifa; Islah Jad lives in Birzeit, and studied in Egypt, France and Britain; and Mazin Qumsiyeh lives in Bethlehem, and is an American citizen who lived and studied in the USA for twenty four years.

It is because most advocates of a one-state solution relate to the Palestinian struggle from outside the geographic location of what was Mandate Palestine that

this study deploys the concept of diaspora, a term that will be developed in more detail below. As this “outside” location is primarily based in North America and Europe, the discourse of one-state will be at times more specifically focused upon as a diasporic discourse enunciated from these geo-political regions. Again, this is not meant to imply that the discourse of one-state is reducible to a North American and European diasporic discourse, or that it is *only* North American and European Palestinian diasporans who are articulating it. Rather, this focus is justified on the grounds that this particular diasporic aspect of the discourse of one-state is designated as significant in terms of accounting for both the specific content of this discourse, the factors driving the political intervention of these intellectuals, and the precise mode of their political contestation.

Indeed, what is the function of the discourse of one-state in Palestinian politics and why has it taken certain forms? Why do intellectuals intervene in political struggles, an intervention that in this instance has been undertaken predominantly from the position of diaspora and so at a transnational level? Given that these particular intellectuals frequently insist on the need to translate their ideas into a programmatic agenda for action, how is it that the practice of their critical engagement remains largely abstract and not otherwise? Finally, what role *can* these intellectuals play in converting their critique into an actual generalised historical form?

The main argument of this study is that the discourse of one-state functions as a competing vision of Palestinian social reality which is articulated in opposition to the officially dominant discourse in Palestinian politics, and which incorporates the particular standpoints of those intellectuals who produce it. These intellectuals seek to impose this vision on the Palestinian political field

through challenging the authority of established elites and so claiming a position of symbolic power for themselves. They do this primarily through claims to possess politically indispensable knowledge and through claims to be the legitimate spokespersons of the Palestinian people. The precise manner in which this bid for symbolic power is performed has effects that contingently deny the possibility of these intellectuals playing a political role beyond their present mode of engagement. The logic of their contentious practice prioritises philosophical interpretation over practical transformation. In addition, it works to symbolically efface different points of view in the Palestinian political field, so limiting the conditions of possibility for the formation of a mobilised collective subject. Consequently, so long as the hegemonic discursive frames of this discourse are reiterated, these agents cannot possibly convert their vision into an actual generalised historical form.

The broader focus of this analysis is on the role of intellectuals in politics and on the relation between critical thought and political struggle (by which is meant thought, or knowledge, that is overtly interested in changing a given social configuration and the political possibilities/impossibilities temporarily enacted within it). The critical practice of intellectuals, and more specifically the production and political effects of counter-knowledge, are the general concerns of this text. The question of how such political possibilities/impossibilities are enacted is considered especially important, not least because awareness of limits might raise the prospect of going beyond them. Indeed, this study contends that reflection on the limits of critical thought and knowledge production is highly significant politically. Yet it also contends that engaging in reflection is far from being straightforward. How does one do this and to what extent is it even

possible? This thesis is significant because it enables a starting point for future research on reflexive practice.

Furthermore, this study engages with other theoretical perspectives including, most importantly, post-representationalism and deliberative democracy. The general arguments made in relation to these theories are twofold. Firstly, that difference is the condition of possibility for politics as the constitution of a mobilised collective subject. Secondly, that the imposition of a prior unity on a given social structure works to prefigure identity as always already present and so effaces the possibilities for its active formation. Both these contentions and their demonstration through the analysis of the discourse of one-state seem to add support to certain theoretical criticisms of post-representation and deliberation,²² which in turn appear to prioritise a conception of politics in which ‘practical groups’ have to be made through struggles for legitimate domination and the constitutive generalising of the particular.²³ These points will be developed in more detail at the theoretical level in the first chapter of this research.

Significance and Review of Literature

The significance of this research is in part determined by its focus on important intellectual debates and reconceptualisations taking place within the Palestinian national movement regarding its historic purpose and future direction. Given

²² Thomassen, Lasse, Beyond Representation?, *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 1, 2007, pp. 111-126; Kioupiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2010, pp. 137-154; Kohn, Margaret, Language, Power, and Persuasion: Toward a Critique of Deliberative Democracy, *Constellations*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2000, pp. 408-429, pp. 423-4; Wedeen, Lisa, *Concepts and commitments in the Study of democracy*, in, Shapiro, Ian, Smith, Rogers M., and Masoud, Tarek E. (eds.), *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, pp. 274-306, p. 298; Young, Iris Marion, *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*, in, Benhabib, Seyla (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1996, pp. 120-135

²³ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 32, 1987, pp. 1-17, pp. 7-8

that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a major issue in world politics, it would seem reasonable to suggest that research generating knowledge on such issues is a worthwhile and significant endeavour. However, the significance of this research is not limited to this point. It is also derived from very specific political and scholarly concerns.

As will be discussed in more detail shortly, the philosophical perspective used in this study rejects the notion of knowledge that is neutral. It rejects, in short, positivist epistemology. This does not mean that scholarly research is necessarily the equivalent of political advocacy. Yet it does mean that it is inevitably bound up with specific historical and social circumstances and is undertaken from a particular normative standpoint. It will be invariably *for* something and *against* something else.

As noted above, the dominant paradigm for resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict – that is, the two-state solution – is widely regarded as being in crisis and is increasingly looked upon as *passé*. This is so despite this approach retaining its official dominance in local, regional, and international politics. While this study does not advocate a specific stance on what the resolution of this conflict ought to look like (and as a white British citizen with no formal political affiliation and who became interested in this issue via academic books, it would be somewhat offensive for this author to do so), it does take seriously the problems facing the two-state approach and by extension the need to think critically about alternatives. These include, of course, a one-state solution; and in this sense this study is shaped by particular circumstances and is undertaken from a standpoint which does not necessarily oppose expanding debate on this issue beyond the boundaries of political orthodoxy. In the absence of a two-state

solution it is Palestinians who suffer the most as an occupied, dispossessed and discriminated against people. Therefore, with this in mind, there would appear to be a political significance attached to critically engaging with alternative formations to the struggle against such conditions.

The more scholarly significance of this research stems from its engagement with the existing literature on this topic. A prevailing position in this literature is that the discourse of one-state functions as a response to material conditions in the occupied territories – that is, Jewish settlements or ‘facts on the ground’²⁴ – that have undermined the territorial basis for a viable Palestinian state. Rashid Khalidi sums this point up well when he states that

the inexorable cementing of Israel’s hold over the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem have rendered moot the possibility of establishing what could legitimately be called a Palestinian state, and consequently have called into question whether a two-state solution is still possible This realization in turn has instigated renewed consideration of the old idea of a one-state solution.²⁵

This view is problematic not only because it ignores a much more fundamental and indeed important epistemological critique of the two-state paradigm underway in the discourse of one-state; but also because it takes as a given what needs to be explained. Why should disillusionment with the two-state approach necessarily translate into advocacy of a one-state solution? The two points are not causally linked, and while it is understandable that a perceived failure in one approach will result in it losing support, it is not clear why this ought to result in

²⁴ Sussman, Gary, Is the Two-State Solution Dead?, *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, p. 39

²⁵ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, pp. 206-7; See also, Hermann, Tamar, The bi-national idea in Israel/Palestine: past and present, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 2005, pp. 381-401; and, Sussman, Gary, The Challenge to the Two-state Solution, *Middle East Report*, Vol. 34, No. 231, Summer 2004, pp. 8-15, pp. 11-12

the promotion of one particular approach and not others.²⁶ Debate on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict may have polarised around a two-state-one-state binary, but this division has been socially constructed and as such cannot be considered inevitable. There are other possibilities available and discourse is not necessarily limited to an either/or dichotomy.²⁷

Another problem with the literature on the discourse of one-state relates to its engagement with those who produce it. As Tamar Hermann comments, the Palestinian individuals who construct this standpoint are ‘mostly intellectuals living in the Diaspora’.²⁸ This is a fairly accurate observation (though it should be stressed that advocacy of this position is not solely carried out from this point). Yet it is one that for the most part is simply stated without any efforts to account for this specificity or explain why such intellectuals are engaged in this critical practice. Moreover, those analyses that do attempt to offer an explanation for these issues either produce overly reductive and unsubstantiated claims regarding the opposition of leftist intellectuals and diaspora to nationalism, which even if true does not explain why such individuals become

²⁶ Heribert Adam makes in passing a similar criticism to the one made here. However, he does not pursue it any further and so the issue remains. Adam, Heribert, Neither a Two State nor a One State Solution, *Ethnopolitics: Formerly Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 10, No. 3-4. September-November 2011, pp. 451-455, p. 452

²⁷ For a discussion of alternatives to both a two-state and a one-state solution see: Mossberg, Mathias, One Land, Two States? Parallel States as an Example of “Out of the Box” Thinking on Israel/Palestine, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2, Winter 2010, pp. 39-45; and, Grinberg, Lev, The Israeli-Palestinian Union: The “1-2-7 States” Vision of the Future, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 2, Winter 2010, pp. 46-53. It is also worthwhile mentioning here that, in some of the earlier writings promoting a one-state solution, the intellectuals analysed in this study did occasionally raise the idea of a confederation/federation with Jordan as an alternative to the two-state solution framework. This is not the first time that such an idea has been raised in Palestinian political discourse, but it does at least indicate that it was far from inevitable that these figures would adopt a one-state approach. See, for instance, Usher, Graham, Bantustanisation or bi-nationalism? An interview with Azmi Bishara, *Race & Class*, Vol. 37, No. 2, 1995, pp. 43-49, p. 48; and, Karmi, Ghada, After Oslo: A single state in Israel/Palestine?, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring 1998, pp. 212-226, pp. 216-17

²⁸ Hermann, Tamar, The bi-national idea in Israel/Palestine: past and present, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 390; see also, Ibish, Hussein, *What’s wrong with the One-State Agenda? Why Ending the Occupation and Peace with Israel is still the Palestinian National Goal*, American Task Force on Palestine, Washington D. C., 2009, pp. 17-18

more forcefully engaged in political struggle;²⁹ or they effectively take an Orientalist stance that lumps all Palestinians together and sees their actions always as the result of an ‘implacable’ and irrational hostility to Israel.³⁰ These points clearly have a limited analytical purchase (and in the latter case are dehistoricizing and essentializing in the extreme), so leaving significant questions on this topic unaddressed and inadequately answered.

Further gaps in the literature arise when one looks closely at some of the criticisms of those who promote a one-state solution. These include a pejorative classification of their critical engagement as a practice of sloganeering which lacks a programmatic content.³¹ Others criticise them for engaging in ‘declarative’³² or ‘discursive strategies’ and ‘not real ones’.³³ Noam Chomsky, in a particularly scathing critique, argues that without developing ‘some kind of feasible program (sic) of action’ those who promote a one-state solution will continue to be engaged in ‘rhetoric and posturing’. He further contends that so long as such figures are not taking ‘responsibility’ for such a development they ‘are choosing, in effect, to take part in an academic seminar among disengaged

²⁹ Sussman, Gary, Is the Two-State Solution Dead?, *Current History*, pp. 37-8; Sussman, Gary, The Challenge to the Two-state Solution, *Middle East Report*, p. 11

³⁰ Karsh, Efraim, A Trojan Horse? A Response to “The Case for Binationalism”, *Boston Review*, Vol.26, No.6, December 2001-January 2002, <http://www.bostonreview.net/BR26.6/karsh.html>, accessed 03/01/2008; Morris, Benny, *One-State, Two-State: Resolving the Israel/Palestine Conflict*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2009, pp. 1-2

³¹ Tamari, Salim, The Dubious Lure of Binationalism, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Autumn 2000, pp. 83-87, pp. 84-5; also see, Ibish, Hussein, *What’s wrong with the One-State Agenda? Why Ending the Occupation and Peace with Israel is still the Palestinian National Goal*, p. 23; Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, p. 209

³² Peled, Yoav, Zionist Realities: Debating Israel-Palestine, *New Left Review*, Vol. 38, March/April 2006, pp. 21-36, p. 27. It should be noted that Peled is engaging with the one-state issue generally through the process of reviewing Virginia Tilley’s book, *The one-state solution: A breakthrough for peace in the Israeli-Palestinian deadlock*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2005

³³ Abu-Manneh, Bashir, The Question of Palestine: An Interview with Bashir Abu-Manneh, *New Politics*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Winter 2008, <http://newpol.org/print/content/question-palestine>, accessed 11/12/2008

intellectuals on Mars’; which he additionally calls ‘harmful’³⁴ and which other critics call ‘utopian’.³⁵ According to Yoav Peled, the most significant problem facing the discourse of one-state is its ‘divorce from social reality’.³⁶

It is certainly true that proponents of a one-state solution are engaged in what for simplicities sake may be called an abstract mode of critical action. They in fact tacitly acknowledge this when stating that they are criticised for not ‘translating the idea [of a one-state solution] into a programme’ and that this ‘is a valid, though not insurmountable, charge’.³⁷ Yet, as this language suggests, the notion of converting their theory into a collective programme of action is not alien to the stance adopted by these intellectuals; and as later stages of this work will show, they routinely declare that such an object is essential to the realisation of their goal. Moreover, as is further suggested by the language used in the above statement, such a process of conversion is not considered an impossible outcome within the discourse of one-state, even if it is certainly recognised as ‘difficult’ to achieve.³⁸ So while critics of those who advocate a one-state solution are right in defining their mode of action as abstract, they fail to see this form of practice as a contradiction to what these intellectuals otherwise profess as politically essential. They simply lambast such agents for being utopian and detached. Even without this contradiction it seems somewhat spurious theoretically to take specific modes of action for granted or regard them as the product of pure choice. It is in addressing these issues, along with the other

³⁴ Chomsky, Noam, Advocacy and Realism, *Znet*, Thursday, 24 August, 2004, <http://www.zcommunications.org/advocacy-and-realism-by-noam-chomsky>, accessed 11/12/2008

³⁵ Abu-Manneh, Bashir, The Question of Palestine: An Interview with Bashir Abu-Manneh, *New Politics*

³⁶ Peled, Yoav, Zionist Realities: Debating Israel-Palestine, *New Left Review*, p. 35

³⁷ Elmusa, Sharif S., *Searching for a solution*, in, Hilal, Jamil (ed.), *Where Now for Palestine: The Demise of the Two-State Solution*, Zed Books, London./New York, 2007, pp. 211-232, p. 220

³⁸ Aruri, Naseer H., The incidental fruit of Oslo, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 13-19 August, 1998, Issue No. 390, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1998/390/pal1.htm>, accessed 30/04/2009

problems and gaps mentioned in this section, that this study claims to make a significant contribution to scholarship on this topic.

More generally, the significance of this research primarily lies in its contribution to scholarship on the role of intellectuals in politics and the relationship between the practice of critical thought and the possibilities of political action. By situating the discourse of one-state and those who produce it within this broader field of inquiry, this study advances specific hypotheses in the sociology of intellectuals as well as configuring their critical role in a much more structured, limited, and less normative fashion than is often presented in the academic literature on this issue.³⁹ It advances a conceptualisation of intellectuals that sees them as occupants of a social position that is certainly different, but that is not necessarily special.⁴⁰ In so doing it problematises the relation between critical thought and political action as one of competing interests, broader social antagonisms and specific constraints. In this sense, then, the contribution of this research is significant in that it furthers a better understanding of the intellectual's political role. It moves away from longstanding debates on what an intellectual ought to do in this regard and furthers knowledge on what they can do in terms of the contingent possibilities enacted within their social practice.⁴¹

³⁹ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 25, No. 2, April 1996, pp. 205-233, pp. 205-10; Kurzman, Charles, and, Owens, Lynn, The Sociology of Intellectuals, *American Review of Sociology*, Vol. 28, 2002, pp. 63-90; Talshir, Gayil, The Intellectual as a Political Actor? Four Models of Theory/Praxis, *Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, Vol. 8, No. 2, June 2005, pp. 209-224; Verdery, Katherine, Konrad and Szelenyi's model of socialism, twenty-five years later, in, Rereading *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 34, No. 1, February 2005, pp. 1-36, pp. 2-3

⁴⁰ Pels, Dick, Knowledge Politics and Anti-Politics: Toward a Critical Appraisal of Bourdieu's Concept of Intellectual Autonomy, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 24, No. 1, February 1995, pp. 79-104, p. 98

⁴¹ Kurzman, Charles, and, Owens, Lynn, The Sociology of Intellectuals, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 82

As noted, furthermore, this study would seem to offer support to theoretical critiques of post-representationalism and deliberative democracy. It is in this sense too that it may be regarded as significant, as it makes a contribution to general debates on these issues.

Conceptual Framework

This study draws on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the "field", which will be reconstructed in detail in Chapter One and as such will be only briefly introduced in this section. Bourdieu's theory of the field as a social space of contention is especially suitable for thinking about the discourse of one-state as its theoretical apparatus incorporates both discursive and objective dimensions. In Bourdieu's view, social contest is primarily over the legitimate definition of reality, but these classificatory struggles and their effectiveness remain oriented by the material conditions in which they are embedded. It is this double structure of the Bourdieusian field that has resulted in it being deployed to understand the discourse of one-state and the contentious practice of those who produce it ahead of other frameworks considered for this research, which were nationalism and (counter)hegemony. While theories of nationalism⁴² and (counter)hegemony⁴³

⁴²Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, New York, 1989 (1983); Brubaker, Rogers, and Cooper, Frederick, Beyond "Identity", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1, February 2000, pp. 1-47; Brubaker, Rogers, *Ethnicity without Groups*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 2006; Calhoun, Craig, *Nations Matter: Culture, History, and the Cosmopolitan Dream*, Routledge, Oxon, 2007; Calhoun, Craig, *Nationalism*, Open University Press, Buckingham, 1997; Ozkirimli, Umut, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, St Martin's Press, New York, 2000, pp. 217-30; Sutherland, Claire, Nation-building through discourse theory, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol.11, No.2, April 2005, pp. 185-202

⁴³Adamson, Walter L., *Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1983 (1980); Butler, Judith, Laclau, Ernesto, and, Žižek, Slavoj, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left*, Verso, London, New York, 2000; Gramsci, Antonio, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (edited and translate by Quito Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith), Lawrence and Wishart, London, 2005 (1971); Laclau, Ernesto, Democracy and the Question of Power, *Constellations*, Vol. 8, No.1, 2001, pp. 3-14; Laclau, Ernesto, and, Mouffe, Chantal, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics (second edition)*, Verso, London, 2001 (1985); and, Jackson Lears, T.J., The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and

certainly emphasise the contested and contingent nature of social categories, and thus the possibility of their reimagining, they tend to lack theoretical tools for thinking systematically about the temporal-spatial logics and resources structuring such contests and the political limitations enacted within them. The Bourdieusian field has the scope to think about all of these dimensions rigorously and it is principally for this reason that it has been preferred to frameworks such as nationalism and (counter)hegemony in this particular instance. In addition, it has been deployed because it allows the delineation of the terms “intellectuals” and “diaspora” for the purpose of this thesis.

The Bourdieusian field is a temporal-spatial framework. It is a social structure that is produced historically through the actions – that is, the words and other deeds – of human agents. More specifically, the field is a social space of contention that is constituted and organised relationally through ongoing struggles between differentiated and (always potentially) antagonistic positions. The precise morphology of the field, in terms of its discursive and objective structure, is *temporarily* and *contingently* determined through battles for domination between differently positioned agents. These agents struggle to impose as legitimate a particular definition of reality on a certain social world (by which is meant a distinct world of human relations). They try to do this through mobilising and converting the specific resources that they have at their disposal (which have been accumulated through prior struggles) into symbolic power. This is the power to utter words and have them recognised as legitimate beyond the point of their initial utterance, so enabling constitutive effects of discourse across social space. Power is central to Bourdieu’s notion of the field, and as a relation it is fundamentally unstable and contestable. Relations of

Possibilities, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 3, June 1985, pp. 567-593

domination necessarily imply relations of resistance. Hence the field being a social space of ongoing struggles.

The centrality of power to Bourdieu's visualisation of the field is determined by certain ontological assumptions, which in turn have specific epistemological implications. The social world in Bourdieu's view lacks absolute foundations. There is no essential human condition and there is no essential Truth. There are only partial understandings and conceptions of the social world and as such only "truths" and different points of view. The reality in which human agents are positioned – that is, social reality – can be expressed differently and it is by no means inevitable or necessary that it is expressed in a certain way. Whatever conceptions and expressions of social reality that prevail in a given historical context are therefore in this sense arbitrary; they are not natural and *could* have been otherwise. Consequently, it follows that their social efficacy is an effect of power; it is determined by the momentary outcomes of temporal-spatial struggles, and is not determined by an abstract and transcendental force. What this means for knowledge of the social world, furthermore, is that it cannot be neutral or simply revelatory; it is produced in specific historical circumstances and so is not only implicated in relations of power, but may indeed be constitutive of them.⁴⁴

So, for Bourdieu, knowledge and more broadly discourse is conceptualised as possessing considerably more than a constative function. Within the field, discourse is not simply a reflective device that describes "reality" with greater or lesser degrees of accuracy. It is, rather, a social practice – a distinct way of speaking and acting that is repeated over time with a high degree of regularity –

⁴⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power* (translated by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson), Polity Press, Cambridge, 2012 (1992), pp. 229-51

that is central to the production of the social world.⁴⁵ Discourse for Bourdieu is conceived in performative terms. The performance of certain words and other deeds by a particular agent may have the *effect* of bringing into being and therefore establishing a specific social reality; and this process may be successfully enacted irrespective of whatever “truth” is involved in such patterns of enunciation. For instance, it may matter little whether someone who pronounces the words “I promise” is speaking truthfully or not for the effect of promising to be accomplished.⁴⁶ The practice of words and other deeds may have certain effects and possess a constitutive force, and it is in this sense that Bourdieu spoke of discourse as a ‘structuring structure’; its component parts contain certain logics of thought and action and these work to delimit and so structure the possibilities for thinking and doing.⁴⁷ As a social practice, discourse is inherently unstable and open to change.

In addition to being a ‘structuring structure’, discourse is at the same envisaged from this standpoint as a ‘structured structure’.⁴⁸ The logics of intelligibility that are contingently inscribed within a particular discourse may delimit certain boundaries of thought and action, but these limits themselves are concomitantly the product of social space; they are oriented by the specific position in the field from which the particular practices of discourse are enunciated. As will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, it is crucial for the

⁴⁵ Wedeen, Lisa, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2008, p. 15; Phillips, Louise, and, Jørgensen, Marianne W., *Discourse Analysis: as Theory and Method*, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 2004 (2002), p. 1; Gill, Rosalind, *Discourse Analysis*, in, Bauer, Martin W., and, Gaskell, George (eds.), *Qualitative Researching With Text, Image and Sound: A Practical Handbook*, Sage Publications, London, 2000, pp. 172-190, pp.172-5

⁴⁶ Wedeen, Lisa, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*, p. 15

⁴⁷ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2011, pp. 294-313, pp. 302-4

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Bourdieuian conceptual lense that the social practice of the agent and the position from which it is performed are ‘analyzed together’.⁴⁹ It was for this reason that Bourdieu often referred to himself as a structuralist constructivist⁵⁰ and opposed what scholars such as Didier Bigo call idealist constructivism; which from this point of view is perceived as being often guilty of detaching social practices from their ‘objective positions’ and inscribing a high degree of voluntarism and ‘free will’ into both their formation and performance.⁵¹

Bourdieu’s notion of objective position is also important in another way to understanding discourse as a structured structure. Unlike other theorists who adopt a performative approach to words and other deeds, Bourdieu envisions the constitutive power of such practices as being derived from the position of those who perform them. The power of words and other deeds is not integral to such actions themselves, as some theorists of performativity contend.⁵² Rather, it is the objective power of those who perform such actions that is concentrated within them during the process of their enunciation; and to a large degree it is this that determines the extent of their social effectiveness at a given moment in time.⁵³ This objective power is not fixed, of course; but what this conceptualisation of performativity means is that the battles to define the social world, and so maintain or change dominant discourses, are at the same time battles to conserve or modify the objective structure of the field and the

⁴⁹ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu*, *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 1989, pp. 26-63, p. 40

⁵⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Social Space and Symbolic Power*, *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 1989, pp. 14-25, p. 14

⁵¹ Bigo, Didier, *Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power*, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 226-34

⁵² Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 107-16. See Jacques Derrida’s *Signature Event Context* for an example of a performative approach to discourse that sees its constitutive force as being located in the ‘very structure of the written text’. Derrida, Jacques, *Limited Inc* (translated by Samuel Webber and Jeffrey Mehlman), Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1988, pp. 1-21

⁵³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 107-16

principles of hierarchy that momentarily determine this. There is then a *double* struggle that is at stake in the field, and from this point of view, this is how a given social reality is approached.⁵⁴

The discourse analysed in this research is produced primarily by individuals who can be considered intellectuals, and this category is conceptualised in this study in a manner that is not only consistent with Bourdieu's field theory, but is in fact inspired by it.⁵⁵ What this means exactly is that unlike dominant trends in the scholarly literature on intellectuals, which tend to define this category in terms of special qualities and roles it *ought* to play in society, this study approaches such figures structurally as the occupants of a discrete position in social space.⁵⁶ To be sure this position is not fixed and its relative strength within a given temporal-spatial framework is, like any other, subject to fluctuations depending on the precise historical trajectory of the field and the contingent social struggles that determine this. Nonetheless, it is a position that is, generally speaking, relatively 'privileged'⁵⁷ and especially so in what Jerome Karabel calls the 'cultural sphere – the symbolic realm of knowledge, values, and meaning'.⁵⁸ It is within this sphere that those who occupy this position are most likely to be able to act and have their practices socially recognised – at least to some degree – as authoritative. In this sense, then, as Katherine Verdery has argued, an intellectual is someone who occupies a position that holds, even if

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 165-84

⁵⁵ Indeed, given that Bourdieu was strongly interested in the relation between discourse, knowledge and political struggle, it is perhaps unsurprising that he focused a lot of his research on intellectuals. Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu*, *Sociological Theory*, p. 26

⁵⁶ Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, pp. 205-7. See also: Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-modernity and Intellectuals*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1989 (1987), pp. 18-19; and, Verdery, Katherine, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1995 (1991), pp. 16-18

⁵⁷ Verdery, Katherine, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*, pp. 17-18

⁵⁸ Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, p. 208

only unstably, a ‘relative monopoly of complex knowledge’ and who engages in social relations on this basis.⁵⁹

This does not mean of course that the social effectiveness of those who occupy this position is necessarily limited to the cultural sphere, or that they are incapable of moving beyond this field and engaging forcefully in other domains, such as politics. The underlying premises and arguments of this research would not make much sense if this was so, and in any case these various spheres are to a significant extent interrelated with the boundaries between them being fluid and permeable and only drawn so clearly on paper for analytical purposes.

What this conception of the intellectual does mean, however, is that their specific practices (in this instance in terms of political engagement) remain socially grounded and analysed as such. It avoids an excessively ‘moralist’ approach that is found in and still tends to dominate the literature on intellectuals. This ‘grand moralist tradition’, as Karabel calls it, has a strong tendency towards thinking about and defining intellectuals in relation to idealised ethical standards, and judging their practices accordingly. In this regard, such literature has been not so much interested in explaining why or how intellectuals act, but in delimiting what they ought to do and by implication what makes a “real” intellectual.⁶⁰ These debates may be interesting, but they are somewhat fruitless analytically unless they are themselves grounded and placed in their appropriate historical and social context. When this occurs it may be possible to discern such debates as part of broader social conflicts and interests derived from their social

⁵⁹ Verdery, Katherine, Konrad and Szelenyi’s model of socialism, twenty-five years later, in, Rereading *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, pp. 2-3

⁶⁰ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, pp. 205-7. Also see, Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-modernity and Intellectuals*, pp. 8-9

position.⁶¹ As will be shown, this study, like others adopting this analytical perspective, would seem to support this proposition.

As noted, the literature on the discourse of one-state has tended to speak of the intellectuals who construct it as being mostly from the Palestinian diaspora. While this observation is true on a certain level, the specific way it is formulated is problematic and assumes far too much. The dispersal of individuals across state borders is a key criterion of diaspora. Yet, it is no longer permissible to understand this term as simply referring to ‘that segment of a people living outside the homeland’.⁶² Indeed, scholars like John Armstrong have argued since as early as the 1970s that diaspora is ‘something more than, say, a collection of persons distinguished by some secondary characteristic such as ... all persons with Scottish names in Wisconsin’.⁶³ This study builds on this approach and as such it does not take diaspora to be a ‘sociological fact’,⁶⁴ or what Rogers Brubaker calls ‘an ethnodemographic or ethnocultural fact’.⁶⁵ It does not regard diaspora as a substantiated or bounded group with membership determined *a priori* by ‘ancestry’. Such a view is not only perceived here as being overly reductionist, but is also seen as having very little analytical value. To a considerable extent, by assuming diaspora to be a ‘tangible’ entity, such perspectives eliminate important questions concerning their formation.⁶⁶

In contrast, diaspora is precisely conceived in this study as being a process of social formation which is temporarily and contingently constituted in and

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Connor, Walker, *The Impact of Homelands on Diasporas*, in, Sheffer, Gabriel (ed.), *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*, Croom Helm, London, pp. 16-46, p. 16

⁶³ Armstrong, John, Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 70, No. 2, June 1976, pp. 393-408, pp. 393-4

⁶⁴ Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4, May 2008, pp. 742-765, p. p. 746

⁶⁵ Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1, January 2005, pp. 1-19, p. 13

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 11

through diasporic practices. These practices have specific qualities which, as Brubaker argues, ‘enables one to speak of diaspora as a distinctive’ category of action.⁶⁷ Yet, before these are delineated, it is important to emphasise that by conceiving of diaspora as an active stance and a process of enactment, significant questions about when and why such practices are engaged in and how they are performed exactly are brought into the equation. This allows, so this study hopes to show, a much richer analytical engagement with diaspora that does not risk reducing politics from this position to *just* ‘ethnic linkages’ or even more archaically ancestral ties.⁶⁸ Therefore, unless specified to the contrary, whenever diaspora is used in this study it is meant in this active and temporal sense.

This visualisation does not discount the prospect of those practices constitutive of diaspora being shaped by the position from which they are undertaken, which, as mentioned above, must in some way be transnational; it must entail a sense of dispersal across state borders. One of the typically distinctive features of diasporic practices is an active orientation to a putative “homeland”, which as Brubaker suggests is often configured in such stances as an ‘authoritative source of value, identity and loyalty’.⁶⁹ Directly related to this point is the additional diasporic practice of ‘boundary-maintenance’. This aspect of diaspora formation refers to those practices which bring into being and reproduce ‘a distinctive identity’ *vis-à-vis* the “hostland” societies in which those who perform such actions are physically positioned. It is this demarcation that enables the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6

⁶⁸ See, for example, King, Charles, and, Melvin, Neil J., *Diaspora Politics: Ethnic Linkages, Foreign Policy, and Security in Eurasia*, *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Winter 1999-2000, pp. 108-138

⁶⁹ Brubaker, Rogers, *The “diaspora” diaspora*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 5-6

production and maintenance of a distinct ‘transnational community’,⁷⁰ or what in Bourdieusian terms might be reconceptualised as a transnational field.⁷¹

This conceptualisation of transnational social space will be undertaken in the next chapter. However, it is important to mention at this stage that while such a field is in part (re)produced from the position of diaspora through distinctive practices of boundary-maintenance, it also incorporates what is sometimes referred to as an interstitial or ‘hybrid’ structure.⁷² By ‘dwelling *here*’ and at the same time being ‘connected *there*’, diasporic practices are often conceived as being disposed towards ‘multiple attachments’.⁷³ They are frequently portrayed as being oriented towards ‘regimes of multiplicity’⁷⁴ and incorporating a ‘necessary heterogeneity’ within the stances that they adopt.⁷⁵ In this respect, it is not only boundary-maintenance that is a constitutive criterion of diaspora (and by extension the transnational field), but ‘boundary-erosion’ too,⁷⁶ which means the formation of an identity ‘which lives with and through, not despite, difference’.⁷⁷ Within the literature on diaspora, these two aspects of diasporic practice are occasionally viewed as being in tension with one another.⁷⁸ This issue will be explored in this research, albeit at a subsidiary level.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 6-7; Armstrong, John, Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas, *The American Political Science Review*, pp. 394-7

⁷¹ Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 743-8; Adamson, Fiona B., *Mobilizing for the transformation of home: political identities and transnational practices*, in, Al-Ali, Nadej, and, Khoser, Khalid (eds.), *New Approaches to Migration? Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home*, Routledge, Oxon, 2002, pp. 155-68

⁷² Vauchez, Antoine, Interstitial Power in Fields of Limited Statehood: Introducing a “Weak Field” Approach to the Study of Transnational Settings, *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2011, pp. 340-345, pp. 341-2

⁷³ Clifford, James, Diasporas, *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 9, No. 3, August 1994, pp. 302-338, pp 307-22

⁷⁴ Tölölyan, Khachig, Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment, *Diaspora*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 3-36, p. 7

⁷⁵ Hall, Stuart, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, in, Rutherford, Jonathan (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1990, 222-237, p. 235

⁷⁶ Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 6

⁷⁷ Hall, Stuart, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, in, Rutherford, Jonathan (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, p. 235

⁷⁸ Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 6

Method and Sources

While it is crucial to the Bourdieusian conceptual framework that the ‘structuring structure’ and the ‘structured structure’⁷⁹ of discourse be ‘analyzed together’, Bourdieu did not specify a particular method for doing this.⁸⁰ His insistence on such a double reading was a conceptual principle, rather than a fully formulated method of analysis. In order to try and fulfil this principle, this research has used a method that blends two specific approaches to discourse analysis. These may be called an action-oriented and a critical approach to the analysis of discourse. The particular sources to which this method is applied will be detailed below.

Both the action-oriented and critical methods of discourse analysis are broadly consistent with the Bourdieusian framework outlined above. This is because they each assume that discourse is centrally ‘involved in establishing one version of the [social] world in the face of competing versions’.⁸¹ Therefore, they insist on looking at discourse as a social practice that is constitutive of the social world and as such issues of veracity are either ignored or are considered at a secondary level in each method of analysis.⁸² They both, then, have similar starting assumptions.

Differences emerge, however, when it comes to the actual process of closely reading the particular words and other deeds that comprise a particular discourse. The primary focus of analysis for an action-oriented stance is on the specific logics of intelligibility contained within a specific discursive formation. This

⁷⁹ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 302-4

⁸⁰ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociological Theory*, p. 40

⁸¹ Gill, Rosalind, *Discourse Analysis*, in, Bauer, Martin W., and Gaskell, George (eds.), *Qualitative Researching With Text, Image and Sound: A Practical Handbook*, p. 176

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 174-6; van Dijk, Teun A., Principle of Critical Discourse Analysis, *Discourse and Society*, Vol. 4, No. 2, April 1993, pp. 249-283, pp. 249-59

approach is concerned with comprehending such logics and providing an interpretation of how they work and what they do specifically within a given historical and social context. This of course means that the particular sources which comprise a discourse are read contextually and, as they are assumed to be in competition with other discourses, are read relationally.⁸³ In contrast, the principal focus of analysis for a critical approach to discourse is on its social conditioning. A critical discourse analysis is concerned with undertaking a close reading of the particular practices that constitute a discursive framework and providing an interpretation of how social structure is implicated in their precise formation; it seeks to interpret the consequences of such structural implication.⁸⁴ So the discourse analytic method used here blends two approaches to reading that, individually, focus on the structuring or structured aspects of discourse. Therefore, their combining will result in a double reading of the constitutive texts of the discourse of one-state.

The sources upon which this double reading is performed are primarily written texts, including various books, articles, declarations and so on. The practice of writing is by the far the most common action through which the discourse of one-state is produced and socially transmitted, and consequently it seems fitting that this is the main source used in this study. Given the objects of this research and its specific framework of analysis, moreover, it is clear that the issue of triangulation is not especially pertinent. The goal is not to corroborate and so verify specific accounts, but to understand why certain practices are being performed and what they do in specific contexts. Whether what the agents

⁸³ Gill, Rosalind, *Discourse Analysis*, in, Bauer, Martin W., and, Gaskell, George (eds.), *Qualitative Researching With Text, Image and Sound: A Practical Handbook*, pp. 172-6; Wedeen, Lisa, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen*, pp. 14-17

⁸⁴ Blommaert, Jan, and, Bulcaen, Chris, Critical Discourse Analysis, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 29, 2000, pp. 447-466, p. 452; van Dijk, Teun A., Principle of Critical Discourse Analysis, *Discourse and Society*, pp. 249-283

analysed in this study say or do is “true” or “false” is not really at stake. Rather, what is at stake is that these agents are engaged in a social practice of enunciation that constructs the social world in a particular way and that iterates certain logics and effects. It is this process that this study seeks to understand through a close reading of the main practice – or source – in which it is performed.

The writings chosen to be read for this study were initially selected on the grounds that they were produced by Palestinian intellectuals and focused substantively on the idea of a one-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. These texts included, for instance, Ali Abunimah's *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*,⁸⁵ Ghada Karmi's *Married to Another Man: Israel's Dilemma in Palestine*,⁸⁶ Saree Makdisi's *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation*,⁸⁷ Mazin Qumsiyeh's *Sharing the Land of Canaan: Human Rights and the Israeli-Palestinian Struggle*,⁸⁸ and Edward Said's *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*.⁸⁹ Also included were articles such as Naseer Aruri's “US Policy and a Single State in Palestine/Israel”,⁹⁰ newspaper opinion pieces such as Ahmad Samih Khalidi's “A One State Solution”,⁹¹ and conference declarations such as *The One State Declaration*.⁹²

After making and then coding extensive notes on these various types of publications, it became apparent that the idea of a one-state solution in itself was

⁸⁵Abunimah, Ali, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*, Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, New York

⁸⁶Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man: Israel's Dilemma in Palestine*, Pluto Press, London, New York, 2007

⁸⁷See footnote 21

⁸⁸Qumsiyeh, Mazin B., *Sharing the Land of Canaan: Human Rights and the Israeli-Palestinian Struggle*, Pluto Press, London, Ann Arbor, 2004

⁸⁹See footnote 17

⁹⁰Aruri, Naseer A., US Policy and a Single State in Palestine/Israel, *The Arab World Geographer*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2005, pp. 133-139

⁹¹Khalidi, Ahmad Samih, A one-state solution, *The Guardian*, Monday 29 September, 2003,

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/sep/29/comment>, accessed 14/06/2007

⁹²See footnote 11

not as pertinent an element in these writings as the issues of contesting the dominant definition of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, criticising elite positions in the Palestinian arena, and reformulating Palestinian politics. At this stage in the research, therefore, the type of writings selected for reading were expanded to include those published by these intellectuals that had the appearance of being concerned with these issues of struggle and redefinition. So texts such as Azmi Bishara's *Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process*,⁹³ Haidar Eid's "The Zionist-Palestinian Conflict: An Alternative Story",⁹⁴ Noura Erakat's "Beyond Sterile Negotiations: Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy",⁹⁵ Saree Makdisi's "'Intellectual Warfare' and the Question of Palestine",⁹⁶ and Joseph Massad's "Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle" were now read in conjunction with those more explicitly focused on the idea of a one-state solution.⁹⁷ It was at this point, moreover, that the search for an analytical framework that incorporated both discursive and objective dimension was initiated, resulting in the use of Bourdieusian field theory and the method of discourse analysis delineated above. From this time onwards, then, the texts selected for this study were (re)read with increasing rigour through these analytical frames. The writings cited in this study were primarily included because, from the point of view this thesis' research questions and framework, they have been deemed to illustrate most

⁹³Bishara, Azmi, *Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process*, in, Giacaman, George, and, Lønning, Dag J. (eds.), *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, Pluto Press, London, 1998

⁹⁴Eid, Haidar, The Zionist-Palestinian Conflict: An Alternative Story, *Nebula*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2008, pp. 122-139

⁹⁵Erakat, Noura, Beyond Sterile Negotiations: Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, *Jadaliyya*, 6 February 2012, http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4259/beyond-sterile-negotiations_looking-for-a-leadersh, accessed 20/06/2012

⁹⁶Makdisi, Saree, "Intellectual Warfare" and the Question of Palestine, in, Bisharat, George, and, Doumani, Beshara, Open Forum: Strategizing Palestine, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 3, Spring 2006, pp. 37-82

⁹⁷Joseph A., Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle, *Middle East Critique*, Vol. 6, No. 11, Fall 1997, pp. 21-35

effectively the central themes, functions and political limitations of the discourse of one-state.

Written words have been by far the main source used to compile this study, but various forms of spoken words uttered by proponents of a one-state solution have been analysed as well. These include: the presentations of these intellectuals at conferences; their speaking at public events such as lectures; their appearance on various news channels such as *Al Jazeera*; and their participation in public debates. The criteria by which these spoken utterances were selected for analysis were broadly the same as those underpinning the selection of written utterances.

For example, the presentations of many of these intellectuals at the *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens* – held at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, on 28 and 29 March, 2009 – are available for viewing online through the Trans-Arab Research Institute website.⁹⁸ These videos were closely read because they are recordings of public utterances by Palestinian intellectuals dealing substantively with the idea of a one-state solution – though, it should be noted that the ease of their accessibility was also a factor in their being consulted. However, just as with the written texts used in this study, certain conferences were selected for attendance by this author on the basis that, one, Palestinian intellectuals promoting a one-state solution were designated speakers at them and, two, the themes of the conferences strongly suggested that issues relating to the contestation of meaning, authority and political practices in the Palestinian field would be extensively discussed. It was on these grounds that conferences such as *Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine* and *Palestine and the Uprisings* – held at SOAS in 2011 and in 2012 –

⁹⁸<http://tari.org/>

were attended by this author and the talks transcribed and subsequently closely read.

Furthermore, serendipity often played a role in determining which public events and meetings were attended by this author and thus used as data for analysis in this study. During the period in which research for this thesis was carried out, both Ali Abumimah and Ghada Karmi gave public lectures at King's College London. This author was fortunate enough to be present at these talks and record notes on what was being expressed. Moreover, this author was kindly invited to attend a meeting held by the *Palestine Land Society* in Westminster in November 2010. At this meeting, the speaker – Salman Abu Sitta – spoke to the audience about the relation between “truth” and political struggle, and so provided this author with further material from which to work and develop his thinking on discourse of one-state. Again, citation of these spoken utterances in the final text of this thesis was primarily determined by the extent to which they were considered as illuminating the structuring and structured effects of this discourse.

The sources used in this study have been all read in English. This is not so much a of problem for the discourse of one-state, as while it is frequently disseminated through Arab media outlets, English is the language in which it is usually written or spoken and in which the challenge of these intellectuals to the established order of the Palestinian political field is launched. However, it is certainly curious that their oppositional practice is ordinarily performed in English and, as will be shown, it is perhaps telling of the political limitations enacted within their stance. In part it is symptomatic of their interest in speaking the “truth” – which they “recite” as the genuine Palestinian position – to a wide

an audience as possible.⁹⁹ It is this practice, and their privileged ability to do it, that is valorised by these intellectuals as politically indispensable to the Palestinian cause. Yet, it also underlies their rather oblique mode of contestation, which is certainly concerned with ‘impacting the present Palestinian leadership’¹⁰⁰ and forcing it to ‘adopt changes’,¹⁰¹ but is less able to ponder questions of *how* beyond insisting that others ought to listen to what they say and modify their actions accordingly.¹⁰²

The use of English language sources is more problematic when it comes to this study’s use of historical Palestinian documents, which include here texts from the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), the PLO, Fateh, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Hamas, and others. These are used in order to assist with and substantiate the historical reconstruction of context and particular discursive structures within the Palestinian political field, and as such they operate at a secondary level in this research. Nevertheless, as transliterations from originals produced in Arabic, or as first hand English accounts from the period in question, they offer only a selective image of historic Palestinian discourse. This is of course true of any historical documentation, and efforts have been made to reduce this selectivity by reading such texts in conjunction with scholarly sources on the history of the Palestinian national movement. Even still, the reader ought

⁹⁹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation*, pp. 88-9

¹⁰⁰ Farsakh, Leila, The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinian Challenges and Prospects, *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 65, No. 1, Winter 2011, pp. 55-71, p. 71

¹⁰¹ Audeh, Ida, Envisioning a better future: Activist Mazin Qumsiyeh interviewed, *The Electronic Intifada*, 10 May, 2009, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/envisioning-better-future-activist-mazin-qumsiyeh-interviewed/8222>, accessed 18/10/2010

¹⁰² Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 51. For a more general analysis of this attitude among “left” intellectuals see, Chakrabarty, Dipesh, Where is Now? *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 30, No. 2, Winter 2004, pp. 458-462

to bear these significant limitations in mind when approaching the more historically based arguments in this text.

Structure

The first chapter of this text, as mentioned, produces a detailed reconstruction of Bourdieu's field theory. This includes an explication of the Bourdieusian field as a meta-theory in which various sub-concepts are mobilised in order to grasp social reality. In addition to being a social space constituted through ineradicable plurality and relations of power, the field incorporates the concepts of *doxa*, *habitus*, capital and political work.

Chapter Two of this study looks at how the discourse of one-state ought to be interpreted and seeks to explain why this specific stance has been adopted by these intellectuals in the context of political crisis and weakened authority. This chapter includes a section in which a history of the Palestinian political field is delineated in terms of a conflict between competing positions. Specifically the *main* political contest in this field is constructed as a battle between what are called here "maximalist" and "pragmatist" perspectives. This battle was temporarily settled in the late 1980s in favour of "pragmatism" but is now being reopened by these intellectuals, albeit in a way that is heavily incorporative of the particular historical circumstances in which their discourse is articulated, as well as their own objective position in the field.

The third chapter is concerned with examining the more forceful engagement of predominantly diasporic intellectuals in political struggle. It is within this chapter that their intervention is conceptualised as a bid for power in which principles of hierarchy are at stake and contested. Knowledge – or rather a

privileged access to “truth” – is itself mobilised in this dispute and advanced in relation to “other” elites in the Palestinian political field. So too is the site of diaspora, which is configured in the discourse of one-state as the position for the “proper” performance of citizenship in the Palestinian context; and so too is a claim to identity with “the people”, which not only emerges in relation to “other” elites, but is also asserted through the articulation of a counter-narrative that positions the particular standpoint of these intellectuals as historically authentic.

The final chapter examines the effects of this bid for domination in terms of the political possibilities/impossibilities it enacts. It finds that the reiterative logics that are constitutive of it are highly restrictive in terms of permitting a political role for these intellectuals beyond principled critique and their position of enunciation.

Chapter One: Thinking Tools

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the Bourdieusian field theory approach used in this study. For Bourdieu, a field is a social space of contestation which is produced historically in and through the actions of human agents.¹ While this trajectory is open and contingent in terms of its specific form and content, the field will necessarily develop ‘into a matrix of objective relations between positions’.² Indeed, this is what a Bourdieusian field is: a set of individual positions occupied by agents who, in their relations to one another, constitute a collective social structure. This structure is not fixed, irrespective of what some critics might say.³ The word “objective” is used in this context to draw attention to the precise morphology of the relations between positions that constitute the field at any one time.⁴ This configuration remains unstable, and specifically it will evolve ‘around particular battles over domination’.⁵ What is at stake in the field is an ongoing struggle to legitimately define a particular social universe, which entails contest to impose as legitimate specific discourses on the social world. Discourse is therefore considered as being potentially constitutive of the social world from this perspective, though its performative

¹ Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 9, No. 4, November 2002, pp. 610-618, p. 615

² Bigo, Didier, and, Madsen, Mikael Rask, Introduction to Symposium: “A Different Reading of the International”: Pierre Bourdieu and International Studies, *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2011, pp. 219-224, p. 221

³ See, for example, Butler, Judith, *Performativity’s Social Magic*, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, pp. 113-128, pp. 117-22

⁴ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 298

⁵ Bigo, Didier, and, Madsen, Mikael Rask, Introduction to Symposium: “A Different Reading of the International”: Pierre Bourdieu and International Studies, *International Political Sociology*, p. 221

force is primarily determined by the objective position from which it is enunciated.⁶

In attempting to reconstruct the Bourdieusian field this chapter is divided into four sections. The first section seeks to explicate the fundamental components of field theory in terms of why struggles to define the social world are ongoing and never settled once and for all. It highlights the ineradicable plurality of the field, its inherent partiality, and the ongoing relationality of social distinction in terms of discourse and stance. All of these features of the field combine to make power a central aspect of the social world. There can be no totality and as such those discourses and visions of social reality which are constituted as legitimate must be an effect of power. Specifically, Bourdieu called this form of legitimate force symbolic power, which if constituted broadly across social space could take on the features of *doxa*, or what can be otherwise called unthinking knowledge.⁷ Even at its most effective, however, power remains unstable in the Bourdieusian field and open to resistance and possible subversion.

The next section is concerned with delineating structure in Bourdieusian social space, both in terms of accounting for the structuring effects of discourse as well as conceptualising how it is structured. This entails looking at issues of context, *habitus*, and what Bourdieu referred to as forms of capital.⁸ Section three is concerned with conceptualising how specifically agents obtain symbolic power, which for Bourdieu required a specific process of accumulation that he sometimes termed ‘political work’.⁹ In order to more precisely delimit what is

⁶ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 296

⁷ Ibid., pp. 303-4

⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Forms of Capital*, in, Richardson, John G. (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, Greenwood Press, New York, 1986, pp. 241-58

⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, pp. 7-8

meant by Bourdieu's notion of political work it will be contrasted with ideas from post-representationalist theory and deliberative democracy (these perspectives themselves will be engaged with at later stages of this research in relation to the discourse of one-state). A final section in this chapter undertakes a reconceptualisation of the Bourdieusian field that transposes it to the transnational level.

Bourdieu's work is complex and it is important specify from the outset that not all of his key ideas are included within this reconstruction of his field theory. Most crucially, his idea of social scientific reflexivity is dropped, which as Loic Waquant explains, sought to make possible 'the *historical emergence* of something like a rational (or a reasonable) subject [emphasis added]'.¹⁰ This notion of scientific reflexivity is dropped not because it is deemed unimportant; as this research will ultimately show, such a notion would appear to be *very* important to 'liberating' the practice of critical thought from the social 'determinisms that weigh on it' and enabling the possibility of inventing, 'concretely, futures other than the one inscribed in the order of things'. Indeed, a number of Bourdieu-inspired scholars forefront this reflexive aspect of his sociology precisely for this reason.¹¹ Rather, it is dropped because it appears irreconcilable with much of his theoretical stance; which in a significant way is

¹⁰ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu*, *Sociological Theory*, p. 31

¹¹ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Critical Thought as a Solvent of Doxa*, *Constellations*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2004, pp. 97-101, p. 97; Bigo, Didier, *Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power*, *International Political Sociology*, p. 232; Lovell, Terry, *Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self*, *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2003, pp. 1-17, p. 5. From a more poststructuralist standpoint see: Campbell, David, *Beyond Choice: The Onto-Politics of Critique*, *International Relations*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2005, pp. 127-134, p. 133; Jabri, Vivienne, *Critical Thought and Political Agency in Time of War*, *International Relations*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2005, pp. 70-78, p. 73

inclined towards the rejection of the Cartesian subject and by implication the possibility of a transcendental, cogitating self.¹²

To be sure a limited reflexivity is a possibility for individuals within the field – as will be shown below. But this insistence on social scientific reflexivity and the emergence of a rational subject appears, as Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow have suggested, to be premised on an ontology that is ‘antithetical’ to that which determines Bourdieu’s arguably most important concepts of field and *habitus*. Dreyfus and Rabinow in fact hypothesise that this apparently contradictory insistence on the theoretical possibility of some form of metaphysical knowledge in Bourdieu’s work is tied to the type of struggles for power that his notion of field sought to shed light upon.¹³ They are not alone in this regard; and it certainly would not be the first time that claims to power are masked as claims to universality – as indeed this research will demonstrate.¹⁴ However, this debate will have to be explored at a later date, and in any case it has been principally raised here in order to specify how Bourdieu’s thinking tools will be developed below. That is to say, they will be deployed selectively *without* inclusion of his notion of social scientific reflexivity, and in this sense they will be used in a way that embellishes his more anti-Cartesian and poststructuralist inclination.

¹² Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu*, *Sociological Theory*, p. 31. By Cartesian subject this study means a conception of the individual which places ‘the rational, cogitative and conscious subject at the centre of knowledge’. This is problematic for much of Bourdieu’s work as the field through *habitus* structures the knowledge and thought of the particular subject in question. There is no pure spot of conscious reflection and reason. Hall, Stuart, *The Question of Cultural Identity*, in, Hall, Stuart, Held, David, and, McGrew, Tony (eds.), *Modernity and its Futures*, Open University Press, Oxford, 1992, pp. 273-326, pp. 282-3

¹³ Dreyfus, Hubert, Rabinow, Paul, *Can there be a Science of Existential Structure and Social Meaning?*, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1999, pp. 84-93, pp. 92-3

¹⁴ See, for example, Bohman, James, *Practical Reason and Cultural Constraint: Agency in Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice*, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, pp. 129-152; and, Pels, Dick, *Knowledge Politics and Anti-Politics: Toward a Critical Appraisal of Bourdieu’s Concept of Intellectual Autonomy*, *Theory and Society*, pp. 88-95

The Field: Relations between Positions as Struggles to Classify Social Space

The field is a social space of ongoing struggles for domination. These are enunciated from particular positions in the field and are carried out in relation to others. What they involve specifically is battles to impose as legitimate particular versions of reality on the social world, so constituting social reality in a particular way.¹⁵ The reason for these ongoing classificatory struggles in social space stem from certain assumptions on which the Bourdieusian field is based and which are essential to understanding some of his more specific ideas. Because the field is a matrix of relations between individual positions, there will be necessarily a ‘plurality of points of view’ existing within the field at any one time.¹⁶ Moreover, as this plurality is ineradicable there are no absolute foundations on which to base legitimate classifications of social reality. In this sense whatever definitions of the social world that do persist are entirely unnecessary and so are open to rupture.¹⁷ In addition, while different points of view are immanent to the field, they only acquire meaning socially in relation to other points.¹⁸ That is, they require an “other” in order to exist socially, though this engagement will be shaped by the relative structure of social space. Therefore, both the agent and the field cannot be fully constituted. The field, consequently, cannot be transformed into an absolute whole.¹⁹

¹⁵ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 242

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 229-35

¹⁷ Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 615

¹⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 177; Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 236-7

¹⁹ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociological Theory*, p. 40

Due to these ontological conditions it is necessary that the field is temporarily constituted through relations of power. The structure of social space, in regards to its particular symbolic order and meaning, will be a result of relations of domination and subordination, and more precisely what Bourdieu referred to as symbolic power.²⁰ In some instances such power may acquire the status of *doxa* and be taken for granted and assumed inevitable.²¹ Nevertheless, *doxa* remains fundamentally unstable owing to the ongoing plurality of the field, as well as its contingent trajectory and relational force.²² There will always be those who have an interest in maintaining the extant order of the field and those who have an interest in modifying it to some degree. To speak of power as a relation is to imply the prospect of resistance and possible subversion.²³ Indeed, Bourdieu sought to capture all these points by applying the metaphor of “game” to this notion of the field.

The prominence and persistence of social antagonism and conflict in the Bourdieusian field stems from certain ontological assumptions on which this concept rests. From this perspective reality is essentially pluralistic. By visualising the field as a matrix of objective relations between positions, it is clear that Bourdieu refuses to oppose social structure to individual agency. As Didier Bigo argues, a ‘field is collective, but it is a field of individuals’. It ‘will not exist independently of human action’.²⁴ Thus, the field is a social structure

²⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 209-10

²¹ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 304

²² Ibid., p. 298; see also: Bigo, Didier, and, R. B. J. Walker, Political Sociology and the Problem of the International, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 3, 2007, pp. 725-739, p. 726

²³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice* (Translated by Richard Nice), Polity Press, Cambridge, 1990, pp. 140-1

²⁴ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 238-9

constituted in and through the relations of individual positions, which are occupied by agents.

In conceptualising the field in this way, it is important to note that individual positions mean precisely that – individual. Bourdieu contends that each individual agent who contributes to the (re)production of the field is ‘confined to a position’ in social space. This is not meant to denote fixity to the positions occupied by agents. Instead, it refers to Bourdieu’s understanding of human agency as embodied. Due to the materiality of the human agent, its bodily form, a singular position cannot simultaneously occupy two (or more) exact points in social space.²⁵ As such, the position an agent occupies, both in terms of its historical trajectory and spatial location, will necessarily be distinct from other points in the field (even if this distinction only amounts to a slight deviation). Bourdieu argues that there is ‘a relativity that is by definition inherent in every point of view’. That is, it is ‘a view taken from a particular point in social space’.²⁶ Consequently, an essential condition of the field is that it will be a site with multiple points of view.²⁷ What this means, therefore, is that difference is immanent to the field.

Within the field, moreover, plurality is ineradicable in an absolute sense, which makes it the condition of possibility for the latter’s ‘uncertainty’²⁸ (though, to be clear, this is not to argue that it is difference in itself which accounts for social antagonism and conflict; such an approach would be suggestive of an essential clash between different positions, reminiscent of the simplistic and dangerous thinking deployed by figures like Samuel Huntington²⁹). Difference is

²⁵ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 229-35

²⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre, Social Space and Symbolic Power, *Sociological Theory*, p. 22

²⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 234-5

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Huntington, Samuel P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, The Free Press, London, 2002

preserved in the Bourdieusian field owing to the absence of essential foundations on which to base, and thus universalise, classifications of the social world. It is because of this foundational lack, as will be discussed below, that the practice of constituting and reproducing a particular version of social reality is necessarily a practice of power.

“Truth” and “universal” discourses are *always* partial in Bourdieu’s view, as they are unavoidably positioned and enunciated from particular points in social space.³⁰ They will necessarily incorporate particular temporal-spatial limits, as there is no purely objective outside with a transcendental subject from which to comprehend and so determine the social world as an absolute reality. Everybody is inside the field, though of course some positions are more powerful than others. In this sense, then, those definitions of social reality which have been successfully established, so constituting the boundaries of intelligible thought and action in a particular social universe, are entirely arbitrary. There is nothing fundamentally necessary about them.³¹ Visions and forms of conduct which do emerge and are constitutive of a particular social reality are the product of specific historical circumstances and struggles. To borrow Ian Hacking’s phrase, they could have been ‘very different’ and thus could be different again.³² The temporal-spatial trajectory of the field is not characterised by linear progression and grand narrative, but by ‘rupture’ and ‘discarded possibilities’.³³

³⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 203-36

³¹ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu*, *Sociological Theory*, p. 52

³² Hacking, Ian, *What is social construction? The teenage pregnancy example*, in, Delanty, Gerard, and, Strydom, Piet (eds.), *Philosophies of Social Science: The Classic and Contemporary Readings*, Open University Press, Maidenhead, 2003, pp. 421-427, p. 423. See also, Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 615

³³ Bourdieu, Pierre, quoted in, Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 615

Accordingly, along with there being no Archimedean point of view in social space, there is no purely autonomous individual. This applies to the temporal-spatial limits which are incorporated in the bodies of agents – which Bourdieu calls *habitus* (to be discussed in the next section). But it also applies to the relationality of the agent, their inability to exist socially without some exterior alterity through which to determine the distinctiveness of their stance and discursive positions. Though plurality is immanent to the field, for reasons explained above, it is important to stress that particular points of view and definitions of social space only ‘exist socially’ when they are ‘perceived as distinct’.³⁴ What this indicates is that the particular stances and positions adopted by agents are not pre-given in social space, though they may be structured in a particular direction. Rather they have to be socially constituted as ‘points in relation to other points’.³⁵ Such moves will be shaped by the relative position from which they are enunciated as the field is characterised by ‘interests at stake’ manifest as battles for domination.³⁶ Yet, they will only acquire ‘meaning relationally, in and through difference’. The position of an agent, in terms of discourse and stance, relies on an “other” in order to emerge as a distinct vision of the social world;³⁷ it emerges in relation to what it ‘is not’.³⁸ The paradox of this process is that the construction of social distinction emerges through a relational practice that binds certain points ‘together’ in order to distinguish them a part.³⁹

³⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 224

³⁵ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 236-7

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 231

³⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, *Ibid.*, p. 177

³⁸ Triandafyllidou, Anna, National identity and the “other”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 4, July 1998, pp. 593-612, pp. 602-9

³⁹ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 236

The individual points which constitute the field at a given moment in time are, therefore, *never fully constituted*. They emerge only ‘in relation to others’ and as this externality of difference is vital to the social production of distinction, a particular agent who acts in the social world can never be complete. This of course renders the field fundamentally unstable as the incompleteness of the agent equates to the incompleteness of social space – the field is a field of agents, after all.⁴⁰ In order for a specific configuration and meaning of social space to retain its saliency over time it is in need of ‘continually being performed’.⁴¹ Discourses and particular definitions of the social world are not settled once and for all, but have to be repeatedly produced. The fact of plurality, along with the need of social meaning to be continually reconstituted in processes of enunciation, results in the field being *always* open to dispute and contestation. It is fundamentally unstable and open to change.

In historical terms, furthermore, this means that the field cannot emerge as an absolute whole. Its trajectory is ongoing and contingent. The notion of some unfolding narrative being actually inscribed in the structure of the field is anathema to the Bourdieusian approach, though this does not mean that social reality cannot be represented in this way by agents who are engaged in battles for domination.⁴² For Bourdieu, there is ‘history only as long as people revolt, resist, act’; and as this possibility is necessarily retained in the field there can be no ‘end to history’.⁴³

With these ontological presuppositions in mind, therefore, it becomes apparent that relations of power are a central component of Bourdieu’s conception of

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 236-40

⁴¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 236

⁴² Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 41

⁴³ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, Sociological Theory*, p. 40

social space. In order for a particular version of social reality to be (re)constituted through discourse, and established across a given field, there must be a process of dominating others. Given that there is no fundamental sameness, no universal perspective, no fully constituted self, and no absolute whole, whatever conceptions of the social world that are established beyond the point of their initial articulation must be an effect of power.⁴⁴ The successful construction of a social consensus on the ‘meaning of the social world’ will necessarily entail the subordination of certain points of view.⁴⁵ These will be temporarily elided or marginalised through the process of establishing a wider social identity, which entails what Bourdieu termed symbolic violence.⁴⁶ The production of a social “whole” is not the result of amalgamation or dialecticism in this view, as plurality is ineradicable and history is ongoing. Rather, it is affected through the generalisation of a particular point of view over others, which are thus subordinated. The most effective form of power in this regard is what Bourdieu termed symbolic power.⁴⁷

Symbolic power is power when it is ‘perceived and recognised as legitimate’, which for Bourdieu is more accurately understood as a process of misrecognition. A particular discourse is socially at its most effective when the ‘violence that is exercised through it’ is misrecognised ‘by those on whom that violence is exercised’.⁴⁸ Words and other signs construct the social world, and

⁴⁴ Foucauldian scholars see power as being essential to social life for similar reasons. For example, Gideon Baker states, ‘what else, other than a struggle of power, could be at work when representatives, along with others who would legislate on our behalf, are unable to rely on some essential truth about the human condition’. Baker, Gideon, Revisiting the Concept of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 1, 2006, pp. 155-172, p. 157.

⁴⁵ Bigo, Didier, and, R. B. J. Walker, Political Sociology and the Problem of the International, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, pp. 725-6

⁴⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 204

⁴⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, Social Space and Symbolic Power, *Sociological Theory*, p. 22. See also, Brubaker, Rogers, and, Cooper, Frederick, Beyond “identity”, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 2000, pp. 1-47, pp. 15-16

⁴⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 209-10

they are capable of establishing meaning across social space most effectively when the symbolic violence wielded by ‘those who utter them’ is not perceived as such. It is through such misrecognition that specific discourses and classificatory schemas are constituted legitimately across the field. Like all forms of domination, then, the exercise of symbolic power entails a tacit ‘complicity’ on behalf of those who are subject to it.⁴⁹ What distinguishes symbolic power is that it is not recognised as power, and so is largely unquestioned.⁵⁰ How this power is accumulated will be discussed in a later section of this chapter.

When discourses constitutive of the social world are established through symbolic power and are historically sedimented across a particular field they become *doxa*. Bourdieu used this term, originally deployed in classical philosophy, to denote ‘common sense’ ways of speaking about and understanding the social world. *Doxa* is in this sense that which is taken for granted.⁵¹ The logics of intelligibility which are inscribed in a specific discourse, and which permit certain thoughts and actions, are for the most part subscribed to and reiterated unthinkingly within the framework of *doxa*.⁵² This is why it is so powerful and effective socially. *Doxa* is that system of knowledge and classification which, having been established historically through the struggles of differently positioned agents, ‘is forgotten as history’ and as the outcome of specific battles.⁵³ The constitutive frames of discourse that is *doxa* are largely assumed to be natural.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 170

⁵⁰ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 304

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 132-3

⁵³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 56

Even still, despite the extensive effectiveness of *doxa*, it remains unstable and fundamentally contestable. The power of discourse, as will be discussed in the next section, is primarily located in the objective position of those who utter it, and this is far from being stable.⁵⁴ In addition to being subject to revolt and resistance from other positions in social space, it is subject to the complexity and fluidity of history. The field does not exist in isolation, but is entangled with other fields and indeterminable forces. A social space is not an impenetrable construct that is rigidly determined. Its exterior limits are soft and permeable, and they may be forcefully breached by external agents with potentially radical consequences to established meanings of social reality.⁵⁵ Owing to the contingency of history and its constant motion, possibilities may arise within a field that were once foreclosed or marginal. Legitimacy, of course, may be lost as well as won, so opening the established orthodoxy of the field to challenges that were temporarily unimaginable. As Didier Bigo states, the ‘dynamism of fields is the rule, stability is the exception’.⁵⁶

Moreover, for all its performative force, *doxa* cannot be spread uniformly across social space. *Doxa* may work to establish a particular definition of social reality as the “universal” meaning of the field, so subordinating and symbolically effacing multiple points of view, with the tacit complicity of those who are subject to this power. Yet, it does not eliminate this difference. Rather, it dominates it, subordinating a plurality of perspectives to its own. As such, the field is hierarchical, but it nonetheless remains what Michael Shapiro calls ‘fractal’. It continues to operate as a ‘historically effected amalgam of diverse

⁵⁴ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 298

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 240

life worlds'.⁵⁷ It is partly for this reason that struggles to define the social world remain ongoing and only temporarily settled through *doxa*. When differences in viewpoint are ensnared in relations of power they may become a source of discord and antagonism, which manifest as struggles to resist domination and so change social reality. As this difference is fundamentally ineradicable, despite its subordination in relations of power, the potential for conflict is therefore ever present.⁵⁸ *Doxa* cannot be a total system. Consequently, there will always be those in the field who have an interest in 'perpetuating' extant relations of power, and those who have an interest in 'subverting' such relations and 'modifying' the classifications which constitute legitimate discourse.⁵⁹ In a broad sense, this is what is at stake in the field: ongoing battles for domination.

Furthermore, the understanding of power as a relation indicates that the prospect of resistance is always available in the field, however constrained this might be. In a similar fashion to Michel Foucault, Bourdieu contends that relations of power cannot 'operate without implying, activating resistance'.⁶⁰ This is because, to speak in Foucauldian terms for a moment, a relation of power entails a practice through which certain 'individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others'; which means, therefore, that the other of this relation is 'a person who acts'.⁶¹ It is this 'capacity to act' on behalf of those who are subject to power that enables the possibility of resistance and ongoing contestation in the

⁵⁷ Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 612

⁵⁸ Bigo, Didier, and, R. B. J. Walker, Political Sociology and the Problem of the International, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, p. 726

⁵⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, pp. 140-1

⁶⁰ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociological Theory*, p. 36

⁶¹ Foucault, Michel, *The Subject and Power*, in, Dreyfus, Herbert L., and, Rabinow, Paul (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics (Second Edition, With an Afterword by and Interview with Michel Foucault)*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1983, pp. 208-228, pp. 219-20

Bourdieuian field.⁶² Indeed, if agents were deprived of this capacity to act, if they were deprived of this ability to set certain oppositional ‘forces in motion’, then one could no longer speak in terms of power. What would exist instead would be an absolute condition, which for reasons discussed above is impermissible to this conceptual lense.⁶³ Such an impossible condition would negate power as there would be no relativity for it to be exercised through. Domination would be rendered obsolete due to the absence of partiality and contradiction

Consequently, by speaking in terms of relations of power and legitimate domination, Bourdieu conceives of the social world as being pregnant with the possibility of these relations being opposed and subverted.⁶⁴ Therefore, along with the ongoing temporality of the field and its fractal nature, relations of power generate specific and ordinarily conflicting interests in social space and enable the limited pursuit of those interests by agents. This is why there are ongoing struggles.

The metaphor used by Bourdieu so as to capture all these related points was the “game”. This analogy is useful as it brings to mind competition ‘between persons to reach some goal or goals’.⁶⁵ Further, it suggests the possibility of

⁶² Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 239

⁶³ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociological Theory*, p. 36

⁶⁴ Michel Foucault makes a similar contention, stating that: ‘One must observe that there cannot be relations of power unless subjects are free. If one or the other were completely at the disposition of the other and became his thing, an object on which he can exercise an infinite violence, there would not be relations of power. In order to exercise a relation of power, there must be on both sides at least a certain form of liberty’. So too does Ernesto Laclau when he comments that: ‘Power, no doubt, involves domination; but domination shows, through the contingency of its sources, its own limits: there is only domination if it opens the possibility of its being overthrown’. Foucault, Michel, quoted in, Baker, Gideon, Revisiting the Concept of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, p. 166; Laclau, Ernesto, Democracy and the Question of Power, *Constellations*, p. 13

⁶⁵ Martin, John Levi, What is Field Theory?, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 109, No. 1, July 2003, pp. 1-49, p. 31

change and agents being able to act and strategise so as to ‘maximize their positions’.⁶⁶ What is more, a “game” is played in accordance with certain rules, which indicates that it is not a neutral exchange between those involved, but one that has certain boundaries and limits of permissible thought and action.

It is on this issue of “rules” that Bourdieu’s metaphor of the “game” has been most criticised. Critics have read it as imposing fixed constraints on those involved, or even as implying causal laws that force persons ‘to do this or that’. Although it is perhaps understandable why this metaphor has been read in this way, given that ordinary games are usually rule bound endeavours, it is nevertheless the case that the social logics which guide action in the field can be disrupted.⁶⁷ They are ‘in constant (potential) change’ because of the agent’s capacity to act and reflect.⁶⁸ What the “game” should be read as implying is that this action and reflexivity remains *structured*.

Structured Struggles: Context, Habitus and Capital

For Bourdieu: ‘The categories of perception, the schemata of classification, that is, essentially, the words, the names which construct social reality as much as they express it, are the stake par excellence of the political struggle, which is a struggle to impose the legitimate principle of vision and division’ on the social world.⁶⁹ As this statement makes clear, political struggle for Bourdieu is to a large extent about ‘will and representation’. When uttered successfully, specific discourses are constitutive of the social world; they bring into being particular

⁶⁶ Maton, Karl, *Habitus*, in, Grenfell, Michael (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*, Acumen, Stocksfield, 2008, pp. 49-66, p. 54. Also look at: Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 239

⁶⁷ Martin, John Levi, What is Field Theory?, *American Journal of Sociology*, pp. 31-2

⁶⁸ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 298

⁶⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, Social Space and Symbolic Power, *Sociological Theory*, pp. 20-1

versions of social reality and establish particular categories of practice, in terms of thought and action.⁷⁰ The struggle to maintain a particular vision of the social world is to a large extent determined by the efficacious reiteration of extant discourses and categories of practice; and struggles to modify or transform the social world are to a large extent determined by the disruption of such efficacious practices and by the extent to which they are effectively re-presented. It is because such practices are without essential foundations and are delimited through relations of power, that the possibility of their subversion and reconstruction is immutably upheld.

However, in visualising the social world in this way, Bourdieu is not for one instance suggesting that agents can ‘construct anything anyhow, either in theory or in practice’.⁷¹ The field is a temporal-spatial construct and as such it ‘will come with a history’,⁷² with agents being positioned in a ‘web of constraining relations’.⁷³ The field is *structured*, and in more ways than one.

For a start, for an agent to utter effective discourse and so constitutively enact that which is named, that agent must adhere to context and what Foucauldian scholars might call the ‘test of reality’.⁷⁴ What an agent does, furthermore, in terms of their performance of words and other deeds, is shaped by what Bourdieu called *habitus*: the proposition that a structural homology exists between an agent’s position in the field and the position an agent takes.⁷⁵ What is more, in

⁷⁰ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Introduction: Symbolic Power and Democratic Practice*, in, Wacquant, Loïc J. D. (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics: The Mystery of the Ministry*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2005, pp. 1-9, p. 3

⁷¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, Social Space and Symbolic Power, *Sociological Theory*, p. 18

⁷² Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, Inter- and Transnational Field(s) of Power: On A Field Trip with Bourdieu, *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2011, pp. 327-330, p. 327

⁷³ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Introduction: Symbolic Power and Democratic Practice*, in, Wacquant, Loïc J. D. (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics: The Mystery of the Ministry*, p. 3

⁷⁴ Foucault, Michel, *What is Enlightenment*, in, Rabinow, Paul (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1984, pp. 32-50, pp. 45-7

⁷⁵ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 244-6

order to speak effectively an agent must have the power to do so, and this is located in the objective structure of the field, in what Bourdieu termed more specifically forms of capital. The capital accumulated by a specific agent is done so through prior struggles, which can be mobilised and invested in contemporary and future struggles.⁷⁶ What Bourdieu termed ‘cultural capital’ is of particular relevance to this study, and so too is ‘symbolic capital’. However, the process and politics of symbolic capital will be examined in the next section.

The performativity of language is shaped by context in Bourdieu’s view. So that a speech act is uttered felicitously it must conform to the ‘conditions of felicity’.⁷⁷ This does not mean that context imposes strict rules that the speaking agent must obey so as to invest discourse with a performative power. Rather, it simply means that one does not have *carte blanche* to *effectively* say what one likes. Words are uttered in historically rich, meaningful and dense circumstances, which are structured by diverse and sometimes powerful classificatory frameworks that have crystallised to greater or lesser extents.⁷⁸ These cannot be fundamentally broken by transgressive codes and ‘stand alone’ endeavours.⁷⁹ Political entrepreneurs may be able in specific contexts to force certain ‘people to understand themselves, their interests, and their predicaments in a certain way’, so reconstructing categories of practice with potentially transformative effects.⁸⁰ But this process is not unlimited, and so as to be effective, their political language must be in some way grounded ‘*in reality*’.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 298

⁷⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 116

⁷⁸ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 303-4

⁷⁹ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 242

⁸⁰ Brubaker, Rogers, and, Cooper, Frederick, Beyond “Identity”, *Theory and Society*, p. 4

⁸¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, p. 7

In any case, the words and other forms of action undertaken by these political entrepreneurs, or for that matter any other agent, will not be unlimited even prior to their performance. From a Bourdieusian perspective, the position of an agent in social space – their temporal-spatial trajectory – will structure their position-taking – their socially constructed stances and their struggles for domination. That is to say, Bourdieu proposes a structural homology between one's position in the field and the position one takes. He calls this relation *habitus*.

Habitus is a fundamental component of Bourdieu's field theory. In fact, *habitus* and field operate in relation to one another and cannot be deployed separately. They are mutually generative in the sense that: an agent's position in the field and its temporal-spatial trajectory will result in that agent possessing certain dispositions; these dispositions will shape that agent's performance in social space; which will contribute to the reproduction or transformation (in varying degrees) of the social matrix of the field.⁸² As such, *habitus* is both produced by and produces the social world. It is the 'embodied history'⁸³ of the agent as well as history in the making.⁸⁴

Owing to this mutuality, Bourdieu typically referred to *habitus* as the 'practical sense' of the agent. This sense of the social world will guide the action of an agent, and at the same time this sense is and remains 'socially founded'. What this means is that from a Bourdieusian standpoint there is no such possibility as pure choice and absolutely conscious decision. Individuals are not formed and nor do they operate in a vacuum.⁸⁵ Nor can individuals' teleport

⁸² Brubaker, Rogers, Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu, *Theory and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 6, November 1985, pp. 745-775, p. 758

⁸³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 56

⁸⁴ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 242

⁸⁵ Madsen, Mikael Rask, Reflexivity and the Construction of the International Object: The Case of Human Rights, *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2011, pp. 259-275, p. 265

themselves beyond temporal and spatial limits, as this would amount to what Didier Bigo calls a ‘god move’, resurrecting the possibility of a fully autonomous and transcendental subject.⁸⁶ Specifically, *habitus* was developed so as to collapse what Bourdieu thought was an artificial opposition between structure and agency (an intellectual interest, incidentally, shaped by the intellectual milieu of mid-twentieth century France), and it is in this manner that this concept should be understood. The field is a collective social structure constituted through the actions of individual agents: and the actions of these individual agents are structured by the field. *Habitus* is the mediation of this relation.⁸⁷

The concept of *habitus* is not without its critics of course, and on this issue Bourdieu is frequently accused of being a structuralist and imposing structural determinisms on the agent that shackle any chance of agency. The relation between field and *habitus* is seen as being mutually generative, but for such critics this relation is one that is totally governed by the field. For example, Judith Butler contends that ‘the field, often figured as preexisting or a social given, does not alter by virtue of the *habitus*, but the *habitus* always and only alters by virtue of the demands put upon it by the “objectivity” of the field’. She further contends that in being driven ‘to avoid the pitfalls of subjectivism and idealism’, Bourdieu is guilty of going too far in the other direction, with the field emerging, as a result, ‘as an unalterable positivity’.⁸⁸ Such an argument seriously misconstrues Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus*.

⁸⁶ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 242

⁸⁷ Brubaker, Rogers, Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu, *Theory and Society*, pp. 746-58; Madsen, Mikael Rask, Reflexivity and the Construction of the International Object: The Case of Human Rights, *International Political Sociology*, p. 265

⁸⁸ Butler, Judith, *Performativity’s Social Magic*, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, p. 117

As suggested, there is no freely choosing and autonomous individual who operates beyond the boundaries of specific social and historical contexts in Bourdieu's view of the social world. Therefore, if this is what is meant by agency then Bourdieu is certainly guilty of denying it. This does not mean, though, that in proposing *habitus* Bourdieu is reducing the agent to a passive automaton manifesting, through mechanical determination, the objective force of the field, as figures like Butler contend.⁸⁹ The agent is certainly structured, but this structuring is incomplete and like the field is unstable, fractal, and ongoing.⁹⁰ The agent is a complex and disintegrated bodily system, which continuously incorporates diverse and often contradictory social elements through its positioning in and exposure to multiple trajectories and limits.⁹¹ The field itself is often incorporative of various sub-fields which are themselves incorporative of specific logics and points of view and which can be transposed to diverse settings.⁹² As a structured individual, the agent is never fully constituted and its *habitus* is likewise ongoing and 'split'. Moreover, it is through such fissures that the possibility of limited decisions and reflexivity emerge. The gaps prevent the structure from being so restrictive as to prohibit creativity altogether.⁹³ One cannot avoid *habitus* as it is the 'active presence' of one's incorporated history,⁹⁴ which generates a complex 'system of dispositions' which orient one's

⁸⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 55

⁹⁰ Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 612

⁹¹ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 242

⁹² Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Pointers on Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics*, in, Wacquant, Loïc J. D. (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics: The Mystery of the Ministry*, pp. 10-28, pp. 16-17

⁹³ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 242-3

⁹⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 56

engagement in the field.⁹⁵ Yet, it is not a structural straightjacket and was certainly not conceived as such by Bourdieu.

For example, as Bourdieu states, *habitus* ‘governs practice, not along the path of mechanical determinism, but within the constraints and limits initially set on its inventions’. An individual’s *habitus* permits ‘regulated improvisations’,⁹⁶ which means that he or she ‘makes choices’, but does not ‘choose the principle of these choices’.⁹⁷ It is in this structured sense, then, that the agency of the individual is retained through the notion of *habitus*. It is certainly true that ‘free will’ and absolute decision are denied to the individual from this perspective.⁹⁸

On top of being structured and unfree to totally determine the words and other deeds they perform, an agent also lacks an absolute ability to enunciate discourse effectively. This point has been already made in relation to context. However, it extends to the objective structure of the field and the relative position of the agent, which shape the resources an agent may ‘mobilize in order to play’ the “game” and struggle for the control of symbolic power.⁹⁹

In this regard, Bourdieusian thought may be considered as being against what is sometimes called idealist constructivism, which often implies that an agent can voluntarily construct the social world in any way they so desire.¹⁰⁰ (It seems to be largely for this reason, furthermore, as will be analysed in chapter two of this

⁹⁵ Brubaker, Rogers, *Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu, Theory and Society*, p. 758

⁹⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, pp. 55-7

⁹⁷ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, Sociological Theory*, p. 45

⁹⁸ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 242-3

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 240

¹⁰⁰ An example of this voluntarist impulse in idealist constructivism may be seen in Alexander Wendt’s famous contention within the disciplinary field of International Relations that ‘anarchy is what states make of it’. Wendt, Alexander, *Anarchy is what state make of it: the social construction of power politics, International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2, March 1992, pp. 391-425. Such a view is rejected by the structuralist constructivist approach developed by Pierre Bourdieu. Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, *Inter- and Transnational Field(s) of Power: On A Field Trip with Bourdieu, International Political Sociology*, p. 327

study, that important questions regarding the new stances adopted by agents in certain settings are often inadequately addressed by idealist constructivist research¹⁰¹). In addition, Bourdieu's approach to the social efficacy of words and other deeds must be regarded in opposition to those accounts of performativity that view the effectiveness of discourse as being 'found in discourse itself'.¹⁰² For Bourdieu, in contrast, the power of discourse is to be found in the objective position of those who articulate it. As such, the more power one has accumulated in objective position, the more chance one has of having their particular version of social reality recognised as legitimate across social space. The more chance they have, therefore, of legitimacy imposing their vision on the social world. Of course, given that the field contingently evolves around struggles for domination, it is likely that the power to produce discourse effectively will be unevenly distributed across social space at any one time.

The relation between performative discourse and objective structure in Bourdieu's account has been subjected to considerable criticism. Specifically, and in a similar fashion to his notion of *habitus*, it has been denounced for being overly structuralist and leaving little – if any – scope for human agency. It has been seen as blunting the 'radicalism' of Bourdieu's constitutive approach to discourse, as the dependency of performativity on objective position and, more specifically, unevenly distributed resources, is regarded by certain critics as

¹⁰¹ Finnemore, Martha, and, Sikkink, Kathryn, Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics, *American Review of Political Science*, Vol. 4, 2001, pp. 391-416, p. 406

¹⁰² Figures such as John Austin (the philosopher who coined the term "performative"), Jürgen Habermas, and Jacques Derrida, were criticised by Bourdieu on the grounds that they falsely located the power of words 'in discourse itself'. Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 107-9

privileging *already* power sites and institutions. It has been considered as prohibiting the prospect of these powerful positions being actively subverted.¹⁰³

Judith Butler, for example, argues that Bourdieu ‘tends to assume that the subject who utters the performative is positioned on a map of social power in a fairly fixed way’. Whether discourse ‘will or will not work’ performatively is dependent, she further contends, ‘on whether the subject who performs the utterance is already authorized to make it work by the positions of social power it occupies’. For Butler, this understanding of performativity renders language ‘epiphenomenal’. She in fact accuses Bourdieu of ‘rehabilitating the base/superstructure model’ of orthodox Marxism.¹⁰⁴ In her view, singular acts undertaken without ‘prior authorisation’ may start an ‘insurrectionary process of overthrowing’ established symbolic order.¹⁰⁵

Such criticisms are once again somewhat misconstrued. Without doubt the agent is temporarily and spatially limited in terms of what it can do in Bourdieusian understandings of the social world. Yet, these limits should not be taken to imply fixity and rigidity to the symbolic and objective ordering of social space. As discussed in the last section, battles for domination are ongoing and never settled once and for all in the field; and relations of power necessarily imply resistance and struggles against domination, with agents always possessing some degree of freedom to act. The objective relations between positions that configure the matrix of the field at any one time are likely to privilege certain agents over others in terms of their ability to utter effective discourse, but these

¹⁰³ Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 611

¹⁰⁴ Butler, Judith, *Performativity's Social Magic*, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1999, pp. 119-22

¹⁰⁵ Butler, Judith, quoted in, Lovell, Terry, *Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self*, *Theory, Culture & Society*, p. 6.

relations are not ‘eternal’.¹⁰⁶ The resources to wage contest are distributed across social space like a ‘balance sheet of what has been won in previous battles and can be invested in subsequent battles’, and this balance sheet is liable to change due to it being entangled with complex historical processes, exterior forces, and internal disputes over its relative worth and distribution.¹⁰⁷ It is simply wrong to suggest that the Bourdieusian field is a fixed cartography, as its objective morphology remains temporal, with the relative value of its resources being open and contested.¹⁰⁸

Therefore, struggles in the field incorporate what Bourdieu calls a ‘double game’.¹⁰⁹ On the one hand, they entail struggles to impose a particular vision on social space and have it recognised as socially legitimate beyond the point of its initial utterance. On the other hand, they entail battles over ‘the principles of hierarchization’ for the particular resources agents possess.¹¹⁰ Struggles ‘aimed at inflating or deflating the value’ of specific types of resources are ongoing in the field.¹¹¹ What is more, Bourdieu hypothesises that agents engaged in such struggles have a tendency to place the specific resources they possess ‘at the top of the hierarchy of the principles of hierarchization’.¹¹² They try to ‘impose a principle of hierarchization most favorable (sic) to their own products’ (a proposition which has clear implication for the strategic moves deployed by agents in their bids for legitimate domination, and which is a hypothesis that

¹⁰⁶ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of International Relations, *International Political Sociology*, p. 298

¹⁰⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, quoted in, *Ibid.*, p. 298

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 297-8

¹⁰⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 180-1

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 168

¹¹¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, p. 10

¹¹² Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 168

appears to be verified by this research).¹¹³ Because of this *double game*, mostly ignored by figures like Butler, the field cannot be envisioned as a static map in which the power to speak effective discourse is always already fully determined. Relations of power means that hierarchies are not determined in and of themselves, and this relationality applies to both symbolic and objective spheres.

The term used by Bourdieu in order to capture these objective resources, or ‘species of power’, was forms of capital.¹¹⁴ While this phrase highlights his fondness for economic terminology, it should not be taken to mean that the resources mobilised by agents so as to contest social space are reducible to an economic dimension. Material power is certainly important for Bourdieu, and clearly economic capital may be converted into symbolic power, or simply used to coerce and control the actions of others. Nevertheless, capital can take on disparate forms in Bourdieu’s conceptual universe, and crucially each of these variegated forms of capital is potentially convertible into another,¹¹⁵ including symbolic capital, which is the resource that enables those who possess it the power to impose a ‘vision of legitimate divisions’ on social space.¹¹⁶

This interconvertibility of capital is important as it highlights once again the amorphous nature of relations of power that structure the field at a given moment in time. It shows their potential for redistribution and reacquisition in one form or another, as well as pointing to the possibility of new principles of hierarchy being brought into being through changing contexts and ongoing battles. As symbolic capital is the most significant form of capital – especially in the context

¹¹³ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu*, *Sociological Theory*, p. 40

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39

¹¹⁵ Brubaker, Rogers, *Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu*, *Theory and Society*, p. 756. See also: Thompson, John B., *Editor’s Introduction*, in, Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 14-16

¹¹⁶ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu*, *Sociological Theory*, p. 22

of political struggle – it is perhaps unsurprising that it is the most difficult to acquire. However, before moving to examine this process another form of capital that is vital to this research will be delineated. This form is what Bourdieu called cultural capital.

Cultural capital is acquirable in two varieties, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. At one level, this kind of capital is captured in the cultivated dispositions embodied by certain agents: the refined tastes and sophisticated schemas of appreciation and understanding, which are acquired over time and typically with much personal investment, and which allow various individuals to appropriate “cultural goods” and even challenge their meaning. At another level, this species of capital is less an embodied set of cultivated dispositions, and more an institutional authority bestowed on certain individuals through the acquisition of, for example, academic qualifications.¹¹⁷ This institutionalised form of cultural capital is effective as an ‘officially recognised’ competence that – to varying degrees and not in all circumstances – ‘show[s] forth and secure[s] belief’ in the specific authority of those who wield it.¹¹⁸

While both of these forms of cultural capital are primarily accumulated and consecrated in the field of culture, their mobilisation and authoritative effect are not necessarily limited to this domain. At certain moments in time, such capital may be forcefully transposed beyond the sphere in which it was primarily accumulated and invested in battles for the control of legitimate discourse. Knowledge, therefore, is not only what is at stake in the field, in terms of discourse and classification. It is also, in its cultivated and institutionalised

¹¹⁷ Brubaker, Rogers, *Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu, Theory and Society*, pp. 757-8

¹¹⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Forms of Capital*, in, Richardson, John G. (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, p. 251. In addition look at: Verdery, Katherine, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu’s Romania*, pp. 17-19

forms, a potentially powerful resource in struggles to alter objective structure. The extent to which this process can be conducted effectively in a field is dependent on the extent to which such capital is converted into symbolic power. This conversion is far from easy and is never guaranteed.¹¹⁹

The Political Work of Symbolic Power: Politics as Will and Representation

The process of accumulating symbolic power is very specific for Bourdieu and is necessary to political struggle in his view. In order to have one's discourse 'perceived and recognised as legitimate', and thus to be in a position to legitimately generalise one's definition of social reality across social space, one must 'win positions'.¹²⁰ Agents engaged in such struggles in the field must win over others 'to their side' so as to legitimately re-present the social world in their own particular terms.¹²¹ As this contest takes place within historically produced frameworks of power, in which multiple viewpoints and competing interests persist, the process of legitimate constitution requires 'political work'.¹²² Disparate wills and competing trajectories have to be engaged with and reconstructed as a generalised political agent. One has to make a 'practical group', which itself is articulated and mobilised in relation to an "other" point in social space.¹²³ As a result of the uneven structure of social space, there will invariably those positions in the field which are more able to undertake this task at a specific point in time. It is such agents who have to impose themselves as

¹¹⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Forms of Capital*, in, Richardson, John G. (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, pp. 249-50

¹²⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 181

¹²¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, p. 12

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 8

legitimate spokespersons on others, thus constituting a collective political subject mobilised for a particular action.¹²⁴

Such a process of collective subject formation, it ought to be stressed, never occurs automatically in Bourdieu's view.¹²⁵ It entails work and organisation.¹²⁶ Moreover, this movement from particular wills to the general will of a given social ensemble is not a benign process of communication in which agents "discover" an underlying homogeneity of vision and interest between them.¹²⁷ It is a process of production in which, through engagement and reconstruction, a particular point of view is generalised over others and momentarily constituted as a "universal" standpoint. This engagement, in order to be temporarily successful, requires symbolic violence and the re-presentation of disparate singularities as an overarching "whole".¹²⁸ In this regard, Bourdieu's conception of politics as 'will and representation' is opposed to ideas contained within post-representationalist and deliberative theories on collective subject formation.¹²⁹ These perspectives can in fact be criticised from a Bourdieusian standpoint on the grounds that, as discourses, they efface important possibilities for political change.

Symbolic power is crucial to political struggle. Its acquisition affords those agents who are interested in modifying extant social relations 'the possibility of changing the social world by changing the representation of this world'.¹³⁰ As this power is intrinsic in Bourdieu's opinion to the legitimate construction of

¹²⁴ Ibid., pp. 14-15

¹²⁵ Ibid., pp. 7-8

¹²⁶ Lovell, Terry, *Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self, Theory, Culture & Society*, p. 10

¹²⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Mystery of the Ministry: From Particular Wills to the General Will, Constellations*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2004, pp. 39-43, pp. 39-41

¹²⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 202-51. There are similar ideas to Bourdieu's found in certain (normally Derrida-inspired) approaches to radical democracy. For example, see: Laclau, Ernesto, *Why Constructing a People is the Main Task of Radical Politics, Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 32, Summer 2006, pp. 646-680, pp. 648-74; Kioupkiolis, Alexandros, *Radicalizing Democracy, Constellations*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2010, pp. 137-154

¹²⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 248-51

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 128

social space, and the imposition of meaning beyond a particular point of enunciation, it is unsurprising that it is by far the most difficult form of capital to accumulate. This is not only because such struggles in the field take place in contexts that are already structured in a particular way, and that are likely to have agents who are interested in maintaining extant relations of power. It is also because the plurality of the field, in terms of its multiple trajectories and standpoints, is likely to make it the site of a broad array of competing principles and interests which have to be won over.¹³¹ The field is hierarchical and so objectively certain agents are better placed than others to acquire symbolic capital. Nevertheless, this process does not occur automatically. It *always* requires political work.

Broadly speaking, political work is a process of accumulation and change. It is the specific practices engaged in by certain agents that enable them to acquire symbolic capital; and it is a practice that affords those who successfully undertake it the ‘power to make groups’, which given the inherent plurality of the field necessitates a degree of reconstitution and displacement. What these practices are precisely will vary depending on the particular case in question. However, for Bourdieu, they require that certain agents confront the ineradicable differences which are both immanent to and potentially constitutive of the field; and further, they require that these agents struggle to re-present such particularities as a collective political subject. Political work is the process through which the transitioning from particular wills to a mobilised general will occurs – though it ought to be emphasised that this process is *never* guaranteed in advance of such confrontation and may *never* be affected. What it entails is that,

¹³¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, pp. 7-12

somehow, certain agents impose themselves as legitimate representatives ‘upon those who, by recognising themselves in these plenipotentiaries, by recognising them as endowed with the full power to speak and act in their name’, are legitimately represented and so constitutively enacted as a ‘practical group’.¹³² As the social distinctiveness of this practical group requires a relation of alterity, its collective stance and vision of the social world will be articulated in opposition to a specified “other”. This collective agency is necessary for the possibility of social change and transformation in Bourdieu’s view.¹³³

The winning of positions which is affected through socially efficacious political work is therefore constitutive of a mobilised collective agent. As implied above, however, this consecration of a collective subject is not a generalised agent comprising the ‘will of all’. It is not, as Bourdieu contends, ‘the mere summation of individual wills’.¹³⁴ Rather, this subject is effectively new; it is produced through *symbolic violence* in the sense that its collectivity emerges through the subordination of disparate trajectories and partial anterior elements to a particular point of view that now stands in for the “whole”. This move, moreover, is effectively established through the complicity of those who are subjected to this symbolic violence. In short, they are won over.¹³⁵ This collectivity is not an effect of an underlying sameness ‘deduced from the structure’ and generated teleologically through obscure causal force. Nor is it a “common good” which is waiting to be found. The collective subject that is deemed vital to the prospect of political change in Bourdieusian accounts is produced historically in struggles between differently positioned agents. It is the

¹³² Ibid., pp. 7-15

¹³³ Lovell, Terry, *Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self*, *Theory, Culture & Society*, pp. 2-10

¹³⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Mystery of the Ministry: From Particular Wills to the General Will*, *Constellations*, p. 41

¹³⁵ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 209-10

momentary and unstable outcomes of such contests that determine the constitution and particular forms of collective action that are mobilised against a specified “other”.¹³⁶ In this regard, one may argue that difference is the condition of possibility for Bourdieu’s notion of politics as will and representation.

On this issue of legitimate representation as the reconstitution of disparate and unstable singularities as a practical group, Bourdieu is very much at odds with critical theories such as post-representationalism and deliberative democracy.¹³⁷ Indeed, post-representationalist accounts agree with Bourdieusian thought in viewing the practice of representation as a necessarily violent process in which a collective subject is constitutively enacted through ‘the subordination of differences to an overarching particularity’.¹³⁸ Yet they strongly disagree with the Bourdieusian insistence that such practices of representation are both unavoidable and politically dangerous to avoid. For certain post-representationalist theorists it is not only normatively desirable to move beyond representation, it is also politically possible, and in some accounts considered a really existing potential.¹³⁹

In this view a collective political subject ought to emerge not through symbolic violence, but through the ongoing ‘interaction and collaboration among singular constituents themselves’.¹⁴⁰ Such a process of collective formation is seen to be possible theoretically through so-called ‘smooth spaces’, which are envisioned in these accounts as horizontal networks in which everyone present

¹³⁶ Lovell, Terry, *Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self, Theory, Culture & Society*, pp. 2-10

¹³⁷ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 1, 2006, pp. 138-154; Calhoun, Craig, *Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere*, in, Calhoun, Craig (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England, 1992, pp. 1-50, pp. 5-6

¹³⁸ Kioupiolis, Alexandros, *Radicalizing Democracy, Constellations*, p. 143

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 144

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 143

has an unmediated voice.¹⁴¹ These horizontal zones are considered as permitting the direct and equal exchange of idiosyncratic viewpoints, which can be expressed within such collective structures without active reconstruction and subordination to identity.¹⁴² In this regard, a collective political subject is said to emerge in which individual differences are socially *present* as singular parts within a ‘general struggle’.¹⁴³ They function as a ‘polyphonic swarm’.¹⁴⁴

For some scholars who subscribe to these aspects of post-representationalist theory, this “general struggle” is deemed to be actually immanent in the contemporary structure of global capitalism, or what is otherwise variously called ‘Power’, ‘neoliberalism’,¹⁴⁵ or ‘imperial power’ in such writings.¹⁴⁶ A post-representationalist mode of politics is thus a very real possibility in these accounts, with ‘smooth space’ being perceived as emerging automatically from ‘lived experience’, and as an outcome of a structural logic of “Power” which ‘prefigures the creative bonds and alliances’ that will ultimately lead to its downfall.¹⁴⁷ This logic of “Power” is considered by certain theorists of this persuasion as one that ‘prefigures also the advance of an “absolute democracy”’.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, quite explicitly (and with not a little irony), ‘the millions of people subject to’ “Power” are *represented* in post-representationalist

¹⁴¹ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, p. 145

¹⁴² Kioupiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, p. 142; Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, p. 145

¹⁴³ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, p. 149

¹⁴⁴ Kioupiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, p. 143

¹⁴⁵ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, p. 149

¹⁴⁶ Kioupiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, p. 143

¹⁴⁷ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 145-53

¹⁴⁸ Kioupiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, p. 143

perspectives as being oriented *already* against a certain structure and for a particular vision of the future.¹⁴⁹ They are deemed present and in motion.

The criticism of representation as a violent process is certainly important, and in this sense the post-representationalist standpoints looked at above make valuable contributions to this issue. However, their assumptions regarding the possibility of an actual post-representational politics and the real existence of a “general struggle” that is moving inexorably towards a final point are problematic; discursively, they seem to efface important political questions.

The same point can be made in relation to theories of deliberative democracy; which likewise assume a horizontal – or neutral – space of communicative exchange in which equal citizens engage in rational debate so as to reach a consensus on what is ‘*practically necessary in the interest of all*’.¹⁵⁰ A general agreement on what qualifies as the “common good”, which is established through ‘finding a common voice’ in a particular society, is the process and object of democracy according to dominant themes in deliberative theory.¹⁵¹ The consensus reached in this regard is ‘moral’ because it is presumed that everyone involved has an ‘equal voice’ and therefore is able to communicate just as effectively as anyone else.¹⁵² Therefore, whatever general agreement that is reached through deliberation will necessarily result from the ‘force of better

¹⁴⁹ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 149-50

¹⁵⁰ Habermas, Jurgen, quoted in, Wedeen, Lisa, *Concepts and commitments in the Study of democracy*, in, Shapiro, Ian, Smith, Rogers M., and Masoud, Tarek E. (eds.), *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, p. 287; See also: Olson, Kevin, Democratic Inequalities: The Problem of Equal Citizenship in Habermas’s Democratic Theory, *Constellations*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1998, pp. 215-233, p. 216

¹⁵¹ Sanders, Lynn, Against Deliberation, *Political Theory*, Vol. 25, No. 3, June 1997, pp. 347-376, p. 360

¹⁵² Mouffe, Chantal, *The Democratic Paradox*, Verso, London, New York, 2000, p. 83; and, Olson, Kevin, Democratic Inequalities: The Problem of Equal Citizenship in Habermas’s Democratic Theory, *Constellations*, p. 216

argument'.¹⁵³ In this sense, consensus on the "common good" and what is in the interest of all is a 'shared understanding' that is authentically present.¹⁵⁴ It is not partiality dominating and operating as the synecdoche of all.¹⁵⁵

In a similar fashion to post-representation, then, theories of deliberative democracy tend to presume 'an underlying homogeneity of interests' within a given social framework.¹⁵⁶ It is the accessing of this 'common ground' that is sought through the practice of deliberation; which suggests, as Lisa Wedeen has argued, that generality is 'always already there'.¹⁵⁷ The constitution of a collective stance in this regard is not created through political work in the Bourdieusian sense, but through a process of discovery in which those involved in the deliberative practice find and come to agree on what they 'all share'.¹⁵⁸ This is an understanding of political action that, again like post-representationalist perspectives, inscribes a teleology within the fabric of extant social relations. It prefigures a 'prior unity' within a particular social structure and then configures the object of making present this unity the outcome of rational exchange between equal citizens.¹⁵⁹ There is in this sense a linear progression inscribed within such conduct, which will proceed inexorably owing to the pure rationality of argumentation in the deliberative sphere. From the

¹⁵³ Young, Iris Marion, *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*, in, Benhabib, Seyla (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, p. 121

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 125

¹⁵⁵ Calhoun, Craig, *Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere*, in, Calhoun, Craig (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, p. 29

¹⁵⁶ Kohn, Margaret, *Language, Power, and Persuasion: Toward a Critique of Deliberative Democracy*, *Constellations*, pp. 423-4

¹⁵⁷ Wedeen, Lisa, *Concepts and commitments in the Study of democracy*, in, Shapiro, Ian, Smith, Rogers M., and Masoud, Tarek E. (eds.), *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, p. 298

¹⁵⁸ Young, Iris Marion, *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*, in, Benhabib, Seyla (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, p. 125

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Bourdieusian standpoint used in this study, this perspective too seems to symbolically efface important political questions.

These include, for a start, the critical question of resistance and opposing extant relations of power. By prefiguring social space either as a “smooth” arena, or as one in which pure rationality will necessarily prevail, both post-representation and deliberation tend to ignore issues of hierarchy and of directly confronting relatively powerful positions. By implication, furthermore, such conceptualisations of social space obscure significant questions of political strategy and organisation. As the scholar Alexandros Kioupkiolis has argued in relation to post-representationalist perspectives specifically, the imposition of horizontal networks on the social world, along with the automaticity with which they are invested, results in making what matters politically ‘already on hand’. It therefore ‘obviates the need’ for active intervention against dominant sites and structures of power.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, for those who are critical of deliberative approaches to democracy, the presumption of a neutral sphere in which equal citizens converse freely with one another in order to reach agreement on the “common good”, is not only likely to thwart what Lynn Sanders calls an ‘egalitarian concern’,¹⁶¹ it is also likely to bypass politics generally by reducing its practice to acts of moral persuasion.¹⁶² The logics implicit and explicit in aspects of post-representation and deliberation effectively deny the political “game”. There is only ever expanding “smooth space”, which is propelled forward by the structure of “Power”; and there is only reasonable

¹⁶⁰ Kioupkiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, pp. 143-7

¹⁶¹ Sanders, Lynn, Against Deliberation, *Political Theory*, p. 370

¹⁶² Kohn, Margaret, Language, Power, and Persuasion: Toward a Critique of Deliberative Democracy, *Constellations*, pp. 423-4

communication, which given its pure morality is likely to ‘benefit those already in power’.¹⁶³

At a more micro-political level, the logics inscribed within post-representation and deliberation appear to efface the conditions of possibility for actively engendering a mobilised collective subject. As noted, the politics of representation in Bourdieusian thought is considered a constitutive process. To legitimately represent and so make a ‘practical group’ the spokesperson must win over disparate positions through imposing a particular viewpoint on others. This political work is not a unidirectional process, of course, and it entails a relation of confrontation with diverse perspectives and interests.¹⁶⁴ But it is one that is essential to the Bourdieusian standpoint as political change is affected in this view through collective action in specific circumstances.¹⁶⁵ The possibility of such politics, therefore, is derived from the ontological impossibility of a fully formed and unified field.¹⁶⁶ It is only through there being an ineradicable difference in the field that particular positions can be transcended and transformed. Without such difference the points of contention and antagonism are removed and so too is the possibility of their re-presentation as a collective historical form. A “generality” can only come into being in this view through the legitimate domination of difference, and if there is no difference over which to enact this relation of power, then the political process is stymied.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 409

¹⁶⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, pp. 7-8

¹⁶⁵ Lovell, Terry, Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self, *Theory, Culture & Society*, pp. 2-10

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 8-9

¹⁶⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 220-51. Similar ideas to Bourdieu’s on this issue are expressed in certain perspectives contained within a radical democracy standpoint. See, for instance, Laclau, Ernesto, Democracy and the Question of Power, *Constellations*, pp. 8-9; Mouffe, Chantal, *The Democratic Paradox*, pp. 135-6; Wenman, Mark Anthony, What is Politics? The Approach of Radical Pluralism, *Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 2003, pp. 57-65, pp. 59-63.

It is precisely the effacement of such difference and possibilities of political transcendence that seems to occur through the discursive logics enacted in certain elements of post-representationalist and deliberative theories. In both perspectives, as shown, a generality is said to pre-exist political engagement, whether this is through the presence of a general struggle generated and set in motion by the structure of global capitalism, or whether this is through the momentarily obscured presence of an underlying sameness that will be uncovered through rational debate. What such conceptions of social space do, it would appear, is impose a prior unity on a given temporal-spatial framework, which not only ‘obviates the need for’ what Iris Marion Young calls ‘self-transcendence’,¹⁶⁸ but also symbolically eliminates the very conditions required for Bourdieu’s transition from the plural to the “universal”.¹⁶⁹

So in this regard, the effects of representationalist and deliberative discourse may be considered stifling politically. They deny the need and possibility of agents struggling to generalise particular visions across social space as they prefigure its unity as always present and in motion. This presentist logic renders political work in the Bourdieusian sense somewhat unthinkable as it masks the ontology of others on which to legitimately impose relations of power. From a Bourdieusian standpoint, this masking of difference may be regarded as a practice of symbolic violence, and when it is coupled with a language of absolutes and authenticity, as is the case with certain elements of post-representation and deliberation, its debilitating effects on political struggle would seem to have an implicitly dogmatic quality.¹⁷⁰ The Bourdieusian conception of

¹⁶⁸ Young, Iris Marion, *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*, in, Benhabib, Seyla (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, p. 125

¹⁶⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 234-6

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 233

politics as will and representation at least makes possible the struggle to generalise and temporarily transcend partial viewpoints; it makes possible the *formation* of a collective political subject and with it the possibility of social transformation. It does this moreover without effacing the difficulties and inherent antinomies entailed in this task.¹⁷¹ Symbolic power requires the winning of positions. Yet the relations of power through which disparate wills are represented and practical groups are forged remain unstable and open to dispute.

The Transnational Political Field

As this study argues, the intellectuals who are constructing the discourse of one-state are engaged in a struggle for legitimate domination of the Palestinian political field. This struggle is in part launched from the position of diaspora. Therefore, such agents are struggling in a political field that is relatively autonomous *and* is dispersed across state borders.¹⁷² This may be thought of as a “transnational political field”. The key distinction of transnational social space is this hybrid structure. While it is relatively autonomous, the transnational field is at the same time ‘partially embedded’ in other fields of power, which are ordinarily national states.¹⁷³ The agents who constitute and (re)produce the transnational field through their actions are therefore *doubly* positioned. Unsurprisingly, from a Bourdieusian perspective this has implications for the stances they adopt and the resources they mobilise in order to play the “game”.

So to a large extent a transnational field is like any other. It is historically produced in the action of human agents and contingently evolves around battles

¹⁷¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Mystery of the Ministry: From Particular Wills to the General Will, Constellations*, pp. 41-3

¹⁷² Brubaker, Rogers, *The “diaspora” diaspora, Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 5

¹⁷³ Adamson, Fiona B., *Mobilizing for the transformation of home: political identities and transnational practices*, in, Al-Ali, Nadje, and, Khoser, Khalid (eds.), *New Approaches to Migration? Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home*, p. 159

to define the social world through the control of legitimate discourse. As Rogers Brubaker argues, a transnational political field is the site

of differentiated and competitive positions or stances adopted by different organisations, parties, movements, or individual political entrepreneurs, each seeking to “represent” the [community] to its own putative members, to the host state, or to the outside world, each seeking to monopolise the legitimate representation of the group.¹⁷⁴

Therefore, despite being dispersed across ‘several political entities’¹⁷⁵, a transnational political field retains its relative autonomy as this is what enables particular interests at stake to emerge and to be contingently fought over.

In contrast to conventional studies of transnationalism and diaspora politics, the transnational field does not posit the stark and usually definitive distinction of inside and outside (which does not mean that such distinctions cannot ‘be upheld as a significant differentiating principle in the game of political positioning’¹⁷⁶). Rather, *everybody is inside* the “game” and this will be characterised by contested relations of domination and subordination, conservation and resistance. As Fiona Adamson contends, transnational social space is ‘open to contestation, mobilization and/or capture by political entrepreneurs’.¹⁷⁷

What distinguishes a transnational political field from its more conventional counterpart is its structure. This is ‘perennially hybrid’, with relative autonomy being partially situated within other fields of power, usually national states.

¹⁷⁴ Brubaker, Rogers, quoted in, *ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 745

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 760

¹⁷⁷ Adamson, Fiona B., *Mobilizing for the transformation of home: political identities and transnational practices*, in, Al-Ali, Nadje, and, Khoser, Khalid (eds.), *New Approaches to Migration? Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home*, p. 159

Furthermore, this double structure has implications for both symbolic and objective dimensions of social space.¹⁷⁸

The state, of course, is a powerful institution which typically has both the material and symbolic resources to legitimately impose ‘what is what and who is who’ on those who are subject to its authority.¹⁷⁹ It is ordinarily able to exert considerable force in shaping ‘structures of perception and cognition across the society’ it dominates. In this sense the state is ‘incorporated in its citizens’ and, perhaps to a lesser extent, in those individuals who are positioned within the political boundaries of its control. According to the Bourdieusian standpoint, such incorporation and ‘minds of state’ will generate dispositions that orient the stances of agents subjected to this structuring. This process is complex and indeterminable, yet one cannot escape *habitus*.¹⁸⁰ However, the key point here is that for those agents who are doubly positioned in a national field of power *and* a transnational social space, the discourses and dispositions that are generated in the former will structure the stances that are adopted in the latter.

Moreover, the objective resources which permit such doubly positioned individuals to speak with some degree of effectiveness in transnational social space may have been acquired in a national meta-field. That is, their objective position in the transnational political field may be in part determined by their objective position in a national field of power. So to give an example close to this study, a national state-sanctioned ‘university certification’ may be an institutionalised form of cultural capital that can be mobilised and invested in

¹⁷⁸ Vauchez, Antoine, Interstitial Power in Fields of Limited Statehood: Introducing a “Weak Field” Approach to the Study of Transnational Settings, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 341-2

¹⁷⁹ Brubaker, Rogers, and, Cooper, Frederick, Beyond “identity”, *Theory and Society*, p. 15

¹⁸⁰ Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, Inter- and Transnational Fields of Power: On a Field Trip with Bourdieu, *International Political Sociology*, p. 328

battles for domination at the transnational level.¹⁸¹ What these objective resources are exactly will not be fixed and will vary depending on the specific context.

This chapter has therefore detailed the main theoretical approach used in this study. It is now time to apply this framework to the analysis of the discourse of one-state and those predominantly diaspora intellectuals who produce it. This will begin with an examination of this discourse as a classificatory framework, with Chapter Two seeking to determine what the function of is discourse is in Palestinian politics and what specifically explains its content.

¹⁸¹ Vauchez, Antoine, Interstitial Power in Fields of Limited Statehood: Introducing a “Weak Field” Approach to the Study of Transnational Settings, *International Political Sociology*, p. 341

Chapter Two: Defining the Palestinian Field: Contesting Two-States, Calling for One

The dominant position in the Palestinian political field is the “pragmatist” perspective, which, broadly speaking, has been historically at odds with “maximalist” standpoints premised on the total liberation of Palestine. Official political discourse in this arena defines the goal of a negotiated two-state solution to the conflict with Israel, and the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as its capital, as the ‘supreme goal of the national liberation cause’.¹ Despite profound differences over what its actual implementation would entail, this position is also the dominant perspective for resolving the conflict in international politics – with the international Quartet declaring its support for ‘a permanent two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict’ in 2003² – and within official Israeli politics – albeit with major qualifications.³ The orthodox agenda in both local and international politics is therefore a negotiated two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

This position is in crisis, however. During the 1990s ‘conventional wisdom’ could assume that it was ‘just a matter of time’ before a two-state solution was

¹ Palestinian National Authority, “Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State”, *Program of the Thirteenth Government*, August 2009, pp. 3-5. In 2006, all the leading Palestinian political factions – including those operating outside the PLO framework – signed the *National Conciliation Document of the Prisoners*. This classified the aim of the Palestinian struggle as being to establish an ‘independent state with *al-Quds al-Shareef* [Holy Jerusalem] as its capital on all territories occupied in 1967’. Barghouti, Marwan (Fateh), al-Natsheh, Sheik Abdul Khaleq (Hamas), al-Sa’di, Sheik Bassam (Islamic Jihad), Mallouh, Abdul Rahim (PFLP), and, Badarneh, Mustafa, (DFLP), *National Conciliation Document of the Prisoners*, May 26, 2006, <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/CE3ABE1B2E1502B58525717A006194CD>, accessed 06/09/2012

² Quartet Mediators – the United Nations, European Union, United States, and Russia, *The Roadmap to Peace in the Middle East*, 30 April, 2003, http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2989783.stm, accessed 31/08/2012

³ Netanyahu, Benjamin, “Full text of Netanyahu’s foreign policy speech at Bar Ilan, *Haaretz*, 14 June, 2009, <http://www.haaretz.com/misc/article-print-page/full-text-of-netanyahu-s-foreign-policy-speech-at-bar-ilan-1.277922?trailingPath=2.169%2C2.216%2C>, accessed 31/08/2012

realised, and that it was ‘virtually inevitable’ that a Palestinian state would be established. At present this is no longer the case and the *doxa* of the two-state approach has become ‘very much open to question’.⁴

It is within this context that certain Palestinian intellectuals have formed and publicly transmitted a discourse espousing a one-state solution to this conflict. Indeed, as noted in the introduction, debate on this conflict has to a large extent polarised around a ‘two-state versus one-state solution’ dichotomy and this bifurcation has come about in no small measure as a result of the critical intervention of these intellectuals.⁵ What, though, is the function of the discourse of one-state in Palestinian politics? Is it simply a practical reaction to the crisis afflicting the two-state approach, as existing scholarship on this issue tends to suggest?⁶ Or does it encompass a considerably richer stance and framework? This chapter argues that this discourse should be conceived as a competing definition of the Palestinian political field, one that is socially constructed in relation to and against the dominant “pragmatist” perspective. In contrast to “pragmatism”, with its emphasis on realism, negotiations and compromise, the discourse of one-state classifies the conflict and the Palestinian struggle in terms of settler colonialism, confrontation, and anti-colonial resistance. What is at stake, in short, is a competition over knowledge of the social world, which has implications for permissible political action.

⁴ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, pp. 150-206

⁵ Roy, Sara, quoted in, Le More, Anne, Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state, *International Affairs*, p. 998; Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation*, p. xxvi (Author’s Note)

⁶ See for example: Hermann, Tamar, The bi-national idea in Israel/Palestine: past and present, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 381-401; Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, pp. 206-7; Sussman, Gary, Is the Two-State Solution Dead?, *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, p. 39; and, Sussman, Gary, The Challenge to the Two-state Solution, *Middle East Report*, pp. 11-12

A further question addressed in this chapter is, how is this counter-knowledge formed? That is, what explains its specific content? To be sure such a question is partly answered by the relation between the one-state stance and “pragmatism”, as noted above. Yet other factors are pertinent, as a Bourdieusian perspective makes clear. The words and other deeds of Israel throughout the course of the peace process have certainly shaped the content of the one-state perspective. Yet how these have been interpreted is to a significant extent oriented by the *habitus* of these intellectuals – as Palestinians and as cultural elites positioned within a predominantly postcolonial epistemological framework. These dispositions furthermore contribute to the specific vision of a one-state solution articulated by these individuals, which is concomitantly structured by the transnationality of the political field and the largely diasporic position from which it is enunciated. Strategic calculation is not absent from the equation, however, and the words constitutive of this discourse are selected in part because they are considered to have political resonance across international and national domains.

A less explicit and more general suggestion made in this chapter is that Bourdieu’s structuralist constructivism provides a fruitful approach for dealing with a specific problem in constructivist research. Idealist constructivist approaches have been able to demonstrate in a number of different contexts that new ideas and political stances ‘often emerge in response to dramatic policy shocks, failures, and crises’.⁷ This insight is certainly supported by the discourse of one-state, as will be shown. What these approaches have been less adept at explaining, as Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink contend, is ‘the content of

⁷ Finnemore, Martha, and, Sikkink, Kathryn, Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics, *American Review of Political Science*, p. 406

new models that are adopted'.⁸ A Bourdieusian emphasis on relations, structural homologies, and reflexivity, it is suggested here, proves useful in this regard.

The structure of this chapter will follow the argument outlined above, with the exception that it will start by providing a historical reconstruction of the Palestinian political field. Like all histories the one provided here will be selective. It will focus only on those issues considered relevant to the actual objects of this research.⁹ After this an analysis of the counter-knowledge of a one-state solution will be undertaken, which will be followed by an explication of its specific content.

The Palestinian Political Field: A History

When the PLO officially adopted the two-state solution approach as the strategic goal of the national movement in November 1988, it defined the goal of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as its capital as 'the natural climax of a ... struggle that started more than seventy years ago'.¹⁰ This claim evinces the relations of power in the Palestinian political field at this time. Far from being "natural" the adoption of the two-state approach marked the triumph of a particular vision of Palestine over other perspectives. Since its inception in the late 1960s, the political field has been broadly divided between "maximalist" positions on the one hand and "pragmatist" positions on the other. As Yezid Sayigh states, this was the 'main historic faultline within the Palestinian national movement'.¹¹ The settling of this contest in favour of the

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Madsen, Mikael Rask, Reflexivity and the Construction of the International Object: The Case of Human Rights, *International Political Sociology*, p. 268

¹⁰ Palestine National Council, "Political Communiqué", Algiers, 15 November 1988, Documents and Source Material, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Winter 1989, pp. 172-228, pp. 216-17

¹¹ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011 (1997), p. 22

“pragmatists” in the late 1980s resulted in a restructuring of Palestinian political discourse and practice. This was especially the case following the signing of the Oslo Accords by the PLO and Israel in 1993, which led to the establishment of the PA and the consecration of a Palestinian discourse that centred on the teleology of state and political compromise, at the expense of a previous symbolic order defined through the icons of revolution and resistance.¹² As noted, however, this position is currently in turmoil; and while this has clearly benefited Hamas, which has risen to be a key player in Palestinian politics, its preeminence is far from being assured.¹³ Thus, the Palestinian political field is at present in a state of pronounced flux and instability.

When the Palestinian national field was established in the late 1960s, the main political contests between its various positions were waged within the “maximalist” framework of armed struggle and the total liberation of Palestine.¹⁴ Guerrilla factions dominated the national movement at this stage. By 1969 they had wrested control of the PLO from Arab states, which had dominated Palestinian politics since the *nakba* and the loss of Palestine in 1948-49, transforming it into a relatively autonomous social space. Israel’s emphatic victory in the June 1967 War – which resulted in it occupying the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem – was the major factor that enabled this process to

¹² Moughrabi, Fouad, Zureik, Elia, Hassassian, Manuel, Haidar, and, Aziz, Haidar, Palestinians on the Peace Process, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, Autumn 1991, pp. 36-53

¹³ Sayigh, Yezid, Inducing a Failed State in Palestine, *Survival*, Vol. 49, No. 3, Autumn 2007, pp. 7-39, p. 19

¹⁴ The situating of the genesis of the Palestinian political field at this point in time is not meant to suggest that there was no distinctly Palestinian politics prior to the late 1960s. Such a claim would be ludicrous. What is being suggested, rather, is that Palestinian politics prior to this point was conducted in arenas that were constituted and dominated by external forces – whether the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate for Palestine, or, after *al nakba* and the loss of Palestine in 1948, Arab states. For more details see: Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, pp. 31-139; Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993*, pp. 1-242. For an opposing view see: Hilal, Jamil, Problematizing Democracy in Palestine, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and Middle East*, Vol. 23, No. 1&2, 2003, pp. 163-172, p. 163

occur as it discredited both Arab states and the incumbent PLO leadership and so provided the opportunity for other agents to claim a preeminent political role. This was done most effectively by the guerrilla faction Fateh, which emerged during this period as the key player in Palestinian politics. In this phase of the Palestinian struggle the epicentre of the political field was positioned in exile. This would only decisively change following the outbreak of the first Palestinian *intifada* in December 1987.

Armed struggle was the main source of political legitimacy at this stage, and was instrumental in mobilising Palestinians on a mass scale, as well as in providing the space needed in order for this process to be carried out.¹⁵ It also functioned as a principle of distinction; bringing into being a ‘militant’¹⁶ Palestinian collective subject and a revolutionary ‘imagined community’.¹⁷

Differences of course existed in the Palestinian arena, particularly over how armed struggle ought to be fought and what liberation specifically entailed. Fateh, for example, tended to articulate a straightforwardly nationalist and non-ideological conception of armed struggle and during this period subscribed to a vision of liberation that sought to establish a secular democratic state in all of Mandate Palestine for ‘Jews, Christians and Muslims’. Groups such as the PFLP, in contrast, espoused a distinctly Marxist-Leninist notion of liberation war. They visualised it as taking place within a ‘deeper process of social and economic change’ that would involve ‘particular classes and political alliances’.

The PFLP was also initially ambivalent about the secular democratic state idea,

¹⁵ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993*, pp. 174-218

¹⁶ Rasheed, Mohammad, *towards a democratic state in Palestine: the Palestinian revolution and the Jews vis-à-vis the democratic, non-sectarian society of the future*, PLO Research Centre, Beirut-Lebanon, November 1970, p. 8

¹⁷ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, pp. 174-218. See also, Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, New York, 1989 (1983), pp. 14-16

publicly espousing it in some instances while in others regarding it ‘as a betrayal of the Arab nation as a whole’ and as a concept that ‘threatened to leave Palestine in the hands of Zionism and colonialism’.¹⁸ Nonetheless, despite such differences, the overarching assumptions of the “maximalist” framework remained largely unchallenged during this period of the Palestinian struggle.¹⁹

This trajectory began to change in the early 1970s, however. At this point a “pragmatist” dynamic prioritising state-building and diplomatic compromise with Israel began to emerge more forcefully. This was driven primarily by Fateh, though factions such as the DFLP also played a significant role.²⁰ With its straightforwardly nationalist agenda and desire ‘for sovereign status and juridical recognition’, Fateh was strongly disposed to situating the struggle within ‘statist political structures’.²¹ To a significant extent, therefore, the “pragmatist” drive in the Palestinian arena encapsulated its own political tendencies and interests.

The PLO’s scaling back of political objectives and gradual shift towards a compromise solution with Israel was further shaped by regional trends. These included, most importantly, the growing *raison d’État* of Arab states following their defeat to Israel in the June 1967 War.²² In one form or another, Palestinian guerrillas had envisaged a significant military role for Arab states in the liberation war. Therefore, with their explicit departure from the stance of total liberation – signified most clearly by their refusal to intervene in the PLO-Jordan

¹⁸ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, pp. 196-237

¹⁹ This is not to say that different points of view to the “maximalist” framework were totally absent, of course. These certainly did exist, but were largely subordinated at this stage. See, for example Gresh, Alain, *The PLO: The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State* (revised and updated edition) (translated by A. M. Berrett), Zed Books Ltd, London and New Jersey, 1988 (1983), pp. 59-76.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-140. See also, Cobban, Helena, *The Palestinian Liberation Organisation: People, Power and Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992 (1984), p. 154

²¹ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, pp. 174-218.

²² Brynen, Rex, Palestine and the Arab State System: Permeability, State Consolidation and the Intifada, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 24, No. 3, September 1991, pp. 595-621, pp. 602-4

War in September 1970, by Egypt and Syria's limited diplomatic objectives in the October 1973 War, and by the agreement of a bilateral peace between Egypt and Israel in 1978 – many PLO operatives began to question the practicality of the “maximalist” standpoint. In turn, this led to them according greater weight to a compromise approach.²³

Moreover, it was around this time that Palestinians in the occupied territories started to play a more prominent role in the national movement.²⁴ This sector of the Palestinian people tended to favour a pragmatic approach and the aim of establishing an independent state, as this agenda met with their immediate aspiration of ending the occupation. From the early 1970s onwards, pro-PLO elites from this constituency sought to influence PLO policy in this direction.²⁵ The outbreak of the first Palestinian *intifada* in the occupied territories in December 1987 proved crucial in enabling “pragmatists” in the Palestinian arena to impose their domination on the political field. It allowed figures such as Yasir Arafat to win the ‘diplomatic mandate [they] had sought for so long’.²⁶

Though this victory contributed further to the rising political preeminence of Palestinians in the occupied territories, the “pragmatist” stance still managed to gain considerable support among Palestinians in exile – despite this constituency having most to lose from the diplomatic strategy. This was mainly due to the vagaries of exile and the frequently violent relations Palestinians experienced with Arab states and societies. For many Palestinians in exile, the bitterness of this experience contributed to a growing sense ‘of the need to establish a

²³ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, pp. 243-333; Cobban, Helena, *The Palestinian Liberation Organisation: People, Power and Politics*, p. 53; Khalidi, Rashid, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2010 (1997), pp. 200-1

²⁴ Parsons, Nigel, *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority: From Oslo to Al-Aqsa*, pp. 29-31

²⁵ Gresh, Alain, *The PLO: The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State*, pp. 133-6

²⁶ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, p. 624

sovereign authority on national soil'.²⁷ They too were thus inclined towards the policy of a negotiated two-state solution.

Even still, this process of change was far from being smooth. PLO politics throughout this period was dominated by an intense and often bitter internal debate 'about the historic nature and purpose of the Palestinian national movement'.²⁸ The reorientation of PLO strategy towards a compromise solution was officially initiated in June 1974, through the political programme of the twelfth Palestine National Council (PNC).²⁹ This session of the PNC effectively brought the "maximalist" and "pragmatist" positions 'into direct conflict' with one another.³⁰ In response to the programme adopted at this PNC, the PFLP withdrew its membership from the PLO's executive committee, and, along with a number of other factions, established a Rejection Front (RF) to oppose "capitulationist" trends in the Palestinian arena.³¹ Specifically, the RF was against 'deviationist trends' that sought to entice 'Palestinians to participate in liquidationist settlements'.³² As PFLP leader George Habash explained at the time:

²⁷ Sayigh, Yezid, *Struggle within, Struggle without: The Transformation of PLO Politics Since 1982*, *International Affairs*, Vol. 65, No. 2, Spring 1989, pp. 247-271, pp. 248-68; Hilal, Jamil, *Problematising Democracy in Palestine*, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and Middle East*, p. 164

²⁸ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, pp. 332-3

²⁹ Rather than calling for the total liberation of Palestine, the political programme of the twelfth PNC ambiguously called for the 'liberation of Palestinian land' and prioritised the establishment of a 'people's national, independent and fighting authority on every part of the Palestinian land that is liberated'. The programme also stated that the 'PLO will struggle by every means' to fulfil its political objectives, which hinted at the possibility of a diplomatic solution to the conflict, as opposed to a military solution accomplished through armed struggle. Gresh, Alain, *The PLO, The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State*, pp. 167-71

³⁰ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, pp. 323-3

³¹ The full title of the RF was the *Front of Palestinian Forces Rejecting Capitulationist Solutions*. In addition to the PFLP, it comprised the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), and the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF).

³² Quoted in, Cobban, Helena, *The Palestinian Liberation Organisation*, p. 149

two contradictory political lines exist within the PLO One political line says the only way open for the resistance movement is to enter into the framework of the political solution and to struggle within this framework to achieve whatever is possible. On the other hand, there is another line that believes in the continuity of the revolution and in staying away from political settlements.³³

Support for the “maximalist” standpoint existed within Palestinian social space throughout this period.³⁴ Yet by the late 1980s this battle had been effectively settled in favour of the “pragmatists” – with the PLO being able to legitimately claim, as noted above, that a negotiated two-solution to the conflict was the ‘natural climax’ of the Palestinian struggle.³⁵ The dominance of this position became entrenched still further after the signing of the Oslo Accords by the PLO and Israel in 1993.

The signing of this agreement inaugurated the Oslo peace process, and led to the return from exile to the occupied territories of the core political leadership, bureaucracy, and military institutions of the PLO, transforming them into the PA. The quasi-state apparatus of the PA would quickly be expanded to incorporate disparate sectors of West Bank and Gazan society, granting various agents a stake in the diplomatic and institution building process, and thus ameliorating potential sources of resistance to such measures. The PA was dominated by Fateh, with its members exercising a virtual monopoly over its key posts and institutions.³⁶

³³ Habash, George, Interviewed in *Al-Hadaf*, Beirut, August 3, 1974, Document and Source Material: Arab Documents on Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Autumn, 1974, pp 189-205, p. 201

³⁴ Cobban, Helena, *The Palestinian Liberation Organisation*, pp. 62-3; Gresh, Alain, *The PLO, The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State*, pp. 146-9; Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, pp. 194-5

³⁵ Palestine National Council, “Political Communiqué”, Algiers, 15 November 1988, Documents and Source Material, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 216-17; Khalidi, Rashid, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*, p. 200; Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, p. 672

³⁶ Parsons, Nigel, *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority: From Oslo to Al-Aqsa*, pp. 126-91

Although the Oslo agreements never once stated that the aim of negotiations between Palestinians and Israel was a two-state solution to the conflict,³⁷ they were broadly seen as confirming the evolution of the PLO, under the leadership of Fateh, ‘from a liberation movement to a para-state that would eventually lead the Palestinians to full-fledged statehood and independence’.³⁸ For many intellectuals writing at the time, the PLO’s engagement in the peace process consecrated a ‘new Palestinian discourse’. This had been in formation since the early 1970s, and differed ‘radically from the previous discourse associated with the rise of the Palestine resistance movement in the 1960s’.³⁹ Now, however, it effectively ‘displaced’ the “maximalist” perspective from the field of contention.⁴⁰ What emerged instead was a symbolic order defined in terms of realism and political compromise, and that focused almost solely on the teleology of state.

According to the terms of this new discursive framework, Palestinians were ‘less ideological’ and ‘more pragmatic’; they were less confrontational and ‘more willing to accommodate themselves to new realities’; and they showed greater awareness of ‘the need to discard the old rhetoric’ and pursue ‘realizable objectives’.⁴¹ Within this framework, the legitimate political conduct for

³⁷ For example, the Declaration of Principles (DoP) – the main document signed between the PLO and Israel – certainly stated that the aim of negotiations between the principal parties was to ‘achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement’. However, the specific outcome of ‘permanent status negotiations’, as these were called, was left open except for the proviso that they would ‘cover remaining issues, including: Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbours, and other issues of common interest’. *Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements*, 13 September 1993, http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/1682727.stm, accessed 02/06/2010

³⁸ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, p. 150

³⁹ Moughrabi, Fouad, Zureik, Elia, Hassassian, Manuel, Haidar, and, Aziz, Haidar, Palestinians on the Peace Process, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 42-3

⁴⁰ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, p. 663

⁴¹ Moughrabi, Fouad, Zureik, Elia, Hassassian, Manuel, Haidar, and, Aziz, Haidar, Palestinians on the Peace Process, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 43

engaging Israel became the practice of negotiations, rather than resistance. The war had ended,⁴² and the era of ‘the guerrilla groups based in exile’ was over. A new phase had begun ‘in which the centre of national politics, primary social constituency, and statist institutions were based in one and the same location, the occupied territories’.⁴³ The recently created institutions of the PA advanced the dominant narrative of state, eliding difference in the Palestinian arena by pushing the militant symbols of armed struggle and revolution to the margins.⁴⁴

In school textbooks developed under the PA, for example, Palestine was defined through ‘flags, institutions, and unity’, and emerged as an unproblematic and natural entity possessing all the accoutrements of state. The symbols of ‘struggle, revolution, and liberation’, which had ‘dominated Palestinian national expression for a generation’, hardly featured at all in these official texts.⁴⁵ The PA’s security forces were valorised as a symbol of the emerging state’s power, with the gun ‘no longer celebrated as the liberator of the captive nation, but rather as instruments of order’.⁴⁶ The “pragmatist” position had by this point in time been largely established as *doxa*, with it being widely taken for granted that negotiations leading to the creation of an independent Palestinian state would be concluded in due course.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, this narrative has lost a considerable degree of social efficacy and the inevitability recognised in this position has become increasingly open to

⁴² Allen, Lori, Palestinians Debate “Polite” Resistance to Occupation, *Middle East Report*, Vol. 32, No. 225, Winter 2002, <http://ns2.merip.org/mer/mer225/palestinians-debate-polite-resistance-occupation>, accessed 12/09/2012

⁴³ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, p. 663

⁴⁴ Khalili, Laleh, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, p. 191

⁴⁵ Brown, Nathan J., *Palestinian Politics after the Oslo Accords: Resuming Arab Palestine*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2003, pp. 224-6

⁴⁶ Khalili, Laleh, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration*, pp. 193-213

⁴⁷ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 150-206; Moughrabi, Fouad, Zureik, Elia, Hassassian, Manuel, Haidar, and, Aziz, Haidar, Palestinians on the Peace Process, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 42

dispute. Even though figures such as Yasir Arafat used to claim that the PA's autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip amounted to sovereignty, Israel has continued to exercise a system of control over the occupied territories and the Palestinians living there throughout the peace process. Control over security, trade, travel, land use, and access to natural resources (especially water), was firmly retained in Israel's hands under the terms of the Oslo agreements.⁴⁸ What is more, Israel has continued to build Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Between 1991 and 2009 the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem rose from 243,000 to 510,648.⁴⁹ Accompanying this process of colonization has been the construction of an extensive network of Israeli-only roads and security infrastructure – including, since 2002, the building of a “security barrier” that runs through significant parts of the West Bank. These ‘physical obstacles’ and ‘extensive “no-go” areas’ for Palestinians have fragmented the occupied territories into a series of non-contiguous enclaves, and have severely hampered Palestinian movement and economic development.⁵⁰ Living conditions for Palestinians in the occupied territories have generally deteriorated since 1993, added to which has been a lack of any meaningful advancement in the diplomatic process.⁵¹

The outbreak of the second Palestinian *intifada* in September 2000 was largely due to these conditions, as well as the growing disillusionment among Palestinians with the diplomatic strategy of the PLO, and their mounting

⁴⁸ Sayigh, Yezid, Arafat and the Anatomy of a Revolt, *Survival*, p. 55; Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 200-6

⁴⁹ “Comprehensive Settlement Population 1972-2010”, *Foundation for Middle East Peace*, http://www.fmep.org/settlement_info/settlement-info-and-tables/stats-data/comprehensive-settlement-population-1972-2006, accessed 16/05/2012.

⁵⁰ Sayigh, Yezid, Inducing a Failed State in Palestine, *Survival*, pp. 7-9; Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 202-3

⁵¹ Le More, Anne, Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state, *International Affairs*, pp. 984-6

disaffection with the corruption and institutional mismanagement of PA elites. Violence was perpetrated from both sides during the course of the second *intifada*, but Israel's response was especially brutal. This included its redeployment in areas of the West Bank its military had vacated as part of the Oslo agreements, and its deliberate destruction of PA institutions and physical infrastructure.⁵² As Laleh Khalili has argued, one of the consequences of Israel's reinvasion of the West Bank and devastating assault on PA institutions, was to weaken the legitimacy of the narrative of state promoted by the latter; as she maintains, it brought into sharp relief the extent to which the PA quasi-state remained 'subject to the policies of Israel'.⁵³ The symbolic authority of this narrative has continued to decline; and while efforts have been made to restart the peace process since the second *intifada* – most notably the Quartet sponsored Road Map in 2003 and the Minneapolis Conference in 2008 – it is effectively moribund. In 2010, direct negotiations between the two sides officially broke down.

For some analysts, the post-Oslo Accords period has been defined by the 'ongoing slow-motion collapse ... of the post-1948 phase of the Palestinian national movement'.⁵⁴ While this assessment is of course retrospective, and it is unlikely that it would have been made prior to the start of the second *intifada*, it nevertheless appears to have a large degree of validity.

The signing of the Oslo Accords and the establishment of the PA effectively marginalised the PLO in Palestinian politics and at present it barely operates.⁵⁵

⁵² Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 204-6

⁵³ Khalili, Laleh, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration*, pp. 194-5

⁵⁴ Doumani, Beshara, Palestine versus the Palestinians? The Iron Laws and the Ironies of a People Denied, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 55-6

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 54-60; Frisch, Hillel, The Death of the PLO, *Middle Eastern Studies*, pp. 243-261; Rubinstein, Danny, One State/Two States: Rethinking Israel and Palestine, *Dissent*; Sayigh, Yezid, Arafat and the Anatomy of a Revolt, *Survival*, pp. 51-2; Sayigh, Yezid, The Palestinian

Historic opposition factions such as the PFLP and the DFLP were similarly sidelined by the commencement of the Oslo peace process, and they had been, in any case, severely wounded both financially and ideologically by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁵⁶ As the principal faction driving the diplomatic strategy and promising a successful conclusion of negotiations with Israel, Fateh has suffered a sharp decline in its political credibility and domestic support owing to its ‘patent inability’ to deliver on this front.⁵⁷ Its organisational disarray and increasing incoherency as a political movement, along with the well documented corruption of many of its senior members, has detracted still further from its internal standing. Indeed, as commentators such as Nathan Brown contend, without a serious process of renewal Fateh is likely to ‘continue its slow fade from the scene’.⁵⁸

Rather than being interested in affecting such a process of renewal, however, Fateh and for that matter political elites generally in the Palestinian arena seem to be more concerned at present with entrenching the established order as opposed to moving beyond it. This appears to be due in part to their practical sense of *raison d'être* and historical conviction that a satisfactory settlement to the conflict with Israel can be achieved within the current diplomatic framework and strategy.⁵⁹ Despite the weakening of the “pragmatist” position within this context, Palestinian political elites continue to assert that the establishment of an

Strategic Impasse, *Survival*, p. 15

⁵⁶ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, pp. 643-54. In addition, Parsons, Nigel, *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority: From Oslo to Al-Aqsa*, p. 145; Rubinstein, Danny, *One State/Two States: Rethinking Israel and Palestine*, *Dissent*

⁵⁷ Sayigh, Yezid, *Inducing a Failed State in Palestine*, *Survival*, p. 15; Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 199-204

⁵⁸ Brown, Nathan J., *Gaza Five Years On: Hamas Settles In*, *The Carnegie Papers*

⁵⁹ International Crisis Group, *The Emperor has no Clothes: Palestinians and the End of the Peace Process*, *Middle East Report*, p. 30; International Crisis Group, *Tipping Point? Palestinians and the Search for a New Strategy*, *Middle East Report*, p. 2

independent state within the framework of a negotiated two-state solution to the conflict is ‘inevitable’.⁶⁰

In addition, this interest in maintaining the established order seems to partly derive from the significant political and economic benefits which these elites derive from the status quo in Palestine-Israel.⁶¹ For this reason, as certain scholars have suggested, there is little incentive for them to try and engage in a process of reconstitution and strategic reformulation in the Palestinian arena, however constrained this option might be. Indeed, given the crisis of legitimacy in this context, such a process seems to be perceived by political elites as a ‘strategic threat’ to their current standing in the political field.⁶² The growing authoritarianism of the PA regime, along with its recent attempts at reforming and improving its public services in the West Bank, appear to symptomatic of an interest in perpetuating the extant order and escaping important political questions.⁶³

This decline of the historic leadership and institutions of the Palestinian national movement has enabled Hamas to assert itself as a major player in the political field. Founded in the late 1980s as a distinctly Palestinian offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas’ rise to prominence was demonstrated most egregiously by its triumph in the 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections. Its political ascendancy was highlighted still further by its

⁶⁰ Ackerman, Gwen, and, Ferziger, Jonathan, Fayyad Says Building State Institutions Will Make Palestine ‘Inevitable’, *Bloomberg*, 18 October, 2010, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-10-18/fayyad-says-building-state-institutions-will-make-palestine-inevitable-.html>, accessed 31/08/2012

⁶¹ International Crisis Group, Tipping Point? Palestinians and the Search for a New Strategy, *Middle East Report*, p. 2

⁶² Brown, Nathan J., Gaza Five Years On: Hamas Settles In, *The Carnegie Papers*

⁶³ See, for example, Brown, Nathan J., Are Palestinians Building a State?, *Carnegie Commentary*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 2010; Khalidi, Raja, and, Sobhi, Samour, Neoliberalism as Liberation: The Statehood Program and the Remaking of the Palestinian National Movement, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2, Winter 2011, pp. 5-25, 8-16; Sayigh, Yezid, Policing the People, Building the State: Authoritarian Transformation in the West Bank and Gaza, *The Carnegie Papers*, February 2011

involvement in a military confrontation with Fateh in June 2007 which led to it seizing control of PA institutions in the Gaza Strip. This brief war between rival Palestinian factions effectively split the PA in two, with Hamas assuming governance responsibilities in the Gaza Strip, and with Fateh dominating presidential and security institutions in the West Bank (the PA government in the West Bank continues to be led by a technocratic administration which was headed until recently by Salam Fayyad, and which is headed now by Rami Hamdallah). This division persists into the present.

Regional trends within the context of the “Arab spring” have added to the sense that Hamas is poised to legitimately dominate the political field and that Fateh is on the wrong side of history.⁶⁴ The dynamic of Islamist ascendancy shown most clearly by the electoral victory of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt *suggests* the emergence of a regional order more favourable to Hamas’ political position.⁶⁵ According to certain analysts, Hamas leaders, especially those based in the Gaza Strip, are convinced that the ‘rising Islamist tide in Egypt and elsewhere [will] lift their boat’,⁶⁶ and that the ‘Palestinian future is theirs’.⁶⁷ For some Hamas operatives this is considered as being simply a matter of time.⁶⁸

This view, however, appears to be once again premature. To be sure the struggles within the context of the “Arab spring” appear to point towards an Islamist trajectory across the region. Yet such struggles remain highly fluid and are far from being settled. Moreover, Islamist domination does not necessarily

⁶⁴ International Crisis Group, Light at the End of their Tunnels? Hamas & the Arab Uprisings, *Middle East Report*, No. 129, 14 August 2012, pp. 13-14

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. i (executive summary)

⁶⁶ Brown, Nathan J., Gaza Five Years On: Hamas Settles In, *The Carnegie Papers*

⁶⁷ Shelah, Ofer, Israel’s exit from the Peace Process sets the stage for the Next *Intifada*, *Al-Monitor*, 28 August 2012, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/08/hamas-on-hold.html>, accessed 28/08/2012

⁶⁸ Brown, Nathan J., Gaza Five Years On: Hamas Settles In, *The Carnegie Papers*. See also, International Crisis Group, Light at the End of their Tunnels? Hamas & the Arab Uprisings, *Middle East Report*, pp. 26-9

translate into straightforward gains for Hamas and indeed it may bring some of its internal contradictions into sharper focus.⁶⁹ In recent years the organisation has been increasingly straddling the divide between militant resistance movement and ‘credible governing authority’.⁷⁰ Its political thought and practice has been oriented at one and the same time towards armed struggle and total liberation: and towards ‘pragmatism and the Palestinian “mainstream”’.⁷¹ The “Arab Spring” has seen it remove its political headquarters from Syria amidst an ongoing rebellion there against the Bashar al-Assad regime, which has resulted in it shifting its regional orbit away from the so-called “axis of resistance” and towards status quo actors such as Egypt, Jordan, Qatar and Turkey.⁷² Furthermore, those Islamist governments that have risen across the region have displayed a strong interest in developing ‘economic and security ties with the United States and the European Union’, which suggests that they will ‘expect Hamas to moderate its stance in return for their political and material support’.⁷³ This point includes the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Even still, despite this regional reorientation Hamas retains its ties to “axis of resistance” states – most notably Iran – and it has far from abandoned its resistance stance.⁷⁴ Therefore, it is fair to say that its internal tensions remain ongoing and that Hamas too lacks a clear strategic vision.⁷⁵ Moreover, given

⁶⁹ Nasser, Nicola, Hamas at the crossroads, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 16-22 August 2012, Issue No. 1111, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1111/op5.htm>, accessed 28/08/2012

⁷⁰ Shabaan, Omar, Hamas and Morsi: Not So Easy Between Brothers, *Carnegie Middle East Center*, October 1, 2012, <http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=49525&lang=en>, accessed 01/10/2012

⁷¹ Hroub, Khaled, A “New Hamas” through its New Documents, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4, Summer 2006, pp. 6-27, p. 25

⁷² International Crisis Group, Light at the End of their Tunnels? Hamas & the Arab Uprisings, *Middle East Report*, p. 6

⁷³ Sayigh, Yezid, Hamas Looks to the Future: With Gains Come Dilemmas, *Al-Hayat*, March 8, 2012, available at http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=47539&solr_hilite=Hamas, accessed 01/10/2012

⁷⁴ Nasser, Nicola, Hamas at the crossroads, *Al-Ahram Weekly*

⁷⁵ International Crisis Group, Light at the End of their Tunnels? Hamas & the Arab Uprisings, *Middle East Report*, p. 14

these contradictions and competing local and regional demands, it seems unlikely that Hamas will be in a position any time soon to formulate an unified stance that incorporates a specific agenda and political programme, whatever this might be. The growing authoritarianism of its governing practices in the Gaza Strip and its increasing disregard for public opinion there appears to be largely symptomatic of this strategic impasse.⁷⁶

Thus, while the Palestinian political field has undergone significant changes since the outbreak of the second *intifada* in 2000, it remains mired in a condition of liminality and pronounced uncertainty. There is a major crisis of legitimacy at this time and it is within this context that certain Palestinian intellectuals have intervened more forcefully in the political field with a discourse espousing a one-state solution to the conflict. As the next section will argue, this discourse should be conceived as a competing definition of the Palestinian political field that is articulated in opposition to the dominant “pragmatist” perspective.

Counter-Knowledge: Contesting the “Pragmatist” Perspective

‘Knowledge of the social world’, states Pierre Bourdieu, ‘and, more precisely, the categories that make it possible, are the stakes *par excellence* of the political struggle’.⁷⁷ This insight would not be lost on proponents of a one-state solution; intellectuals who are contesting the dominant “pragmatist” perspective in the Palestinian political field with an alternative definition of social reality. Specifically, they contest the structuring effects of “pragmatist” discourse and its foreclosing of conceptual horizons in Palestinian and international arenas, as well as its categorisation of the conflict as a border dispute between two equivalent

⁷⁶ Brown, Nathan J., Gaza Five Years On: Hamas Settles In, *The Carnegie Papers*

⁷⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 236

national movements that can be only resolved through a negotiated two-state solution. In the counter-knowledge of these intellectuals, the Palestinians are engaged in an existential war, and more specifically, a battle against settler colonialism. This is so *despite* the peace process, which in their view has advanced the Zionist settler colonial project in Mandate Palestine. Indeed, according to the version of social reality constructed in the discourse of one-state, “pragmatism” is complicit in this particular relation of domination. As such, negotiations and territorial compromise are considered futile and the Palestinian struggle should be concerned with anti-colonial resistance and decolonization.

Discourse, in Bourdieu’s view, may operate as a structuring structure. When recognised as legitimate particular utterances will structure social reality, permitting certain courses of action and limiting the possibility of others.⁷⁸ In analysing this specific instance of discursive contestation, it is important to be aware that the intellectuals who are promoting a one-state solution are conscious of the limits imposed on the Palestinian political field by “pragmatist” discourse. While many of these individuals at one stage considered ‘historic compromise’ as ‘necessary’,⁷⁹ and thus to some extent embodied the assumptions of “pragmatism”, they now perceive this standpoint to be an oppressive framework; or to put it in Bourdieusian language, they now see its symbolic violence.

The ‘Middle East peace process industry’, states Ali Abunimah, ‘seeks to define the limits of permissible discussion about political outcomes’.⁸⁰ In Joseph

⁷⁸ Leander, Anna, The Promises, Problems, and Potentials of a Bourdieu-Inspired Staging of the International, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 303-4

⁷⁹ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*, pp. 11-12

⁸⁰ Abunimah, Ali, Can Palestine be partitioned? Taking the discussion back to basics, *The Electronic Intifada*, 20 June, 2011, <http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/can-palestine-be-partitioned-taking-discussion-back-basics>, accessed 06/09/2012

Massad's words, the boundaries of "pragmatist" discourse work to 'ensure that no other strategy is pursued' and to prevent 'other visions from being contemplated'.⁸¹ Edward Said commented that his writings against official political discourse were frequently denounced by his opponents as showing 'a utopian lack of pragmatism and realism'⁸²; he implied that this was intended to foreclose political debate by dismissing his views as politically detached and puerile⁸³ – even though, as he also stated, they have 'proved to be correct'.⁸⁴ The foreclosing effects of orthodox discourse are therefore perceived by advocates of the one-state approach.

In making this point it is necessary to understand precisely what this structuring effect is, or rather, how it is interpreted by the intellectuals who are contesting it. Leaving aside at present the competing value each position invests in this framework of knowledge, it is clear that both supporters and critics of the "pragmatist" perspective see the structure it enacts in broadly the same way. Writing for the American Task Force on Palestine (ATFP), an organisation that is largely supportive of the official Palestinian standpoint, Hussein Ibish states that the triumph of the two-state perspective on both a local and international level has 'fundamentally transformed the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from a zero-sum equation to what can and should be a win-win dynamic'.⁸⁵ 'The framework of a two-state solution', he continues, 'has made it possible to support the Palestinians' aspiration to freedom without being anti-Israeli, and to call for

⁸¹ Massad, Joseph A., The compulsion to partition, *Al Jazeera English*, 06 August, 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/08/201285124456911263.html>, accessed 06/09/2012

⁸² Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 191

⁸³ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (revised and updated edition), Granta Books, London, 2002 (2000), pp. 167-72

⁸⁴ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 191

⁸⁵ Ibish, Hussein, *What's wrong with the One-State Agenda? Why Ending the Occupation and Peace with Israel is still the Palestinian National Goal*, p. 6

Israel's right to security and normality without being anti-Palestinian'.⁸⁶ To borrow Menachem Klein's sharp description of this "pragmatist" view, the 'proposed two-state solution transformed an existential struggle between two sides negating each other into a border conflict'.⁸⁷ Moreover, as Ibish's language makes clear, Zionism is placed on the same level as Palestinian nationalism in this discursive framework. The two are considered legitimate national movements or at least social constructions that should not be fundamentally opposed.

A further effect of "pragmatist" discourse is, as discussed above, to foreclose conceptual horizons in the Palestinian arena and limit the possibility of alternative political struggles. In the 1990s it was widely taken for granted that the trajectory of the conflict was steadily heading towards the telos of a negotiated two-state solution and independent Palestinian statehood.⁸⁸ What this foreclosure specifically entails in the present context of crisis and the questioning of this position, however, is less a guarantee of its realisation – though this still persists – and more the construction of a stark choice between statehood and permanent war. To cite the words of former West Bank PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, '*peace cannot be attained* unless our people gain their national rights as defined by international resolutions including their right to live freely and decently in an independent state [emphasis added]'.⁸⁹ The same rigid dichotomy is apparent in statements from groups such as the ATFP which declare that a 'permanent peace in the Middle East ... *can only be achieved* by a

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 7

⁸⁷ Klein, Menachem, One State in the Holy Land: A Dream of a Nightmare?, *The International Spectator*, Vol. 43, No. 4, December 2008, pp. 1-13, p. 5

⁸⁸ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 150-206

⁸⁹ Palestinian National Authority, "Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State", p. 5

historic compromise based on a two-state solution [emphasis]'.⁹⁰ Beyond the Palestinian political field, this dichotomy is also created at the international level when powerful figures like US President Barack Obama assert that: 'everyone knows [that] a lasting peace will involve two states for two peoples'.⁹¹ Efforts to reassert the *doxa* of the two-state approach seem to be performed through such utterances.

For proponents of a one-state solution, the version of social reality produced by "pragmatist" discourse is understood in a very similar way to those who support this standpoint. Its framing effects are conceived from this perspective as indicating that: as partition of Mandate Palestine into two states is 'accepted by both sides', resolving 'this conflict should simply be a matter of devising a well-designed internationally supported negotiation process' leading to this outcome.⁹² From the point of view of these intellectuals, the classificatory schemas constitutive of "pragmatist" discourse construct the conflict as being 'one of competing nationalisms'⁹³; they produce a conflict that is simply about 'contesting one nationalism with another',⁹⁴ which has lines of antagonism that 'coincide with the lines of June 4, 1967'.⁹⁵ Furthermore, this system of knowledge – 'encompassing national leaders, international officials, academics, advocates, media and non-governmental organizations' – is seen by one-state

⁹⁰ American Task Force on Palestine, *Our Mission*,

http://www.americantaskforce.org/position/our_mission, accessed 10/10/2012

⁹¹ Obama, Barack, Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa, State Department, Washington D.C., May 19, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/19/remarks-president-middle-east-and-north-africa>, accessed 06/09/2012

⁹² Rouhana, Nadim N., The Colonial Condition: Is Partition Possible in Palestine?, *Jadal*, Issue 10, June 2011, pp. 1-5 pp. 2-3

⁹³ Massad, Joseph A., The Intellectual Life of Edward Said, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3, Special Issue in Honor of Edward W. Said, Spring 2004, pp. 7-22, p. 16

⁹⁴ Makdisi, Saree, "Intellectual Warfare" and the Question of Palestine, in, Bisharat, George, and, Doumani, Beshara, Open Forum: Strategizing Palestine, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 82

⁹⁵ This date refers to the pre-June 1967 War borders between Israel and what are now the occupied territories. This line is commonly referred to as the "Green Line". Abunimah, Ali, It's not just the occupation, *The Electronic Intifada*, 7 June 2007, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article7012.shtml>, accessed 10/10/2010

proponents as enforcing the view ‘that the partition of historic Palestine into Israeli Jewish and Palestinian states is the only possible solution to an otherwise intractable conflict’.⁹⁶ The idea that ‘the ultimate goal of the Palestinian struggle for the last hundred years has been to have a state’ is also perceived from this standpoint as having been firmly established through “pragmatist” discourse (this issue will be addressed in more detail in the following chapter).⁹⁷

The major difference between these two positions of course is that from the perspective of intellectuals who are calling for a one-state solution the “pragmatist” stance is wrong. While they recognise the latter’s structuring effects in the same terms as the agents of “pragmatism”, they recognise these terms as imposing a false lense through which to envision the conflict and the Palestinian struggle. In their view, the framework enacted through “pragmatist” discourse mystifies the “true” reality of these social configurations. As such, it should be contested and should be contested by them.

According to these agents, a political role of the intellectual is ‘to think new thoughts and open lines of reflection that convention and orthodoxy have closed’.⁹⁸ Part of their task includes producing an ‘alternative view’ that provides ‘another way of looking not just at the present and past, but at the future as well’.⁹⁹ In this regard, these individuals subscribe to and reproduce a longstanding image of the critical intellectual as someone who confronts conventional wisdom.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Abunimah, Ali, A Curious Case of Exceptionalism: Non-partitionist Approaches to Ethnic Conflict Regulation and the Question of Palestine, *Ethnopolitics*, p. 431

⁹⁷ Bishara, Azmi, The Pitfalls of a US-Israeli Vision of a Palestinian State, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2, Winter 2006, pp. 56-63, p. 59

⁹⁸ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 259

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xx (introduction to first edition)

¹⁰⁰ Hart, Janet, *Reading the Radical Subject: Gramsci, Glino, and Paralanguages of the Modern Nation*, in, Grigor Suny, Ronald, and, Kennedy, Michael D. (eds.), *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1999, pp. 171-204, p. 176

In adopting this role, those who call for a one-state solution contend that the reality of the conflict is not defined by a win-win dynamic but by a dynamic of ‘oppressor and oppressed’.¹⁰¹ The conflict is not a border dispute. Rather, the ‘exclusive focus on the occupation serves increasingly to obscure that the conflict in Palestine is at its core a colonial struggle’.¹⁰² This struggle, more specifically, is ‘between a settler-colonizing nationalism and anti-colonial nationalism’ and therefore it is not a struggle between two equivalent national movements.¹⁰³ As such, the choice facing Palestinians is not statehood or permanent war, but ‘liberation or oblivion’.¹⁰⁴ The conflict is existential; the struggle is a matter of existence.

On this matter, it is important to elaborate on the category of settler colonialism invoked by these critical intellectuals. Colonialism is a complex social formation and one cannot deal with its multifarious aspects here. In broad terms, nonetheless, it is permissible to classify it as a system of domination which relies on material force and the production of ‘colonial epistemic differences’. Frameworks of knowledge constitutive of the European project of modernity are intrinsic to the establishment and reproduction of colonial relations. This is because they not only deny “Progress” and “Enlightenment” to those persons who are positioned outside their epistemological boundaries, but in so doing they produce desubjectified and inferior “others” who are thus open to negation. Within this relation of power, the subjectivity of the colonised “other” is constructed in the exteriority of colonial discourse. It is an ‘outside created

¹⁰¹ Barghouti, Omar, Re-Imagining Palestine: Self-determination, Ethical De-colonization, and Equality, *The One Democratic State Group*, July 29, 2009, http://www.odsg.org/co/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1438:re-imagining-palestine-self-determination-ethical-de-colonization-and-equality1&catid=27:one-state&Itemid=41, accessed 06/11/2009

¹⁰² Abunimah, Ali, It’s not just the occupation, *The Electronic Intifada*

¹⁰³ Massad, Joseph A., The Intellectual Life of Edward Said, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 16

¹⁰⁴ Qumsiyeh, Mazin, Palestine in relativity, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Issue No. 962, 27 August-2September, 2009, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2009/962/op151.htm>, accessed 06/11/2009

from the inside’ – that is, from inside the boundaries of modernity.¹⁰⁵ The colonial subject is therefore an object in this relation.¹⁰⁶ This relation, furthermore, is racialized in colonial formations; the epistemological categories of modernity – “rationalism”, “progress”, “secularism”, etc. – are essentially white and European: their constitutive “other” – “irrationalism”, “backwardness”, “superstition”, etc. – are essentially not. Epistemic differences are at the same time racialized differences in the colonial system.¹⁰⁷

Negation is a central aspect of settler colonialism and knowledge is intricately related to this process. However, what makes settler colonialism distinct as a form of colonialism is that its negatory logic is more specifically an eliminatory logic. Settler colonialism is driven by the logic of elimination. It is, as Patrick Wolfe argues, a ‘land-centred project that coordinates a comprehensive range of agencies, from the metropolitan centre to the frontier encampment, with a view to eliminating Indigenous societies’.¹⁰⁸ The “native” is ‘superfluous’ in this relation. This figure operates neither as a constitutive “other” to the figure of the modern settler, nor does it function as an object from which to extract surplus value.¹⁰⁹ The destruction of indigenous societies and their replacement by a new settler configuration is the object of this eliminatory logic. Settler colonialism ‘destroys to replace’.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Mignolo, Walter D., and, Tlostanova, Madina V., *Theorizing from the Borders: Shifting to Geo- and Body-Politics of Knowledge*, *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 9, No. 2, May 2006, pp. 205-221, pp. 205-7. See also, Said, Edward W., *Orientalism*, Penguin Books, London, 2003 (1978), pp. 21-27

¹⁰⁶ Young, Robert J. C., *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., Oxford, 2001, pp. 4-10

¹⁰⁷ Mignolo, Walter D., and, Tlostanova, Madina V., *Theorizing from the Borders: Shifting to Geo- and Body-Politics of Knowledge*, *European Journal of Social Theory*, p. 210

¹⁰⁸ Wolfe, Patrick, *Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native*, *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4, December 2006, pp. 387-409, p. 393

¹⁰⁹ Wolfe, Patrick, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event*, Cassell, London and New York, 1999, pp. 1-3

¹¹⁰ Wolfe, Patrick, *Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native*, *Journal of Genocide Research*, p. 388

The methods of elimination deployed by settler colonial formations, it is significant to note, are far from being singular, unchanging and lacking in innovation. Genocide, for example, may be one approach used, as in the case of Native Americans, but practices of elimination may also include programmes of assimilation, mass expulsion, and reconstituted human geographies. So, while settler colonialism desires the elimination of the “native”, this goal does not have to be realised through any particular route.¹¹¹

Moreover, it is important to acknowledge that settler colonialism ‘is a structure and not an event’. As social configurations, settler colonial societies are likely to be nuanced and pluralized. Nevertheless, their logic of destroying and replacing the “native” is an organising principle and not a discrete occurrence which happens once and is then superseded. The impulse to eliminate is not determined, for example, by the outcome of elections; it is, as Wolfe remarks, ‘relatively impervious to regime change’. The logic of settler colonialism is ongoing so long as its structure remains in place. Therefore, it is only through displacing this structure that the logic of settler colonialism can itself be eradicated.¹¹²

Proponents of a one-state solution are not the only persons to have applied the category of settler colonialism to the Zionist movement and Israel. Wolfe does so, and so do others.¹¹³ Within the context of Palestinian political thought there is a substantial history of depicting the Zionist movement and the Israeli state in these terms. In the 1960s, for instance, prominent intellectuals such as Fayezeh Sayegh contended that,

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 388-402

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 388-404

although it was not until 1948 that the Zionist aim was at last fulfilled, through the forcible expulsion of the majority of Palestinian Arabs from their homeland, the objective of de-Arabizing Palestine (as a requirement of Zionizing that country) had been entertained by the Zionist movement since its inception.

Sayegh further argued that the ‘motto of the race-supremacist Zionist settler regime in Palestine was racial elimination’, and that this was a ‘congenital, essential, and permanent’ feature of Israeli state and society.¹¹⁴ In his earlier critical writings, Edward Said framed the reconstruction of Palestine as ‘the State of Israel in 1948’ as ‘a feat unparalleled in the history of settler colonialism’.¹¹⁵

What is crucial about the present context, however, is that those who promote a one-state solution are deploying the category of settler colonialism against “pragmatism” as well as Zionism and Israel. The point is that the conflict has not been ‘fundamentally transformed’, as those who utter the “pragmatist” standpoint assert.¹¹⁶ The Palestinians ‘are being persecuted by Israel as *its* natives’.¹¹⁷ The logic of elimination that drove the Zionist movement and Israel in the past continues to drive them in the present. This process has not been ruptured and displaced by the onset of the peace process and the establishment of diplomatic ties between the PLO and Israel.

Thus, in this counterview, settler colonialism persists and the *nakba* is not ‘a discrete event that took place and ended in 1948’, but a process that ‘continues to destroy Palestine and the Palestinians’. As Joseph Massad contends: ‘I hold that the Nakba is a historical epoch that is 127 years old and is ongoing. The year 1881 is the date when Jewish colonization of Palestine started and, *as everyone*

¹¹⁴ Sayegh, Fayez A., *Zionist Colonialism in Palestine*, Research Centre of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Beirut, September 1965, pp. 21-7

¹¹⁵ Said, Edward W., *Zionism from the Standpoint of its Victims*, *Social Text*, No. 1, Winter 1979, pp. 7-58, pp. 8-10

¹¹⁶ Ibish, Hussein, *What’s wrong with the One-State Agenda? Why Ending the Occupation and Peace with Israel is still the Palestinian National Goal*, p. 6

¹¹⁷ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 145

knows, it has never ended [emphasis added]'.¹¹⁸ The phrase “everyone knows” is certainly revealing in that it appropriates the language of orthodox discourse and so challenges the legitimacy of its utterances; it gives a strong indication of the type of battle that is taking place between these different points of view. The knowledge formed and disseminated by these intellectuals defines the conflict in terms of historical continuity and positions “pragmatism” within the boundaries of Israel’s ‘colonial structure’.¹¹⁹

Indeed, according to such writings, Israel is responsible for a remarkable feat of innovation in the annals of settler colonial movements. Though it continues to eliminate Palestine and the Palestinians, it has managed to do so through paving ‘a diplomatic route for the erasure’ of territory and bodies.¹²⁰ The Oslo peace process is considered from this standpoint as extending Zionism’s historical treatment of the Palestinians, which certainly has cast them as inferior to Jews – or ‘moderns’¹²¹ in Theodor Herzl’s parlance – and which, as a consequence of this disavowal, has been able to deny their political existence.¹²² This treatment has been clearly altered with the start of the Oslo peace process, as Israel recognised the ‘PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people’ within this context and so ceased denying the existence outright.¹²³ Yet, even still, for these intellectuals the reality of the conflict has not been fundamentally transformed;

¹¹⁸ At the time of writing the figure is 132 years old. Massad, Joseph A., *Resisting the Nakba, The Electronic Intifada*, 16 May 2008, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/resisting-nakba/7518>, accessed 26/08/2009

¹¹⁹ Massad, Joseph A., *The compulsion to partition, Al Jazeera English*

¹²⁰ Aruri, Naseer, *US Policy and Palestine: Oslo, the Intifada and erasure, Race & Class*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2011, pp. 3-20, pp. 5-6

¹²¹ Herzl, Theodor, *The Jewish State*, p. 45, available at, <http://www.mideastweb.org/jewishstate.pdf>, accessed 24/10/2012

¹²² For example, former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir declared in 1969 that ‘there is no such thing as a Palestinian people’. Meir, Golda, quoted in, Jamal, Amal, *The Palestinians in the Israeli Peace Discourse: A Conditional Partnership, Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Autumn 2000, pp. 36-51, p. 36

¹²³ *Israel-PLO Mutual Recognition*, 9 September 1993, available at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook9/pages/107%20israel-plo%20mutual%20recognition-%20letters%20and%20spe.aspx>, accessed 15/05/2013

Israel has maintained its disavowal of Palestinian political subjectivity through refusing to recognise it as being equal to that of Jews and its conduct during the peace process is framed in the discourse of one-state as being symptomatic of this ongoing denial.¹²⁴

The recognition granted to the PLO by Israel is recast in this discourse as stemming from tactical reassessment and opportunism. Israeli leaders are portrayed as realising that they are no longer able to ‘expel all Palestinians’ from the territory of Mandate Palestine, which has resulted in them adjusting tactics so as to cede the day-to-day administration of the Palestinian people to their formal representative, while allowing Israel to retain overarching control of the land.¹²⁵ This is what the peace process is principally about in this version of social reality: through a combination of territorial expansion and diplomacy, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are being spatially sequestered into sub-sovereign Bantustans which will be governed by the PA.¹²⁶ This is the “solution” that Israel is trying to impose upon the Palestinians, according to this perspective, and it has been able to make considerable advances in this direction owing to the ready acquiescence of the historic Palestinian leadership (a point that will be discussed in more detail at later stages of this work).¹²⁷ If Israel had

¹²⁴ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 58

¹²⁵ Massad, Joseph A., *Resisting the Nakba, The Electronic Intifada*

¹²⁶ The word “Bantustan” refers to the segregated “black homelands” that were established under the Apartheid regime in South Africa. There were ten created in all during the Apartheid period, and these comprised less than 13.7 percent of South Africa’s total land mass. As Mona Younis argues the Bantustan programme was central to ‘the apartheid strategy of “separate development”’, in that it enabled the ‘social and political exclusion of Africans’, while allowing their ‘controlled economic inclusion’. Younis, Mona H., *Liberation and Democratization: The South African and Palestinian National Movements*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London, 2000, pp.80-1. For certain scholars who see Israel in settler colonial terms it is this last point on economic inclusion that renders the Bantustan analogy misplaced in the occupied territories. Palestinians located in these territories have ‘become more and more dispensable’ to Israel economically over the Oslo period and as a result the non-contiguous enclaves in which they are positioned have become more like ‘reservations’. Wolfe, Patrick, *Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native, Journal of Genocide Research*, p. 404

¹²⁷ Makdisi, Saree, *For a Secular Democratic State, The Nation*, 3 June, 2007, available at, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/secular-democratic-state/6978>, accessed 24/02/2009; Massad, Joseph A., *Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national*

genuinely recognised ‘the Palestinian people as a nation’,¹²⁸ so these intellectuals contend, then it would not be engaged in such practices and nor would it continue to reduce the existence of Palestinians in the occupied territories ‘to penury’.¹²⁹ It is in this view battling to ‘place all those [Palestinians] it cannot expel inside an apartheid wall that it will call a Palestinian state’,¹³⁰ and these Bantustans will amount to no more than 14 per cent of the territory of Mandate Palestine.¹³¹

The recognition accorded to the PLO by Israel is also recast in this discourse as being consistent with its longstanding settler colonial practices, in that it affected the social magic of erasing the majority of Palestinians from the newly constituted symbolic order of the peace process. Accordingly, the discourse of the peace process reduced ‘the Palestinian people to one-third of their total number’, and this was because it limited the category of “the Palestinian people” to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.¹³² As these intellectuals contend, the discursive framework inaugurated through the Oslo Accords made no mention whatsoever of the Palestinian minority in Israel and the issues confronting them as Arab citizens of state that is officially defined as Jewish;¹³³ and nor did it afford much significance to the issue of Palestinian refugees and their right of return following their forced exodus from the territory that became

struggle, *Middle East Critique*, p. 28

¹²⁸ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, pp. 58-9

¹²⁹ Makdisi, Saree, For a Secular Democratic State, *The Nation*

¹³⁰ Massad, Joseph A., Reducing the Palestinians, *The Electronic Intifada*, 27 December 2003, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/printer2306.shtml>, accessed 06/11/2009

¹³¹ Abulhawa, Susan, and, Baroud, Ramzy, Palestine/Israel: A Single State, With Liberty And Justice For All, *Countercurrents*, 28 December, 2009, <http://www.countercurrents.org/baroud281209.htm>, accessed 12/04/2010

¹³² Massad, Joseph A., Resisting the Nakba, *The Electronic Intifada*

¹³³ See for example, The National Committee for the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel, *The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel* (translated by Abed Al Rahman Kelani), Nazareth, 2006; and, Sa’di, Ahmad H., Israel as ethnic democracy: what are the implications for the Palestinian minority?, *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 1, January 2000, pp. 25-38

Israel in 1948.¹³⁴ Indeed, as Ghada Karmi argues, the positioning of Palestinian refugees as a permanent status issue within the framework of the peace process effectively reduced a central component of the Palestinian national struggle to ‘a bargaining chip in the negotiations with Israel’.¹³⁵ As she continues, the discourse of the peace process effectively worked to erase ‘Palestinian history before 1967’ and make Israel seem as if it ‘had always been a natural part of the landscape’.¹³⁶ This is a central critique of the peace process within the discourse of one-state, and it is one that reproduces a relatively longstanding trope in “maximalist” assaults on “pragmatism”.¹³⁷ For these intellectuals, the discourse of the peace process has produced the ‘de-Palestinianization’ of the vast majority of the Palestinian people. They have been eliminated symbolically.¹³⁸

So, from this point of view, the Zionist movement has succeeded in colonising history as well as land, and this triumph has been achieved through the peace process.¹³⁹ If not reversed, the political effects of this discursive conquest are: the permanent second-class citizenship of Palestinian minority in Israel, who as Arab citizens of a Jewish state are confronted with a range of discriminatory measures; and the permanent dispossession and exile of Palestinian refugees (along with the Bantustanisation of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza

¹³⁴ Internationally the Palestinian refugees’ right of return is enshrined in United Nations General Assembly Resolution (UNGAR) 194, which states that: ‘refugees wishing to return to their homes and to live in peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity should be made good by the governments or authorities responsible’. See Khalidi, Rashid, Observations on the Right of Return, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 21, No.1, Winter 1992, pp. 29-40, for a nuanced engagement with the centrality of the right of return ‘to the Palestinian national narrative’.

¹³⁵ Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man: Israel’s Dilemma in Palestine*, p. 183

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5

¹³⁷ For example, in the 1970s figures such as George Habash used to contend that the “pragmatist” approach entailed accepting that ‘the end of the aggression of 1967 should come at the price of confirming the aggression of 1948’. Habash, George, quoted in, Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, p. 337

¹³⁸ Massad, Joseph A., Resisting the Nakba, *The Electronic Intifada*

¹³⁹ Eid, Haidar, The Zionist-Palestinian Conflict: An Alternative Story, *Nebula*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2008, pp. 122-139, p. 123

Strip).¹⁴⁰ In contrast to “pragmatism”, the conflict is defined in the discourse of one-state as ‘the colonisation of Palestine and the resistance to it’.¹⁴¹ However, as the historic Palestinian leadership is considered as acquiescing in Israel’s settler colonial project, it is unlikely that in its current form and constitution it will be able to resist and reverse this process of conquest. Therefore, what has occurred through the Oslo peace process more specifically in the eyes of these intellectuals is Palestinian assimilation. Israel sought to advance its settler colonial project through the tactic of assimilating the Palestinian leadership to its point of view, and through the terms of the peace process it has succeeded in doing this.¹⁴² In his early criticisms of the Oslo framework, Edward Said classified this reconstruction as the ‘internalizing of the colonizer’s perspective’.¹⁴³ This is exactly the stance that the discourse of one-state takes in relation to the discourse of “pragmatism” and those who produce it.

Consequently, in this version of the social world, the articulation of “pragmatism” in the Palestinian political field effectively equates to the promotion of Zionism. As is often the case, Joseph Massad sums up this position most cogently:

On the pragmatic side, the arguments run as follows: it is pragmatic for Palestinians to give up their right of return; it is pragmatic for Palestinians to accept to live in a Jewish supremacist state as third class citizens; it is pragmatic for Palestinians to live in Israeli-controlled and besieged bantustans rather than opt for independence; and it is pragmatic for Israel to remain a Jewish supremacist state.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ *The One State Declaration*

¹⁴¹ Massad, Joseph A., The compulsion to partition, *Al Jazeera English*

¹⁴² Eid, Haidar, The Zionist-Palestinian Conflict: An Alternative Story, *Nebula*, p. 135

¹⁴³ Said, Edward W., *The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with David Barsamian*, AK Press, Edinburgh, 1994, p. 151

¹⁴⁴ Massad, Joseph A., On Zionism and Jewish Supremacy, *New Politics*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Winter 2002, pp. 89-101, p. 89

The “pragmatist” standpoint is defined as a Zionist-Israeli position in the discourse of one-state and as will be shown in the next chapter this classification is part of a struggle for legitimate domination of the Palestinian political field. The relation between these two points is a relation of power, and proponents of a one-state solution are seeking to transform social reality. In their version of the social world it is telling that the category of struggle invoked is ‘non-pragmatist anti-colonial strategy’.¹⁴⁵ What this strategy actually entails from their point of view, and what its political implications are, will be the object of later analysis. For now it is important to specify that the relation between the “pragmatist” standpoint and the one-state perspective is one of competing definitions of the conflict and the Palestinian struggle.

Of course, knowledge of the social world has implications for permissible action. It is what categories of knowledge *do* that is crucial from a performative perspective. That Palestinians should engage in non-pragmatist anti-colonial struggle is, to a significant extent, a logical extension of the discursive formulation apparent in the discourse of one-state. As Nadim Rouhana states: ‘Whether we conceptualize the conflict between Zionism and the Palestinians as a case of settler colonialism or a clash between two national movements has direct implications for the type of solution one envisions as being possible’.¹⁴⁶ Because Zionism is defined as a settler colonial movement from this standpoint, it is conceived as being structurally incapable of diplomatic compromise and conceding “native” political rights and subjectivity. Thus, the only option available to Palestinians in this representation of social reality is to resist the

¹⁴⁵ Massad, Joseph A., The compulsion to partition, *Al Jazeera English*

¹⁴⁶ Rouhana, Nadim N., The Colonial Condition: Is Partition Possible in Palestine?, *Jadal*, p. 1

settler colonial project and reverse it. Again, it is worthwhile quoting Joseph Massad on this point:

all European colonial settler projects in Asia and Africa have been seen – willingly or reluctantly – by most observers in the past half century, as reversible. Indeed their reversibility *is the only successful strategy to end the violence that their projects constantly engender*, especially as the colonial settler project is predicated from its inception to its very end on an unending process of violence without which it would cease to exist [emphasis added].¹⁴⁷

Thus, while advocates of a one-state solution are often criticised for being utopian (and there are certainly elements within their discursive practice that point towards a utopian politics, as will be shown), their own reconceptualisation of the conflict in fact suggests that it is they who are being practical. In the words of one of its producers, their knowledge of the social world is a matter of ‘realpolitik’.¹⁴⁸ As Israel’s structural logic of ‘colonial settlement and ethnic cleansing ... precludes territorial compromise’, the “pragmatist” position is ‘an exercise in futility’.¹⁴⁹ What is therefore required from the one-state position is confrontation, and not accommodation; resistance, and not negotiations. Decolonization through a one-state solution needs to be ‘forcefully imposed upon the attention of the Jewish community’ in Mandate Palestine.¹⁵⁰ This statement is the logical consequence of the discourse of one-state’s construction of the conflict and the Palestinian struggle, and it is clearly opposed to the “pragmatist” framework. From this point of view, force is usually conceptualised as a ‘battle of ideas’.¹⁵¹ This issue, however, will be discussed in detail in a later chapter.

¹⁴⁷ Massad, Joseph A., The compulsion to partition, *Al Jazeera English*

¹⁴⁸ Personal interview with Ghada Karmi, London, 15 February, 2010

¹⁴⁹ Aruri, Naseer, US Policy and Palestine: Oslo, the Intifada and erasure, *Race & Class*, p. 11

¹⁵⁰ Ghanem, As’ad, One problem, one solution, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Issue No. 387, 23-29 July, 1998, http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1998/1948/387_ghnm.htm, accessed 27/01/2009

¹⁵¹ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to end the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*, p. 191

The Content of Counter-Knowledge

‘The question of legitimacy arises’, Bourdieu contends, ‘from the very possibility of this questioning, from [a] break with the doxa that takes the ordinary order for granted’.¹⁵² Many of the intellectuals who call for a single state in Mandate Palestine previously supported the two-state approach, albeit ambivalently. In their prior opinion, ‘such a solution – while it did not mean justice for Palestinians – would nevertheless be a path to peace’.¹⁵³ This view has now changed and the crisis of legitimacy that has been increasingly affecting the two-state position since the start of the second Palestinian *intifada* in 2000 has contributed to this shift in perspective. Without this crisis it seems unlikely that these intellectuals would have reoriented their conceptualisation of the conflict and the Palestinian struggle. In their version of social reality, the ‘one big idea that was supposed to save us – the Palestinian state – lies in tatters’.¹⁵⁴ This is why they insist on the need for ‘a new vision, a new voice, [and] a new truth’ in the Palestinian arena.¹⁵⁵ They are clearly trying to provide this in the form of the discourse of one-state.

While the crisis of the two-state framework has enabled such reconceptualisations to take place, it does not explain the precise form of the counter-knowledge constructed by these intellectuals. It is quite commonplace at present to read warnings that a two-state solution to the conflict is fast becoming unfeasible and that this approach is in crisis. Yet most organisations and individuals making these assertions do not advocate a one-state solution. In the

¹⁵² Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 242

¹⁵³ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to end the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*, p. 11

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 183

¹⁵⁵ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 28

main such warnings are accompanied by calls for a more effective implementation of the two-state paradigm rather than its complete overthrow.¹⁵⁶ Therefore there is a need to explain the content of the discourse of one-state. Why is its position-taking what it is? This question moreover is addressed to a specific problem in constructivist research, which has often proved inadequate in determining the content of new stances that are adopted in the midst of political crisis.¹⁵⁷ From a Bourdieusian perspective it is argued here that the stance adopted by these intellectuals in terms of its content is principally explained by their relation to Israel's actions during the course of the peace process and their structural position in the field. An additional argument of this section is that reflexivity and strategic calculation shape their position-taking.

The content of the discourse of one-state is formed in relation to the “pragmatist” perspective in that it is opposed to this stance and therefore acquires some of its social distinctiveness by being what it is not. Further, the adoption of a “maximalist” perspective by these intellectuals – that is, one that is in some fashion premised on the liberation of Mandate Palestine in its entirety – is explained by Israel's actions over the last two decades. These have included the continued colonization and settlement of Palestinian land, as detailed previously, and a refusal to cede equal political rights and subjectivity to Palestinians.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ International Crisis Group, *The Emperor Has No Clothes: Palestinians and the End of the Peace Process*, *Middle East Report*, pp. 29-37

¹⁵⁷ Finnemore, Martha, and Sikkink, Kathryn, *Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics*, *Annual Review of Political Science*, p. 406

¹⁵⁸ For example, the 1997 *Beilan-Eitan Agreement: National Agreement Regarding the Negotiations on the Permanent Settlement with the Palestinians* articulates the official Israeli position on what a future peace agreement with the Palestinians will entail. This document states that there ‘will be no return to the 1967 borders’ and that the ‘majority of settlers will live on their settlement under Israeli sovereignty’. It asserts that the ‘Jordan Valley’ in the West Bank ‘will be a special security zone and Israeli army forces will be posted along the Jordan’. ‘Jerusalem ... will be a single unified city within sovereign Israel’ and the ‘right of the State of Israel to prevent the entry of Palestinian refugees into its sovereign territory will be recognized’. Further, it states that any ‘Palestinian entity’ established through negotiations ‘will be demilitarized and it will have no army’ and that, within these ‘limits’, it may be ‘regarded as an

Moreover, official Israeli discourse has remained firm in its denial of Palestinian perspectives and historical narratives, to the extent that the issue of Palestinian refugees is reduced to a depoliticised ‘humanitarian problem’ in the visions of peace promulgated from this standpoint, and the history and political concerns of the Palestinian minority in Israel remain absent altogether.¹⁵⁹ So the main point here is that the words used in the discourse of one-state have not been plucked out of thin air; they have been formed in relation to the material and discursive practices of Israel during the peace process and in this sense they are grounded in reality. They are not a result of an implacable hostility to Zionism and Israel, despite what some Orientalist-inspired scholars on this topic might think.¹⁶⁰

More specifically, the actions of Israel throughout this period have altered the perceptions of these intellectuals because they have brought into question the notion of political and territorial compromise. It is worthwhile remembering that for Palestinians generally the adoption of the two-state strategy was – as the language of this study suggests – a pragmatic decision. To paraphrase Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, it was made with the head and not with the heart. It

enlarged autonomy’ or ‘as a state’. Beilen, Yossi, and, Eitan, Michael, *Beilen-Eitan Agreement: National Agreement Regarding the Negotiations on the Permanent Settlement with the Palestinians*, 26 January 1997, http://www.knesset.gov.il/process/docs/bei-eit_eng.htm, accessed 30/10/2012. Current Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, effectively reiterated this vision word for word in his so-called “Bar Ilan Speech” made in June 2009. This speech is considered significant in that it called for ‘a real peace agreement’ in which a ‘demilitarized Palestinian state’ would coexist ‘side by side with the Jewish state’. Yet Netanyahu’s vision of a two-state solution contained all the limitations on Palestinian statehood that were envisioned in the *Beilen-Eitan Agreement* document, along with a more explicit assertion that Palestinians offer a ‘public, binding and sincere ... recognition of Israel as the national homeland of the Jewish people’. Such a public and official recognition by Palestinians would entail a negation of their own national narrative, and especially the right of return. So it would seem that the official Israeli position and representation of the conflict continues to deny Palestinian rights and history. Netanyahu, Benjamin, Full text of Netanyahu’s foreign policy speech at Bar Ilan, *Haaretz*. For more details see: International Crisis Group, Tipping Point? Palestinians and the Search for a New Strategy, *Middle East Report*, p. 7; Le More, Anne, Killing with kindness: funding the demise of a Palestinian state, *International Affairs*, 987-91; Jamal, Amal, The Palestinians in the Israeli Peace Discourse: A Conditional Partnership, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 36-51

¹⁵⁹ See, for example, Netanyahu, Benjamin, Full text of Netanyahu’s foreign policy speech at Bar Ilan, *Haaretz*

¹⁶⁰ Karsh, Efraim, A Trojan Horse? A Response to “The Case for Binationalism”, *Boston Review*; Morris, Benny, *One-State, Two-State: Resolving the Israel/Palestine Conflict*, pp. 1-2

was not a move that accorded moral legitimacy to the State of Israel, but rather was one that recognised its *fait accompli*. This does not mean of course that the goal of an independent state was insignificant to Palestinians. Yet the ‘national cause’ of statehood was nevertheless premised on the major historical sacrifice of conceding the vast majority of a homeland that they consider rightfully theirs.¹⁶¹ Thus, for this historic compromise to be met with further territorial expropriation and a continuing denial of history is to render it somewhat pointless.

This is certainly the logic deployed by these intellectuals in response to Israel’s actions. They consider the major Palestinian offer of compromise as having been rejected by Israel and this has made them extremely bitter. As Susan Abulhawa and Ramzy Baroud state:

In the 1990s, we [Palestinians] supported the Oslo Accords two-state solution even though it would have returned to us only 22% of our historic homeland. But Israel repeatedly squandered our generosity, confiscating more Palestinian land to increase Jewish-only colonies and Jewish-only roads. What remains to us now is less than 14% of Historic Palestine, all of it as isolated Bantustans, shrinking ghettos, walls, fences, checkpoints with surly soldiers, and the perpetual encroachment of expanding illegal Israeli colonies.¹⁶²

As Ramzy Baroud states elsewhere, the Palestinians’ diplomatic strategy has been ‘ridiculed and rejected’ by Israel.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Agha, Hussein, and Malley, Robert, Obama and the Middle East, *New York Review of Books*, June 11, 2009, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2009/jun/11/obama-and-the-middle-east/?pagination=false>, accessed 06/11/2012. See also: Malley, Robert, and, Agha, Hussein, The Palestinian-Israeli Camp David Negotiations and Beyond, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1, Autumn 2001, pp. 62-85, p. 70; and, Khalidi, Rashid, Observations on the Right of Return, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 29-40

¹⁶² Abulhawa, Susan, and, Baroud, Ramzy, Palestine/Israel: A Single State, With Liberty And Justice For All, *Countercurrents*

¹⁶³ Baroud, Ramzy, One State: Coexistence, Not Apartheid, *The One Democratic State Group*, 27 May, 2008, http://www.odsg.org/co/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=615:one-state-coexistence-not-apartheid&catid=27:one-state&Itemid=41, accessed 06/02/2010

This perception, which as noted is not groundless, has contributed to the specific paradigm shift from “pragmatism” to “maximalism” made by most of these intellectuals. As advocates of a one-state solution contend, ‘[t]he benefits of 18 years of negotiations with Israel has been not only more Jewish colonial settlement and more massacres and more confiscation of land, but also the destruction of the Palestinian national movement’. As such, a ‘whole new generation of Palestinian and Arab intellectuals ... now understand that negotiations with Israel have only served to intensify the occupation and will only serve to do so in the future’.¹⁶⁴ For these critics, Israel’s actions have made the ‘futility’ of the diplomatic process ‘painfully apparent’.¹⁶⁵ They have therefore made these intellectuals think differently in that they are perceived as showing that the Palestinians’ historic political and territorial compromise is ‘not enough for Israel’;¹⁶⁶ and if this major historical compromise is not enough then it becomes permissible to think in terms of “maximalism” once more.¹⁶⁷ It becomes permissible to think that Palestinian rights and aspirations ‘*can only* be realised through Israeli defeat [emphasis added]’.¹⁶⁸

Nevertheless, a focus on Israel’s actions during the peace process leaves a lot of aspects within the discourse of one-state unanswered. Israel’s conduct during this period may account for why these intellectuals have abandoned their support for “pragmatism” and have adopted a “maximalist” stance. Yet in itself it does

¹⁶⁴ Massad, Joseph A., Israel’s right to defend itself, *The Electronic Intifada*, 20 January, 2009, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/printer10221.shtml>, accessed 12/02/2009

¹⁶⁵ Abulhawa, Susan, and Baroud, Ramzy, Palestine/Israel: A Single State, With Liberty And Justice For All, *Countercurrents*

¹⁶⁶ Makdasi, Saree, The Palestinian people betrayed, *Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/feb/13/opinion/la-oe-makdasi-israelis-palestinians-20110127>, accessed 06/09/2012

¹⁶⁷ Aruri, Naseer A., US Policy and a Single State in Palestine/Israel, *The Arab World Geographer*, p. 133

¹⁶⁸ Bishara, Azmi, Scandal in the raw, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Issue No. 968, 15-21 October, 2009, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/print/2009/968/op.5.htm>, accessed 25/02/2010

not illustrate why these individuals have viewed it through the framework of settler colonialism by these individuals, nor does it explain the type of one-state solution that they envision. Here, it is argued, the Bourdieusian concepts of *habitus* and reflexivity are pertinent.

To be sure there are many different interpretations of Israel's actions during the course of the peace process. Menachem Klein, to give one example, deploys a Realist framework to comprehend Israel's conduct during this period. He argues that Israel is 'using the tool of territorial expansion to impose its border on the future Palestinian state' and that this is not driven by an eliminatory logic but by balance of power politics.¹⁶⁹ Many would agree with this assessment and many would offer alternative explanations.¹⁷⁰ These, however, cannot be dealt with here.

For the Palestinian intellectuals who are constructing the discourse of one-state, though, it is specifically settler colonialism that has determined Israel's actions. Where does this view come from? To a large extent, it comes from the particularity of the Palestinian national movement and the Palestinian political field. There is, as mentioned previously, a historicity of convention within these arenas that frames Zionism and Israel as settler colonial formations. While such views were effectively marginalised in the late 1980s, and certainly in the early 1990s, they are an historically pertinent element within the fractal system that is Palestinian social space.

After the *nakba*, for instance, when the national movement was primarily articulated through the frames of Arab nationalism,¹⁷¹ Palestinian political

¹⁶⁹ Klein, Menachem, One State in the Holy Land: A Dream of a Nightmare?, *The International Spectator*, p. 5

¹⁷⁰ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, p. 206. See also Jamal, Amal, The Palestinians in the Israeli Peace Discourse: A Conditional Partnership, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 48-9.

¹⁷¹ For more detail see Baumgarten, Helga, The Three Faces/Phases of Palestinian Nationalism, 1948-2005, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4, Summer 2005, pp. 25-48, pp. 27-31

thought was heavily imbued with constructions of Zionism and Israel as eliminatory and territorially expansionist forces that had to be challenged outright. Influential Arab thinkers at this time, such as Constantine Zurayk, defined the aims of Zionism as being to ‘annihilate the people [of Palestine] and replace them by another’.¹⁷² Such views were incorporated into the political stance of the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM) – the main Palestinian political organisation during this period – with its members declaring that Zionism possessed ‘an aggressive and expansionist nature’,¹⁷³ and that Israel sought ‘the usurpation of the Arab land, and the expulsion of the Arab people’.¹⁷⁴ For intellectuals like Zurayk, and organisations like the ANM, these qualities and ambitions were deemed essential to Zionism and the Israeli state and therefore the presence of these social formations in Palestine had to be entirely eradicated. From this perspective, Israel had to be confronted with a counterforce of ‘vengeance’,¹⁷⁵ and this typically meant, as Walid Kazziha explains, that ‘there was no other choice for the Arabs except to meet the Zionist challenge on the same terms laid down by the Jews: expulsion or extermination’.¹⁷⁶

‘[V]endetta’ nationalism, as it was later called by Fateh representatives, was dropped by the Palestinian national movement as its main platform in the late 1960s and early 1970s and was replaced by what was termed a ‘humanitarian’, ‘progressive’, and ‘democratic’ approach to liberation.¹⁷⁷ With the establishment

¹⁷² Zurayk, Constantine (1948), quoted in, Kazziha, Walid, W., *Revolutionary Transformations in the Arab World: Habash and his Comrades from Nationalism to Marxism*, Charles Knight & Company Ltd., London and Tonbridge, 1975, p. 4

¹⁷³ Anonymous ANM text (1957), quoted in, *Ibid.*, p. 50

¹⁷⁴ Darwaza, Hakam (1958), quoted in, *Ibid.*, p. 51

¹⁷⁵ Baumgarten, Helga, The Three Faces/Phases of Palestinian Nationalism, 1948-2005, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4, Summer 2005, pp. 25-48, p. 28

¹⁷⁶ Kazziha, Walid, W., *Revolutionary Transformations in the Arab World: Habash and his Comrades from Nationalism to Marxism*, pp. 53-4

¹⁷⁷ Rasheed, Mohammad, *towards a democratic state in Palestine: the Palestinian revolution and the Jews vis-à-vis the democratic, non-sectarian society of the future*, pp. 7-8

of the Palestinian political field came a reconstruction of Palestinian political discourse. The creation of a democratic state in all of Mandate Palestine, in which ‘Arabs and (Israeli) Jews [would] live without any discrimination whatsoever’, was adopted as the strategic objective of the PLO.¹⁷⁸ While this stance was not without its contradictions,¹⁷⁹ the main Palestinian factions at this time did seek to distance themselves and the nascent political field from the vengeful conceptions of liberation produced by groups such as the ANM (and indeed the PLO before its takeover by Palestinian guerrillas).¹⁸⁰ These same factions, however, persisted with the representation of Zionism and Israel as settler colonial formations.¹⁸¹

For example, Nayef Hawatemah, leader of the DFLP, described Israel during this period as ‘an essentially Zionist state ... with chauvinist and expansionist ambitions ... [and] organic links to colonialism’.¹⁸² ‘That Israel constitutes a colonialist expansionist presence at the expense of Arab land and its owners is not a matter for discussion’, states an important PFLP publication from 1969,

¹⁷⁸ Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), *A Democratic Solution to the Palestine Question*, in Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, Palestine Books, No. 27, PLO Research Center, Beirut-Lebanon, December 1969, p. 173

¹⁷⁹ Gresh, Alain, *The PLO, The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State*, pp. 33-52; Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, p. 237

¹⁸⁰ For example, Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), *A Democratic Solution to the Palestine Question*, in Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, pp. 173-4; Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, *The Political, Organizational and Military Report for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine*, in Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, pp. 181-225; Rasheed, Mohammad, *towards a democratic state in Palestine: the Palestinian revolution and the Jews vis-à-vis the democratic, non-sectarian society of the future*, p. 8. Also see: Gresh, Alain, *The PLO, The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State*, pp. 33-52

¹⁸¹ It is important to stress, however, that, in contrast to the ANM, factions within the Palestinian political field did draw a careful distinction ‘between Judaism and Zionism’ and emphasised that the ‘Palestinian liberation movement [was] not racist or hostile to the Jews’ or aimed ‘at the Jewish people’. Arafat, Yasir, *Speech at the UN*, 13 November, 1974, in Lukacs, Yehuda (ed.), *Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 1984, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 174; Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, *The Political, Organizational and Military Report for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine*, in Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, p. 224

¹⁸² Hawatemah, Nayef, *A Democratic Solution for the Palestine Problem*, in Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, p. 177

perhaps showing how sedimented such views were in the Palestinian arena at this stage.¹⁸³ The Palestinian National Charter classified the Zionist movement as being ‘racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist and colonial in its aims’.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore, in his address to the UN General Assembly in 1974, PLO chairman Yasir Arafat categorised Zionism and Israel in terms of ‘settler colonialism and racial discrimination’.¹⁸⁵ Thus, representational practices of this sort were highly prominent.

Of course, the trajectory of the Palestinian political field began to change in the early 1970s, with “pragmatism” gradually emerging as the dominant perspective from this time onwards. With its emphasis on political and territorial compromise, the “pragmatist” standpoint clearly envisions the possibility of a negotiated two-state solution to the conflict. Therefore, it discounts many of the claims advanced by “maximalist” standpoints regarding the nature of Zionism and the Israeli state. In contrast to “maximalist” perspectives, “pragmatism” does not see Israel as *essentially* aggressive, expansionist, and engaged in ‘a life-or-death struggle’.¹⁸⁶ Although the “maximalist” position eventually lost the battle with “pragmatism” and so was subordinated in the Palestinian political field, it did not disappear entirely. Moreover, much of the discursive contest waged against “pragmatism” by “maximalist” figures centred on its misunderstanding of the fundamental conflict with Zionism. So, for example, the RF was set up in 1974 not only to counter what it saw as deviationist trends in the political field, but also to counter the specific view that Zionism would

¹⁸³ Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, *A Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine*, Information Department, Amman, 1969, p. 78

¹⁸⁴ PLO, *The Palestinian National Charter*, in, Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, p. 140

¹⁸⁵ Arafat, Yasir, *Speech at the UN*, 13 November, 1974, in, Lukacs, Yehuda (ed.), *Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, p. 170

¹⁸⁶ Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, *A Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine*, pp. 17-18

‘evacuate ... land without a political [and] military struggle that compels it to do so’.¹⁸⁷ From this perspective force was necessary and diplomatic exchange was futile.

The language used in the discourse of one-state therefore has strong antecedents in the historical structure of Palestinian social space. More specifically, the intellectuals who construct this discourse are embedded in these antecedents, albeit ambivalently and in complex ways. While many of those who advocate a one-state solution at one stage reckoned that Palestinians ‘needed to make a historical compromise’,¹⁸⁸ they accompanied such sentiments with statements explaining their ‘bitterness resulting from the loss of the PLO’s old goal, that is the establishment of secular democracy in Palestine’.¹⁸⁹ At times a critical engagement with the “maximalist” past is undertaken in the discourse of one-state (which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter), but this element of the Palestinian struggle is nevertheless valorised from this perspective and taken as the original meaning of Palestine – its ‘venerable tradition’,¹⁹⁰ ‘nodal point’,¹⁹¹ and ‘genuine’ objective.¹⁹² The ‘revolutionary intelligentsia’¹⁹³ and ‘revolutionary principles’¹⁹⁴ of the past are crucial themes in this discourse, and contribute to the (re)articulation of these *ideas* in the present discursive formation. This necessarily includes the conception of Israel as a settler colonial

¹⁸⁷ Habash, George, quoted in, Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State*, pp. 336-7

¹⁸⁸ Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho 1993-1995*, Vintage, London, 1995, p. 152

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 186-7

¹⁹⁰ Tutunji, Jenab, and, Khaldi, Kamal, A binational state in Palestine: the rational choice for Palestinians and the moral choice for Israelis, *International Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 1, 1997, pp. 31-58, p. 38

¹⁹¹ Khalidi, Ahmad Samih, ‘Thanks, but no thanks’, *The Guardian*, Thursday December 13 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/dec/13/usa.israel/print>, accessed 23/11/2008

¹⁹² Bishara, Azmi, The Pitfalls of a US-Israeli Vision of a Palestinian State, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 59

¹⁹³ Massad, Joseph A., Reducing the Palestinians, *The Electronic Intifada*

¹⁹⁴ Eid, Haidar, Gaza 2009: De-Osloizing the Palestinian Mind, *Palestine Think Tank*, March 14, 2009, <http://palestinethinktank.com/2009/03/14/haidar-eid-gaza-2009-de-osloizing-the-palestinian-mind/feed>, accessed 29/05/2009

construct as the revolutionary ideas of Palestinian history only acquire ‘meaning relationally’,¹⁹⁵ with the presence of the Zionist “other” and the thought of a social universe in which ‘there will be no “native” and “settler”’.¹⁹⁶ As Edward Said explains,

Palestinians were not only the opponents and victims of Zionism, they also represented an alternative: This was what they embodied in fighting for the idea of Palestine, a non-exclusivist, secular, democratic, tolerant, and generally progressive ideology, *not about colonizing and dispossessing people but about liberating them* [emphasis added].¹⁹⁷

The positioning of these intellectuals within this historical trajectory disposes them toward a vision of Zionism and Israel as settler colonial configurations. Furthermore, their *habitus* as Palestinians, which incorporates a particular meaning of Palestine as *not* (Zionist) settler colonialism, points toward an additional explanation for the content of their counter-knowledge. Their knowledge is embedded in particular texts and understandings of the Palestinian struggle. Before elaborating on this point, however, it is important to mention that their critique of settler colonialism also stems from their embodied history as intellectuals.

On display in the discourse of one-state is a rich and eclectic intellectual heritage, which includes liberal ideas as well as more critical figures such as Amilcar Cabral, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, George Lukacs, Karl Marx, and others.¹⁹⁸ Overall, however, it is possible to discern a postcolonial standpoint as the key intellectual lense through

¹⁹⁵ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 177

¹⁹⁶ Makdisi, Saree, For a Secular Democratic State, *The Nation*

¹⁹⁷ Said, Edward W., *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination 1969-1994*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1994, p. xix (Introduction)

¹⁹⁸ See, for instance, Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia: A Fanonian Reading of the Intellectual Landscape in Post-Oslo Palestine, *Nebula*, Vol. 4, No. 2, June 2007, pp. 96-106

which this discourse is produced. This is perhaps unsurprising given that Edward Said is widely considered a principal founder of the postcolonial tradition, and was not only the most prominent intellectual to speak out in favour of a one-state solution, but was and remains a major influence on those intellectuals around him who are advocating this approach. Postcolonialism itself remains irreducible to a single point and is informed by an eclectic range of epistemological perspectives. It is on the grounds of this intellectual diversity (or incoherency) that it is often criticised.¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless, a central claim of postcolonial studies is that colonial relations persist into the present.²⁰⁰ Therefore, embedded in this standpoint, it seems that many of those who are advocating a one-state approach are intellectually inclined to see colonialism in Palestine-Israel, which is not the same as saying that this view has no grounding in the actual practices of Zionism and the Israeli state, but only that the world can be expressed in different ways and that there appears to be no escape from the subjective gaze. The intellectual position of those who call for a one-state solution, and the dispositions it generates, additionally account for the content of their discourse.

Returning to the issue of the specific meaning of Palestine, it is important to acknowledge that the solution envisioned in the discourse of one-state is of a certain type. Although the conditions of possibility for combating Israel in this discourse permit a “maximalist” confrontation and an existential conflict, these possibilities are not necessarily clear cut in terms of delineating an imagined future. It was shown that groups such as the ANM, which subscribed to similar

¹⁹⁹ Slater, David, Post-colonial questions for global times, *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter 1998, pp. 647-678, p. 655

²⁰⁰ Gregory, Derek, Gregory, Derek, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2004, pp. 7-9

views on the necessity of confronting Zionism and Israel outright, primarily understood the liberation of Palestine through the notion of vengeance. Romantic and fascistic themes of ‘blood, iron, and fire’ were also prominent features in its stance.²⁰¹ Hamas’ vision of liberation, as described in its founding charter, visualises the establishment of a single state in Mandate Palestine ‘[u]nder the shadow of Islam’ in which ‘members of the three religions: Islam, Christianity and Judaism [would] coexist in safety and security’.²⁰² For proponents of a one-state solution, in contrast, the struggle for ‘liberation’ is premised on ‘universal principles of peace, equality, justice and human rights’.²⁰³ In their view, a one-state solution is ‘a vision of a country founded on democratic, inclusive and egalitarian principles’. ‘The constitution and actual practices of such a state would address the rights and needs of all its citizens’;²⁰⁴ and providing that they ‘shed their colonial character and privileges’, Israeli Jews will be ‘equal citizens and full partners in building and developing a new shared society, free from all colonial subjugation and discrimination’.²⁰⁵ Thus, the discourse of one-state is a rather distinct “maximalist” framework.

This distinction stems in part from different understandings of what Palestine means. As suggested already, the language used in the discourse of one-state is

²⁰¹ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, p. 73

²⁰² Articles 6, 7, 9, and 31, *The Charter of Allah: The Platform of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)*, Hamas Charter, 1988, <http://www.thejerusalemfund.org/www.thejerusalemfund.org/carryover/documents/charter.html>, accessed 25/02/2009

²⁰³ The Movement for One Democratic State in Palestine, *Declaration of the Movement for One Democratic State in Palestine*, August 8, 2010, <http://www.onedemocraticstate.org/pdf/HCDeclaration.pdf>, accessed 17/07/2011

²⁰⁴ Abunimah, Ali, Akash, Munir, Aruri, Naseer, Bisharat, George, Faris, Hani A., Ghanem, As’ad, Karmi, Ghada, Kovel, Joel, Lynk, Michael, Mezvinsky, Norton, Piterberg, Gabriel, Abu-Sitta, Salman, Akram, Susan, Ben-Dor, Oren, Da’na, Seif, Farsakh, Leila, Herzallah, Monadel, Kazimi, Mujid, Lenow, Howard, Makdisi, Saree, Pappé, Ilan, Saliba, Najib, *The Boston Declaration on the One State*, 28-29 March, 2009, <http://onestateforpalestineisrael.com/statements/BostonDeclarationEnglishText.pdf>, accessed 25/02/2010. This will be referenced as the *Boston Declaration on the One State* from now on.

²⁰⁵ Barghouti, Omar, Re-Imagining Palestine: Self-determination, Ethical De-colonization, and Equality, July 29, 2009, *The One Democratic State Group*

very much embedded in particular historical texts and conceptions of the Palestinian struggle. Edward Said is not alone in thinking about Palestine as an inclusive ideology. In his 1974 speech to the UN General Assembly, Yasir Arafat declared that ‘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 in peace and without discrimination [emphasis added]’.²⁰⁶ Such prior utterances are cited in the discourse of one-state and shape its viewpoint. Indeed, proponents of this view state that their calls for a one-state solution derive ‘directly from *the* traditional conception of Palestinian self-determination [emphasis added]’.²⁰⁷ This tradition definitely refers to the PLO’s democratic state idea from the late 1960s and early 1970s and even more broadly Palestine is invested from this perspective with ‘a kind of universality’; its meaning is not limited to a singular point; rather it ‘wriggles free of one confining label or another’ and encompasses the ‘intersection of many communities and cultures’. ‘Palestinians represent the plural’ and this signification stretches back centuries and even millennia according to this standpoint.²⁰⁸ With so much staked on *this* identification of Palestine and the Palestinian struggle in the discourse of one-state, it becomes unintelligible for its proponents to consider liberation as the enactment of revenge or the establishment of an ethnic state. What Palestine means in their view, and their positioning within certain historical definitions, shapes the precise language used

²⁰⁶ Arafat, Yasir, *Speech at the UN*, 13 November, 1974, in, Lukacs, Yehuda (ed.), *Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, p. 180

²⁰⁷ Abunimah, Ali, Reclaiming Self-Determination, Al-Shabaka Policy Brief, May 2010, *Al-Shabaka: the Palestinian Policy Network*, <http://al-shabaka.org/sites/default/files/policybrief/en/reclaiming-self-determination/reclaiming-self-determination.pdf>, accessed 05/08/2010, p. 5

²⁰⁸ Said, Edward W., *The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with David Barsamian*, pp. 26-61

in the formation of their counter-knowledge. It orients them towards certain trajectories and visions of the future.

The position of these intellectuals in the *Palestinian* political field is not the only factor structuring the specific content of their position-taking. In Bourdieusian thought the political field is often depicted as a meta-field in which different sub-fields are embedded.²⁰⁹ At the same time as being a part of the meta-field of Palestinian politics, these intellectuals are positioned within a cultural field and this once again has consequences for the type of one-state solution that they envision.

A postcolonial perspective is a strong feature of the intellectual *habitus* of those cultural elites who are advocating a single state in Palestine-Israel. This embodied history generates a more precise interest in what Saree Makdisi calls the ‘anti-colonial humanism of liberation’.²¹⁰ Edward Said is especially important in this respect, not only because he wrote extensively on the issue of anti-colonial liberation in his contributions to the field of postcolonial studies, but because these works and their intellectual genealogy structured his stance on Palestine.²¹¹ This genealogy includes, most crucially, Frantz Fanon, whose concept of liberation, or rather certain aspects of it, is heavily incorporated into Said’s own position on this topic. Fanon’s notion of liberation found its fullest expression in his last book, *The Wretched of the Earth*,²¹² which as Said himself states is ‘a hybrid work – part essay, part imaginative story, part philosophical analysis, part psychological case history, part nationalist allegory, part visionary

²⁰⁹ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Pointers on Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics*, in, Wacquant, Loïc J. D. (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics: The Mystery of the Ministry*, pp. 16-17

²¹⁰ Makdisi, Saree, Said, Palestine, and the Humanism of Liberation, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 31, No. 2, Winter 2005, pp. 443-461, p. 461

²¹¹ See, for example, Said, Edward W., *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage Books, London, 1994, pp. 316-40

²¹² Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth* (translated by Constance Farrington), Penguin Books, London, 1990 (1963)

transcendence of history'.²¹³ What Said focuses upon in particular, however, is an element of Fanon's dialecticism.

Liberation for Fanon meant transcending colonialism and what he saw as the Manichean logic of settler and native²¹⁴ and bringing humanity 'up to a different level [emphasis added]'.²¹⁵ Specifically, the goal of liberation was 'humanism',²¹⁶ and this was to be attained not through imitating Europe, nor through an interstitial synthesis of binary logics, but through a process of radical transformation in which *new* human beings are created – or 'set afoot' in Fanon's terms.²¹⁷ The *newness* of this humanity emerged in its *truly* universal consciousness and outlook, which would enable universalism, a condition constituted and reproduced according to Fanon through the recognition and acceptance of 'the reciprocal relativism of different cultures, once the colonial state is irreversibly excluded'.²¹⁸ This move towards humanism was essential for liberation, Fanon contended, as otherwise the process of decolonization would remain determined by the Manichean logic of colonialism and so would be driven by '[r]acialism and hatred and resentment'. The hierarchal systems of violence and separation would remain 'intact during the period of decolonization', only now they would 'wear a black face, or an Arab one'.²¹⁹

Fanon went to great lengths to specify the actual moves required in order to realise this humanistic point, frankly acknowledging that such a process was extremely difficult with success being far from assured. For Said, though, it is mainly Fanon's notion of liberation as humanism *in the abstract* that has been

²¹³ Said, Edward W., *Culture and Imperialism*, p. 326

²¹⁴ Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 29-34

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 254

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 165

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 254-5

²¹⁸ Fanon, Frantz, *Toward the African Revolution*, Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperation, London, 1980 (1967), p. 44

²¹⁹ Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 111-16

absorbed into his intellectual and political stance.²²⁰ In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said speaks in detail about this aspect of Fanon's concept of liberation, understanding his intent as being to 'bind the European as well as the native together in a new non-adversarial community of awareness and anti-imperialism'. To transcend history in Said's Fanonist reading of liberation is to set in motion 'a new and inclusive conception of history', which is to struggle for a new political subject.²²¹ It is precisely this disposition, forged in part in the cultural setting of postcolonial studies, which has been more concertedly transposed by Said to the political context of Palestine since the start of the peace process. Writing in this specific and more unstable political context, when he was transitioning from an orientation towards "pragmatism" to an orientation towards liberation, it is telling that Said declared that the 'time for a new politics – indeed for a new human being – has come'.²²² This outlook was later articulated more forcefully as the struggle for 'a common humanity asserted in a binational state'.²²³

Liberation as humanism – or, more accurately, as a universality of difference – is not limited to Said in the construction of the counter-knowledge of a one-state solution. The common humanity sought by Said is inclusive of particularity, as the last quotation makes clear, and as other proponents of a single state contend this is the key 'lesson' that Said learnt from Fanon.²²⁴ Owing to the profound influence Said has on other intellectuals producing the discourse of one-state it is fair to say that this is a lesson that they learnt too – even if only indirectly. Moreover, many of these intellectuals are themselves positioned in the cultural

²²⁰ This author would like to thank Bashir Abu-Manneh for bringing his attention to this point.

²²¹ Said, Edward W., *Culture and Imperialism*, pp. 323-31

²²² Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 68

²²³ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 51

²²⁴ Makdisi, Saree, Said, Palestine, and the Humanism of Liberation, *Critical Inquiry*, p. 451

field of postcolonial studies and have an intimate relationship with Fanon's work, as shown by the degree to which he is cited and deployed in the formation of their counter-discourse.²²⁵

For example, the 'humanist alternative' is how Saree Makdisi defines a one-state solution, following Said, following Fanon; and this entails the negation of 'the traumatic encounter between colonizer and colonized, occupier and occupied, self and other' through the 'affirmation of unity rather than division, sharing rather than denial'.²²⁶ Difference will persist once the 'exclusive and exclusionary state' is transcended in Palestine-Israel, according to the aims of this vision, but through 'cooperation' not contradiction,²²⁷ 'mutuality'²²⁸ not 'narrow nationalism'²²⁹, and through a 'pluralistic existence'²³⁰ and a common life 'together'.²³¹

Thus, cultural field and political position have become somewhat enmeshed in this instance, resulting in a discursive formation that is structured, to a significant extent, by the anti-colonial liberationist discourse of Frantz Fanon. This is a further factor explaining why the content of the discourse of one-state is what it is: a "maximalist" vision infused with a notion of 'universal humanism'.²³²

²²⁵ For example, the one-state position contends that the Palestinian national movement 'has moved into the post-colonial condition', by which is meant that 'native elites' have become the 'embodiment of Frantz Fanon's "pitfalls of national consciousness"'. Eid, Haidar, The pitfalls of Palestinian national consciousness, *The Electronic Intifada*, 25 August 2009, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/printer10728.shtml>, accessed 06/11/2009. See Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 119-65 for further elaboration

²²⁶ Makdisi, Saree, Said, Palestine, and the Humanism of Liberation, *Critical Inquiry*, p. 461

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 452-9

²²⁸ Aruri, Naseer, H., *Towards a Pluralistic Existence in Palestine/Israel*, in, Aruri, Naseer, H., and, Shuraydi, Muhammad, A.(eds.), *Revising Culture Reinventing Peace: the Influence of Edward W. Said*, Olive Branch Press, New York, 2001, pp. 120-133, p. 121

²²⁹ Abumimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 148

²³⁰ Aruri, Naseer, H., *Towards a Pluralistic Existence in Palestine/Israel*, in, Aruri, Naseer, H., and, Shuraydi, Muhammad, A.(eds.), *Revising Culture Reinventing Peace: the Influence of Edward W. Said*, p. 121

²³¹ Makdisi, Saree, Said, Palestine, and the Humanism of Liberation, *Critical Inquiry*, pp. 452-61

²³² Massad, Joseph A., Israel's right to defend itself, *The Electronic Intifada*

Structural homologies do not stop here, however. It is also the case – concomitantly – that the position of these intellectuals in a *transnational* field shapes their political stance.

The history of the Palestinian political field is one of transnationality. Its genesis occurred in a condition of exile, with Palestinian guerrillas in particular driving this process forward and carving out a relatively autonomous social space *across* multiple state borders. The exilic condition experienced by the vast majority of Palestinians stemmed of course from the creation of Israel in 1948, which resulted in their dispossession and forced dispersal across the Arab world and elsewhere. Though the centre of gravity of the Palestinian political field has shifted to the occupied territories – as a result of the first *intifada* and especially the signing of the Oslo Accords – most Palestinians continue to live outside the geographical boundaries of Mandate Palestine. Due to this repositioning ‘political decisions now emanate from inside Palestine’ and those on the “outside” have become heavily marginalised politically.²³³ Nevertheless, this relation of power is contested, and as Sari Hanafi argues this sector of the Palestinian community still ‘seeks a decision-making role’.²³⁴ The meta-field of Palestinian politics thus retains its transnationality, albeit in ways different to the past.

The Palestinian intellectuals who are advocating a one-state solution are largely positioned outside the geographic boundaries of Mandate Palestine, with their physical location being mainly in either North America or Europe. Their

²³³ Peteet, Julie, Problematizing a Palestinian Diaspora, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 39, 2007, pp. 627-646, p. 638. See also, Tamari, Salim, *Bourgeois Nostalgia and Exilic Narrative*, in, Robin, Ron, and, Strath, Bo (eds.), *Homelands: Poetic Power and the Politics of Space*, PIE-Peter Land, Bruxelles, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/M, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2003, p. 63

²³⁴ Hanafi, Sari, Reshaping Geography: Palestinian Community Networks in Europe and the New Media, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3, May 2005, pp. 581-598, p. 594

political conduct in this regard is therefore transnational and more exactly still can be considered diasporic: it is performed across state borders; is actively oriented to a putative “homeland”; and contributes to the (re)formation of a distinct transnational community.²³⁵ As a stance, diaspora is typically envisioned through the notion of ‘hybridity’, which denotes not ‘the admixture of pre-given identities or essences’, but an ‘enunciation [that] resists totalization’.²³⁶ In less abstract terms, the practice of diaspora is considered as operating in contradistinction to the homogenising logic of the nation-state.²³⁷ Diasporic agents are often regarded as prefiguring a postnational future dominated by ‘nonexclusive practices of community, politics, and cultural difference’.²³⁸ It is such possibilities that are often conceived as being prescribed within the practices of diaspora.

While this perspective is overly simplistic (for reasons that will be discussed in the next chapter), it is nonetheless true that the position of diaspora proscribes *singularly* exclusive practices and generates orientations towards multiplicity and the formation of hybrid subjectivities.²³⁹ This aspect of diaspora is incorporated in the discourse of one-state and shows why certain historical texts and political stances are appealing to those who are responsible for its production. After all, as Julie Peteet contends, the standpoint of the PLO’s democratic state idea ‘was the “outside”, and it reflected a modern, cosmopolitan conceptualization of place,

²³⁵ Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 5-6

²³⁶ Bhabha, Homi K., *DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation*, in, Bhabha, Homi K. (ed.), *Nation and Narration*, Routledge, London and New York, 2000 (1990), pp. 291-322, p. 314

²³⁷ Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 8-10

²³⁸ Clifford, James, *Diasporas*, *Cultural Anthropology*, p. 302

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 307-22; Hall, Stuart, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, in, Rutherford, Jonathan (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, p. 235; Tölölyan, Khachig, Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment, *Diaspora*, p. 7

polity and identity'.²⁴⁰ The reiteration of this “outside” point of view in the discourse of one-state is thus shaped by the largely diasporic position from which it is uttered, as its proponents assert their inability ‘to love a country’²⁴¹ and their distaste for an ‘unidimensional identity embodied by a homogenized, nationalist state’.²⁴² They further assert their predilection for ‘transnational rather than national’²⁴³ and celebrate trends such as globalisation as a process of ‘pluralism’²⁴⁴ that is supplanting the ‘dying ideology of separation’.²⁴⁵ As Saree Makdisi affirms:

My interest in Palestine ... [is] not motivated simply by a sense of belonging to the people, for my sense of belonging – to any group or people – has always been rather complicated. My mother is Palestinian; but my father is Lebanese. I was born in Washington; so I am an American, in addition to being Lebanese and Palestinian I have, in short, become far too used to being an outsider to feel entirely comfortable as an “insider” identifying completely with any group or nation What draws me to Palestine, then, is neither nationalism or patriotism, but my sense of justice.²⁴⁶

Though it is justice that is prioritised by Makdisi as the motivation for his more forceful intervention into the political field, one cannot escape the strikingly diasporic position that informs this stance. Hybridity as multiplicity and a resistance to totalization is present *in* this text and is constitutive of the broader one-state perspective. A single state in Palestine-Israel is envisioned from this standpoint as being for ‘all people in the diversity of their identities’.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁰ Peteet, Julie, Problematizing a Palestinian Diaspora, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, p. 637

²⁴¹ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 222

²⁴² Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, pp. 170-1

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 170

²⁴⁴ Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man: Israel's Dilemma in Palestine*, p. 216

²⁴⁵ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 330

²⁴⁶ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation*, pp. xv-xvi (Author's Note)

²⁴⁷ *The One State Declaration*

The predominantly diasporic position from which this perspective is enunciated may also further account for the strong presence of figures like Fanon in the discourse of one-state. As a theorist of anti-colonial liberation, Fanon is read from this point of view primarily for his notion of humanism as a universality of difference. His vision of liberation is reproduced in this discourse – often via Edward Said – as a struggle for coexistence that is inclusive of difference and at the same time is concerned with realising a common humanity. Although these intellectuals may have read Fanon critically, there is no avoiding the fact that the element of his liberation that they focus upon is homologous with their diasporic position. In Bourdieusian understandings of the social world the particular stances adopted by agents are neither random nor are they the product of pure choice. For figures such as Said, Fanon’s anti-colonial liberationist discourse is described as being ‘postnationalist’ and ‘transnational’, which demonstrates its appeal to these intellectuals as well as the structuring effect of diaspora on the content of their discursive practice.²⁴⁸

By being positioned in a transnational social space, the agents who are producing the discourse of one-state are situated in *national* fields of power other than the distinctly Palestinian one. Transnational fields may be relatively autonomous, but they still function across and are partially embedded in more consolidated national states. This *double* positioning of these intellectuals has consequences for their discursive stance.

As many of those who are advocating this approach are located in states from North America or Europe, often as formal citizens of these entities, it is perhaps unsurprising that the official discourse of such national fields structures their text. The use of the term ‘one nation’ to describe the object of a single state in

²⁴⁸ Said, Edward W., *Culture and Imperialism*, pp. 323-5

Palestine-Israel clearly has a specific resonance in both US and British contexts, and for the former in particular is a reproduction of official state discourse.²⁴⁹ This too applies to the definition of a one-state solution as a struggle for ‘liberty and justice for all’.²⁵⁰ For some of those who utter this stance the US state is cited as a direct source of inspiration for Palestine-Israel. Such figures declare that ‘we [Americans] can model the virtues of a vibrant, multicultural society based on equal rights [emphasis added]’.²⁵¹ Others promote ‘constitutional liberalism with its conception of individuals – whatever their race, religion, or ethnicity – as equal, rights-bearing members of a single political society’ as the basis for a one-state solution, and refer to the US as a ‘model to emulate’.²⁵² So the content of this discourse bears the imprint of the *national* states that its producers are embedded in and undertake their transnational activism from.

This last point should not be overstated, however. While their stance on Palestine-Israel is shaped by their political subjectivity as citizens of national states such as the USA (though of course not exclusively), there seems to be a reflexive element to the appearance of official state discourse in their position-taking. In Bourdieu’s opinion, one cannot escape their *habitus*. Nonetheless, given the fractal nature of embodied history *habitus* it is an orienting structure rather than a determining structure. There is room for creativity and inventiveness as well as strategic calculation, albeit within contingent limits.

²⁴⁹ Karmi, Ghada, The future is one nation, *The Guardian*, Thursday 25 September, 2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/sep/25/middleeast/print>, accessed 12/12/2008.

²⁵⁰ Abulhawa, Susan, and, Baroud, Ramzy, Palestine/Israel: A Single State, With Liberty And Justice For All, *Countercurrents*

²⁵¹ Bisharat, George, Israel and Palestine: A true one-state solution, *The Washington Post*, Friday, September 3, 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/02/AR2010090204665_pf.html, accessed 08/09/2010

²⁵² Abu-Odeh, Lama, The Case for Binationalism: Why one state – liberal and constitutionalist – may be the key to peace in the Middle East, *Boston Review*, Vol. 26, No. 6, December 2001-January 2002, <http://bostonreview.net/BR26.6/abu-odeh.html>, accessed 03/01/2008

The reiteration of official state discourse in the discourse of one-state, especially from the USA, serves a strategic function.

To be sure the specific language of anti-colonialism, universalism, equality, citizenship, inclusion, and plurality that is constitutive of this discourse is sincerely held by its producers as it is a mobilisation of their own particular point of view into the Palestinian political field. Yet it is also uttered in this way – with pertinent themes lifted from US state institutions – owing to the assessment that such language will ‘be met with greater sympathy and support in the United States’.²⁵³ To capture ‘the moral high ground’ is the immediate objective for Palestinians, according to this position,²⁵⁴ especially in the US as ‘it is the world’s only superpower’ and gives extensive support to Israel.²⁵⁵ The language used in the discourse of one-state reflects this strategy and so is shaped by it.

It is for a similar reason that the struggle against apartheid in South Africa is so frequently invoked in the discourse of one-state. The settler colonial reality ascribed to Palestine-Israel from this perspective is seen as being akin to apartheid in South Africa, if not exactly like it. As a number of critics have pointed out, there are crucial differences between the two cases and strategically the comparison between apartheid South Africa and Palestine-Israel is highly problematic if not fundamentally flawed.²⁵⁶ Nevertheless, even if proponents of a one-state solution are misguided in drawing exact parallels between Israel and apartheid South Africa, given the near universal opprobrium meted out to the latter by the international community, it is clear that if Israel was legitimately

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, pp. 49-61

²⁵⁵ Abu-Odeh, Lama, The Case for Binationalism: Why one state – liberal and constitutionalist – may be the key to peace in the Middle East, *Boston Review*

²⁵⁶ See, for instance, Wolfe, Patrick, Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native, *Journal of Genocide Research*, p. 404, and, Younis, Mona H., *Liberation and Democratization: The South African and Palestinian National Movements*, pp. 2-3

classified in these terms then Palestinians would be constituted in a morally superior position. This potential outcome is recognised as such by figures like former Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, when they state that ‘they [proponents of a one-state solution] want to change the essence of the conflict from an Algerian paradigm to a South African one. From a struggle against “occupation”, in their parlance, to a struggle for one-man-one-vote’. Olmert goes so far as to suggest that this form of struggle is ‘ultimately a much more powerful one’.²⁵⁷ Therefore, the content of the discourse of one-state is also shaped by strategic calculations on the need to confront Israel in ‘the moral dimension’.²⁵⁸ This is why Israel is so frequently and so uncritically compared to apartheid South Africa in this discourse.

The struggle against apartheid in South Africa is additionally invoked in this discourse on such a scale so as to suggest the possibility of success. This perspective contends that the South African example shows that ‘people with fundamentally incompatible views of history, locked for centuries in a bitter conflict of unfathomable misery and suffering, could emerge in peaceful reconciliation’.²⁵⁹ Even if committed ‘Zionists from across the political spectrum will resist the move toward the one-state solution in the way that privileged groups have always historically resisted the erosion of their privileges’, states Saree Makdisi, the ‘resistance, even the violent resistance, of privileged groups did not stop South Africa abandoning *apartheid*’.²⁶⁰ Indeed, according to this standpoint, the struggle against apartheid in South Africa ‘attests to the potency

²⁵⁷ Olmert, Ehud, quoted in, Landau, David, Maximum Jews, minimum Palestinians, *Haaretz*, November 13, 2003, <http://www.haaretz.com/general/maximum-jews-minimum-palestinians-1.105562>, accessed 15/11/2012

²⁵⁸ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 197

²⁵⁹ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 135

²⁶⁰ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 290

and potential of this type of contest.²⁶¹ It is clear, therefore, that the prevalence of South Africa in the discourse of one-state is due to a further strategic function: it is meant to denote the realism of a one-state solution by situating it in the ‘realm of the possible’.²⁶² South Africa signifies what can be done and this message of possibility is directed primarily at Palestinians, though Israeli Jews and the international community are included in this relation as well.²⁶³

Thus, the content of the discourse of one-state is shaped by the relation of those who produce it with the words and deeds of the Israeli state. It is structured by the specific *habitus* of these individuals as Palestinians, as cultural elites, and as diasporic agents. Moreover, within these unstable and contingent limits there is a degree of reflexivity and strategic calculation taking place which delimits what is being uttered in this counter-discourse. The content of the new stance that these agents have adopted in the context of political crisis is not the result of structural causality or pure choice. Rather it is an articulation of their particular point of view in social space which they are mobilising against the dominant “pragmatist” perspective. What is at stake is knowledge of the social world and the counter-vision being produced by these intellectuals is formed through the relations in which they engage and through the complex history that they embody. Strategising is important, and it is performed within these constraints.

²⁶¹ Barghouti, Omar, *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*, Haymarket Books, Chicago, Illinois, 2011, p. 103

²⁶² Benford, Robert D., and, Snow, David A., Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment, *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 26, 2000, pp. 611-639, p. 620

²⁶³ Tarazi, Michael, Why not two peoples, one state?, *The One Democratic State Group*, Friday 28 September, 2007, http://www.odsg.org/co/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=165:why-not-two-peoples-one-state&catid=27:one-state&Itemid=41, accessed 18/01/2011

Concluding Remarks

The vision of a one-state solution uttered by these critical intellectuals is therefore a competing definition of social reality that is articulated in opposition to the dominant position in the Palestinian political field. The discourse of one-state is a competing framework of knowledge that has assumptions and outlines of permissible political action that are radically distinct from those constitutive of the dominant “pragmatist” perspective. In this respect, existing scholarship on this topic is wrong. To insist that this discourse is primarily a pragmatic response to material conditions in the occupied territories is to grossly simplify and misconstrue this issue.²⁶⁴

These intellectuals certainly consider ongoing Jewish settlement expansion as a threat to the viability of Palestinian statehood and as such a two-state solution to the conflict (though they are not alone in this regard). Yet their stance is considerably more profound than a pragmatic reaction to these material obstacles. Their stance rejects the dominant discursive framework within this context as being fundamentally flawed and on the grounds that it imposes a false lense through which to view the reality of the conflict and the Palestinian struggle. It is not that an independent Palestinian state and a two-state solution have been rendered *passé* by Israel’s ongoing territorial expansion, although this issue is clearly important. Rather, it is that such objects were never permissible in the first place given the existential confrontation and settler colonial reality Palestinians face. The challenge to the two-state approach launched by these intellectuals is thus aimed at its epistemological assumptions and political

²⁶⁴ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 206-7; Hermann, Tamar, The bi-national idea in Israel/Palestine: past and present, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 381-401; Sussman, Gary, The Challenge to the Two-state Solution, *Middle East Report*, pp. 11-12; and, Sussman, Gary, Is the Two-State Solution Dead?, *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, p. 39

effects. Therefore, it is not primarily concerned with convincing people that it is too late for the two-state solution.

This last point ties into a criticism that is made of those who construct the discourse of one-state, which is probably best captured by Rashid Khalidi's assertion that 'what one politician has done ... another can undo'.²⁶⁵ That is, they are criticised for assuming a linearity to the progression of Israel's settlement project in the occupied territories, which results in the discounting of practices aimed at its reversal. What the scholars and analysts who make this criticism mean is that 'there is always doubt about the political future' and so calls for a one-state solution divert 'the focus of activism and advocacy' away from the more plausible and internationally legitimate goal of ending the occupation and establishing a Palestinian state. Such critics in fact accuse proponents of a one-state solution of being politically irresponsible and diluting 'the strength and energy of the campaign to end the occupation'. It is on this campaign that they ought to expound their political energies and not on the 'politically implausible' single state approach.²⁶⁶

While it is correct for these critics to forefront the political difficulties of the single state approach – an issue which as later stages of this work will show is specifically denied by these intellectuals – it is somewhat inaccurate for them to lambast its advocates for adopting a linear approach to the temporality of Israel's occupation. This is because, as this chapter has demonstrated, such a charge does not apply to the principal issue at stake in the practice of discursive contention performed by these intellectuals. What is at stake in this particular

²⁶⁵ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, p. 214

²⁶⁶ Ibish, Hussein, *What's wrong with the One-State Agenda? Why Ending the Occupation and Peace with Israel is still the Palestinian National Goal*, pp. 30-40. See also Chomsky, Noam, *Advocacy and Realism*, *Znet*

instance is a contest over the determination of legitimate knowledge in the Palestinian political field. To be sure these intellectuals occupy a subordinate position, but by focusing on temporality and insisting on the need to support the established agenda, their critics seem to have missed the implications of the radical reconceptualisation of the political field that they are engaged in. The epistemological boundaries that constitute and structure the stance of these intellectuals invoke a temporality of historical continuity and conditions of possibility that proscribe the type of politics inscribed in the two-state agenda. Linear progression is absent and consequently so too are the political implications that are said to stem from this. It is perhaps fair to conclude that such critics miss pivotal aspects of the discourse of one-state because they are to varying degrees embroiled in the battle over legitimate knowledge taking place in this arena. This is why they insist on modes of practice that are utterly incompatible with the definition of social reality produced by these intellectuals.

The Bourdieusian lense used in this study has of course helped in the conceptualisation of the discourse of one-state as a practice of counter-knowledge. This is mainly due to its ontological assumptions, which prioritises a practice of theoretical ordering in which conflict, competing perspectives and relations of power are accorded a primary significance in social life. For all its merits, however, it is important to emphasise that the Bourdieusian lense is far from exhaustive. While it certainly sheds light on what are considered here to be some of the key aspects of the discourse of one-state, the present configuration of the Palestinian political field, and indeed the relation between knowledge and politics generally, it no doubt casts shadows over other elements. The arguments made here are therefore fundamentally limited and necessarily skewed in a

certain direction. Nevertheless, the Bourdieusian lense seems to be a useful conceptual framework for analysing social change and comprehending the articulation of new discursive practices.²⁶⁷

The fruitfulness of the Bourdieusian approach would appear to extend to the issue of accounting for the ‘content of new stances that are adopted’. As mentioned, this question has often been neglected in idealist constructivist research – a consequence perhaps of the latent voluntarism that is often found in such analyses. Though such research has been adept at showing how political crises frequently result in the articulation of ‘new conceptions on which to base new policies’,²⁶⁸ it has been less adept at explaining how such conceptions are formed, with them being overly subjectivised and detached from the structural conditions of their production.²⁶⁹ This certainly cannot be said of Bourdieu’s structuralist constructivist framework, which makes a priority out of analysing ‘together’ the position and the position-taking of agents.²⁷⁰

In regards to the discourse of one-state more specifically, another problem in the scholarly literature on this issue is that the advocacy of this position is largely taken to be a natural response to the crisis afflicting the two-state perspective. It seems to be assumed that a problem with the two-state paradigm will automatically lead to a promotion of a one-state paradigm. This clearly makes no sense and not only does the imposition of such causation mask a number of key points concerning the specific formation of this counter-knowledge, it also

²⁶⁷ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 240-1

²⁶⁸ Finnemore, Martha, and, Sikkink, Kathryn, Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics, *American Review of Political Science*, p. 406

²⁶⁹ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 226-34

²⁷⁰ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociological Theory*, p. 40

unwittingly repeats one of the main discursive strategies of these intellectuals: that there is no alternative to the one-state approach. As certain analysts have suggested, there clearly are other possibilities beyond the two-state-one-state dichotomy, though none of them of course are inevitable.²⁷¹

With its emphasis on relations, structural homologies, and reflexivity, the Bourdieusian lense seems to provide a propitious conceptual “toolbox” for analysing the general and the particular concerns raised here. Crisis has certainly contributed to the formation of the discourse of one-state, and its particular content has been socially constructed in relation to the dominant “pragmatist” perspective and what is perceived as being the settler colonial essence of political Zionism. The words and deeds of the Israeli state have likewise contributed to the utterances constitutive of the discourse of one-state, especially as its official language does continue to deny the political subjectivity of Palestinians, and its concrete practices continue to dispossess them of territory. Indeed, within the context of the peace process, it is Israel’s nonrecognition (or rather truncated recognition) of Palestinians as a political community, along with its continuing policies of dispossession, that have made these intellectuals question the assumptions on which the “pragmatist” paradigm is based. To a significant extent such actions have made these intellectuals abandon the notion of political-territorial compromise as a whole, which therefore explains why they have adopted a “maximalist” stance and not a more “moderate” agenda.

Yet the interpretation of Israel’s actions during this period is not a neutral endeavour, and inescapably it is guided by the incorporated history of these

²⁷¹ For example, see: Mossberg, Mathias, One Land, Two States? Parallel States as an Example of “Out of the Box” Thinking on Israel/Palestine, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 39-45; Grinberg, Lev, The Israeli-Palestinian Union: The “1-2-7 States” Vision of the Future, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 46-53.

agents, their temporal-spatial trajectories in multiple fields. In this regard, this chapter has identified two fields as being key: the national and the cultural. The embodied history of these agents as *Palestinians* is certainly generative of dispositions which are inclined to see Zionism and Israel as settler colonial configurations. These are not absolute, but are ongoing and fractal. Nevertheless, there is a long and important historical process within this context that has repeatedly classified Zionism and Israel in such terms and which structure the articulation of the discourse of one-state. Indeed, the historic battles within this political arena have been largely waged around this classificatory point, and while “pragmatism” was clearly victorious, its crisis has enabled these intellectuals to reopen this central schism. So in this sense the historical complexity of Palestinian social space has oriented the stance of these intellectuals which has contributed to the (re)structuring of the field. The process is ongoing but it is nonetheless constrained.

Reinforcing this point of view is the position of these agents in a cultural field, by which is meant their embodied history as – for want of a better phrase – *postcolonial intellectuals*. This should not be overstated *given that intellectually the one-state perspective is quite eclectic*. Yet it is clear that a postcolonial lense – which has as its starting point the assumption that colonial relations persist into the present – is an important conceptual framework used by these intellectuals in their interpretation of Zionism and the political conduct of Israel. This positioning within the cultural sphere does not distort “reality”. Nor does it necessarily undermine the validity of what these intellectuals are contending. After all, ‘[e]veryone uses theories’, whether consciously or unconsciously, and such divergent ‘ideas about how the world works’ can result in radically different

understandings of what is ostensibly the same issue.²⁷² The point here, rather, is that intellectually these agents are embedded in a tradition which disposes them towards construing certain relations of domination and subordination in terms of coloniality. This is likewise a factor in explaining the content of their critical conceptualisation.

The precise vision of a one-state solution uttered by these intellectuals is similarly explicated by structural homologies in multiple fields. It is certainly not inevitable that it has been articulated in the way that it has, as shown in this chapter, and again this study has identified the position of these agents in a national and a cultural field as being key to accounting for this stance. In addition, the position of these individuals in a transnational field is deemed important.

Nationally, these agents are embedded in and structured by antecedent trajectories and social constructions of *Palestinianess* which point towards multiplicity and universality. Their stance is constrained by such historical understandings of what it means to be Palestinian. Culturally, the vision of a one-state solution is guided by intellectual genealogies inclusive of Frantz Fanon and in particular his notion of anti-colonial liberation as a dialectical transcendence of colonialism through the production of humanism. For proponents of a one-state solution, their position in the cultural field of postcolonial studies has exposed them such conceptions of liberation which are then transposed to the specific political context of Palestine. This is not an absolute decision, but a product of their prior incorporation of such humanistic principles in their bodily trajectories. Transnationally, the diasporic position of

²⁷² Walt, Stephen M., International Relations: One World, Many Theories, *Foreign Policy*, No. 110, Special Edition: Frontiers of Knowledge, Spring 1998, pp. 29-46, p. 29

these individuals generates distaste for exclusive political formations and specifically the nationalist ideal of a homogenous nation-state. It is for this practical reason as well that their stance is inclusive of a strong orientation towards heterogeneity and a universality of difference. In short, there is a structural homology between their position in social space and their position-taking. The Bourdieusian insistence on ‘looking at the structural homologies of position taking and objective positions’ seems to be a fruitful approach for explaining the content of new stances that are adopted.²⁷³

The diasporic position of these agents and the hybrid subjectivity it generates further accounts for the reiteration of official “hostland” language in their counter-discourse. However, the use of such utterances appears more crucially to display a reflexive element in the production of this discourse, with the repetition of sentences from the US Pledge of Allegiance, for example, being calculated to have a strategically advantageous outcome for Palestinians. This point similarly applies to the repetition of terminology used in the South African anti-apartheid struggle, such as ‘one person-one vote’ and indeed the application of the word ‘apartheid’ to Israeli practices.²⁷⁴ While these agents genuinely regard Israel as an apartheid state similar if not identical to apartheid South Africa, which as noted is problematic, such words are at the same time used in the discourse of one-state so as to make the Palestinian struggle morally compelling to international audiences, especially in the US. Furthermore, the anti-apartheid example is invoked so as to situate the object of a one-state solution in the boundaries of the possible. So here too a reflexive element is involved.

²⁷³ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 234

²⁷⁴ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo and Iraq to the Roadmap*, p. 51

Thus, the Bourdieusian framework includes a range of thinking tools that can be mobilised in order to explain why the content of a new political stance is what it is. Specifically, these centre on relations, positions and reflexivity, which as this chapter has shown are all pertinent in varying degrees to explaining the precise formation of the counter-knowledge of a one-state solution. Its content is not determined voluntarily, nor is it determined causally as response to the crisis afflicting the two-state paradigm. The next chapter focuses more specifically on the struggle to legitimately impose this counter-knowledge on the field of Palestinian politics.

Chapter Three: Legitimate Domination: Intellectuals, Diaspora, and the Discourse of One-State

Why do intellectuals engage in struggle in the political field? Though there is a long and complicated history of intellectuals intervening in politics, this line of questioning is seldom undertaken. Scholarly literature on intellectuals and politics is dominated by what Jerome Karabel calls a moralist tradition which focuses on what intellectuals *ought* to do politically, as opposed to the more analytical question of why they act politically.¹ This literature is replete with descriptions of ‘intellectuals as persons playing a particular role in society, as advisers to or critics of power, shapers of values, legitimators of social order, guardians of morality, self-appointed defenders of the nation’.² Intellectuals ‘should constantly disturb, [and] should bear witness to the misery of the world’, stated the late Vaclav Havel.³ The task of the intellectual is ‘to change the world through rational means’, remarked Karl Mannheim.⁴ According to a recent study, an intellectual is someone ‘who applies intellectual activities for a whole community’.⁵ For Edward Said, in a definition that is particularly pertinent to this study, an intellectual ought to speak the ‘truth to power’.⁶

A further trait within the moralist literature on intellectuals – as suggested by the above examples – is that they should somehow be oppositional or at least not

¹ Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, p. 205

² Verdery, Katherine, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceasescu’s Romania*, p. 15

³ Havel, Vaclav, *Disturbing the Peace: A Conversation with Karel Hvizdala*, Vintage Books, New York, 1991, p. 167

⁴ Mannheim, Karl, *The Sociology of Intellectuals* (translated by Dick Pels), *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 10, 1993, pp. 69-80, p. 69

⁵ Stina Lyon, E, *What Influence? Public Intellectuals, the State and Civil Society*, in, Fleck, Christian, Hess, Andreas, and Stina Lyon, E (eds.), *Intellectuals and their Publics: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, Ashgate, Surrey, 2009, p. 70

⁶ Said, Edward W., *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures*, Panteon Books, New York, 1994, p. 102

fear risking ‘the ire of the established authorities’.⁷ This view is clearly problematic given that people who consider themselves intellectuals, and who are recognised as such, have worked on the side of established authorities – as government advisors, policy experts, or as proponents of maintaining a certain mode of life. This issue ties into wider debates on who is an “intellectual”, which as figures like Zygmunt Bauman have contended, and as this study suggests, are ultimately bound up with relations of power and the production of authoritative discourse.⁸ As Robert Michels noted as early as 1937, for intellectuals in ‘the politics of any period, the parties of revolution, of continuity and of reaction have all been in their hands’.⁹ Many of the Palestinian intellectuals under examination in this chapter had been previously supportive of the Palestinian political leadership. They are now explicitly opposed to it in its current form. Indeed, this is the problem with defining an intellectual as someone who is necessarily oppositional: it takes as a given what needs to be explained.¹⁰

Given that Bourdieu ascribed such centrality to knowledge in political struggle, it is unsurprising that he wrote a fair amount on intellectuals. In his view, such agents were the holders of cultural capital *par excellence*;¹¹ and while he professed his support for the figure of the ‘critical intellectual’ as *an* agent of change, he nevertheless engaged with this figure reflexively and often ruthlessly.¹² For Bourdieu, intellectuals typically occupy a curious position in the

⁷ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, p. 205

⁸ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-modernity and Intellectuals*, pp. 8-9

⁹ Michels, Robert, *Intellectuals*, in, Seligman, Edwin R. A. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (Vol. 8), Macmillan, New York, 1937, p. 119

¹⁰ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, p. 207

¹¹ Kurzman, Charles, and, Owens, Lynn, The Sociology of Intellectuals, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 79

¹² Bourdieu, Pierre, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time* (translated by Richard Nice), Polity Press, Cambridge, 2001 (1998), p. 8. Shusterman, Richard, *Introduction:*

field of power. On the one hand, their position is rich with cultural capital, which results in them being a part of the cultural elite in a given social formation. On the other hand, their position is in most instances directly estranged from the dominant sites of political power, which are ordinarily dominated by economic and political elites – the professionals of politics. In an attempt to capture this somewhat paradoxical position, Bourdieu described intellectuals as a ‘dominated fraction of the dominant class’.¹³ It is in the realm of culture that intellectuals can most plausibly make claims to legitimate domination; and the cultural sphere is ordinarily subordinated to those of economics and politics.¹⁴

However, despite this typically subordinate position, intellectuals remain ‘a potentially competing elite’ in the field of power. In certain historical conditions they have ‘both the inclination and the capacity to mount a challenge to the elites that preside over the political and economic domains’. What these conditions are precisely will vary from case to case, but a broad hypothesis in this respect is that intellectuals will most rigorously contest different elites during periods of crisis and weakened authority. They do this, moreover, in order to claim power, or to put it in Bourdieusian terminology, so as to occupy a position of legitimate domination in a particular meta-field.¹⁵

The role of crisis in shaping the discourse of one-state has been already suggested in the last chapter, and this point will be developed further here in relation to the speakers of this discourse and their struggle with other positions in the Palestinian political field. Why they are engaged in this struggle is *primarily explained by power*, so this chapter contends. They are struggling for a position

Bourdieu as Philosopher, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, pp. 1-13 pp. 11-12

¹³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology* (translated by Matthew Adamson), Polity Press, Cambridge, 1990, p. 145

¹⁴ Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, p. 208

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 208-12

of legitimate domination in the field of Palestinian politics. This does not mean that their intervention is reducible to power and the process of maximizing their position in the political field. Other factors are also pertinent, such as a commitment to Palestinian rights and justice and a sense of obligation *as intellectuals* to speak out on behalf of those who are oppressed. Nevertheless, power is central and while commitment and norms of obligation are important, they do not operate at the expense of self-interest and are in fact secondary to it. The intellectuals who are uttering the discourse of one-state occupy positions that are invested with considerable cultural capital. It is precisely this form of capital that they are mobilising so as to contest other elite positions in the Palestinian political field. In addition, they attempt to augment this move by claiming to legitimately represent and speak for the Palestinian people.

That this engagement in political struggle is taking place within a transnational field is significant and likewise can be understood in terms of legitimate domination. The position of diaspora is generally considered as being a ‘fecund space’ for the construction of potentially competing discourses.¹⁶ As Benedict Anderson remarks, it is a position that is often ‘radically unaccountable’, lacking the constraints of the putative “homeland”, however extraordinary or quotidian these might be.¹⁷ The practice of diaspora politics has been facilitated in recent years by advances in global communication technologies, which have enabled connections and the rapid transference of knowledge across disparate state borders.¹⁸ So-called “hostland” contexts are also important in this respect, as will

¹⁶ Sorenson, John, Essence and Continuity in the Construction of Nationhood: Transformations of Identity in Ethiopia and its Diaspora, *Diaspora*, Vol. 2, No.2, Fall 1992, pp. 201-228, p. 201

¹⁷ Anderson, Benedict, Exodus, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Winter 1994, pp. 314-327, p. 327

¹⁸ Appadurai, Arjun, Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy, *Public Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Spring 1990, pp. 1-24, p. 15; Tölölyan, Khachig, Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment, *Diaspora*, p. 22

be discussed below.¹⁹ For agents who are already the ‘sometime occupants of a site that is privileged in forming and transmitting discourses’,²⁰ diaspora is an additional resource that can be mobilised so as to contest different positions in a transnational field and advance particular points of view.²¹ The resources accumulated by diasporic agents in a *national* field of power can be similarly utilised in this regard.

While the position of diaspora might be privileged in certain ways in the production of counter-discourses, this in itself does not reveal why such practices are undertaken. Too often it is assumed that diasporic practices are motivated by opposition to exclusive political formations and in particular the homogenising logic of the nation state.²² To be sure a predilection for hybridity is a crucial feature of diasporic conduct (as the last chapter demonstrated), but when seen from a Bourdieusian perspective such conduct remains embedded in a *distinct* transnational space where conflict and competition are ineradicable. The position of diaspora is part of the social structure that constitutes the (transnational) field and this matrix of objective relations between positions remains one that is immersed in hierarchy. Certain scholars have envisaged practices of diaspora as practices of citizenship, which are not only concerned with making claims to belong and participate in a singular transnational community,²³ but are concerned with contesting the fluid boundaries of inside

¹⁹ Waldinger, Roger, and, Fitzgerald, David, Transnationalism in Question, *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 109, No. 5, March 2004, pp. 1177-1195, p. 1192

²⁰ Verdery, Katherine, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceasescu's Romania*, p. 15

²¹ Radhakrishnan, Rajagopalan, *Diasporic Mediation: Between Home and Location*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London, 1996, p. 173

²² Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 8-9

²³ Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 745-7

and outside, domination and subordination.²⁴ In this sense, the oppositional political practices of diaspora are less motivated by the object of a postnational future, and are more about determining one's relative position in a relatively exclusive social formation. The paradox of diaspora is that, politically, its agents are often disposed toward a hybrid vision of the social world, but are seeking to impose this vision on a separate space.²⁵

This is precisely the argument made in this chapter in relation to the predominantly diasporic intellectuals producing the discourse of one-state. While the content of their counter-knowledge incorporates the hybridity of their diasporic position, their intervention into the Palestinian political field is *primarily* motivated by resistance to subordination and the goal of legitimately imposing their particular point of view on this social structure. That is to say, as predominantly diasporic agents, they are struggling for a position of legitimate domination in a transnational field. So as to maximize their position in this regard these agents seek to hierarchize diaspora in relation to the occupied territories and other Palestinian points, classifying the former in contrast to the latter as a propitious spot for the conduct of politics and therefore for the performance of citizenship.²⁶ The cultural *property* of these agents as intellectuals is once again important in this respect but as a practice of diaspora their struggle in the Palestinian political field is best explicated as a battle to deconstruct and reconstruct boundaries of inside and outside, domination and subordination.

²⁴ Bauböck, Rainer, Towards a Political Theory of Migrant Transnationalism, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 37, No. 3, Fall 2003, pp. 700-723, pp. 719-20

²⁵ Brubaker, Rogers, The "diaspora" diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 5-7

²⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 168

This chapter begins by examining the crisis of authority in the political field and how it has been framed by these cultural elites as an opportunity for their intervention in Palestinian politics. It then moves on to analysing why this intervention has taken place, focusing on commitment, norms of obligation and the mobilisation of cultural capital. The next section looks at the transnational and more specifically diasporic aspect of the discourse of one-state, focusing on relations of subordination and resistance as well as on practices of citizenship as struggles of hierarchization. Finally, the last two sections will look at the considerable discursive work undertaken by these oppositional intellectuals in order to discredit dominant elites and narratives in the political field and so socially construct themselves as legitimate spokespersons for the Palestinian people and cause.

The Crisis of Political Elites: An Opportunity for Whom?

There is a general perception among Palestinians that the peace process has been a disaster.²⁷ The core objective of the PLO since at least the late 1980s has been to establish an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as its capital through a negotiated compromise with Israel. While the PLO's participation in the Oslo peace process and the creation of the PA were broadly perceived as an important step towards this (for many people, inevitable) goal, the latter has been so far unfulfilled and this strategy is now widely regarded as having failed. The crisis of the two-state solution is not simply the failure of an idea or a conceptual framework, however. It is also a crisis for those who utter this perspective in the Palestinian field and whose political legitimacy was to a large extent staked on realising the object of a

²⁷ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 149-50

negotiated two-state solution to the conflict.²⁸ The authority of the historic Palestinian leadership, embodied by PLO elites and since June 2007 PA elites based solely in the West Bank, has been severely undermined as a result of its inability to advance even minimal Palestinian national interests. It was partly for this reason that Hamas was victorious in the 2006 PLC election, at the expense of the historically dominant Fateh.²⁹

The impasse stemming from the failure of the two-state approach is *doubly* recognised by proponents of a one-state solution as a failure of Palestinian political elites. They are not alone in this regard, but what is interesting here is how this impasse and crisis of political authority is represented from their point of view. It is not only that the crisis of the two-state solution requires what was discussed in the last chapter as ‘a new vision, a new voice, [and] a new truth’, which of course is the one-state solution.³⁰ It is also that this “new” phase in the Palestinian struggle requires a different category of person to lead it, subordinating discredited political elites as well as sclerotic and reactionary opposition groups. This person is “the intellectual”, and the crisis of political authority in the Palestinian arena is constructed from this perspective as an opening for the political intervention of certain cultural elites. It is this opening that has enabled their more forthright engagement in political struggle.

According to those who utter the discourse of one-state, ‘the Palestinian national movement has become a failed national movement’. This is because ‘it has been unable to achieve the objectives it set for itself’.³¹ What is more, the absence of an independent Palestinian state and a negotiated settlement to the

²⁸ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, p. 660

²⁹ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 149-50

³⁰ Said, Edward. W, *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 28

³¹ Ghanem, As‘ad, Cooperation Instead of Separation: The One-State Solution to Promote Israeli-Palestinian Peace, *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economic and Culture*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2007, pp. 13-19, p. 15

conflict with Israel has been combined with ongoing occupation and further colonization of Palestinian land by Jewish settlers. This condition, along with other forms of structural violence inflicted on Palestinians, has resulted in the ‘failure of the [Palestinian] authority that brought [the peace process] about’.³² Palestinian political elites are seen as being so inefficacious politically from this perspective that they are represented as ‘irrelevant to the future of the Palestinian people as a whole’.³³ Owing to the crisis of the two-state solution, their position within the Palestinian political field has been severely weakened in the eyes of those who are calling for a one-state solution.

Due to this policy failure on behalf of political elites in the Palestinian field, the Palestinian struggle is portrayed by those producing the discourse of one-state as having entered a period ‘of profound uncertainty and risk’.³⁴ Again, this is hardly a unique category of perception among Palestinians at this moment in time.³⁵ But what differentiates the position-taking of these intellectuals in this context is the type of response to this crisis that they delineate. While one phase of struggle draws to a close and ends in disaster another phase is being opened up. The liminality of the Palestinian field is depicted from this perspective as providing a ‘tantalizing opportunity’.³⁶

At one level, the opportunity envisioned here is immediately restricted in this discourse to a particular point of view and interpretation of social reality. That is, the counter-knowledge of a one-state solution. Indeed, though these

³² Katamesh, Ahmad, *Approach to the Single Democratic State: Two Separate and Interlocked Communities* (translated by Nadia Ali Hamad), Munif Al-Barghouti Cultural Centre, Supported by Health Work Committees, pp. 34-69

³³ Makdisi, Saree, Good Riddance, Abbas, *Foreign Policy*, November 6, 2009, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/11/06/good_riddance_abbas, accessed 09/11/2009

³⁴ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 183

³⁵ See, for example, Khalidi, Raja, and, Sobhi, Samour, Neoliberalism as Liberation: The Statehood Program and the Remaking of the Palestinian National Movement, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 16-17

³⁶ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 183

intellectuals are struggling in a certain sense to prise open conceptual horizons in the context of the Palestine-Israel conflict, their discursive practices work at the same time to foreclose other possibilities besides a single state. This is in their construction of the social world the “only alternative”. But at another level one may ask: for whom exactly is this crisis an opportunity? The answer to this question in the discourse of one-state is very specific: intellectuals; or rather a certain category of intellectual, one who is disentangled from dominant sites of political power and is committed to ‘the truth unadorned’.³⁷

It is worthwhile mentioning here that, in performing their engagement in the political field, the cultural elites who are advocating a one-state solution are presenting themselves as a particular kind of intellectual. Their action in this regard is designated in their texts as being part of ‘a historic role played by people of conscience in the international community of scholars and intellectuals who have shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice’.³⁸ In a process of self-definition, proponents of a one-state solution describe proponents of a one-state solution as ‘people who *care*, people who are more interested in the truth and in justice than in going with the flow of mainstream opinion or with the political dictates of established authorities’.³⁹ Their interest lies principally in “truth” and “justice”, according to their own words, and this is detached from boundaries of convention and dominant political positions.⁴⁰ To be an intellectual is to engage in criticism, figures from this perspective argue; and what this means is that intellectuals are people with certain rational capacities

³⁷ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 283

³⁸ Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), *About the Campaign*, <http://www.pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=868>, accessed 11/10/2011. While the PACBI does not officially promote a one-state solution, intellectuals advocating this approach dominate its Advisory Board, Founding Committee, and Steering Committee.

³⁹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation*, p. xxvi (Author’s Note)

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

who are not afraid to ‘raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma (rather than to produce them), [and] to be someone who cannot be easily co-opted by governments or corporations’.⁴¹ In formulating the discourse of one-state, it is precisely this sort of agent that advocates of this approach claim to be.

Therefore, when this position states that the crisis of political authority in the Palestinian arena has resulted in circumstances that are ‘especially ripe for debate, discussion, and genuine process enacted by *independent intellectuals* [emphasis added]’,⁴² it is claiming a central role for a certain type of person. Yet, it is also clear that this person cannot be any intellectual, broadly conceived, but must be, as the word “independent” suggests, a figure who embodies the principles of intellectual praxis supposedly embodied by those who are making this representation. In other words, the crisis of political authority in the Palestinian field is perceived and represented as enabling *their* political intervention.

As this position further contends, ‘because the Palestinian and Arab leadership is too powerless and morally bankrupt ... [i]t is *left to a small number of intellectuals and visionaries* to articulate a *new* theory of coexistence which, in the current impasse, might offer a way out of the quandary [emphasis added]’.⁴³ Such statements give a strong indication of the position desired by proponents of a one-state solution. At this critical juncture in Palestinian politics, it is they who are claiming to be essential for the future. *Their* self-appointed task is to show Palestinians (and Israelis) that an alternative exists to the ‘vacuum’ created by the crisis of the two-state position, and this role is classified as ‘vital’.⁴⁴ In addition,

⁴¹ Said, Edward W., *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures*, p. 11

⁴² Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 124

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 204

⁴⁴ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, pp. 183-4

this standpoint asserts that this role cannot be performed as ‘an idle intellectual exercise’⁴⁵ or through a practice of ‘armchair intellectualism’, and so is presented as an explicitly political function.⁴⁶ Within the context of crisis and acute policy failure by traditional political elites, these intellectuals are attempting to affirm their presence *inside* the political sphere. They are trying to do this, in an initial sense, by framing the crisis as necessitating their engagement in political struggle.

Moreover, according to this perspective, this “vacuum” cannot be filled by other oppositional agents within the Palestinian political field. It is telling that this discourse is largely silent towards historic opposition factions in the Palestinian national movement, such as the PFLP and DFLP, which suggests that they are considered insignificant. When they do make an appearance in this discourse it is mainly in a negative light. Specifically, they are disparaged for being ‘complicit in a structure of politics that led to Oslo’⁴⁷ and for adopting the highly conservative stance of ‘perpetual opposition’, which has compounded the disastrous status quo in Palestinian politics.⁴⁸ The history of rejectionism associated with factions like the PFLP is also denigrated from this standpoint. It is depicted as being symptomatic of a proclivity to abstain from politics, rather than to work for actual political alternatives.⁴⁹ As this position declares, such factions can do ‘absolutely nothing to advance [the Palestinian] cause’.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 184

⁴⁶ Barghouti, Omar, Re-Imagining Palestine: Self-determination, Ethical De-colonization, and Equality, *The One Democratic State Group*

⁴⁷ Usher, Graham, Bantustanisation or bi-nationalism? An interview with Azmi Bishara, *Race & Class*, p. 47

⁴⁸ Bishara, Azmi, Toothless counsel, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 28 May-3 June 2009, Issue No. 949, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2009/949/op1.htm>, accessed 24/11/2009

⁴⁹ Usher, Graham, Bantustanisation or bi-nationalism? An interview with Azmi Bishara, *Race & Class*, pp. 45-8

⁵⁰ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 62

Hamas fails little better in this discourse, although its language of liberation, return and resistance is cited as a positive aspect of its stance.⁵¹ Overall, however, it too is dismissed from this perspective as an agent capable of leading Palestinians out of the current impasse and fashioning a better future. As a resistance movement, Hamas' commitment to armed struggle is considered futile against a state as strong militarily as Israel. Its militant posture and at times indiscriminate attacks against Israeli civilians are also seen as tactically puerile, playing into hands of Israel by enabling it to reiterate an already sedimented discourse of Palestinian "terrorism" and reproduce a Palestinian "other" in terms of barbarity.⁵² Discursively, its Islamist perspective is represented as being abhorrent to the majority of Palestinians, who in this view are predominantly secular in their outlook,⁵³ and is considered as foreclosing the possibility of it formulating a 'democratic alternative that would offer a choice to Israelis'.⁵⁴ The one-state position contends that Hamas' Islamism is a nativist inversion of Zionism, which highlights once again its Fanonist inclination.⁵⁵ Therefore, it is incapable of moving beyond 'some version of the status quo'.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Hamas is increasingly viewed from this perspective as adopting a "pragmatist" stance, which means of course that it cannot possibly be an effective political agent.⁵⁷

⁵¹ For instance, Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 272

⁵² Bishara, Azmi, Channeling the resistance, *New Democracy World*, July 9, 2006, <http://www.newdemocracyworld.org/old/War/Bishara.htm>, accessed 07/01/2011

⁵³ Makdisi, Saree, Good Riddance, Abbas, *Foreign Policy*

⁵⁴ Bishara, Azmi, Separation or unity, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 27 March – 2 April 2008, Issue No. 890, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2008/890/op1.htm>, accessed 25/02/2010

⁵⁵ Massad, Joseph, Palestinians and the Limits of Racialized Discourse, *Social Text*, No. 34, 1993, pp. 94-114, p. 109

⁵⁶ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 311

⁵⁷ Eid, Haidar, Tough questions for Hamas, *The Electronic Intifada*, 2 November 2010, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article11605.shtml>, 07/01/2011

The effect of these representational practices is quite specific. In the context of crisis and depleted political authority for established elites such expressions work to reinforce the idea that the opening for political change made available by these circumstances is *only* open for certain cultural elites; it is they alone who are able to use this opportunity to good effect, with other positions (within the framework of this discourse at least) being excluded from this potentiality. The crisis of the two-state solution and political authority in the Palestinian arena has been perceived by the agents who a calling for a one-state solution, and has been not only understood as enabling their intervention into the political sphere, but has been actively framed as requiring this form of conduct on *their* behalf. The historical condition of crisis has permitted their struggle for a central position in the political sphere.

Mobilising Cultural Capital: Or, the Political Indispensability of Knowledge

The conditions of political failure in the Palestinian context have enabled the counter-intervention of certain intellectuals, but these do not in themselves explain why these figures are acting in this way. Failure has only provided an opening for this sort of conduct, which, to a certain extent, has been seized upon by these individuals. Politically speaking, intellectuals ‘constitute themselves as intellectuals (a separate group, with qualities, responsibilities and tasks all of its own) only in the activity of *critique*’. They emerge in the process of criticising ‘the officially sanctioned order’.⁵⁸ Why they do this, though, is an intriguing question.

⁵⁸ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Love in Adversity: On the State and the Intellectuals, and the State of the Intellectuals*, *Thesis Eleven*, Vol. 31, 1992, pp. 81-104, p. 84. See also, Giesen, Bernhard, *Intellectuals and Politics*, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2011, pp. 291-301, p. 298

At one level, the action of those calling for a one-state solution can be explained by an interest in subverting and transforming the established social order in Palestine-Israel. ‘Intellectuals’, argues Michael Kennedy, ‘are prone to write powerful critiques of what is, implying what ought to be’,⁵⁹ and this is certainly a factor accounting for the discourse of one-state. Its proponents interpret the present structure in Palestine-Israel as incredibly unjust and wrong for Palestinians, and they are struggling in order to try and change this configuration. In addition, and as mentioned previously, their self-definition as intellectuals is quite distinct and incorporates a sense of political responsibility and obligation to speak out against injustice and in favour of those who are oppressed. This sense of obligation stems from prior constructions of intellectuals and their political role, and is an important factor explaining their counter-intervention.⁶⁰ What is more, many of these intellectuals embody a history of political activism (both in relation to Palestine and other issues) and this would seem to complement their practical sense as a certain form of cultural agent who is mobilising knowledge for the benefit of the oppressed.

At a more dominant level, this study would suggest, the contentious action of these intellectuals is driven by a bid for power in the Palestinian political field. Despite proclamations of disinterest and detachment, intellectuals remain embedded in structures of hierarchy, and while they may seek to undermine established orders in the name of broader values and constituencies, such moves often underlie ‘their own claims to power’.⁶¹ The discourse of one-state

⁵⁹ Kennedy, Michael, The ironies of intellectuals on the road to power, or not, in, Rereading *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, p. 27

⁶⁰ Scholars such as Francesca Polletta and Jasper James argue generally that ‘norms of obligation’ may be an important factor explaining contentious action. Polletta, Francesca, and, Jasper, James M., Collective Identity and Social Movements, *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 27, 2001, pp. 283-305, p. 290

⁶¹ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, pp. 205-10

incorporates a particular point of view, and those who utter it are struggling to impose it upon the Palestinian political field through acquiring a position of legitimate domination. Thus, what is at stake is not only the question of *what* the Palestinian political field means, but *who* legitimately determines this process. Who speaks for Palestine? Those who are producing the discourse of one-state are trying to make themselves the answer to this question. They try to do this primarily through mobilising their cultural capital and asserting the political indispensability of the knowledge *they* possess.⁶² It is through possessing this resource that they stake their claim to legitimate authority and this is mobilised in relation to political elites and “other” intellectuals in the Palestinian arena who *do not* and *cannot* on their own possess this knowledge.

Historically, intellectuals have intervened in politics in the declared interest of the oppressed.⁶³ It is certainly true that those who are advocating a one-state solution consider themselves to be acting in the interest of the Palestinian people, and this partly explains their engagement in political struggle. From their point of view, the prevailing order in Palestine-Israel works against Palestinian rights and therefore perpetuates historical injustices. The ‘essence of the Palestine problem is injustice’,⁶⁴ and rather than alleviate this problem, the terms of the peace process have entrenched it still further by marginalising Palestinian refugees and the Palestinian minority in Israel, and by spatially sequestering Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip into sub-sovereign enclaves in the context of continuing Israeli occupation and settler colonization. Proponents of a one-state solution are engaging in political struggle because they want ‘to

⁶² Verdery, Katherine, Konrad and Szelenyi’s model of socialism, twenty-five years later, in, Rereading *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, pp. 2-3

⁶³ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 173

⁶⁴ Personal interview with Ghada Karmi, 15 February 2010, London

mobilize for the rights of the Palestinians’ and eradicate injustices that continue to be inflicted upon them.⁶⁵ A one-state solution is promoted from this perspective as a framework in which the rights of *all* Palestinians can be fulfilled.⁶⁶ Therefore, for these intellectuals, their struggle for a one-state solution is motivated by a desire to overturn the prevailing order for the benefit of the ‘entire Palestinian people’.⁶⁷ To a significant extent, it is this (assumed) common interest that drives them.

This conduct is also specifically related to their position as intellectuals. This position assumes that an intellectual is someone who has a specific political role; therefore, in order to be an intellectual one must act accordingly. The practical sense of these agents is embedded multifariously in prior constructions of “the intellectual” associated with figures such as Julien Benda, Amilcar Cabral, Frantz Fanon, Antonio Gramsci, and George Lukacs, and these textual orientations are generative of their contentious practice.⁶⁸

For example, Saree Makdisi speaks of his political engagement in terms of a ‘refusal to remain silent in the face of injustice’ and an ‘unwillingness to just go on living ... life ... and enjoying the privileges of a tenured university professor’.⁶⁹ ‘When the intellectual’s society reaches a historical cross roads’, states Haidar Eid paraphrasing George Lukacs, ‘the intellectual should be involved in the whole socio-political process and leave his ivory tower’.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Palestine Solidarity Conference, *Stuttgart Declaration*, Stuttgart, 26-28 November 2010, available at <http://senderfreiespalaestina.de/sign.htm>, accessed 10/06/2013

⁶⁶ *The One State Declaration*

⁶⁷ Hilal, Jamil, Palestinian Answers in the Arab Spring, Al-Shabaka Policy Brief, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, May 2011, <http://al-shabaka.org/sites/default/files/policybrief/en/palestinian-answers-arab-spring/palestinian-answers-arab-spring.pdf>, accessed 17/05/2011, p. 2

⁶⁸ See, for instance, Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia: A Fanonian Reading of the Intellectual Landscape in Post-Oslo Palestine, *Nebula*, pp. 96-106; Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho 1993-1995*, Vintage, London, 1995, pp. 195-7

⁶⁹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. xxvi

⁷⁰ Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia: A Fanonian Reading of the Intellectual Landscape in Post-Oslo Palestine, *Nebula*, p. 100

Similarly, Omar Barghouti asserts that ‘in contexts of colonial oppression, intellectuals ... cannot be just – or mere – intellectuals in the abstract sense; they cannot but be immersed in some form or another of activism’ and be ‘organically engage[d] in effective, collective emancipatory processes aimed at reaching justice’.⁷¹ The possibility of even restricted choice is effaced from such formulations and the idea that an intellectual should and *must* act politically in circumstances like those prevailing in Palestine is a powerful schema forcing those who are advocating a one-state solution to act.

In this respect, Edward Said is once again highly significant. Before his untimely death in 2003, Said was the most prominent individual to promote a one-state solution and separately he spent considerable time constructing his own particular image of the intellectual agent. This too built on and internalised certain conceptual antecedents. For Said, the main task of the intellectual is to be a ‘disturber of the status quo’.⁷² The intellectual’s ‘raison d’être is to represent all those people and issues that are routinely forgotten or swept under the rug’⁷³ and they perform this function through ‘speaking the truth to power’.⁷⁴ Though there are a number of problems with this formulation (which will be discussed at later stages of this essay), Said’s notion of intellectuals and their proper function not only contributed to his engagement in the Palestinian political field, it also forced others to act. The principle of “speaking the truth to power”, as produced by Said, is nearly ubiquitous in the discourse of one-state and proponents of this agenda directly relate their actual conduct in this regard to this understanding of “the intellectual’s” political role.

⁷¹ Barghouti, Omar, *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*, p. 104

⁷² Said, Edward W., *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures*, p. x

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 11

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102

It is ‘Said’s memorable *words* [emphasis added]’ that are cited by advocates of the one-state approach as a precursor to their political action, with their discursive practices in this regard being defined by such agents as ‘an attempt to speak truth to power’.⁷⁵ ‘[T]he 11 million Palestinians living under occupation, apartheid and as stateless refugees are living the truth’⁷⁶ and as a result ‘one of the first *duties* of activists is to speak truth to power [emphasis added]’.⁷⁷ It is these norms of obligation and political responsibility *as intellectuals* – stemming principally from Saidian formulations – that are the most pertinent textual constructs determining the oppositional intervention of these particular agents. Words have a performativity in certain circumstances and when uttered by an authorised speaker; and this efficacy can set specific forces in motion. This has happened in the Palestinian arena in relation to those who are producing the discourse of one-state; Said’s words on the role of intellectuals have a particular efficacy for these agents owing to the impasse in the Palestinian struggle and the authority they recognise in his position; and this has made them act. As Saree Makdisi, a nephew of Said, states: ‘my uncle Edward ... showed me the way’.⁷⁸

More broadly, many of those who are adopting the one-state stance embody a history of political activism. This trajectory includes participation in various organisations and activist networks which focus on Palestine, but it also includes engagement with wider issues such as human rights. Some of those who are promoting this solution have been in the past formal members of the Palestinian

⁷⁵ Barghouti, Omar, *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*, p. 34

⁷⁶ Karkar, Sonja, Talking Palestine to power, *The Electronic Intifada*, 12 April 2010, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/talking-palestine-power/8776>, accessed 18/10/2010

⁷⁷ Cronin, David, Interview: Mazin Qumsiyeh on popular resistance and breaking the spell of fear, *The Electronic Intifada*, 16 June, 2011, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/interview-mazin-qumsiyeh-popular-resistance-and-breaking-spell-fear/10086>, accessed 13/07/2011

⁷⁸ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 321

national movement, positioned within PLO institutions.⁷⁹ Although this embodied history of political activism does not make their action in promoting a single state in Palestine-Israel inevitable, it does suggest a disposition among these agents for becoming politically engaged and speaking out on issues they perceive as unjust. Such predilections, as certain theorists have contended, can often be vital in shaping a persons decision to act.⁸⁰ Scholars writing more specifically on the issue of intellectuals and politics have also argued that a personal repertoire of political engagement can make it more likely that cultural elites re-enact such conduct.⁸¹ For advocates of a one-state solution, their embodied history of activism would seem to complement their predominant understanding of themselves in this context as intellectuals who have a duty to speak the “truth” and confront established positions.

This emphasis on “truth”, moreover, implies a more precise conception of what intellectuals do in politics. When intellectuals intervene on the side of the oppressed in a given historical context, they frequently do so in terms of using their knowledge, and the authority attached to this virtue, in order to advance the

⁷⁹ For example, figures including Naseer Aruri, Mazin Qumsiyeh, Ali Abunimah, Salman Abu Sitta, Nadim Rouhana, As’ad Ghanem, and Omar Barghouti, among others, have been or are involved with organizations or activist networks like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the Arab Organization for Human Rights, *Al-Awda* – the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, Academics for Justice (AFJ), the Electronic Intifada, the Arab American Action Network (AAAN), the National Committee for the Heads of Arab Local Authorities in Israel, the *Mada Al-Carmel* – Arab Centre for Applied Social Research, *Adalah* – the Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, the Palestinian Return Centre, the Independent Palestinian Commission for the Protection of Citizen Rights, and the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaign. Aruri, Abu Sitta, Edward Said, Ghada Karmi, Michael Tarazi, Jamil Hilal, and Ahmad Qatamesh have been formal participants in the Palestinian national movement, either as members of the PNC, formal advisors to the PLO, or as associates to factions such as the DFLP and PFLP. Up until 2007, Azmi Bishara was a member of the Israeli Knesset as head of the National Democratic Assembly (NDA), a party that has as its main aim the transformation of Israel from a Jewish state to a “state of all its citizens”. Prior to his co-founding of the NDA in the early 1990s, he was a member of the Israeli communist party, RAKAH.

⁸⁰ Polletta, Francesca, and Jasper, James. M, *Collective Identity and Social Movements*, *Annual Review of Sociology*, p. 284

⁸¹ Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, p. 214

interests of those who are downtrodden.⁸² Zygmunt Bauman refers to this trait as a discourse of ‘service and self-sacrifice’. It is the properties possessed by the intellectual specifically that ought to be put in the services of the oppressed. Their knowledge, ‘beyond the reach of all those who are not [intellectuals]’, should be instrumentalized politically – but not for themselves.⁸³ As proponents of a one-state solution declare, their position in the cultural field has enabled them ‘to understand politics better’ than those who are *not* positioned in this sphere.⁸⁴ They possess ‘a thorough enough understanding of [the Palestinian] people and their cause ... to write and speak about them in public’,⁸⁵ and are in a ‘position to reach people *who are willing to listen* [emphasis added]’, and therefore they ‘must try to do so’.⁸⁶ It is their special qualities as intellectuals that can render a service to subaltern Palestinians. To put them into such use is thus essential, with their actions stemming in part from this practical sense of their own utility to a broader political ensemble.

But as Bauman further contends, a ‘relationship of domination’ is often concealed by the intellectual discourse of service and self-sacrifice.⁸⁷ The authoritative knowledge that intellectuals profess to put in the service of the oppressed is at the same time the principal resource through which their bid for power in a particular social configuration is mobilised. Those who are articulating the discourse of one-state certainly have an interest in advancing the rights of Palestinians. They are also actively engaged in pursuing this interest because of specific understandings of their political role as intellectuals and

⁸² Foucault, Michel, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, Gordon, Colin (ed.), The Harvester Press, Sussex, 1980, pp. 126-33

⁸³ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 13

⁸⁴ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 143

⁸⁵ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. xxiv

⁸⁶ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 375

⁸⁷ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 13

because of their history of activism and the political utility they recognise and invest in knowledge cultivated in the field of culture. Nevertheless, it is the knowledge that they claim to have privileged access to in particular that they deem essential to the Palestinian struggle, and this point is asserted in relation to political elites and “other” intellectuals in the Palestinian political field. Considerable work is undertaken in this discourse so as to elevate their embodied cultural capital to a position of political indispensability and therefore preeminence over other points in social space. Their counter-intervention in the Palestinian political field is primarily explained as a bid for power and it is through the resource of cultural capital, and its elevation above other points, that their struggle for legitimate domination is principally carried out.

Cultural capital of course takes different forms in Bourdieu’s theoretical schema. On the one hand, it may be accumulated through the possession of official qualifications and academic certificates, which concentrate an institutionalised authority in the position of the speaker, a competence that is ‘officially recognized’.⁸⁸ On the other hand, cultural capital is possessed as ‘incorporated dispositions’, a set of cultivated schemes for ‘appreciation and understanding’.⁸⁹ The intellectuals who are calling for a one-state solution are quite rich in both the institutionalised and incorporated forms of cultural capital. Many of them hold advanced degrees from some of the most prestigious universities in the world and continue to be positioned as professional academics in such institutions.⁹⁰ As *public* speakers, moreover, many of them are

⁸⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Forms of Capital*, in, Richardson, John G. (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, p. 251

⁸⁹ Brubaker, Rogers, *Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu, Theory and Society*, pp. 757-8

⁹⁰ These include, among others: Columbia University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, Oxford University, Princeton University, University of California Berkeley, University of California Los Angeles, University of Cambridge, University of London, and Yale University.

recognised, and at times vilified, for being ‘intellectual superstar[s]’ whose bodies incorporate sophisticated cultural dispositions beyond their immediate field of institutional expertise.⁹¹ In their struggle for legitimate domination it is mainly this last form of cultural capital that proponents of a one-state solution are mobilising and seeking to impose at the centre of the Palestinian political universe.

The one-state perspective contends that as a framework of knowledge the “pragmatist” position was destined to failure. Other factors may have contributed to the severity of this failure, but ultimately the epistemological assumptions constitutive of the “pragmatist” viewpoint are fundamentally flawed and therefore its prescriptions for resolving the conflict are – and always were – mistaken. Above all else, then, the crisis afflicting the Palestinian national movement, as represented in the discourse of one-state, stems from a failure of knowledge and more specifically a lack of competence among the higher echelons of the political field. By uttering the “pragmatist” perspective, and indeed by participating in the peace process, political elites have demonstrated that they are unable to appreciate and understand ‘the nature of the Israeli context’.⁹² This is defined by these intellectuals primarily in terms of settler colonialism.

‘In order to have understood this context’, these critics continue, ‘the Palestinian leadership would have had to study Israel carefully, [and] understand the dynamics of its political and ideological commitments’.⁹³ It has not done so, as implied by this statement, and this is because expertise has been ‘excluded

⁹¹ Ruthven, Malise, Edward Said, *The Guardian*, Friday 26 September, 2003, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2003/sep/26/guardianobituaries.highereducation>, accessed 19/12/2012

⁹² Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, pp. 152-3

⁹³ *Ibid.*

from the decision-making process'.⁹⁴ Indeed, as this counter-position further contends, 'knowledge, information, and consent' have been subordinated in the Palestinian arena to a vulgar interpretation of power, practiced by political elites, that centres on 'brute force and policemen'.⁹⁵ The domination of "pragmatist" discourse has been especially calamitous for the Palestinian struggle as its epistemological assumptions are wrong; and they are wrong because those who have produced them are incompetent and lack the sophistication required 'to speak rationally of what is *really* before [Palestinians] as a people [emphasis added]'. As the discourse of one-state asserts, this task 'falls once again to intellectuals and men and women of conscience'.⁹⁶

While the original sin of mistaken assumptions and superficial analysis has resulted in the crisis of the Palestinian national movement, it has been compounded by the political leadership's inability to learn. The leadership's reiteration of "pragmatist" discourse and practice, even in the midst of acute policy failure and crisis, is represented in the discourse of one-state as proving that it is '*incapable* of re-examining the past with all its errors, pitfalls, and misconceptions [emphasis added]'.⁹⁷ It is framed in this discourse as showing that political elites are 'unable to realise' that "pragmatism" has failed and that 'they are not even capable of imagining' an alternative to it.⁹⁸ It shows that 'the Palestinian leadership ... can[not] think beyond the two-state solution', which, given that this agenda is considered an impossibility within this discursive

⁹⁴ Qumsiyeh, Mazin B., *Sharing the Land of Canaan: Human Rights and the Israeli-Palestinian Struggle*, pp. 161-2

⁹⁵ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 56

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 50

⁹⁷ Aruri, Naseer, H., *Towards a Pluralistic Existence in Palestine/Israel*, in, Aruri, Naseer, H., and, Shuraydi, Muhammad, A.(eds.), *Revising Culture Reinventing Peace: the Influence of Edward W. Said*, p. 128

⁹⁸ Sabawi, Samah, The PLO's dangerous land swaps rhetoric, *Al-Jazeera English*, 03 April 2013, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/04/2013437476354167.html>, accessed 03/04/2013

framework, makes this a problem of considerable proportion and political significance.⁹⁹

This inability of political elites to reflect on their mistakes is important as it is contrasted in this discourse with those proponents of a one-state solution who had previously occupied a “pragmatist” standpoint: these figures have possessed the cultural wherewithal to reappraise their initial assumptions and make the necessary changes. As Joseph Massad states: ‘Given that the last ten years [of the peace process] have demonstrated the utter failure of such tactics and strategy, one would think that the PA and its corrupt coterie of consultants would cease and desist from pursuing such a losing course of action’.¹⁰⁰ That they have not done so is due to ‘the stupidity of the Palestinian leadership’.¹⁰¹ It is due to their lack of ‘intelligence, imagination and political skill’;¹⁰² it is due to their being ‘incompetent’¹⁰³ and ‘mad’¹⁰⁴, which has prevented them from being able to comprehend ‘the fiction of US-brokered negotiations’ and so formulate an alternative strategy.¹⁰⁵ The absence of cultivated knowledge among political elites is framed in this discourse as having disastrous consequences for the Palestinian struggle: ‘Having one of the most gullible leaderships in modern

⁹⁹ Karmi, Ghada, Palestinians need a one-state solution, *The Guardian*, Thursday 20 September, 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/sep/20/one-state-solution-palestinians-israel>, accessed 03/04.2013

¹⁰⁰ Massad, Joseph, A., The Binational State and the Reunification of the Palestinian People, *Global Dialogue*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 2002, pp. 123-129, p. 126

¹⁰¹ Makdisi, Saree, Said, Palestine, and the Humanism of Liberation, *Critical Inquiry*, p. 447

¹⁰² Makdisi, Saree, Last Straw for the Palestinian “Authority”?, *Huffpost World*, 6 October, 2009, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/saree-makdisi/last-straw-for-the-palest_b_309585.html, accessed 02/04/2011

¹⁰³ Barghouti, Omar, Organizing for Self-Determination, Ethical De-Zionization and Resisting Apartheid, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*, University of Massachusetts, 28 and 29 March, 2009. A video recording of the conference sessions is available at <http://www.arabichour.org/One-state-Conference.htm>, accessed 03/10/2011

¹⁰⁴ Massad, Joseph A., The compulsion to partition, *Al Jazeera English*

¹⁰⁵ Abunimah, Ali, PLO paper reveals leadership bereft of strategy, legitimacy, *The Electronic Intifada*, 11 March, 2010, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article11126.shtml>, accessed 12/04/2010

history while facing one of the most potent and ruthless of enemies has been a lethal combination for the Palestinian people'.¹⁰⁶

The ineptitude of political elites is further demonstrated, this position contends, in the minutiae of the peace process and in particular the Oslo agreements. In signing these agreements, the political leadership did not entirely foresee the 'damage' it 'inflicted' on the Palestinian national movement.¹⁰⁷ As discussed in the last chapter, the discourse of the peace process effectively worked to assimilate the dominant Palestinian position to a Zionist point of view, allowing Israel to 'continue the occupation with Palestinian consent',¹⁰⁸ while displacing Palestinian refugees to the margins of this discursive formation and effacing the Palestinian minority in Israel from it altogether. To a large extent, political elites did not foresee this damage because they were unable to understand and appreciate what they were signing in the form of the Oslo agreements. According to the one-state perspective, Israel was able to impose an agreement so favourable to the Zionist project on the Palestinian leadership because,

Arafat and Abbas and their assistants at Oslo had no intimate or specialist knowledge of cartography, water aquifers, international law, or the Geneva Conventions; and at best a very unsteady command of the English language, in which they were negotiating and signing documents.

The Israeli negotiators, in contrast, are depicted in this discourse as being rich in specialist knowledge and being acutely aware of its relation to political objective.

¹⁰⁶ Aruri, Naseer, Diagnosis and Key Questions, Abu-Manneh, Bashir, Abunimah, Ali, Aruri, Naseer, Butt, Diana, Nazzal-Batayneh, Mary, Rabbani, Mouin, and, Sabawi, Samah, Strategies if talks "succeed", Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, 16 November, 2010, <http://al-shabaka.org/node/213>, 17/05/2011

¹⁰⁷ Qumsiyeh, Mazin B., *Sharing the Land of Canaan: Human Rights and the Israeli-Palestinian Struggle*, p. 161

¹⁰⁸ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, pp. 24-5

It is this factor too that allowed Israel to orchestrate an agreement with Palestinian representatives on such favourable terms.¹⁰⁹

The Palestinian leadership is also criticised in this discourse for doing ‘an abysmal job’ representing the Palestinian struggle on the international stage. The figures who advocate a one-state solution chastise political elites for being inept at ‘explaining how Palestinian demands are entirely in keeping with the requirements of international law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, various United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and so on’. The failure of political elites in this regard is portrayed as stemming, once again, from an absence of crucial skills. Such agents have been unable ‘to express [Palestinian] intentions and aims – and above all their conformity to the demands of international law – to a global media market, in that market’s primary language of communication, English’. This absence is especially damaging as Palestinians ‘lack other means (economic leverage, military power, diplomatic clout)’ through which to advance their struggle. As such, ‘language is virtually the only device left to them’, which makes the representational deficiencies of the leadership ‘all the more debilitating’.¹¹⁰ Political elites are effectively framed in this discourse as nullifying, through their own incompetence, the one area in which Palestinians might realistically secure political gains. Their lack of knowledge and competence therefore emerges in this discourse as a problem of paramount importance.

Furthermore, the version of social reality constructed in the discourse of one-state is uttered in relation to “other” intellectuals in the Palestinian political field. “Pragmatist” intellectuals are on the receiving end of this discourse’s critique and

¹⁰⁹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 81

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-9

are similarly portrayed as lacking cultural acumen and competence. According to this critique, it is because such intellectuals have ‘suspended their critical faculties’ that they continue to align themselves with dominant political discourse and institutions in the Palestinian arena.¹¹¹ It is due to ‘[i]gnorance and laziness’ that such intellectuals subscribe to and reiterate the classificatory schemas of “pragmatism”,¹¹² and this is why, moreover, they remain utterly ‘credulous’ when confronted with ongoing Zionist discourse and practice that reveals the impossibility of meaningful political and territorial compromise in Mandate Palestine.¹¹³

Importantly, the absence of a critical disposition among “pragmatist” intellectuals is further portrayed in the discourse of one-state as disqualifying them from any role in providing an ‘alternative future’ for Palestinians.¹¹⁴ These intellectuals are not only represented in this discourse as bearing major responsibility for the crisis afflicting the Palestinian national movement,¹¹⁵ but owing to their cultural malaise and inertia are classified as being trapped in a “false” reality from which they cannot escape.¹¹⁶ This classification works, within the framework of this discourse, to promote the irrelevance of “other” intellectuals to the future of the Palestinian struggle. They are defined as irrelevant and this is because proponents of a one-state solution are seeking to assert their relevance.¹¹⁷ If intellectuals are constituted in critique, it is because

¹¹¹ Massad, Joseph, The Intellectual Life of Edward Said, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3, Special Issue in Honor of Edward W. Said, Spring 2004, pp. 7-22, p. 8

¹¹² Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho 1993-1995*, p. 130

¹¹³ Massad, Joseph A., *The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinians*, Routledge, London and New York, 2006, pp. 98-103

¹¹⁴ Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia: A Fanonian Reading of the Intellectual Landscape in Post-Oslo Palestine, *Nebula*, pp. 98-9

¹¹⁵ Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho 1993-1995*, p. 39

¹¹⁶ Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia, *Nebula*, pp. 98-9

¹¹⁷ Bauman, Zygmunt, Love in Adversity: On the State and the Intellectuals, and the State of the Intellectuals, *Thesis Eleven*, p. 81

this process distinguishes them from what they are criticising. Those who utter the discourse of one-state therefore emerge in their definition of social reality as culturally superior agents, whose knowledge and dynamism will allow them to provide an alternative vision for advancing the Palestinian struggle and moving it beyond the current impasse.

As this last point suggests, the centrality of knowledge in the discourse of one-state's critique of "other" elites in the Palestinian political field is embedded in relations of power. Whether intentional or not, any construction of social reality which links an acute crisis to the absence of a specific form of knowledge will have the effect of placing those who possess this knowledge in a preeminent position. To a significant extent, this sort of discursive strategy is typical of intellectuals in politics. Their 'domination depends', as Zygmunt Bauman argues, on their ability to produce the 'indispensability of the kind of knowledge they control'.¹¹⁸ The discourse of one-state asserts that the crisis in Palestinian politics stems not only from a lack of understanding, but from a lack of competence and ability to understand within the higher stratum of the political field. Consequently, what Palestinians 'need is...to understand what is going on, in order that [they] can know how to bring the conflict to a just and lasting resolution [emphasis added]'.¹¹⁹ What is 'needed at the moment' is 'a new beginning, away from the follies of leaders'.¹²⁰ As those who produce this discourse assert, it is they 'who see the reality and its complexities'.¹²¹ It is they who have been proven 'correct' by the impasse in negotiations and the crisis of

¹¹⁸ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 20

¹¹⁹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 269

¹²⁰ Farid, Farid Y., Palestine and the politics of hope, *Al Jazeera English*, 03 October, 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/10/2011102103212424596.html>, accessed 06/09/2012

¹²¹ Ghanem, As'ad, One problem, one solution, *Al-Ahram Weekly*

“pragmatism”.¹²² It is they who possess the ‘critical faculties’ to understand what is ‘realistic’ and how to take the Palestinians forward.¹²³ As such it is they who are politically indispensable.

Therefore, as this position contends, ‘the Palestinian people should be led *now* by modern, well-educated people for whom the values of citizenship are central to their vision [emphasis added]’.¹²⁴ The use of the word ‘now’ is telling in that it reiterates the view – highlighted in this section – that Palestinians so far have not been led by modern, well-educated people. However, given that the discourse of one-state is primarily articulated by intellectuals – a term generally associated with modern, well-educated people – and is a vision in which citizenship holds a central place, the word ‘now’ also indicates what these intellectuals are doing in enunciating this critique: they are making a bid for power over Palestinian social space, and it is this struggle for legitimate domination that principally explains their more forceful engagement in the political field.

Claiming Discourse for the “Outside”

The legitimate domination sought after by those who are calling for a one-state solution is further related to the diasporic position from which their counter-knowledge is predominantly enunciated. It is certainly true that this position has shaped the stance of these intellectuals, with the necessary heterogeneity of diaspora being incorporated into the counter-knowledge of their critical engagement. Nevertheless, this discourse is uttered in a *distinct* transnational

¹²² Eid, Haidar, Gaza 2009: Culture of resistance vs. defeat, *The Electronic Intifada*, 11 February 2009, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article10298.shtml>, accessed 23/11/2009

¹²³ Farid, Farid Y., Palestine and the politics of hope, *Al Jazeera English*

¹²⁴ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 243

field and so is embedded in relations of power as well as in competing definitions of a particular social universe. Why do diasporic agents engage in political struggle across a distinct social space? What, from the point of view of diaspora, is the discourse of one-state about? This study argues that the main answer to these questions is power – both in the sense of resisting subordination and in the sense of legitimately acquiring what John Sorenson calls ‘the control of discourse’.¹²⁵

In recent studies of transnational politics scholars have begun to envision practices of diaspora as practices of citizenship. What this means precisely is that diaspora is not only a form of politics that takes place across state borders, but that it is also concerned with contesting the contingent limits of political boundaries and subjectivities.¹²⁶ Who is a citizen is thus an important question from this perspective, and one that cannot necessarily be answered by an individual’s formal status in a single juridical-political entity.¹²⁷ The formation of a citizen is not, in any case, ‘a benign and innocuous process’, as Engin Isin points out. Boundaries of inside and outside are produced in and through relations of power, which delimit political subjectivities of belonging and exclusion, possession and lack. What one is, or claims to be, is thus inseparable from what constitutes citizenship and its performance: the properties which enable one to make judgements and take part in determining the “common” good and which are beyond the limits of “others”.¹²⁸ These properties and the

¹²⁵ Sorenson, John, *Essence and Contingency in the Construction of Nationhood: Transformations of Identity in Ethiopia and its Diaspora*, *Diaspora*, pp. 214-23

¹²⁶ Bauböck, Rainer, *Towards a Political Theory of Migrant Transnationalism*, *International Migration Review*, pp. 719-20

¹²⁷ Turner, Simon, *The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 745-7

¹²⁸ Isin, Engin F., *Being Political: Genealogies of Citizenship*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London, 2002, pp. ix(preface)-37

boundaries they enact are not fixed, and as with any other category of practice, the determinants of citizenship are historically contingent and contested.

Within transnational settings, and within diaspora politics in particular, boundaries of inside and outside are often crucial. The use of a Bourdieusian lense, however, enables one to see the distinction between “inside” and “outside” not only as a marker of physical location, but more importantly as a relationship of hierarchy that is potentially antagonistic. Everybody is *inside* the field, whether this relatively autonomous social space is local, transnational, or international. Yet, the relative positions constitutive of this structure are only contingently configured horizontally. In Palestinian politics, the repositioning of the centre of gravity from exile to the occupied territories was expedited by the first Palestinian *intifada*, and consecrated by the signing of the Oslo Accords and the establishment of the PA. What this repositioning led to, though, was a severing of the Palestinian body politic, with Palestinians outside the occupied territories being formally positioned outside the political process.¹²⁹

For proponents of a one-state solution, this process of exclusion has been bitterly received. Their counter-intervention is to a large extent motivated by resistance to their subordination outside the boundaries of formal Palestinian politics, and is driven by the object of not only reasserting their membership inside the Palestinian polity, but of legitimately reconstructing what “inside” means. As diaspora intellectuals, they are claiming rights and obligations as part of the Palestinian political community, and this includes a claim to symbolic

¹²⁹ Nabulsi, Karma, Popular Sovereignty, Collective Rights, Participation and Crafting Durable Solutions for Palestinian Refugees, *BADIL Expert Forum, Seminar 1, The Role of International Law in Peacemaking and Crafting Durable Solutions for Refugees*, Ghent University/Department of Third World Studies, May 2003, p. 9

authority. It is once again the battle for legitimate domination that explains their conduct as *diaspora* intellectuals engaging in political struggle.

A key feature of the Bourdieusian field is that its agents accept that its particular interests at stake are worth competing over. They recognise that the “game” is ‘worth playing’, and without this contest the field would cease to exist. This recognition may be only tacit, however, and as Bourdieu argues agents within a particular social configuration may participate in such struggles because the possibility of not doing so is temporally unimaginable.¹³⁰ Their conduct in this regard is taken for granted and is assumed to be inevitable. This feature extends to the transnational political field and for those diasporic agents who are constructing the discourse of one-state it is certainly relevant. Their participation in Palestinian politics is largely undertaken on the assumption that ‘being Palestinian is a full time occupation’ and therefore for them to slide into indifference and political apathy in this transnational context is simply ‘not possible’.¹³¹ They have no ‘choice’ in this matter.¹³² The prospect of them *not* ‘tak[ing] part in what’s going on’ in this context appears to be largely inconceivable to their mode of thought.¹³³

Of course, there are good historical and sociological reasons for this assumption, and it has not emerged from nowhere. To begin with, the Palestinian struggle for (even pragmatic) justice and (even minimal) rights is ongoing and for those who are producing the counter-knowledge of a one-state solution this is grounds enough for them to be politically involved.

¹³⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 179-80

¹³¹ Personal interview with Ghada Karmi, London, 15 February, 2010

¹³² Said, Edward W., *The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with David Barsamian*, p. 164

¹³³ Rabbani, Mouin, Symbols versus Substance: A Year after the Declaration of Principles: An Interview with Edward W. Said, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2, Winter 1995, pp. 60-72, p. 69

Furthermore, the manner in which these individuals perceive their dispersal from the Palestinian homeland is a significant factor. As discussed previously, dispersal across state borders is a core aspect of diaspora, as is an active orientation to a putative “homeland”, and an engagement in practices which contribute to the production of a discrete transnational community. For scholars such as Rogers Brubaker it is this last point that is especially important, as it allows the expression of a diaspora as a distinct social formation.¹³⁴ Participation in diasporic practices is therefore not inevitable for dispersed peoples in this view, as diaspora is ‘a process and an aspiration’ as opposed to ‘a sociological fact’.¹³⁵ One contention in the literature on diaspora is that individuals who perceive their dispersal to be involuntary are more likely to engage in diasporic practices and form a particularly salient connection to the putative “homeland” and the wider transnational community. Violent dispersals are important in this respect owing to the profound trauma that they inflict upon those who experience them.¹³⁶

The phrase *al nakba* refers to the loss of Palestine in 1948 as well as to the violent dispersal of the vast majority of Palestinians from this territory by Zionist forces. As a semiotic device it also signifies a continuing process of loss and dispossession, an ongoing trauma and catastrophe. As both an event and a process, *al nakba* has unquestionably had a formative effect on Palestinian national consciousness, and historically it has been represented in important national documents as a state of exception that will be only ended through struggle and a ‘return’ to the homeland, so that ‘normal life’ can resume.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 5-6

¹³⁵ Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 746

¹³⁶ Clifford, James, Diasporas, *Cultural Anthropology*, p. 307

¹³⁷ PLO, *The Palestinian National Charter*, in, Kadi, Leila S. (ed.), *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, p. 138

Though the trauma of *al nakba* sometimes appears solely as a psychological shock in historiography on Palestine, it does have a material dimension, as after 1948 most Palestinians in exile lived in highly oppressive environments, making the ‘return to Palestine an urgent necessity’.¹³⁸ This point should not be overstated, however, as for many Palestinians, as well as for diasporic agents generally, the notion of return signifies the possibility of ‘healing’ and overcoming subjectivities of loss, rather than an actual step.¹³⁹ Moreover, it conveys a legitimate stake in the politics of the “homeland” – even if such conduct is performed from afar – while transmitting memories of the initial loss.¹⁴⁰

The diasporic subjectivities which emerge in the discourse of one-state are likewise constituted around loss and return, and this suggests that the trauma of the Palestinian dispersal is a major factor accounting for the unthinking investment in the politics of the homeland and the *transnational* community that those who produce this position undertake. Within the writings of these diaspora intellectuals *al nakba* is categorised as a loss of ‘human dignity’ and an event and a process that has inflicted ‘the *special* wound of victimization [emphasis added]’ on them and other Palestinians.¹⁴¹ It is framed in terms of an ‘ineffable collective loss and grief’, which has produced a ‘deep vow’¹⁴² and a

¹³⁸ Sayigh, Rosemary, *The Palestinians: from peasants to revolutionaries*, Zed Books, London, 2007 (1979), p. 159

¹³⁹ Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 746

¹⁴⁰ Incidentally, this is a further factor explaining why the reduction of the right of return to a final status issue in the context of the peace process is framed as a denial of a legitimate right *and* an erasure of history in the discourse of one-state.

¹⁴¹ Bisharat, George, Origins of the Middle East crisis: Who caused the Palestinian Diaspora?, *The Electronic Intifada*, 3 December, 2003, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/origins-middle-east-crisis-who-caused-palestinian-diaspora/4898>, accessed 29/04/2010

¹⁴² Abulhawa, Susan, 60 Years of Dispossession, Humiliation, Oppression, *The Palestine Chronicle*, 23 May 2008, http://palestinechronicle.com/view_article_details.php?id=13820, accessed 18/01/2011

‘determination’ to return among Palestinians that is ‘sacred’.¹⁴³ What is more, the prospect of being able to ‘go home’ is construed as enabling the healing of this wound, as it ‘will have’ the effect of ending ‘the bitterest conflict of all’.¹⁴⁴ The promise of redemption through overturning a political subjectivity of loss is thus a powerful scheme in the discourse of one-state, and whether it works figuratively or is sought literally, it orients the action of those who produce it toward the Palestinian homeland and political community. Such a stance is to a significant extent typical of those agents who produce diasporic practice.

Another factor which may contribute to the engagement of individuals in diasporic practices is the conditions in the national states in which they are embedded. Transnational political fields are peculiar in the sense that they are both a relatively autonomous social space and one that overlaps with (ordinarily) more institutionalised national fields of power. Resources available in the latter may certainly permit action in the former; whether these include access to technologies that enable the rapid transference of specific discourses across state borders; or, as in the case of those agents under analysis here, official qualifications and institutionalised positions which affect authorised discourse beyond immediate local contexts.¹⁴⁵ National discourses and institutions which do not foreclose political identifications beyond singular limits are also important conditions which allow individuals to initiate transnational politics.¹⁴⁶ Those intellectuals who produce the discourse of one-state tend to be situated in

¹⁴³ Abu Sitta, Salman, *Palestinian Right to Return: Sacred, Legal and Possible* (second revised edition), The Palestinian Return Centre, London, May 1999, p. 43

¹⁴⁴ Karmi, Ghada, Bin Laden and the Palestinians, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 12-18 May, 2011, Issue No. 1047, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/print/2011/1047/op1.htm>, accessed 13/07/2011

¹⁴⁵ Vauchez, Antoine, Interstitial Power in Fields of Limited Statehood: Introducing a “Weak Field” Approach to the Study of Transnational Settings, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 341-2

¹⁴⁶ Demmers, Jolle, Diaspora and Conflict: Locality, Long-Distance Nationalism, and Delocalisation of Conflict Dynamics, *The Public*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2002, pp. 85-96, p. 94

national states and societies in North America and Europe that permit multi-identificational political practices; or at least they are positioned in states and societies which do not compel their putative members to assimilate to a single subject-position. This point certainly seems significant to explaining their adherence to the transnational field.¹⁴⁷

Commitment to the politics of the “homeland” and transnational community may further stem from a position of marginality in the “hostland” context. Individuals may engage in diasporic practices and (re)produce a distinct transnational social formation due to a sense of exclusion from the state and society in which they are objectively positioned.¹⁴⁸ Although most of those who articulate the discourse of one-state are formal citizens of North American and European states, and are individuals who occupy “successful” social positions, political marginality and exclusion in these settings is a prominent theme in their public texts. Within the US context in particular, this sense of marginality as Palestinian- and Arab-Americans stems from what they perceive (with good reason) as the hegemony of Zionist discourse in this arena, which they additionally understand as constraining considerably the utterance of legitimate Palestinian political discourse.¹⁴⁹

Moreover, many of these Palestinian intellectuals see themselves as being positioned within “Western” contexts that are to a significant extent structured by what Joseph Massad calls a ‘racialized discourse’. From their point of view, this discursive structure prohibits their “full” participation in these social frameworks as Palestinians, as it works to constitute them as perennially non-white subjects,

¹⁴⁷ Hanafi, Sari, Reshaping Geography: Palestinian Community Networks in Europe and the New Media, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, pp. 584-5

¹⁴⁸ Kostantaras, Dean. J, Idealisations of self and nation in the thought of diaspora intellectuals, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 2008, pp. 700-720, pp. 701-13

¹⁴⁹ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 222

whose subjectivity ranges from ‘uncivilized barbarians’ to a more ambivalent ‘*white but not quite*’. To a certain extent, this view stems from the postcolonial lense through which they conceive social reality, and more specifically from the Fanonist gaze that they deploy. But it should be stressed that this perspective stems from their lived experience as well. If it was not for the saliency of this discursive structure, as Massad states, ‘Palestinians (myself included) ... would not face the difficulties which *we* constantly do [emphasis added]’.¹⁵⁰ More to the point, this marginality of Palestinian political utterances, and this interpellation of Palestinian subjectivity into a racialized position, is disliked and resisted by these intellectuals, and these hierarchal relations in the “hostland” context have had the consequence of spurring action and unquestioned commitment to the transnational field.

Given this investment in the transnational political field, it is unsurprising that these agents have greeted the contraction of the formal sphere of Palestinian politics to the occupied territories with much trepidation and disaffection. The stakes are indeed high in this relation of subordination. To accept their positioning outside the formal boundaries of Palestinian politics would be ‘to commit national suicide’.¹⁵¹ It would entail a ‘stripping of political identity’ from their bodies and from those of other Palestinians who are not situated in the West Bank or Gaza Strip.¹⁵² With this stark language in mind, it is additionally unsurprising that they should seek to resist this process of contraction that was consecrated through the Oslo Accords, the establishment of the PA, and the first PLC election. To assert, as proponents of the one-state perspective do, that ‘I’m

¹⁵⁰ Massad, Joseph, *Palestinians and the Limits of Racialized Discourse*, *Social Text*, pp. 100-8

¹⁵¹ Massad, Joseph A., *The Binational State and the Reunification of the Palestinian People*, *Global Dialogue*, p. 127

¹⁵² Nabulsi, Karma, *Popular Sovereignty, Collective Rights, Participation and Crafting Durable Solutions for Palestinian Refugees*, *BADIL Expert Forum, Seminar 1, The Role of International Law in Peacemaking and Crafting Durable Solutions for Refugees*, p. 9

Palestinian too’,¹⁵³ or that ‘Palestinians everywhere, both inside and outside, are *still* citizens of the Palestinian polity [emphasis added]’, is therefore an act of resistance.¹⁵⁴ Such language is a counterpoint to the process of exclusion being forced upon Palestinians outside the occupied territories by political elites in agreement with Israel. As will be discussed shortly, the invocation of citizenship works to claim certain rights and obligations, which are articulated in a specific manner in this discourse and in terms that a far from being banal.

On one level, the interest of these agents in resisting their positioning outside the boundaries of formal Palestinian politics is ideational and is derived from the logic of the field and its ontology of difference.¹⁵⁵ For instance, it is interesting that the re-centring of Palestinian political gravity to the occupied territories that occurred with the first *intifada* is not perceived by these individuals as a process of exclusion. From their perspective, at the time of the first *intifada* inside and outside were not salient political boundaries in the Palestinian context, as this uprising was one expression of *the* meaning of Palestine as a ‘struggle against racial discrimination’ and more specifically Zionism.¹⁵⁶ Though it catapulted Palestinians in the occupied territories to the forefront of the national movement, the *intifada*’s signification, as understood by those who are calling for a one-state solution, was one they identified with and were firmly positioned within. Despite the profound changes it engendered, the *intifada*, in this sense, did not amount to a stark departure. It represented continuity, both discursively and spatially.

¹⁵³ Abulhawa, Susan, 60 Years of Dispossession, Humiliation, Oppression, *The Palestine Chronicle*

¹⁵⁴ Nabulsi, Karma, The pain of being Palestinian (wherever you live), *The Independent*, Tuesday 12 September, 2006, <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/karma-nabulsi-the-pain-of-being-palestinian-wherever-you-live-415617.html>, accessed 18/01/2011

¹⁵⁵ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 234-5

¹⁵⁶ Said, Edward W., By birth or by choice?, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 28 October-3 November 1999, Issue No. 453, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1999/453/op2.htm>, accessed 01/05/2009

The meaning of Palestine was radically altered from their perspective with the signing of the Oslo Accords and when the PLO leadership “returned” from exile and when the PA was established. Due to this process, Palestine was changed from an idea which signified a liberationist alternative to Zionism to a sign that stood for ‘a nationalist state that would mirror Zionist nationalism across the border’.¹⁵⁷ The contraction of the formal boundaries of Palestinian politics to the occupied territories was accompanied by a perversion of its “true” meaning, according to this standpoint; and so, to a considerable degree, their interest in resisting this process is a result of their desire to ‘restore Palestine’ to its rightful place.¹⁵⁸ That is to say, their exclusion from the formal political sphere is in part understood as the domination of a different vision of Palestine, one that they dislike and feel unaffiliated to, and one that they seek to rearticulate. Boundaries of inside and outside and the hierarchal relations between these limits are therefore partly determined by different visions of a particular social universe and their relative position in (transnational) social space. Advocates of a one-state solution describe themselves as being ‘actively involved in redefining the national agenda from the outside’, and they are engaged in such practice because they object to what Palestine has become, or rather, they object to the marginalisation of their own particular point of view.¹⁵⁹

On another level, their interest in resisting their subordination in the Palestinian political field stems from its objective structure. As embodied agents they have been materially excluded from taking part in formal Palestinian politics, which of course accounts to a large extent for the subordination of their particular vision of Palestine in this arena (in actuality, symbolic structure and

¹⁵⁷ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 148

¹⁵⁸ Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho 1993-1995*, p. xxix

¹⁵⁹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 282

objective structure are typically inseparable in Bourdieu's opinion, and such levels are only separated here for analytical purposes¹⁶⁰). 'The most serious assault' on the 'Palestinian people as a whole' was the first PLC election in 1996, as this was restricted to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, so 'excluding ... all Palestinians outside of them from the democratic process to which they too were entitled'. This process had the effect of 'creating cleavages and tensions between segments of Palestinian society'.¹⁶¹ For those who construct the discourse of one-state specifically, the contradictions in Palestinian society stem from their own desire to 'restore their ties with their homeland and its people'.¹⁶² Their refusal to accept their objective positioning outside the boundaries of formal politics is a key factor for their engagement in political struggle across transnational social space. In order for them to take part in the formal political sphere the objective structure of the field must change, and so they contest it.

Thus, from the point of view of diaspora, the discourse of one-state is about resisting discursive and material subordination in the Palestinian political field, and seeking the subversion and reconstruction of the established order in this particular social space. A one-state solution is a particular vision of Palestine and the Palestinian struggle, one that is homologous with the specific position in the field of those who articulate it, and one that has been discussed in detail already (see chapter two).

In addition, a one-state solution is promoted from this standpoint as a framework of struggle that *all* Palestinians can take part in, without material or temporal discordance or disintegration. Demonstrating that diaspora politics is

¹⁶⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 234-6

¹⁶¹ Nabulsi, Karma, Popular Sovereignty, Collective Rights, Participation and Crafting Durable Solutions for Palestinian Refugees, *BADIL Expert Forum, Seminar 1, The Role of International Law in Peacemaking and Crafting Durable Solutions for Refugees*, p. 9

¹⁶² Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 170

not singularly or even primarily concerned with hybridity and fashioning a postnational future, a one-state solution is advanced by these diaspora intellectuals as a platform that will enable ‘a condition of national coherence’ for Palestinians.¹⁶³ In contrast to the limits imposed upon them by the contraction of the formal political sphere to the occupied territories, a one-state solution is marketed as a ‘vision capable of unifying Palestinians and ... *their* goals [emphasis added]’.¹⁶⁴ To those who produce this vision, it is this interest in restructuring objective positions in the political field that further explains their engagement in political struggle: the object of commonality *against* partiality, both in terms of participation and aims. The struggle for a one-state solution is in fact represented by these agents as the ‘only way the Palestinian people can be reunified’.¹⁶⁵ This is also what is at stake in the context of their counter-intervention: the (re)formation of a homogenous space.

Such a space is an ontological impossibility in Bourdieu’s visualisation of the social world, however, as it would necessitate absolute reconciliation and harmony.¹⁶⁶ The institution of a common framework of participation and interest may well be a strong element driving these intellectuals into contentious action, but this goal is neither sought benignly nor without relations of hierarchy. The struggle for unification is actually the struggle for their legitimate domination of the political field; and while participation for all is sought in their vision of this particular reality, boundaries of inside and outside remain, albeit with a different distribution of resources and symbolic authority. From the point of view of diaspora, the question of “Who speaks for Palestine?” is perhaps better phrased

¹⁶³ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 328

¹⁶⁴ Makdisi, S, Good Riddance, Abbas, *Foreign Policy*

¹⁶⁵ Massad, Joseph A., The Binational State and the Reunification of the Palestinian People, *Global Dialogue*, p. 128

¹⁶⁶ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociological Theory*, p. 40

as “Who is a citizen?” – by which is meant, who is better able to determine the “common” interest?¹⁶⁷ It is the deconstruction *and* reconstruction of political boundaries and subjectivities that most accurately explains the counter-invention of these diaspora intellectuals, though this struggle is not necessarily carried out consciously. They are trying to redefine what constitutes “inside”.

This process occurs in a similar fashion to the mobilisation of their cultural capital that was analysed in the last section. The ‘principles of hierarchization’, which are an issue of contention in any given field, include in this particular instance not only a struggle by these agents to legitimately classify the knowledge they possess as politically indispensable, but a struggle to hierarchize the site of diaspora as the position for the proper conduct of politics.¹⁶⁸ As this position asserts, ‘Palestinians *outside of historical Palestine* can play a constructive role that is *impossible* for those inside, who live under the daily pressure of occupation and dialectical confrontation [emphasis added]’.¹⁶⁹ Owing to ‘the burden of daily survival’,¹⁷⁰ these Palestinians, along with those positioned in refugee camps, cannot possibly counteract the ‘jejune clichés and unthinking formulas’ that dominate the political field¹⁷¹ – at least this is how social reality is represented in the discourse of one-state. Diaspora, in contrast, is hierarchized in this discourse as a site of ‘relative security’ which enables its occupants – meaning primarily those cultural elites who construct this version of social reality – to ‘sit down and think’. The materiality of diaspora as ‘time and security’ is itself mobilised as a resource in this context that grants certain agents

¹⁶⁷ Isin, Engin F., *Being Political: Genealogies of Citizenship*, p. x (preface)

¹⁶⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 168

¹⁶⁹ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 208

¹⁷⁰ Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man*, pp. 179-80

¹⁷¹ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 77

‘the ability to analyse and think through solutions’ to the problems of Palestinians as a whole.¹⁷²

It is the possession of such properties that “other” Palestinians lack – indispensable knowledge *combined* with the material conditions to use it effectively – that ‘leaves the Palestinian diaspora’ as the only constituency in the political field from which a ‘new leadership’ can emerge.¹⁷³ From this representation of social reality emerges the central claim in the discourse of one-state: that ‘as citizens’ its proponents ‘must take responsibility’ for the Palestinian struggle.¹⁷⁴ One of the main texts constitutive of the discourse of one-state is a book entitled *Palestine Inside Out*, written by Saree Makdisi. The title of this book is striking when read from the analytical perspective deployed in this study, in that it captures precisely what is being sought after through the political engagement of these intellectuals. They are trying to institutionalise the “outside” as the inside of the political field, a point from which judgements on the “common” good can be properly undertaken by individuals who ‘know’ what is best for Palestinians.¹⁷⁵ Political boundaries and political subjectivities are intertwined and contingent, and for all the talk in this discourse of unifying the national field, it is clear that most Palestinians are left outside its boundaries of citizenship as a practice.

Therefore, from the position of diaspora, the political engagement of these intellectuals remains heavily embedded in relations of power: not only as a practice of resistance to subordination, but as a struggle for legitimate symbolic

¹⁷² Personal interview with Ghada Karmi, 15 February 2010, London

¹⁷³ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, pp. 344-5

¹⁷⁴ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, pp. 76-7

¹⁷⁵ Abunimah, Ali, and, Barghouti, Omar, Democracy: an existential threat?, *The Guardian*, Sunday 30 December, 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/dec/30/democracyanexistentialthreat>, accessed 23/11/2008

authority. The question of “who is a citizen?” is increasingly being seen as a pertinent issue in the study of diasporic and transnational politics. Yet, as this study shows, in certain circumstances the more pressing question might be, “what constitutes citizenship?” – how do particular agents in a transnational field claim the right and duty to speak with authority and determine the “common” good? What properties and resources do they mobilise in this regard? Who are the outsiders? Who lacks the properties necessary for the performance of citizenship?¹⁷⁶

The answers to these questions are not universally fixed and they remain open to contestation. In regards to the particular case at hand, the properties of cultural wherewithal, non-oppressive temporality, and ontological security, are mobilised in relation to “others” in the transnational political field who lack such attributes; and it is the legitimate production of this distinction that is being sought after by those diaspora intellectuals who are constructing the counter-discourse of a one-state solution; and it is this aim that primarily explains their counter-intervention in this political arena. Diasporic practices may stem from losses, redemptions, and exclusions that orient action to a putative “homeland” and maintain adherence to a *transnational* community. Nevertheless, power is a pivotal factor explaining such conduct.

Augmenting this Claim I: Representing Palestine

If one accepts what has been said so far, then it is clear that ‘[b]y acting, agents are shaped by the relations in which they engage’.¹⁷⁷ The relation of distinction

¹⁷⁶ Isin, Engin F., Citizenship in flux: The figure of the activist citizen, *Subjectivity*, Issue 29, 2009, pp. 367-388, pp. 368-72

¹⁷⁷ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 236

undertaken by those intellectuals who are calling for a one-state solution reveals a struggle for power in the political field that centres on their claim to legitimate symbolic authority at the expense of “other” positions in this arena. Further proof for this struggle, this section argues, is found in the discourse of one-state’s claim to legitimately represent the Palestinian people. The “people” or the “nation” or the “proletariat” are historically strong themes in the discursive practices of intellectuals in politics (though not necessarily uniquely),¹⁷⁸ and their claims to unity with a particular group function to constitute such figures as its legitimate spokespersons. Given the immanent plurality of the field, this process of speaking for others necessarily entails symbolic violence, and claims to be able to do so may be appropriative, assimilating the interests, desires and identifications of a broader ensemble (whatever these might be) to a singular point of view. It is in this sense that Bourdieu speaks of the spokesperson creating the group, as opposed to the other way round.¹⁷⁹

Substance is often sought after for such claims through struggles over the past, what Bourdieu calls ‘a retrospective reconstruction of a past adjusted to the needs of the present’.¹⁸⁰ This kind of action is certainly being attempted in the discourse of one-state, as will be demonstrated in the next section. Such claims are often enacted, especially by those agents who occupy an elite position in the field, through – once again – relations of distinction. It is the relation that ‘forms the extremities’ in a Bourdieusian understanding of the social world; meaning that it is through a process of “othering” that temporally binds certain positions together that the identities of agents are contingently brought into being.¹⁸¹ In

¹⁷⁸ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 172-6; Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, p. 210

¹⁷⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 204-14

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 235

¹⁸¹ Bigo, Didier, *Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power*, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 236-7

battles for domination this relational practice typically involves efforts to discredit others in a field and impose categories upon them which separate their position from an effective political role. Separation from the “people” is frequently an important element in this strategy, which at the same time is geared towards the production of its converse: the agent as the synecdoche of the “people”, the person who can legitimately speak for them.¹⁸²

In addition to having deficiencies in knowledge and competence, other elites in the Palestinian political field are represented in the discourse of one-state as having abandoned the Palestinian people and their cause. This representational practice is prominent and routinely deploys vituperating language to define these other positions. What such language does, in the framework of this discourse at least, is establish these other elites as outsiders, as persons who are distinct from the “masses” because they identify with narrow interests as opposed to those of the whole. Of course, those intellectuals who utter these classifications claim to have the resources necessary for advancing the “common” good and such language further works to differentiate them from these other elites and position them on the side of the “people”. They ‘know what Palestinians need’,¹⁸³ and ‘what is desired’ by them,¹⁸⁴ and a one-state solution encapsulates these general interests.¹⁸⁵ Their point of view is that of the “people”, and hence they are legitimate representatives. However, such claims are hardly straightforward and unidirectional, and as they are uttered in a social space of contention, they cannot

¹⁸² Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 744-5

¹⁸³ Abunimah, Ali, and, Barghouti, Omar, Democracy: an existential threat?, *The Guardian*

¹⁸⁴ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 167

¹⁸⁵ Makdisi, Saree, If Not Two States, Then One, *The New York Times*, December 5, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/06/opinion/global/if-not-two-states-then-one.html?_r=0, accessed 03/04/2013

be separated from struggles for power and the monopolisation of legitimate political discourse.

The version of social reality expressed in the discourse of one-state contends that, since their participation in the Oslo peace process, political elites in the Palestinian arena have been acting ‘for personal gain at the expense of the national cause’.¹⁸⁶ These elites approach ‘matters that relate to the general interest from the narrowest of perspectives – that of their own vested interests’.¹⁸⁷ The ‘Palestinian leaders’ are ‘willing ... to sell out their people’s rights’; and this is not only because they are culturally unsophisticated and unable to properly understand the reality that they are faced with; it is also because they have ‘given up’ and become ‘[c]onvinced that colonialism cannot be defeated’ in Palestine-Israel.¹⁸⁸ Capitulation is another factor which accounts for this leadership’s adoption of the colonizer’s gaze and its *thorough* assimilation of “pragmatism” to the Zionist point of view. They have lost the ‘will to resist’.¹⁸⁹ As such, so write those who produce this classification, political elites are only interested in ‘some petty managerial role within [Israel’s colonial structure] from which they might benefit, even at the expense of their people’.¹⁹⁰ This role includes ‘ruling the bantustans being carved out of the occupied territories’,¹⁹¹ and ‘collaborating openly with the oppressor’,¹⁹² so as to ensure the ‘subordination and conformity of the Palestinians’ in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁶ Katamesh, Ahmad, *Approach to the Single Democratic State: Two Separate and Interlocked Communities*, p. 69

¹⁸⁷ Bishara, Azmi, *Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process*, in, Giacaman, George, and, Lønning, Dag J. (eds.), *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, p. 220

¹⁸⁸ Makdisi, Saree, The Palestinian people betrayed, *Los Angeles Times*

¹⁸⁹ Said, Edward, W., *The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with David Barsamian*, p. 150

¹⁹⁰ Makdisi, Saree, The Palestinian people betrayed, *Los Angeles Times*

¹⁹¹ Massad, Joseph, Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle, *Middle East Critique*, Vol. 6, No. 11, Fall 1997, pp. 21-35, p. 28

¹⁹² Justin Podur interviews Omar Barghouti, The South Africa Moment in Palestine, *Znet Magazine*, April 4, 2009, <http://www.zcommunications.org/contents/57547/print>, accessed 29/11/2009

¹⁹³ Eid, Haidar, Gaza 2009: De-Osloizing the Palestinian Mind, *Palestine Think Tank*

So, according to the one-state perspective, it is not solely that political elites are incapable of moving beyond the “pragmatist” framework and generating a ‘genuine’ political strategy,¹⁹⁴ it is also that they are ‘unwilling’ to do so owing to narrow benefits that accrue to them from the prevailing order.¹⁹⁵ They are utterly useless; they are ‘Palestinian Zionists’¹⁹⁶; they are ‘working for the other side’.¹⁹⁷ They are complicit in perpetuating a discursive order that is ‘producing Palestinians as forever subjugated to Israeli apartheid and military occupation’, and they are disinterested in change.¹⁹⁸

What is more, because of this loss of will, adoption of the Zionist viewpoint, and resulting lack of interest in the “national” good, the political leadership is represented in the discourse of one-state as having ‘zero credibility’ and as being unable to make a ‘real claim to represent the views of Palestinians’.¹⁹⁹ In fact, rather than legitimately representing Palestinians, the surrender attributed to political elites in this discourse is additionally framed as revealing their contempt for the “masses”. As Haidar Eid writes, it shows that they lack ‘faith in the power of the Palestinian people to reclaim their land and rights’.²⁰⁰

For those intellectuals who are producing this counter-discourse, this issue of political representation was one that they raised very early on in the context of their critical engagement. Even before they came out firmly in favour of a one-

¹⁹⁴ Makdisi, Saree, The Palestinian people betrayed, *Los Angeles Times*

¹⁹⁵ Aruri, Naseer, H., *Towards a Pluralistic Existence in Palestine/Israel*, in, Aruri, Naseer, H., and, Shuraydi, Muhammad, A.(eds.), *Revising Culture Reinventing Peace: the Influence of Edward W. Said*, p. 128

¹⁹⁶ El-Khairy, Mohannad, Our Last Hope, *The One Democratic State Group*, Tuesday, 15 December, 2009, http://www.odsg.org/co/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1581:our-last-hope&catid=27:one-state&Itemid=41, accessed 12/04/2010

¹⁹⁷ Justin Podur interviews Omar Barghouti, The South Africa Moment in Palestine, *Znet Magazine*

¹⁹⁸ Massad, Joseph, Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle, *Middle East Critique*, p. 28

¹⁹⁹ Makdisi, Saree, The Palestinian people betrayed, *Los Angeles Times*

²⁰⁰ Eid, Haidar, The pitfalls of Palestinian national consciousness, *The Electronic Intifada*

state solution, figures from this perspective were denouncing the PLO hierarchy for signing the Oslo Accords and participating in the peace process, and thus fully ‘shed[ding] itself of its own history and its own representativity’.²⁰¹ It is therefore an issue which is highly significant to proponents of this approach, and the historic leadership’s signing of these accords is now consistently framed in their discursive output as the exact moment when it ‘ceased to represent the national will of the majority of Palestinians’.²⁰² The exact moment when it forfeited ‘control over language and discourse’, and ‘abandoned altogether the traditional Palestinian narratives of self-determination and national liberation’; the exact moment when it acquiesced in ‘Israel’s ... language and discourse’ and so became deprived of legitimacy.²⁰³

If the political leadership does not represent the national will of the Palestinians, or at least the majority of them, then who does? More to the point, what is the national will of most Palestinians? Given the inherent instability of the field, as well as its plurality, there can be no fixed or singular answer to these questions. Nevertheless, the agents who are articulating the discourse of one-state are trying to provide such an answer, and tellingly they define their ‘own will as “people”’.²⁰⁴ ‘Deep inside’, they contend, ‘a huge majority of Palestinians ... want to see a one-state [solution]’ to the conflict.²⁰⁵ A one-state solution, as portrayed by these intellectuals, is classified as a ‘genuine... expression of Palestinianism’. It is ‘essentially Palestinian’.²⁰⁶ As has been

²⁰¹ Said, Edward, W., *The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with David Barsamian*, p. 133

²⁰² Massad, Joseph A., *The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essay on Zionism and the Palestinians*, pp. 98-103

²⁰³ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, pp. 85-6

²⁰⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 210

²⁰⁵ Barghouti, Omar, Organizing for Self-Determination, Ethical De-Zionization and Resisting Apartheid, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*

²⁰⁶ Abu Sitta, Salman, *Foreword*, in, Qumsiyeh, Mazin B., *Sharing the Land of Canaan: Human Rights and the Israeli-Palestinian Struggle*, p. xiii

shown, the position-taking of these intellectuals is very much structurally homologous with their particular position in the field, and therefore to say that their stance is the stance of Palestinians generally risks symbolic violence beyond their initial utterance. The elision of difference in the Palestinian field occurs most egregiously *in* this discourse through terms such as ‘false consciousness’, which are applied to Palestinians who support the two-state position.²⁰⁷ These people are considered to be holding a perspective different to the one that they ‘should morally and rationally admit’.²⁰⁸ They are wrong and irrational, and so their views can be dismissed as false.

The language of falsity, whether uttered implicitly or explicitly, clearly implies its opposite – truth. “Speaking truth to power” is how proponents of a one-state solution define their critical engagement, and as a discursive device this phrase has had a structuring effect on their bodies, forcing them to take part in political struggle. Within this specific context, however, this phrase has taken on an additional significance (though not necessarily for the first time). It is not only a structuring structure, and a claim to know ‘what is really before [Palestinians] as a people’²⁰⁹ – a privileged access to the “truth” that gives them ‘the right to tell others, deprived of such access, what to do’.²¹⁰ It also incorporates a claim to be the true voice of the Palestinian people, uttered against those political elites who have apparently abandoned this position and taken up with the ‘enemy’.²¹¹ So,

²⁰⁷ Eid, Haidar, Gaza 2009: De-Osloizing the Palestinian Mind, *Palestine Think Tank*

²⁰⁸ Farsakh, Leila, Building Movements for the One State Solution in Palestine and the Arab World, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*, University of Massachusetts, 28 and 29 March, 2009. A video recording of the conference sessions is available at <http://www.arabichour.org/One-state-Conference.htm>, accessed 03/10/2011

²⁰⁹ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 50

²¹⁰ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Intimations of Postmodernity*, Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p. 9

²¹¹ Massad, Joseph, Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle, *Middle East Critique*, p. 28

what is occurring through the articulation of the discourse of one-state is not only a struggle to discredit and delegitimise political elites in the Palestinian arena, but through such efforts there is a struggle to legitimise speakers of this discourse as spokespersons for Palestinians, in this framework and beyond. Their point of view is asserted as the Palestinian point of view, and they contest power.

The production of “false consciousness” among Palestinians is furthermore attributed to what some of those who promote a one-state solution call the ‘assimilated intelligentsia’: those “pragmatist” intellectuals who, according to this perspective, are cerebrally sterile and who have reneged on their ‘national and historical responsibility’²¹² to represent ‘the truth’.²¹³ Indeed, these other cultural elites are coloured in an almost identical shade to political elites in the discourse of one-state. Along with their mental deficiencies and foreclosed conceptual horizons, they are depicted as being only able to ‘think of their families and bettering themselves’.²¹⁴ That is to say, they have only narrow interests, and not those of the whole.

The lack of a critical disposition among these other intellectuals, or rather its discontinuation, is tied in this discourse to the narrow interests that they allegedly pursue. Through their positioning of themselves close to the dominant sites of power in the political field – that is, through their role as ‘full-time advisers’ to politicians such as the late ‘Arafat and ministers in his Authority’²¹⁵ – these other intellectuals have become ‘attuned to the exigencies of political power and the benefits that could accrue to them from it’. It is for this reason as well that they

²¹² Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia: A Fanonian Reading of the Intellectual Landscape in Post-Oslo Palestine, *Nebula*, pp. 96-8

²¹³ Massad, Joseph, citing, Said, Edward W., *Representations of the Intellectual*, Vintage, New York, 1996, p. 119, in, Political Realists or Comprador Intelligentsia, *Middle East Critique*, p. 35

²¹⁴ Said, Edward W., *The Pen and the Sword*, p. 150

²¹⁵ Massad, Joseph A., The Intellectual Life of Edward Said, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 8

have traded ‘in their national liberation goals for a pro-western pragmatism’,²¹⁶ giving ‘proof that [they] [have] assimilated the culture of the occupying power’.²¹⁷ From this perspective, the specific benefits that accrue to these intellectuals include being ‘paid handsomely by the PA’s new funders’.²¹⁸ The prospect of being ‘invited to the Brookings Institution’ or appearing on ‘US television’ are further private interests for which these intellectuals have abandoned ‘the cause of Palestinian self-determination’ and forsaken ‘matters of principle’.²¹⁹ This is what their “pragmatism” means, as written in this discourse: individual gain over and above the national interest.

The representations of social reality made in the discourse of one-state are taken to be irrefutable and positively “out there” by those who utter them. In a very similar fashion to its categorisations of political elites, the narrow interests pursued by these other cultural elites are therefore cast in this discourse as a sign of their disregard and outright disdain for the Palestinian people. Their narrow motivations convey a lack of ‘hope in the power of the masses’ and demonstrate that they have zero belief in the capacity of Palestinians ‘to do something about their own present and future history’.²²⁰ They too have capitulated, and as such cannot possibly claim to speak for Palestinians, even if they could provide ‘honest analyses’ of the situation.²²¹

But as those who construct this counter-discourse emphatically assert: ‘The anti-Oslo intellectual is what the Oslo intelligentsia is NOT’.²²² They are *not* a

²¹⁶ Massad, Joseph, Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle, *Middle East Critique*, p. 32

²¹⁷ Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia: A Fanonian Reading of the Intellectual Landscape in Post-Oslo Palestine, *Nebula*, p. 97

²¹⁸ Massad, Joseph A., The Intellectual Life of Edward Said, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 8

²¹⁹ Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents*, p. 38

²²⁰ Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia, *Nebula*, pp. 96-9

²²¹ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 76

²²² Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia, *Nebula*, p. 102

foreclosed cultural agent who is operating from the point of view of the oppressor. They are *not* a cultural agent who is interested in personal aggrandizement even at the expense of a broader community. They are *not* a cultural agent who possesses disdain for the Palestinian people and their capacity to change the world. It is precisely this claim to distinction that emerges in the relational practices of these critical intellectuals. Therefore, what separates these intellectuals from other cultural elites in the political field is their ‘creative’²²³ disposition and utterance of a point of view that incorporates ‘all Palestinian’ perspectives.²²⁴ Furthermore, they are only ‘interested in the truth and in justice’ through their ‘commitment’ to the Palestinian people as a whole.²²⁵ They believe in ‘new possibilities’ and adopt a ‘resistance approach’ which signifies their trust in the Palestinian capacity to establish ‘an alternative future’.²²⁶ Whereas other intellectuals are certainly separate from the Palestinian people, those who make this classification are certainly not. This identity with the Palestinian people is what is being claimed in the discourse of one-state: the former is being assimilated to the latter’s point of view through the discrediting of other elites.

The position of economic elites is also criticised in this discourse, although it must be said that this is far less prominent than the targeting of political and cultural elites, and often appears to emerge as an afterthought, or as a concern of only a *minority* of those who construct this standpoint.²²⁷ Even still, when this

²²³ Makdisi, Saree, The Palestinian people betrayed, *Los Angeles Times*

²²⁴ Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia, *Nebula*, p. 102

²²⁵ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. xxvi (Author’s Note)

²²⁶ Eid, Haidar, Representations of Oslo Intelligentsia, *Nebula*, pp. 98-9

²²⁷The reason for this discrepancy and rather marginal position of the economic sphere in the discourse of one-state seems to stem, in part, from the liberal stance that is incorporated into this viewpoint – albeit within the broader lense of postcolonialism and other critical perspectives. For instance, the vision of equality promulgated in the one-state position is predominantly of a liberal variance, in that it focuses on overturning Israel’s ‘institutionalized and legalized system of racial discrimination, denial of Palestinian refugee rights, and its two-tiered legal system in the occupied Palestinian territory’. It is primarily concerned with challenging what Beshara Doumani has called (speaking of the Palestinian national movement generally) the ‘politico-legal boxes’ that Palestinians have been positioned in. While such a confrontation is clearly important,

attack does occur, it is performed in broadly the same terms as those used to discredit other elites in the Palestinian political field. That is, economic elites are defined as being solely interested in advancing their own position rather than that of the ‘masses’.²²⁸

The self-interestedness of these economic agents is sometimes linked in this discourse to their bourgeois position and their ‘organic’ links to ‘imperial interests’²²⁹ and the ‘neoliberal global market’.²³⁰ Much more commonly, however, it is portrayed as deriving from the “false” promises of “pragmatism” and the co-option of this stratum of Palestinian society to the terms of the Oslo framework. It was mainly due to this framework, the one-state position contends, that these agents became a ‘Palestinian comprador bourgeoisie’,²³¹ as it enabled them to forge lucrative ‘connections’ with Israel, so making them interested in keeping ‘the peace process alive’,²³² regardless of the effects on the

it does risk fetishizing law at the expense of socio-economic issues and inequalities. Indeed, Uri Avnery has contended that proponents of a one-state solution have yet to address how Palestinians can avoid being ‘turned into an exploited underclass devoid of real power’ in the type of future that they envision. There are exceptions within the discourse of one-state – such as Seif Da’na, who at least warns of the dangers of reproducing ‘economic inequality and social exclusion’ within the single state framework, what he calls ‘apartheid within one political border’ – but these figures tend to be on the margins of this standpoint. Barghouti, Omar, *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*, pp. 63-4; Doumani, Beshara, in, Abunimah, Ali, Barakat, Rans, Doumani, Beshara, Haddad, Toufic, Hilal, Jamil, al-Masri, Hani, Qato, Mezna, and, Youmans, Will, *Achieving a Palestinian Spring*, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, 1 August, 2011, <http://al-shabaka.org/roundtable/politics/achieving-palestinian-spring>, accessed 07/10/2011, pp. 7-8; Avnery, Uri, *A Binational State? God Forbid!*, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 4, Summer 1999, pp. 55-60, p. 58; Da’na, Seif, Single, Single, secular, democratic, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 July 2001, Issue No. 543, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2001/543/op5.htm>, accessed 24/01/2010

A more crucial reason for this discrepancy, as will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, is perhaps the excessive idealism of the one-state perspective, by which is meant its aversion to materialism and the prospect that people might have – for want of a better word – “real” interests as opposed to ones that are simply wrong or the result of capitulation. This view leads to a sort of Hegelian twist through which the world changes through changing peoples’ minds.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Massad, Joseph, *Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle*, *Middle East Critique*, pp. 22-35

²³⁰ Da’na, Seif, Single, Single, secular, democratic, *Al-Ahram Weekly*

²³¹ Massad, Joseph, *Political realists or comprador intelligentsia: Palestinian intellectuals and the national struggle*, *Middle East Critique*, pp. 22-35

²³² Bishara, Azmi, *Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process*, in, Giacaman, George, and, Lønning, Dag J. (eds.), *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, p. 220

‘aspirations of the broader community’. They are now only concerned with ‘real-estate deals’ and ‘gated communities’, and not with ‘liberating human beings’.²³³ It is in this sense that they have been ‘co-opted’.²³⁴ They have given up the struggle.

The liberation of ‘human beings’ is of course the declared objective of the one-state perspective, and therefore such classifications work (within the parameters of this discourse at least) to once again position those who utter them on the side of the “people” and not separate from them.²³⁵ If economic elites (along with other elites in the field) are engaged in the (re)production of an official order in which the Palestinian people are largely ‘non-existent’, then the same cannot be said for the point of view enunciated by these critical intellectuals. Encompassed within their perspective are ‘the needs of the vast majority of disenfranchised people’, and because these people are disenfranchised, it is these intellectuals who give voice to their interests and desires.²³⁶ It is they who emerge within their own discursive practices as the spokespersons for the Palestinian struggle, and indeed because their position is representative of others, they can legitimately do this. In studies of intellectuals in politics this process is sometimes called ‘the creation of in- and out-groups’, and for those who are doing so in this specific instance, the Palestinian people are certainly on one side of this divide, and not the other.²³⁷

²³³ Abunimah, Ali, Role of Israeli firm raises boycott concerns about Rawabi, *The Electronic Intifada*, 30 December 2010, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article11706.shtml>, accessed 07/01/2011

²³⁴ Bishara, Azmi, *Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process*, in, Giacaman, George, and, Lønning, Dag J. (eds.), *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, p. 220

²³⁵ Aruri, Naseer, H., *Towards a Pluralistic Existence in Palestine/Israel*, in, Aruri, Naseer, H., and, Shuraydi, Muhammad, A.(eds.), *Revising Culture Reinventing Peace: the Influence of Edward W. Said*, p. 128

²³⁶ Abunimah, Ali, Role of Israeli firm raises boycott concerns about Rawabi, *The Electronic Intifada*

²³⁷ Verdery, Katherine, *National Ideology Under Socialism*, pp. 15-16

In an implicit fashion, certain scholars have pointed to the claims made by those Palestinian intellectuals who advocate of a one-state solution and have argued that little or no evidence is provided to substantiate them.²³⁸ Though correct, such a criticism misses the point. These claims are not made in the name of academic rigour. A Bourdieusian lense helps one to see the symbolic violence that is affected through such claims in the discourse of one-state and to also see the sought after relations of power behind such discursive moves. The Palestinian people are absorbed into the standpoint of these intellectuals so as to further legitimise a bid for domination of the political field that has been analysed throughout this chapter. It is this struggle for power that primarily explains why these agents do what they do. They can speak with authority not only because they have privileged access to the “truth”, and because they are in a position to perform a proper citizenship function, but also because they represent the “people”. They are its legitimate spokespersons.

Augmenting this Claim II: Re-presenting Palestine

Within the discourse of one-state an effort at re-writing the Palestinian past is underway. From the point of view of scholarly rigour, the claims made in this history are at times highly questionable (though this is not to say that there is such a possibility as an absolute or impartial history), and this questionability will be raised at various points throughout this section. However, the focus of this section is not to determine whether the history being constructed by these intellectuals is right or wrong. Rather, it is to determine its effects. The argument presented here is that this historicization process is explicitly tied to power, and that these intellectuals are re-presenting Palestine and the Palestinian

²³⁸ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 208-9

struggle so as to portray their particular point of view as authentic. It is through the strategy of (re)narrativization that they seek to augment their claim to legitimately speak for the Palestinian people, historicising their stance – the product of their particular *habitus* – as the authentic Palestinian position. Any other stance or historical trajectory therefore emerges in this discourse as inauthentic and an aberration, a departure from the “true” path. This process of history writing highlights once again the centrality of power to the political engagement of these intellectuals.

For the purpose of this argument, it is worthwhile recalling that the official narrative in the Palestinian political field centres on the teleology of state, and this goal is often described somewhat contradictorily as an impending ‘reality’ within the framework of a two-state solution, or as an option that is fast dissipating along with the ‘prospect for realizing peace’.²³⁹ The efficacy of this narrative is sometimes implicitly recognised by proponents of a one-state solution, as is shown by statements which proclaim, lamentably, that it ‘is as if the ultimate goal of the Palestinian struggle for the last hundred years has been to have a state’.²⁴⁰ Yet, as such statements also reveal, it is clear that proponents of a one-state solution contest the authority of this narrative, and of course the official positions which disseminate it. In the counter-history of these intellectuals, the ultimate goal of the Palestinian struggle has never been ‘*merely* a state [emphasis added]’. Instead, as this position declares, ‘the struggle for Palestine seeks to contest an unacceptable system of ethnic separation and

²³⁹ Palestinian National Authority, “Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State”, *Program of the Thirteenth Government*, p. 3

²⁴⁰ Bishara, Azmi, The Pitfalls of a US-Israeli Vision of a Palestinian State, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 59

exclusion with a vision of inclusion and cooperation'.²⁴¹ This is what the struggle has always been about.

The battle over the past undertaken by those who call for a one-state solution seems to support a general insight: that such struggles become more acute during transitory periods, when the old is dying and the new is 'being born and in need of instant antiquity'.²⁴² This is not to say definitively that a struggle for a one-state solution is the "newness" that will replace the "old" in the Palestinian political field. The future is open after all. Rather, it is to suggest that history becomes considerably less settled in times of crisis and liminality, when struggles to see who will be next on top are in fuller flow.

Antiquity is certainly not a misplaced word in the context of the discourse of one-state and its effort to recast the Palestinian past and delimit its future. In the history on display in this discourse, as alluded to in the previous chapter, the struggle for Palestine as a vision of inclusion and cooperation has deep-rooted antecedents. 'Throughout thousands of years', remarks Ahmad Katamesh, 'Palestine comprised multiple cultures, religions and social components'.²⁴³ 'Palestine was for centuries', writes Omar Barghouti, 'a fertile meeting ground for diverse civilizations and cultures, fostering communication, dialogue and acculturation among them'.²⁴⁴ Ghada Karmi asserts that,

before the mass migration of European Jews imposed their exclusivist creed of Zionism and culturally alien philosophy on the country, [Palestinian society] had been a successful composite of Muslims,

²⁴¹ Makdisi, Saree, "Intellectual Warfare" and the Question of Palestine, in, Bisharat, George, and, Doumani, Beshara, Open Forum: Strategizing Palestine, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 82

²⁴² Ho Tai, Hue-Tam, Remembered Realms: Pierra Nora and French National History, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 106, No. 3, 2001, pp. 906-22, p. 921

²⁴³ Katamesh, Ahmad, *Approach to the Single Democratic State*, p. 82

²⁴⁴ Barghouti, Omar, Re-Imagining Palestine: Self-determination, Ethical De-colonization, and Equality, *The One Democratic State Group*

Christians and Jews as well as Armenians, Circassians, Europeans and others.²⁴⁵

Susan Abulhawa and Ramzy Baroud comment that prior to ‘the establishment of Israel, Palestine had been multi-religious and multi-cultural, Christians, Muslims and Jews, Armenians, Greek Orthodox, to name a few, all had a place there; and all lived in relative harmony’.²⁴⁶

While the onset of Zionist immigration exerted a strain on this vision of Palestine, as the above examples attest, it was only with the establishment of Israel and the other events of *al nakba* that it ceased to exist in material form. Up until this point Palestine continued to represent an objective alternative to the exclusivism of Zionism, and this was best demonstrated, this version of the past contends, in accounts of Arab ‘relations with Jews during the pre-1948 period [that] were entirely friendly’.²⁴⁷ Accounts which speak of ‘banal contacts’ between the two communities in which people ‘worked together, played together, exchanged gifts, and helped each other’, so proving that they were never ‘destined to be enemies’.²⁴⁸ What these accounts are specifically is hard to say, other than the personal reminiscences of elder family members and friends of those who produce this discourse.

The opposition of most Palestinians to the UN’s 1947 partition plan for Palestine (which became UNGAR 181) is also (re)interpreted in this discourse as evidence of their embodiment of an inclusive and cooperative alternative to Zionist exclusivism and ethnic separation. In this version of the past, the Zionist movement accepted this proposal – and thus the (tactical) separation of Palestine

²⁴⁵ Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man*, p. 252

²⁴⁶ Abulhawa, Susan, and, Baroud, Ramzy, Palestine/Israel: A Single State, With Justice and Liberty for All, *Countercurrents*

²⁴⁷ Bisharat, George, Look for a future Palestine in the Past, *The Electronic Intifada*, 3 February 2005, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/look-future-palestine-past/5456>, accessed 13/07/2011

²⁴⁸ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 5

into exclusive states – while the Palestinians rejected such an outcome *and* offered instead a one-state solution to the conflict of the kind promulgated by those who produce this discourse today. As the *Declaration of the Movement for One Democratic State in Palestine* writes:

In 1947, the Palestinian people and their representatives, together with all the Arab and Muslim States members of the United Nations, unanimously rejected the partition of Palestine and called for all of Mandate Palestine between the Mediterranean sea and the Jordan River to be established as a unitary democratic state that would prohibit any discrimination on the grounds of religion and serve all of its citizens equally.²⁴⁹

The mentioning of ‘Arab and Muslim state members’ of the UN in this passage strongly suggests that it is referring to the proposals of Subcommittee Two of the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). Established by the UN and tasked with finding a solution to the problem of Palestine, the recommendations of UNSCOP’s Subcommittee One would form the basis of the partition plan and UNGAR 181. Subcommittee Two, in contrast, made up almost entirely of Arab and Muslim states, proposed the creation of ‘a unitary and sovereign State’ in Mandate Palestine that would ‘guarantee respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion’. In addition, it recommended that this state should have ‘a democratic constitution’.²⁵⁰ So, in a broad sense, it did incorporate many of the principles present in the contemporary demands for a one-state solution.

²⁴⁹ The Movement for One Democratic State in Palestine, *Declaration of the Movement for One Democratic State in Palestine*

²⁵⁰ United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, *Report of Subcommittee Two (1947)*, A/AC.14/32 and Add. I, available in, Tilley, Virginia, *The one-state solution: A breakthrough for peace in the Israeli-Palestinian deadlock*, pp. 236-8 (Appendixes)

Nevertheless, the suggestion that this proposal was organic to the Palestinian people and their representatives is somewhat misleading. To be sure, political positions did exist within the Palestinian national movement at this time that were broadly similar to the perspective enunciated by contemporary proponents of a one-state solution, though these were largely confined to the Palestine Communist Party (PCP) and other marginal groups on the left.²⁵¹ The PCP in any case eventually endorsed the 1947 partition plan in conjunction with the standpoint of the Soviet Union.²⁵² The wider national movement, in contrast, led by Jamal al-Husayni, rejected *all* proposals made by UNSCOP members on the grounds that external agents did not possess the remit to determine the fate of Palestine.²⁵³ Therefore, it is difficult to reconcile these two wildly contradictory accounts, except to say that the process of history writing underway in the discourse of one-state functions as what Bourdieu might call ‘a tool for rupture’. It confronts the established order with ‘discarded possibilities’, while substantiating the claims of counter-discourses by making them appear authentic.²⁵⁴ It is not by accident that such discrepancies emerge as the past is intricately linked to struggles for the present.

The *nakba* ended the existence of Palestine in concrete form and it brought into full relief the underlying conflict between the Palestinians and the Zionists (albeit one that was only resumed following the “reemergence” of the national movement in the late 1960s). According to this history, ‘the conflict between

²⁵¹ See, for example, Budeira, Musa, *The Palestine Communist Party, 1919-1948: Arab and Jew in the Struggle for Internationalism*, Ithaca Press, London, 1979

²⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 234-8; See also, Jacobson, Abigail, *Between National Liberation and Anti-Colonial Struggle*, *Crown Center for Middle East Studies*, Brandeis University, Working Paper 3 August 2012

²⁵³ Al-Husayni, Jamal, *Testimony on Palestinian Arab Reaction to the UNSCOP Proposals*, September 29, 1947, available in, Smith, Charles D., *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 210-12

²⁵⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, quoted in, Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 615

Zionism and the Palestinians is – and has always been – driven by the notion that hundreds of years of cultural heterogeneity and plurality could be negated overnight by the creation of a state with a single ... identity'.²⁵⁵ Following the loss of 1948 and the decimation of their society, it is precisely this heterogeneous and pluralistic vision of Palestine that Palestinians have been struggling to reconstitute in structural form: this is the essence of their ongoing confrontation with Zionism and in the end they will 'prevail'.²⁵⁶

Although this version of the conflict and the Palestinian trajectory incorporates a degree of nostalgia and a desire to return to a beautified past, it is only on the margins of this discourse that such sentiments exist.²⁵⁷ For the most part, this narrative is essential and revolutionary. The Palestinians embody a struggle to transform the present, not to restore the past. Their goal is liberation. As writers of this perspective write, 'from the very beginning ... [Palestinians] were not interested in another separatist nationalism'.

We were not interested in just another nationalism, resisting theirs in order to have ours, that we were going to be the mirror image of them. That just as they had Zionism we would have Zionism too, except it would be Palestinian. But rather ... we were ... an alternative in which the discriminations made on the basis of race and religion and national origin would be transcended by something we called liberation.²⁵⁸

This is what the Palestinian struggle was and is about, and this is what the PLO embodied when it was captured by Palestinian activists in the late 1960s and reconstituted as a relatively autonomous national space. The PLO was revolutionary, this position maintains, exactly because it 'called for a secular

²⁵⁵ Makdisi, Saree, End of the two-state solution, *The Guardian*, Monday 28 July 2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/jul/28/israelandthepalestinians.middleeast>, accessed 06/11/2009

²⁵⁶ Abu Sitta, Salman, *Foreword*, in, Qumsiyeh, Mazin, B. *Sharing the Land of Canaan*, p. xiv

²⁵⁷ See, for example, Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man*, p. 231

²⁵⁸ Said, Edward, W., *The Pen and the Sword*, pp. 165-6

state in Palestine where Jews, Christians, and Muslims would live together in equality'.²⁵⁹ What made the Palestinian perspective revolutionary was its desire to include difference.

As discussed in the last chapter, there are textual antecedents within the Palestinian political field that contain this inclusive impulse and it is far from being unique to the figures who promote a one-state solution. Their discourse is incorporative of these prior utterances and it is in this sense that their position is historically structured. Nevertheless, the reiterative quality of the discourse of one-state is neither exact nor all encompassing and inevitably much is left out of the historical reconstruction carried out by its producers. The authenticity they claim for their vision of revolutionary struggle is in fact revealed through their silence and disavowal of crucial historical elements within the field; and once more this is tied to the present.

For instance, though dominant positions within the Palestinian arena certainly envisaged a 'non-sectarian Palestine' as the object of their political action, during the "maximalist" phase of the national struggle this goal was explicitly articulated through militancy and armed resistance. The democratic solution, as this approach was sometimes called, was 'organically linked' to armed struggle,²⁶⁰ and was unequivocally a 'militant standpoint'.²⁶¹ The quintessential Palestinian agent of this period was 'the revolutionary who bears arms' and this was contrasted with the figure of the 'refugee' or the 'second-class citizen',²⁶² and the lived experiences of 'misery, humiliation and despair'. The taking up of

²⁵⁹ Qumsiyeh, Mazin, B. *Sharing the Land of Canaan*, p. 153

²⁶⁰ PFLP, *Palestine: Towards a Democratic Solution*, PFLP Information Department, 1970, p. 22

²⁶¹ Rasheed, Mohammad, *towards a democratic state in Palestine: the Palestinian revolution and the Jews vis-à-vis the democratic, non-sectarian society of the future*, p. 8

²⁶² Quoted in, Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, p. 195

arms created a ‘new sense of pride and dignity’,²⁶³ and as a discourse and practice armed struggle played a pivotal role in the imagining of the Palestinian community, as well as in establishing its relative autonomy.²⁶⁴ In this context, armed struggle and revolution were as much concerned with rejecting reality as they were with transforming it in pursuit of specific outcomes.²⁶⁵

The discourse of one-state is either silent on this aspect of the Palestinian struggle or consciously disavows it, valorising instead those “revolutionary” principles that its producers embody and reassert as *the* meaning of Palestine. Armed struggle is criticised from this perspective as an ill-thought-out strategy that had the deleterious effect of undermining the revolutionary ideals of the national movement, submerging them under military violence and so mystifying the Palestinian compulsion for inclusion and coexistence against exclusion.²⁶⁶ On other occasions the role of armed struggle is less bellicosely downplayed, with ‘the history of Palestinian resistance’ being classified as ‘overwhelmingly nonviolent’.²⁶⁷ The effect of this silence, critique and reemphasis seems to be to delineate the ‘indispensable role of civil resistance’ in the contemporary era;²⁶⁸ to construct a ‘truth [that] leaves only the power of mind and education to do the job that armies have been unable to accomplish for over half a century’.²⁶⁹ The nature of the conflict precludes a diplomatic outcome, but according to this version of the past there ‘can be no military solution’ either,²⁷⁰ and so, as this

²⁶³ Rasheed, Mohammad, *towards a democratic state in Palestine: the Palestinian revolution and the Jews vis-à-vis the democratic, non-sectarian society of the future*, pp. 13-16

²⁶⁴ Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, pp. 174-218

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 196-7

²⁶⁶ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, pp. 107-9

²⁶⁷ Cronin, David, Interview: Mazin Qumsiyeh on popular resistance and breaking the spell of fear, *The Electronic Intifada*

²⁶⁸ Barghouti, Omar, Putting Palestine Back on the Map: Boycott as Civil Resistance, in, Bisharat, George, and, Doumani, Beshara, Open Forum: Strategizing Palestine, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 55

²⁶⁹ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 77

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

position declares, the focus should be on ‘cultural struggle’.²⁷¹ The diminution of armed struggle and militancy in this perspective is tied to the assertion of cultural capital and the bid for power of these intellectuals.

The Palestinians are urged to ‘rediscover and reconstruct their democratic secular state framework’ in the discourse of one-state.²⁷² As this language suggests, this authentic position is seen to have been hidden from view in this account, and indeed this is the one of the central turning points in the counter-narrative promulgated in these texts. The PLO’s decision to adopt the political programme of the twelfth PNC in 1974 is re-presented in this narrative as a point of departure; and tellingly this is not only a departure from the “true” path of liberation, but from the primacy of the Palestinian diaspora and the majority. The elite discourse of “pragmatism” began to take hold at this stage and this was accompanied by a reorientation within the political field towards other elites in the occupied territories. Though it was only with the signing of the Oslo Accords that the political action of the “people” was fully ‘replaced with the action of the elites’, the seeds for this betrayal were planted in the mid-1970s, the point of aberration.²⁷³

As this discourse asserts: ‘Whereas between 1964 and 1974, the PLO had tilted more towards the diaspora in its programme for liberation, from the mid-1970s, pressure from the emerging pro-PLO Palestinian *elite* in the West Bank and Gaza to accept a two-state solution began to bear fruit [emphasis added]’.²⁷⁴ When read in the broader framework of this discursive practice, it is clear that

²⁷¹ Ibid., p. 50

²⁷² Aruri, Naseer, H., *Towards a Pluralistic Existence in Palestine/Israel*, in, Aruri, Naseer, H., and, Shuraydi, Muhammad, A.(eds.), *Revising Culture Reinventing Peace: the Influence of Edward W. Said*, p. 132

²⁷³ Katamesh, Ahmad, *Approach to the Single Democratic State*, p. 69

²⁷⁴ Massad, Joseph, A., *The Binational State and the Reunification of the Palestinian People*, *Global Dialogue*, p. 124

such statements implicitly tie the authentic Palestinian view to the position of diaspora. It was the diaspora ‘which produced Arafat in the first place’, this standpoint writes, before his gradual corruption and repositioning as the head of the PA.²⁷⁵

The “purity” of diasporic perspectives on the “homeland” and transnational community – and by implication the “impurity” of other perspectives (usually those emanating from *within* the “homeland”) – is a theme prevalent in studies of diaspora, and such claims are hardly limited to the Palestinian intellectuals who are calling for a one-state solution. This theme is linked to the peculiarities of diaspora as a site, as diasporic practices tend to be *radically* detached from the actual “homeland” and broader community and so the connections they forge are often highly idealised.²⁷⁶ For those diaspora intellectuals who produce this counter-narrative, the aberration of “pragmatism” became more and more harmful to the national movement the closer its agents got to the institution of their rule in the occupied territories. Whereas in the narrative of state promulgated by official positions in the political field the signing of the Oslo Accords is conveyed as the crossing of an ‘important threshold toward the final goal of statehood’, it is portrayed in this counter-narrative as the marginalisation of the “people” and the “true” goal of liberation.²⁷⁷ Rather than a liberationist alternative to Zionism, under the force of political elites and their narrow interests, the national movement was hijacked and reconstituted as its ‘mimic’.²⁷⁸

According to this perspective, though, the ‘language of national liberation from the 1960s and 1970s’ is starting to resurface, and this is because symbolic

²⁷⁵ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 345

²⁷⁶ Anderson, Benedict, *Exodus, Critical Inquiry*, p. 327

²⁷⁷ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, p. 150

²⁷⁸ Said, Edward W., *The Pen and the Sword*, p. 133

authority is shifting from ‘the occupied territories ... to those Palestinians living ... in the global diaspora’ – to those people, that is, who make this claim.²⁷⁹ The Palestinians are ‘a people who are finally demanding to speak in their own voices, to tell their own story, [and] to define themselves for the world’, and this is because these intellectuals speak and narrate and define. No longer are the Palestinians ‘a people whose voice has been muted’, as when these intellectuals speak so too do the “people”, and this voice is authentic, unbroken from the period of revolution and beyond. The dark years of “pragmatism” are coming to an end, with all its falsehoods, symbolic violence, and betrayals. With the “people” at the helm the struggle for liberation will resume and the revolution will continue. Those who construct this narrative *define* the Palestinian people:

We are a people who stand firmly on moral ground, demanding basic human rights and freedom Ours is a demand for inclusion, while theirs is for exclusion. Ours is for the diverse, multi-religious society that Palestine had always been before the declaration of Israel Ours is a claim based on history [emphasis added].²⁸⁰

The one-state solution is thus historicized as the Palestinian perspective by those who advocate it, and when they proclaim that they have put this approach ‘on the world’s agenda’,²⁸¹ they also mean that the Palestinian people are beginning ‘to hold the reins of their own destiny’ once again.²⁸² This is because these intellectuals are struggling for this hold, this position of preeminence, and the authority to define and keep on defining; and historical legitimacy is a strategy for augmenting this claim.

²⁷⁹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 89

²⁸⁰ Abulhawa, Susan, Writing our own stories, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 16-22 June 2011, Issue No. 1052, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1052/op10.htm>, accessed 17/06/2011

²⁸¹ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. xxvi (Author’s Note)

²⁸² Abulhawa, Susan, Writing our own stories, *Al-Ahram Weekly*

This is not to suggest for one moment of course that these agents do not have a genuine concern for advancing the Palestinian cause and for giving voice to Palestinian people, who have been undoubtedly marginalised politically due to the stagnation and decline of their national institutions, as well as the growing authoritarianism of both the West Bank and Gaza Strip PA governments. But the point is that when these agents claim to be representing the “people” and their authentic cause, they set themselves up as transparent interlocutors, merely vocalising what the “masses” really think and want and what they have always wanted. ‘The Palestinians are very much united on how they see their goals, their history and their politics’, this position contends.²⁸³ But is this really the case? An uncritical look at the discourse of one-state would certainly suggest so, and this is often the problem with the intellectual as spokesperson: they assume themselves to be someone whom they are not – disinterested, scientific and without prejudice; thus making the positions they articulate universal, instead of particular and bearing the heavy imprints of their own interests, incorporated dispositions, tastes and preferences.²⁸⁴ What this means for politics will be discussed in the next chapter.

It is important to be clear here, however, and stress that a stark bifurcation between Palestinians in the occupied territories and the position of diaspora is not being drawn in this discourse and its narrative of liberation. These Palestinians may be seen as more susceptible to the discourse of “pragmatism” – and on occasion proponents of a one-state solution empathise with this disposition – but this perspective insists that they too are ultimately inclined to a liberationist

²⁸³ Abunimah, Ali, *After Apartheid: Getting to Justice and Equality in Palestine*, *Public Meeting*, King’s College London, 24 March, 2011

²⁸⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 203-16; Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 232-3

confrontation with Zionism and pluralism.²⁸⁵ It is the elites who have usurped the Palestinian struggle and set it on a course that is contrary to the wishes of the “masses”. An independent state ‘never inspired the Palestinian collective [emphasis added]’,²⁸⁶ and so it follows that such a goal was never the ‘natural climax’ of their struggle.²⁸⁷ It was imposed upon them autocratically, ‘from above’,²⁸⁸ and without reference to history or subjectivity.²⁸⁹ This is how the Palestinians came to be silenced.

For this act of usurpation to occur, so this narrative continues, the political leadership must have had a very tenuous grasp of reality and commitment to the people from the outset. It was these factors as well that allowed it to be corrupted so easily along the path to self-rule in the ‘vassal’ PA regime.²⁹⁰ Although this discourse pays some attention to contextual dynamics that shaped the PLO’s decision to adopt of more “pragmatic” stance in the mid-1970s, this repositioning is primarily framed in terms of incompetence and estrangement. The 1974 PNC marked the moment when political elites started to ‘naively’ believe that a historic compromise could be reached with Israel,²⁹¹ setting it on route for the present day inertia – a leadership who is ‘incompetent and witless’²⁹² and who lacks ‘the means’ to progress indisputable goals.²⁹³ The decision to set the national struggle on a more “pragmatic” trajectory is further

²⁸⁵ Abulhawa, Susan, 60 Years of Dispossession, Humiliation, Oppression, *The Palestine Chronicle*

²⁸⁶ Elmusa, Sharif, S., Greater Palestine: Matching Demography, Geography, and Heart, *Arab World Geographer*, Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 156-160, p. 160

²⁸⁷ Palestine National Council, “Political Communiqué”, Algiers, 15 November 1988, Documents and Source Material, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 216-17

²⁸⁸ Da’na, Seif, Towards a new liberation strategy, *Media Monitors Network*, September 08, 2001, <http://www.mediamonitors.net/seifdana1.html>, accessed 08/08/2011

²⁸⁹ Abunimah, Ali, Role of Israeli firm raises boycott concerns about Rawabi, *The Electronic Intifada*

²⁹⁰ Qumsiyeh, Mazin B., *Sharing the Land of Canaan*, p. 134

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 155

²⁹² Barghouti, Omar, Organizing for Self-Determination, Ethical De-Zionization and Resisting Apartheid, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*

²⁹³ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. 86

(re)framed in this discourse as showing that political elites were only ever superficially Palestinian. What the leadership ‘*never* seems to have understood’, this position asserts, ‘is that we [i.e. the Palestinians] are *and have always been* a movement standing for, symbolizing, and getting support as the embodiment of principles of justice and liberation [emphasis added]’. In the counter-narrative of liberation, it is the latent separation of the leadership from the people that has caused it to stray so far from the “true” path and then lose it totally through ‘covert maneuvering (sic) in the halls of Western power’.²⁹⁴ This is the opposite of what those who call for a one-state solution are doing: they are continuing the authentic struggle and so are uttering a legitimate standpoint.

There is, then, a process of history writing underway in the discourse of one-state which challenges the official narrative in the political field and which constitutes the agents who produce it in a trajectory of continuity and legitimacy. When these agents speak and define the Palestinian people they are not wrong in proclaiming that the Palestinian people are speaking and defining themselves – not wrong, that is, according to the terms that they deploy and historicize as authentic. They are one in this re-presentation of the past, and therefore it is perfectly valid for these intellectuals to claim the mantle of legitimate discourse and so determine what the people want, and so contest those positions which proclaim otherwise. This oneness extends to the type of capital mobilised by these agents, and their classification of the present Palestinian condition. It is also an oneness that clearly denies the plurality of the field, and which is consequently effacing Palestinian difference in both its symbolic and objective forms. This act of symbolic violence has strong consequences for the possibility of these agents converting their critical thought into an actual political agenda, as

²⁹⁴ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, pp. 386-7

the next chapter will show. Nevertheless, its performance is explicitly linked to power and the struggle to impose a legitimate position on the Palestinian political field *against* the orthodox standpoint. History is interwoven with relations of domination and resistance, through its reconstruction.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has shown that the factors explaining why intellectuals engage in political struggle may be complex and irreducible to a single point. To be sure such agents tend to occupy positions that are rich in the resource of cultural capital.²⁹⁵ Moreover, these may be mobilised in order to play the “game”. Nevertheless, action of this sort remains embedded in particular contexts and is thus constrained and enabled by certain temporal-spatial boundaries.

The analysis conducted above seems to support a general hypothesis in the literature on intellectuals in politics: that such agents are more likely to take a more overtly political stance and challenge established order in historical conditions of crises and pronounced uncertainty.²⁹⁶ This is not a causal proposition or even one that is relatively straightforward. As this chapter has shown, the crisis in established authority within the Palestinian political field has been perceived and constructed by certain cultural elites as an opportunity for *their* political engagement. Such a crisis may be objective in the sense that the political legitimacy of the historic Palestinian leadership has declined considerably in recent years owing to its policy failures. Yet this objective reconfiguration of the field still requires that a challenge is initiated. So what

²⁹⁵ Kurzman, Charles, and Owens, Lynn, The Sociology of Intellectuals, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 79

²⁹⁶ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, pp. 208-12.

this chapter has suggested is that while it is by no means inevitable that a crisis in established political authority will lead to a more rigorous challenge from the cultural field, it may certainly enable this form of oppositional practice.

Even still, this observation does not reveal much in terms of why such an oppositional political engagement is undertaken. Why do intellectuals intervene in the political field? An interest in changing the social world for the “better” and for the benefit of a wider social constituency has proven to be an important factor contributing to the political intervention of those figures analysed in this study. They understandably consider the present structure in Palestine-Israel as being incredibly unjust and oppressive to Palestinians generally and as such they desire to transform this particular reality. What drives them, then, is the object of justice and national liberation and more specifically in their view the dispelling of settler colonialism and the establishment of a humanistic state. It is for these objects that they have become more forcefully engaged politically, though the vulnerability of political elites has certainly enabled this to happen. This is hardly a startling revelation given that historically the figure of “the intellectual” has frequently displayed a compulsion to publicly oppose *what is* in terms of *what ought to be*.²⁹⁷ Indeed, some scholars go so far as to argue that such a practice is ‘the constitutive function of the intelligentsia’.²⁹⁸ Nevertheless, as this chapter has suggested, normative agendas remain a pertinent factor explaining the oppositional intervention of intellectuals.

In this regard it is also important to consider the issue of role. The question of “what is the role of intellectuals in politics” may be a classic, but it is one that

²⁹⁷ Kennedy, Michael, The ironies of intellectuals on the road to power, or not, in, Rereading *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, p. 27

²⁹⁸ Talshir, Gayil, The Intellectual as a Political Actor? Four Models of Theory/Praxis, *Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, p. 211

has been consciously avoided in this study (or at least it is one that has been avoided in the moralist sense of trying to define what an intellectual ought to do). This is because to focus solely on such definitional debates is not very helpful in determining why intellectuals engage in oppositional political practices;²⁹⁹ and further because it seems somewhat problematic philosophically and politically to try and delineate how a certain person ought to behave and fix this criteria for all times and all places. What about specific historical and social contexts? What about important political questions of power and strategy? To think only abstractly about what intellectuals ought to do politically would appear to risk dogmatism and a potential blindness to prevailing conditions and possibilities.³⁰⁰ It would seem to go against *some of the* important constitutive criteria of critical theory, which laudably has a concern with the ‘actual and the possible’ in a given social framework.³⁰¹ Although critical theory is explicitly normative in its interest in changing the world, this interest is not necessarily ensconced in an idealised and implicitly rigid conception of the intellectual’s political role. In fact it would appear to be more concerned with the political aspect of this question rather than the intellectual part.

However, in a certain fashion, role remains important to the study of intellectuals in politics, as this chapter has demonstrated. A practical sense of obligation and political responsibility *as intellectuals* to speak out and confront injustice and oppression may indeed determine oppositional action. The individuals analysed in this study are positioned within specific understandings of the intellectual’s political role, which are recognised as authoritative and to a

²⁹⁹ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, pp. 205-7

³⁰⁰ Kioupkiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, p. 147

³⁰¹ Comstock, Donald E., *A Method for Critical Research*, in, Martin, Michael, and, McIntyre, Lee C., *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and, London, England, 1994, pp. 626-7

large extent appear to be internalised or at least taken for granted. To be a ‘real intellectual’ one *must* act accordingly, and for these individuals this is taken to require their political engagement – especially when politicians are perceived to have failed – through a practice of “speaking truth to power”.³⁰² This is what intellectuals do and so they do it. Such prior cognitive schemes and historically generated dispositions force them to act and to be engaged in a precise mode of political struggle. As “real” intellectuals they cannot operate in the cultural field alone. In order to fulfil a practical sense of role and (re)produce themselves as a recognisable form of intellectual subject they have to perform a specific function. This is a further factor explaining why they do what they do in the political field. So it is perhaps in this more structuring sense that the issue of role should be integrated into the study of intellectuals in politics.

However, for all the interest in alleviating injustice and transforming social reality, along with the structuring effects of role in making these agents move beyond the cultural sphere, it is cultural acumen and their ‘relative monopoly of complex knowledge’ that they are deploying in the field of politics.³⁰³ As critical scholarship on this issue has suggested, it is such knowledge that intellectuals frequently proclaim to be putting in the services of subaltern positions, on the assumption that it has a political utility in terms of comprehension and delineating what is wrong and what is right with a particular situation. What such proclamations often disguise, however, through the language of disinterest and sacrifice, is the self-interest of the intellectual figure.³⁰⁴ Their knowledge is

³⁰² Said, Edward W., *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures*, pp. 7-102

³⁰³ Verdery, Katherine, Konrad and Szelenyi’s model of socialism, twenty-five years later, in, *Rereading The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, pp. 2-3

³⁰⁴ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 13; Kennedy, Michael, The ironies of intellectuals on the road to power, or not, in, *Rereading The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, p. 27

the resource they deploy so as to ‘legitimize aspirations to power’.³⁰⁵ In Bourdieusian terminology, it is the capital of institutionalised competence and cultivated dispositions which are invested in battles for legitimate domination of the field. This study supports these insights and shows that intellectuals are far from being above or somehow separate from the field of power – as is often proclaimed through the discourse of disinterest and detachment – but are interested in capturing and imposing their own point of view upon it.

In this particular instance, it is the resource of cultural capital that has been mobilised in order to play the “game” and specifically this has entailed the strategic move of classifying the Palestinian political impasse as a problem of competence and requisite knowledge. This definition of social reality clearly works to place those who possess such resources in an indispensable political position and ‘at the top of the hierarchy of the principles of hierarchization’; and it is such resources that these intellectuals claim to possess in abundance, in contrast to “other” elite points in Palestinian social space.³⁰⁶ Their engagement in political struggle is therefore explained as a bid for power; it is an interest in legitimate domination of the field that accounts for their more forceful intervention in politics.

Struggles over the principles of hierarchization do not stop there, however, and the ‘double game’ that Bourdieu talks about in his conception of social space extends in this particular instance to the transnational field.³⁰⁷ As a diasporic practice, the articulation of the discourse of one-state is certainly a competing definition of the Palestinian political field, and its imposition on this relatively

³⁰⁵ Verdery, Katherine, Konrad and Szelenyi’s model of socialism, twenty-five years later, in, Rereading *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, pp. 2-3

³⁰⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 168

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-1

autonomous social sphere is ensnared in relations of power, and in particular battles over the meaning and delimitation of “inside” and “outside”. Citizenship is a concept that has been previously introduced into the study of transnational politics. But what the Bourdieusian framework enables, and what this study shows, is a conceptualisation of citizenship in this setting that is less concerned with boundaries of political membership – formal or otherwise – and more concerned with demarcating the properties essential to a “proper” citizenship function. That is to say, in keeping with understandings of citizenship deployed in different contexts, the concept is envisioned here at the transnational level less as a status and more as a specific practice; one that requires for its specificity that agents be *capable of performing certain actions*.³⁰⁸ What these actions are precisely are historically contested.

In contrast to “other” Palestinian points in social space, these diaspora intellectuals claim to possess properties that allow them to be effective political subjects. This socially constructed binary of possession and lack is a central theme in the genealogy of citizenship, as Engin Isin has shown, and it is directly tied to the production of political boundaries of inside and outside, domination and subordination.³⁰⁹ Specifically it is diaspora that is hierarchized in this instance as a temporal-spatial materiality which affords those who are positioned within it the time and security to be properly political (combined with privileged knowledge of course). For Palestinians positioned outside this point in social space, they are produced in this discourse as lacking such temporal-spatial properties and are therefore produced as political outsiders. This is clearly not done maliciously, but it does suggest a struggle taking place across transnational

³⁰⁸ Isin, Engin F., *Being Political: Genealogies of Citizenship*, pp. ix(preface)-37

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

social space to deconstruct and reconstruct extant relations of power in the Palestinian context. Power and the control of legitimate discourse are thus central to explicating the political engagement of these *diaspora* intellectuals.

More generally, this study has shown that the conceptualisation of diasporic practices as practices of citizenship need not be limited to claims to belong to a particular *transnational* community. Such practices may be heavily implicated in relations of power. Furthermore, this emphasis on relations of power at the transnational level may perhaps address a central paradox in the study of diaspora politics: namely that diasporic stances are typically infused with visions of hybridity and nonexclusivity, but are principally performed in exclusive social formations.³¹⁰ The focus on relations of power enables one to see this paradox as an outcome of the (transnational) field and the struggles it generates to legitimately impose a particular point of view on social space. In this sense this paradox is at least understandable, though this point is made here only tentatively and with much circumspection.

Finally, the struggle for power launched by these intellectuals is further shown through their claim to legitimately represent and speak for Palestine and the Palestinian people. Much creative discursive work is carried out in order to assert this claim and the identity that these intellectuals proclaim to share with the “people” is produced in their discourse through a relation of distinction from “other” elites and a process of (re)narrating the past. They are the privileged voice of the “people” representing authentic Palestinian demands. This is of course tied to their interest in gaining legitimate control of determining political discourse in the Palestinian field, and it is certainly not unheard of for

³¹⁰ Brubaker, Rogers, The “diaspora” diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 6; Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, p. 745

intellectuals (and indeed other social categories) to claim to speak for a wider social ensemble in pursuit of such aims.³¹¹ The interesting point here about such discursive moves, however, is that while there clearly might be words constitutive of the discourse of one-state that resonate with Palestinians generally, the people are in effect symbolically effaced in this discourse through their assimilation to the standpoint of these intellectuals. The vision of a one-state solution incorporates a particular point of view and its generalisation to other points in the field in advance of ‘political work’ is an act of symbolic violence.³¹² It denies the plurality immanent to the field; and as the next chapter will argue it denies the possibility of anything but a heavily circumscribed form of politics being engaged in by these intellectuals.

³¹¹ Karabel, Jerome, Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics, *Theory and Society*, p. 210; Kurzman, Charles, and, Owens, Lynn, The Sociology of Intellectuals, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 65

³¹² Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, pp. 7-8

Chapter Four: Modes of Criticality: The Contingent Political Limits of the Discourse of One-State

The possibility of resistance is implied by the notion of a field constituted through relations of power. Without this relational aspect power would not be power at all but an absolute condition in which the social world is fixed and settled outright. An individual's 'capacity to act' is a necessary feature of the field and while this capacity is inevitably constrained to varying degrees by the temporal-spatial structure of social space, even those positions which are heavily subordinated have a freedom to initiate certain oppositional forces.¹ The social world is ongoing and unstable and this is because of the *relative* freedom of the agent and the partiality of domination. What people do in the field is never determined in advance. Nonetheless, it is shaped by their relative position in social space and the relations of power in which they are implicated.

If these ontological assumptions indicate why conflict and struggle are rife in social space, they reveal little about the exact modes of resistance individuals deploy against political orthodoxy and established order. The arguments of previous chapters are that proponents of a one-state solution are contesting the domination of "pragmatism" in the Palestinian political field and are trying to impose as legitimately dominant their own position on social space. This is primarily how their discursive practice should be understood and why they are engaged in political struggle. Specifically, it is through the resources of cultural capital and temporal-spatial security that these agents are making their bid for power in the field, augmented by a claim to represent the authentic demands of the "people". Yet in seeking this relation of power how exactly are they trying to

¹ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 239

exercise it? As noted in Chapter One, Michel Foucault regards relations of power as the ‘strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others’.² Those who construct the discourse of one-state have so far practiced a strategy of resistance which centres, in their own words, on ‘impacting the present Palestinian leadership ... [through] the loudness of their voice’.³ How is that they are engaged in such a form of political practice and not otherwise?

This question seems pertinent given that different modes of political action are proposed by these individuals, with great weight being attached to the object of converting their ‘ideal’ of a one-state solution ‘into a concrete political movement’.⁴ They in fact contend that ‘the gap between our position and our goal *can only be* narrowed if we can have an organised movement of the millions of Palestinians united in a common platform [emphasis added]’.⁵ Therefore, given the significance they invest in organising a political movement comprising the mass of the Palestinian people, how come they continue to perform action along the lines specified above? What prevents them from engaging in this other mode of conduct, which it should be noted is similar to Bourdieu’s notion of political work?

One does not want to appear naïve in asking these sorts of question. It is clearly a colossally difficult task to engage in such a form of conduct, one that cannot be carried out overnight, and one that might not ever materialise despite the best efforts of those who attempt it. But so what? If difficulty was a

² Foucault, Michel, *The Subject and Power*, in, Dreyfus, Herbert L., and, Rabinow, Paul (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics (Second Edition, With an Afterword by and Interview with Michel Foucault)*, pp. 219-20

³ Farsakh, Leila, The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinian Challenges and Prospects, *Middle East Journal*, p. 71

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 56

⁵ Nabulsi, Karma, Popular Sovereignty and Justice, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*, University of Massachusetts, 28 and 29 March, 2009. A video recording of the conference sessions is available at <http://www.arabichour.org/One-state-Conference.htm>, accessed 03/10/2011

sufficient reason for not trying to convert abstract critical thought into an actual historical position then those who are interested in changing the social world, or a particular aspect of it, may as well give up now. Within their own discursive output, proponents of a one-state solution acknowledge that such a task is ‘difficult’ and especially so at this present ‘juncture’.⁶ Yet they also acknowledge that ‘difficult’ is not the same as ‘insurmountable’ and as such it would seem analytically spurious to *a priori* dismiss the possibility of their attempting this mode of critical engagement, irrespective of their structural subordination.⁷

Moreover, it would seem that the questions posed here have a particular resonance within the Palestinian political field in its present configuration. Unsurprisingly, those intellectuals who construct the discourse of one-state are not alone in perceiving that the Palestinian national movement is undergoing a significant process of change, characterised mainly by the collapse of its historic leadership, institutions and (to a lesser extent) discursive frameworks. In addition, they are not alone in identifying a pressing need for Palestinians to ‘become a unified political community on the basis of a clear agenda and effective strategies’, so as to confront and try and reverse ‘their suffering as a dispossessed and oppressed people’. Commenting on the national movement generally, Beshara Doumani remarks that the calls in this regard have been ‘numerous’ and perhaps can be seen as ‘a crucial first step’.⁸

However, while those who articulate the discourse of one-state tend to categorise the current Palestinian impasse in terms of liminality and

⁶ Aruri, Naseer H., The incidental fruit of Oslo, *Al-Ahram Weekly*

⁷ Elmusa, Sharif S., *Searching for a solution*, in, Hilal, Jamil (ed.), *Where Now for Palestine: The Demise of the Two-State Solution*, p. 220

⁸ Doumani, Beshara, Palestine versus the Palestinians? The Iron Laws and the Ironies of a People Denied, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 56-61

(re)emergence, there are others who are less positive in their outlook. As Doumani argues, the Palestinians are at a ‘watershed moment’ and though this is filled with ‘potential opportunities’ it is at the same time filled with ‘very real dangers’. For those who do not subscribe to a positivist epistemology and a definitive horizon it is unconscionable to think that ‘the salvation of the Palestinians’ is assured.⁹ From a Bourdieusian perspective there are only ongoing and indeterminable struggles to preserve or modify extant relations of power, which returns one to the question of how exactly change is sought and resistance is operationalized.

Proponents of a one-state solution are, as noted, trying to impact the conduct of the ‘present Palestinian leadership ... [through] the loudness of their voice’.¹⁰ This is a strategy that has been recognised and remarked upon by critics of their approach, with figures like Bashir Abu-Manneh commenting that such proponents seem to think that they can win support for their position by ‘shout[ing] hard and long enough’. Abu-Manneh goes further and argues that this mode of conduct ‘smacks of discursive strategies not real ones’ and is ‘utopian’.¹¹ This mode of operation needs to be explained, however, as it is not inevitable.

The argument of this chapter is that this strategy stems from the bid for symbolic power enacted by these intellectuals through their articulation of the discourse of one-state. The precise nature of this bid results in the contingent establishment of boundaries beyond which these agents temporarily cannot move. These conditions of possibility/impossibility therefore prevent them from

⁹ Ibid., pp. 59-61

¹⁰ Farsakh, Leila, *The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinian Challenges and Prospects*, *Middle East Journal*, p. 71

¹¹ Abu-Manneh, Bashir, *The Question of Palestine: An Interview with Bashir Abu-Manneh*, *New Politics*

trying to proselytise their position in the political field in a manner that is ‘real’¹² (to borrow Abu-Manneh’s phrase) or ‘concrete’¹³ (to use their own). Such boundaries mark the limits of their political engagement.

These limits are enacted in two ways. Firstly, the mobilisation of their cultural capital results in a critical practice infused with an excessive idealism and focus on epistemology, which affects a reduction of political transformation to ideas, “truth” and consciousness; it is from such knowledge and correct philosophical interpretation that all else will follow. Secondly, their claim to unity with the “people” results in a symbolic effacement of difference in the political field, thereby denying the conditions of possibility for political engagement and reconstruction through a process of winning positions and generalising particular wills into a mobilised collective subject. Beyond the elite sphere, collective will is always already present in this representation of social reality and as such cannot be practically made. This is why politics for these agents is limited to principled critique directed at “other” elites.

The argument made here finally enables a response to the overarching research question posed at the beginning of this study. That is: what role *can* these particular intellectuals play in converting their critical thought into an actual political agenda? The answer suggested here is that the specific practice of their critical thought has reached its limits and consequently they can play no role beyond that which they are already engaged in. This is all they can do given the effects produced by their discursive intervention into the political field. As such, it seems reasonable to suggest that these critical intellectuals are an implicitly conservative and heavily restricted agent for change.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Farsakh, Leila, *The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinian Challenges and Prospects*, *Middle East Journal*, p. 71

Of course, given that this role is determined partially and contingently by structural position and the effects of creative discursive work, any conclusions drawn are temporary and heavily qualified. The discourse of one-state and those who utter it are not a total and fixed system, and the arguments made here are the result of a partial reading using a specific conceptual lense. The hegemonic frames constitutive of this position-taking and their reiteration may delineate heavily circumscribed conditions of possibility/impossibility for political struggle, which derive from the bid for power launched by these intellectuals. Yet in order to stress that this position is not a totality or a fixity, but is ongoing and fluid, a final section in this chapter will briefly detail slippages from its dominant stance that point towards more open political possibilities. These are uttered infrequently and are heavily subordinated in this discourse. Nonetheless, from a Bourdieusian perspective, they have less restrictive political effects than their hegemonic counterparts.

The Reduction of Politics to Ideas

‘The field of power’, states Loïc Waquant, ‘is precisely [the] arena where holders of the various kinds of capital compete over which of them will prevail’.¹⁴ Through problematising the crisis of the two-state framework as an absence of credible knowledge in the Palestinian arena, those who produce the discourse of one-state are trying to produce themselves and the capital at their disposal as the solution. It is their privileged access to “truth”, stemming mainly from their cultural sophistication and advanced qualifications, that makes them indispensable to the Palestinian struggle. What this claim seems to do to

¹⁴ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Foreword*, in, Bourdieu, Pierre, *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power* (translated by Laurreta C. Clough), Polity Press, Cambridge, 1996, pp. ix-xxii, p. xi

questions of political change, however, is reduce them to abstract principles and normative frameworks, resulting in patterns of resistance which prioritise ideas, epistemological excavations, and necessary – if sometimes painful – maturations of thought and action. It is not by chance that the official domination of “pragmatism” is framed as ‘nauseating’¹⁵ in this discourse owing to its insistence on politics as the ‘art of the possible’¹⁶, which is considered as being directly ‘opposed to idealism’¹⁷ and the ‘special position’ that these intellectuals claim to occupy.¹⁸ It is not by chance, moreover, that their critical practice remains abstract, as their position and bid for power orients them to a politics in which ideas rule the world.

The ‘truth unadorned’, as noted previously, is what these intellectuals claim to be interested in.¹⁹ They are ‘interested in the truth and in justice’, with a specific reference to the Palestinians.²⁰ Their political engagement, so they state, is a moral struggle based on ‘universal principles’, and it is this morality that has been lacking from the discourse of “pragmatism”.²¹ Above all else, according to this counter-discourse, the crisis that has befallen the Palestinians is due to this *lack*, with the national cause being hijacked by philosophically inert and unscrupulous elites.

The epistemology on which this criticism is based assumes metaphysics of right and wrong, good and bad. It is the privileged access to this metaphysical foundation that these intellectuals claim to possess, which according to their diagnosis makes them politically vital. Palestinians generally are taken in the

¹⁵ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 72

¹⁶ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 105

¹⁷ Massad, Joseph A., *On Zionism and Jewish Supremacy, New Politics*, p. 89

¹⁸ Talshir, Gayil, *The Intellectual as a Political Actor? Four Models of Theory/Praxis*, *Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, p. 220

¹⁹ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 283

²⁰ Makdisi, Saree, *Palestine Inside Out*, p. xxvi (Author’s Note)

²¹ *Boston Declaration on the One State*

discourse of one-state to embody these transcendental principles, even if they are not fully conscious of them yet. Consequently, once the inherent injustice of Israel's 'racial and colonial privileges' is recognised,²² and 'it becomes fully apparent' to Palestinians (as well as others) that "pragmatism" is wrong,²³ then 'everything will fall into place'.²⁴ A one-state solution 'is inevitable',²⁵ and this is because 'History suggests that no version of ethnic privilege can ultimately persist'.²⁶

The inessentiality of truth is a staple feature of the Bourdieusian field. In this sense, it bears a strong resemblance to poststructuralist accounts which speak of historical 'regimes of truth', and 'struggles over those truths'.²⁷ Truth in this regard is inextricably interwoven with partiality and relations of power, the utterance of particular discourses and efforts to have them recognised as legitimate across certain social arenas. As an effect of power, discourses also produce certain effects, and these are likewise partial, in that they temporally delimit what is intelligible and performable, albeit unstably. The discourse of one-state, like any other discourse, is constitutive of limits, even if these only work on those who recognise its authority, and even if this recognition only extends to those agents who are responsible for its utterance. Though their metaphysical claims are utterly impermissible from a Bourdieusian standpoint, it is doubtless the case that *the notion* of essential truth is invested with supreme

²² Massad, Joseph, Palestine state ... of mind, Transcript of *Empire* episode, *Al-Jazeera English*, Thursday, October 6, 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/empire/2011/11/2011119114243850152.html>, accessed 30/05/2013

²³ Bishara, Azmi, *Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process*, in, Giacaman, George, and, Lønning, Dag J. (eds.), *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, pp. 223-4

²⁴ Massad, Joseph, Palestine state ... of mind, Transcript of *Empire* episode, *Al-Jazeera English*

²⁵ Karmi, Ghada, The future is one nation, *The Guardian*

²⁶ Bisharat, George, Israel and Palestine: A true one-state solution, *The Washington Post*

²⁷ Veyne, Paul, quoted in, Jabri, Vivienne, Critical Thought and Political Agency in Time of War, *International Relations*, p. 76

importance by these intellectuals because it is assumed to positively exist in this context, with its uncovering and acceptance being essential to progress.

The bid for power in this discourse, therefore, has effects on the shape of political conduct. By seeking to structure social reality in such a way so that the specific authority at their disposal is converted into symbolic capital, these agents are establishing limits and orders of preference for action. It is not as if practical politics and actual historical formations are accorded no significance in this discourse. As shown already, organised and concrete movements and platforms feature in this discourse and are framed as being essential to its vision of success. Rather, such practicalities, though important, have an importance of a second order nature, which is necessarily imposed by the primacy invested in cultural struggle and epistemological awakening. Organising a collective political subject is discussed in this discourse, but its manifestation is seen as being relatively straightforward, comprising ‘traditional steps well known to all activists’, once the idea of a one-state solution has been accepted. The ‘main plank of the campaign’²⁸ for a one-state solution is thus to get ‘the idea accepted’, and this is because when that occurs ‘the battle is mostly won’.²⁹ The ‘concrete grounds’ for a solution, this position declares, ‘can only come from moral vision, and neither from “pragmatism” nor “practicality”’.³⁰ The inevitability that is frequently attached to the realisation of a one-state solution is perhaps attributable to this temporal logic, the positivistic assertion of cause and effect, *x* causes *y*.³¹

²⁸ Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man*, pp. 258-9

²⁹ Personal interview with Ghada Karmi, London, 15 February, 2010

³⁰ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 51

³¹ As Salman Abu Sitta remarked at a public event attended by this author, ‘by enlightening people’ the ‘truth will prevail’. Abu Sitta, Salman, *Mapping Palestine: for its Survival of Destruction?*, *Palestine Land Society*, Central Hall, Westminster, London, 12 November, 2010

A ‘battle of ideas’ is what is needed, and this needs special intellectuals who are most suited to conducting this battle of ideas.³² Organisers and activists in this sense are ‘important’, ‘but they do not write textbooks for education systems, and they do not write the editorials in newspapers’.³³ It is the circularity of this logic that prevents any movement beyond principled critique for these agents, contingently trapping them in a tautology of their own making.

The decision to make this tautology did not come down to autonomous choice, it should be stressed. It is derived from their position in the field. *Habitus* is a generator of dispositions that orient action in the manner of placing restrictions on decisions. According to Bourdieu, furthermore, such dispositions seek to provide themselves with a ‘milieu to which [they are] as pre-adapted as possible’, thereby reinforcing such dispositions ‘by offering the market most favourable to [their] products’.³⁴ As scholars of social movements have noticed, agents ‘normally seek arenas where their resources and skills are comparatively valuable’.³⁵ It is such dispositions which decide the action of those agents who are producing the discourse of one-state.

The transposition of their cultural logic to the field of power, or rather their reduction of politics to “truth” and consciousness, results in the performance and prioritisation of action in marketplaces that are best suited to the products that they are inclined to produce. It is no coincidence that one of the main forums in which the idea of a one-state solution, and so the “truth” of the matter, is produced and disseminated has been the academic conference – although, it

³² Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 191

³³ Pappé, Ilan, Roundtable – Unsettling (Settler) Colonialism, *Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine*, School of Oriental and African Studies, 5 and 6 March, 2011

³⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 61

³⁵ Jasper, James M., A Strategic Approach to Collective Action: Looking for Agency in Social Movement Choices, *Mobilization: The International Journal of Research in Social Movements, Protest, and Contentious Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 1, February 2004, pp. 1-16, p. 5

should be emphasised that this specific practice is only considered here in a cursory fashion as an outcome and reiteration of the epistemological and theoretical possibilities constitutive of the discourse of one-state, and not in terms of its actual impact, which is a matter that has been set aside by this study. These forums often include quite sophisticated analyses of the situation, undertaken from the perspectives discussed previously in this study, and frequently result in the production and publication of declarations which call for further ‘discussion, research and’ – only then – ‘action to advance a unitary, democratic solution and bring it to fruition’.³⁶ The exaltation of ‘secular education’³⁷, ‘research’³⁸, ‘lectures’,³⁹ ‘academic books’,⁴⁰ ‘research’,⁴¹ and so on, as a politics of liberation stems from the exaltation of what Zygmunt Bauman called the ‘intellectual mode of praxis’, and the interest in acquiring or conserving the ‘enthronement’ of this technique in a particular social space.⁴² Why fight, so it would seem, has consequences for how to fight, at least in this instance.

‘Open thinking’, then, does not necessarily point ‘beyond itself’, as Theodor Adorno once remarked;⁴³ and while critical thought is certainly crucial as a ‘solvent of *doxa*’, it too imposes limits that are shaped by the conditions of its production, and which, so it appears, are important to reflect upon (though how

³⁶ *The One State Declaration*

³⁷ Said, Edward W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 167

³⁸ Nabulsi, Karma, The Peace Process and the Palestinians: A Road Map to Mars, *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, No. 2, March 2004, pp. 221-231, p. 231

³⁹ Personal interview with Ghada Karmi, London, 15 February, 2010

⁴⁰ Pappé, Ilan, Roundtable – Unsettling (Settler) Colonialism, *Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine*

⁴¹ Abunimah, Ali, Barghouti, Omar, Ben-Dor, Oren, Bisharat, George, Bresheeth, Haim, Chavez Giraldo, Pedro, Cook, Jonathan, Farsakh, Leila, Friedman, Steven, Jad, Islah, Massad, Joseph, Pappé, Ilan, Prieto Del Campo, Carlos, Rouhana, Nadim, Tarazi, Michael, Tilley, Virginia, *Statement: One country, one state*, 9 July 2007, <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/printer7102.shtml>, accessed 25/02/2010

⁴² Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 18

⁴³ Adorno, Theodor, quoted in, Talshir, Gayil, The Intellectual as a Political Actor? Four Models of Theory/Praxis, *Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, p. 218

one does this and to what extent it is even possible cannot be discussed here).⁴⁴ The conditions of possibility/impossibility inscribed in a particular critical standpoint, and their consequences for thought and action, may even be contrary to the forms of politicisation deemed vital in certain circumstances; preventing, from specific positions, efforts at their enactment. The position of the intellectual, and more precisely the critical intellectual, seems, when viewed through the conceptual lense used here, to be oriented towards a latent conservatism in political thought and action, which derives ultimately from *an interest* in disinterest.⁴⁵ It is for this reason that figures such as Saree Makdisi proclaim that, ‘all the Palestinians have to do is express the reality of their own historical and actual circumstances’.⁴⁶ That is, speak the “truth” to power.

Critical practice is clearly important. With the crisis of the two-state solution, as well as the authority of their position, these intellectuals have been able to challenge established orthodoxy and prise open a discursive terrain that, not so long ago, was heavily foreclosed and from which most Palestinians are excluded. Yet, by promoting a critique which works to monopolise critical practice in their hands and through their conventional mode of praxis, they have absented from their discourse, in its present figuration, the possibility of forging ‘political bonds’ with potential resisters beyond themselves.⁴⁷ Of course, this might result in a loss of authority when confronted with the plurality of the field and different decisions.⁴⁸ But to a large extent the attempted mediation of these differences is

⁴⁴ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Critical Thought as a Solvent of Doxa*, *Constellations*, pp. 97-101

⁴⁵ Kurzman, Charles, and, Owens, Lynn, *The Sociology of Intellectuals*, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 78. Also see Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, p. 230

⁴⁶ Makdisi, Saree, “Intellectual Warfare” and the Question of Palestine, in, Bisharat, George, and, Doumani, Beshara, *Open Forum: Strategizing Palestine*, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 81

⁴⁷ Campbell, David, *Why Fight: Humanitarianism, Principles, and Post-structuralism*, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 1998, pp. 497-521, pp. 517-21

⁴⁸ Talshir, Gayil, *The Intellectual as a Political Actor? Four Models of Theory/Praxis*, *Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, pp. 219-20

what politics is about, with some points of view triumphing more so than others. To deny this confrontation, then, is to eradicate potential actual historical formations which, though constrained, struggle to defeat excessive violence and hopefully institute relations of power that are less violent. This may never work.

The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaign, in which many of those who produce the discourse of one-state are prominent, is deemed vital from this perspective for the realisation of this approach. But it, too, within the limits of the discourse of one-state, appears to follow this circular logic – though, again, it ought to be stressed that BDS is only examined here briefly and with a sole focus on its epistemological and theoretical implications within the context of this discourse; questions regarding the actual impact of this activism are once more positioned outside the purview of this research.

The BDS campaign was launched in July 2005 by ‘representatives of Palestinian civil society’. It calls upon ‘international civil society organisations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel’. Boycotts target those ‘products and companies (Israeli and international) that profit from the violation of Palestinian rights’. They also target ‘Israeli sporting, cultural and academic institutions’, as these are seen as contributing directly to ‘maintaining, defending, or whitewashing the oppression of Palestinians’. As the BDS movement states: ‘Divestment means targeting corporations complicit in the violation of Palestinian rights and ensuring that the likes of university investment portfolios and pension funds are not used to finance such companies’. In addition, such international organisations and people of conscience are called upon to pressure their ‘respective states to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel’. This

is because sanctions are considered to be an essential mechanism for ‘demonstrating disapproval of a country’s actions’. Taken together, the aim of these measures is to force Israel to comply with ‘international law and Palestinian rights’,⁴⁹ which means:

- (1) Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall; (2) Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and (3) Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.⁵⁰

The ‘BDS campaign worldwide’ is coordinated by the BDS National Committee (BNC), which was established in November 2007. According to the BNC website, its creation was necessary due to the rapid growth of the BDS movement and the impetus for greater cohesion this generated.⁵¹

Though one cannot reduce the BDS movement to those figures who construct the counter-knowledge of a one-state solution, many of them are active in it, and this campaign features heavily in their writings. For example, the BDS campaign is categorised by such intellectuals as being ‘the *only way* to ensure the creation of a secular, democratic state for all in historic Palestine [emphasis added]’.⁵² The centrality ascribed to BDS by these specific agents is consistent with their broader discursive stance on the one-state solution and its assumptions regarding foundational principles and epistemology. Rather than being principally concerned with exacting an economic toll on Israel, so as to coerce it into

⁴⁹ Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement, *Introducing the BDS Movement*, <http://www.bdsmovement.net/bdsintro>, accessed 11/02/2013

⁵⁰ BDS Movement, *Palestinian Civil Society Call for BDS*, 9 July 2005, available at <http://www.bdsmovement.net/call>, accessed 11/02/2013. See this web address for the list of endorsements.

⁵¹ BDS Movement, *Palestinian BDS National Committee*, <http://www.bdsmovement.net/BNC>, accessed 11/02/2013

⁵² Eid, Haidar, Sharpeville 1960, Gaza 2009, *The Electronic Intifada*, 22 January, 2009, <http://electronicintifada.net/content/sharpeville-1960-gaza-2009/8013>, accessed 23/11/2009

complying with international law and Palestinian rights, the BDS movement is for these agents a tactic subordinated to the strategy of excavating the “truth”. ‘The most consequential achievement of the ... BDS movement’, states Omar Barghouti, has been ‘to expose the “essential nature” of Israel’s regime over the Palestinian people as one that combines military occupation, colonization, ethnic cleansing, and apartheid’ – what he otherwise calls ‘settler colonialism’. This practice of demystification is ‘all Palestinians and defenders of peace with justice have to do’ in order to secure their goal; ‘prove beyond a doubt’ that Israel is a settler colonial configuration, which for these critics of course is not subject to falsification.⁵³ Their role in this regard is thus delimited to convincing ‘Israelis by hitting them on the head and putting some sense into their head’;⁵⁴ and educating the Palestinian leadership: ‘*We need to educate them, we need to encourage them to adopt changes [emphasis added]*’.⁵⁵ BDS for these intellectuals appears to be informed by the specific epistemological criteria that currently determines their wider calls for a one-state solution.

The discourse of “truth” seems to impose teleology on the social world in another way for many of these intellectuals, restricting action beyond principled critique still further. While generally the discourse of one-state assumes a causal link between excavating *a priori* foundations and political realisation, which delimits critical practice in a certain direction, for some writing this perspective these *a priori* foundations possess agency. They are an active and underlying structure catapulting history and human beings forward to a single, unitary state in Palestine-Israel. In this regard, the reality of a one-state solution – as

⁵³ Barghouti, Omar, *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*, pp. 11-64

⁵⁴ Barghouti, Omar, Organizing for Self-Determination, Ethical De-Zionization and Resisting Apartheid, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*

⁵⁵ Audeh, Ida, Envisioning a better future: Activist Mazin Qumsiyeh interviewed, *The Electronic Intifada*

articulated by these intellectuals – is incontrovertibly immanent in the crisis of “pragmatism” and the two-state approach. Once the façade of a two-state solution has passed, then it is causally logical in this representation of social reality that a single state will emerge. But the journey to this horizon is not only to be hastened by the practice of consciousness raising carried out by special intellectuals, it is also to be determined by the force of “pragmatism’s” inevitable collapse, its incompatibility with Israel’s essential policy and ‘the worsening of the reality on the ground’.⁵⁶

‘When it becomes fully apparent that an independent and democratic state occupying every inch of the West Bank and Gaza Strip free from Israeli settlements is not realisable’, this position contends, Palestinians ‘will then begin to discuss the bi-national solution that will do away with the system of apartheid that is anchored in the realities of Oslo’.⁵⁷ Though the “truth” of reality is apprehended automatically in this instance through the unfolding of such reality itself, the effect in this discourse is still assumed to be very much the same as when consciousness is given via pedagogical instruction: awakening leads to emancipation, the positivist principle of x causes y , which obviates the need for the active formation of a collective political subject through the mediation and reconstruction of different political wills; the actual struggle for domination of a particular point of view.⁵⁸ “Truth” in this instance appears to be counterproductive, in that it works to prevent efforts at production as an effect of power.

⁵⁶ Cocco, Michelangelo, Interview with Leila Farsakh – the Two State Solution is Dead, *PeacePalestine*, 7 July 2007, <http://peacepalestine.blogspot.co.uk/2007/07/interview-with-leila-farsakh-two-state.html>, accessed 23/11/2009

⁵⁷ Bishara, Azmi, *Reflections on the Realities of the Oslo Process*, in, Giacaman, George, and, Lønning, Dag J. (eds.), *After Oslo: New Realities, Old Problems*, pp. 223-4

⁵⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 233

Israel's policies are thus framed in this discourse, or at least in certain elements of it, as expediting 'political consciousness' among Palestinians, which will 'later' transform into 'political agenda', and ultimately into 'a single, binational, egalitarian state for Palestinians and Jews in historical Palestine'.⁵⁹ Hardly any thought is given to how this process might work beyond abstract stages, and this is because critical practice is reduced in this account to the revelation of essential "truth", so hastening what is prefigured in a structure of collapse. In most utterances constitutive of this discourse, countervailing interests in the field are denied or are considered flimsy at best, reduced to misapprehension or moral laxity, though having overwhelmingly deleterious consequences. Such a framing of social reality – which is shaped by the position from which it is enunciated and by a struggle for power – has a specific effect on political action. It delineates a relation of power, a mode of conduct 'in which certain actions modify others',⁶⁰ of 'the kind teachers have over pupils' as a strategy from which all else will necessarily follow.⁶¹ It reifies this relation, with lessons taught and learnt being the key to success; prioritising education and moral rectitude, what is 'right'⁶² and what is 'unarguably desirable'⁶³, over more practical forms of politics. The "truth" will lead to freedom in this discourse because those who produce it claim privileged access to the "truth".

Interestingly, the acquisition of 'political consciousness' is framed in the discourse of one-state as 'the reunification of the Palestinian people', as a 'going

⁵⁹ Ghanem, As'ad, Thank you for bringing us together, *Haaretz*, 22 October 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/thank-you-for-bringing-us-together-1.320546>, accessed 07/01/2011

⁶⁰ Foucault, Michel, *The Subject and Power*, in, Dreyfus, Herbert L., and, Rabinow, Paul (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics (Second Edition, With an Afterword by and Interview with Michel Foucault)*, pp. 219-20

⁶¹ Bauman, Zygmunt, Love in Adversity: On the State and the Intellectuals, and the State of the Intellectuals, *Thesis Eleven*, p. 88

⁶² Qumsiyeh, Mazin, *Sharing the Land of Canaan*, p. 83

⁶³ Karmi, Ghada, *Married to Another Man*, pp. 201-57

back’, the recovery of an essential sameness which is already present.⁶⁴ The “masses” are summoned in this discourse into a position of identity with those cultural elites who do this summoning, as shown in the last chapter, and they are either conscious of this identity already or will be in due course owing to the realities of their situation. This assimilative practice has specific consequences for political action as will be analysed shortly in the next section. But the final point here is that it is political and other elites who are constructed in this discourse as the ‘one part’ that has deviated from the whole.⁶⁵ So in seeking to politicise their pedagogic function as the essential task of politics, a decision structured by their position in the field, these intellectuals are directing this function solely to the Palestinian leadership – trying to impact it through ‘the loudness of their voice’⁶⁶ – because they are the agents who have deviated from essential Palestinian norms. Though political and other elites are said to be acting in pursuit of their own narrow interests, this is due to their servitude to “false” principles embedded in a psychology of capitulation. It is they who are subject to moral critique and necessarily so owing to the terms in which these intellectuals perform their bid for power. They have reached their limit and can do no more. Hence the exasperation: ‘Is the current Palestinian leadership listening?’⁶⁷

Denying the Political

The aforementioned assimilative practice of these intellectuals has effects on political action in much the same way as their discourse of “truth”. It constitutes

⁶⁴ Ghanem, As’ad, Thank you for bringing us together, *Haaretz*

⁶⁵ Hilal, Jamil, Palestinian Answers in the Arab Spring, Al-Shabaka Policy Brief, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, p. 2

⁶⁶ Farsakh, Leila, The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinian Challenges and Prospects, *Middle East Journal*, p. 71

⁶⁷ Said, Edward, W., *From Oslo to Iraq and the Roadmap*, p. 51

a limit beyond which they cannot move, therefore preventing efforts aimed at constructing a collective political subject struggling against “pragmatism” and by extension hegemonic political Zionism. This limit, however, should be seen as distinct from the one discussed in the last section, even though their effects are equivalent to one another. The discourse of “truth” reduces politics to moral enlightenment, so restricting political conduct to principled critique. The subsuming of the “people” to the position of these intellectual removes the conditions of possibility for politics as such, except of course that which is channelled towards other elites. It might be useful to imagine these limits as emerging from different directions; one arising primarily as a consequence of structural position: the other (to be discussed in this section) arising primarily as a consequence of the creative aspect of power struggle.

For those inspired by Bourdieusian thought, symbolic violence is essential to the formation of a collective political subject.⁶⁸ At the same time, the formation of a collective political subject is crucial to the prospect of transformation, as this can only occur for Bourdieu through – in all its contingent and multifarious forms – mobilised collective action enacted in specific historical circumstances.⁶⁹ With this in mind, it may seem pertinent to ask: what happens when symbolic violence is inflicted on others prior to the task of political work and efforts to transcend and generalise a particular position are undertaken? The answer suggested here is: political stasis.

From a Bourdieusian standpoint, political work is vital, and especially so for those agents interested in modifying the double structure of social space, because

⁶⁸ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 231-4

⁶⁹ Lovell, Terry, Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self, *Theory, Culture & Society*, pp. 2-10

visions have to be imposed on others and collective subjects have to be made. Structural immanence is a feature of the Bourdieusian field, but the immanent singularities embodied by individuals – even if they are quite similar to other individuals – do not come together and coalesce around a particular vision and goal automatically.⁷⁰ There is a need for engagement and reconstruction, processes which necessarily entail relations of power owing to the ineradicable plurality of the field. It is disparate singularities that have to be converted into a general stance, according to Bourdieu; and for this collective subject to come into being certain agents have to win positions and convert what resources they possess into symbolic power. If successful – which of course cannot be guaranteed in advance – this political work will enable such agents to legitimately impose their vision of the social world on others and re-present them in their own image. Crucially, in this process, these others temporarily recognise this image as theirs, or, rather, they misrecognise the violence that they are subject to. It is important to stress here that this collective subject is not what Bourdieu called a ‘class on paper’ and a ‘theoretical’ group. Political work is a process of actualisation, in which a particular vision is translated into a general category practice.⁷¹

Étienne Balibar captures this process well when he describes it as “‘forcing” the incompatibilities and inventing new “universals””.⁷² Indeed, force is required precisely because difference is an ontological condition of the field and therefore is ineradicable. Any general will that is temporarily established will consequently require varying degrees of elision in which whatever differences

⁷⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, pp. 7-15

⁷¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 180-232

⁷² Balibar, Étienne, Europe as Borderland, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 27, 2009, pp. 190-215, p. 208

exist are subordinated to an overarching whole. The particular stands in as the “universal” in this regard, and this is a relation of domination.

Significantly, though, it is exactly this incompatibility and ontology of difference that enables politics as a process of change and transformation. It is the ‘fact of plurality’, states Chantal Mouffe paraphrasing John Rawls, that prevents a fully compatible whole from being established or existing already. It is the ontology of difference that keeps open the prospect of political reconstruction, as disparity in vision and interest are the conditions of possibility for remaking “unity”. Otherwise unity would be already present, whether explicitly or implicitly. “Unity” as a product, or indeed as a political project, requires difference; it necessitates incompatibilities that have to be forced together as an effect of power, so as to create a temporary whole.⁷³ Difference has to be engaged and re-enacted, and this task is arduous.

It is on such grounds that theories of post-representation and deliberation seem to fall down as critical standpoints, which they both claim to be.⁷⁴ Post-representationalist accounts effectively regurgitate an ‘obsolete Marxist teleology’, which prefigures an absolute generality in a given social structure – usually global capitalism for such theorists – that is moving inexorably against this structure and for a fully constituted presence.⁷⁵ Despite its name and pretence to the contrary, post-representationalism is engaged in representational practices, except that what it represents is taken to be a ‘real’ presence and potential.⁷⁶ The ‘millions of people’ spoken about in such theoretical formulations, and who are prefigured in such texts in a certain way, are

⁷³ Mouffe, Chantal, *The Democratic Paradox*, pp. 83-136

⁷⁴ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 138-154; Calhoun, Craig, *Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere*, in, Calhoun, Craig (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, pp. 5-6

⁷⁵ Kioupkiolis, Alexandros, *Radicalizing Democracy, Constellations*, p. 144

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

realistically considered to be moving, or about to move, in a general direction. The collective subject already exists in these texts, bound and propelled by an underlying structural homogeneity.⁷⁷ As a presupposition, this ontology of sameness works discursively to eliminate both the need and possibility of active intervention and political reconstruction. What is required politically, at least as understood from a Bourdieusian perspective, is already in formation and in motion, or definitely will be so in due course.

Similarly, the assumptions on which deliberative theory is based tend towards this rather conservative delimiting of political engagement. A consensus on the common good is undoubtedly an aim of public deliberation in this approach, with this being achieved through communication and rational agreement on what qualifies as the general interest. Aside from the highly problematic starting point of assuming that communication can proceed on an equal basis between differently positioned agents, which is where the rationality of debate resides in deliberative theory, the notion of agreeing interests common to all likewise implies that this commonality is immanent to the arena of deliberation.⁷⁸ Deliberation succeeds in reaching a consensus by appealing ‘to what discussants all share’.⁷⁹ Therefore, there is no need for violent transformation, which of course is a theoretical nicety, but which as a discursive framework restricts

⁷⁷ Tormey, Simon, “Not in my Name”: Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 145-53

⁷⁸ Calhoun, Craig, *Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere*, in, Calhoun, Craig (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, p. 29; Kohn, Margaret, Language, Power, and Persuasion: Toward a Critique of Deliberative Democracy, *Constellations*, pp. 423-4; Mouffe, Chantal, *The Democratic Paradox*, p. 83; Olson, Kevin, Democratic Inequalities: The Problem of Equal Citizenship in Habermas’s Democratic Theory, *Constellations*, p. 216; Sanders, Lynn, Against Deliberation, *Political Theory*, p. 360; Wedeen, Lisa, *Concepts and commitments in the Study of democracy*, in, Shapiro, Ian, Smith, Rogers M., and Masoud, Tarek E. (eds.), *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, p. 287; Young, Iris Marion, *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*, in, Benhabib, Seyla (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, pp. 121-5

⁷⁹ Young, Iris Marion, *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*, in, Benhabib, Seyla (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, p. 125

political engagement to the uncovering of a prior sameness. Once again, an underlying unity is posited across a given social space in advance of its production, which, if one takes seriously the effects of discursive formations, results in a denial of the conditions of possibility of politics as confronting difference with its reconstruction.

The discourse of one-state is similarly a critical standpoint, or at least it is so superficially. As its proponents state, they are not interested in ‘idealized abstraction’, but in ‘real’ transformation.⁸⁰ To be sure, they overcome the gap between these two points through discursive moves which reduce actual politics to moral enlightenment, moves which are undertaken as a result of their position in the field and their bid for power. In this sense, these intellectuals are guilty of replicating what Dipesh Chakrabarty identifies as ‘the left’s romance of truth’, which in no small measure amounts to the romance of themselves.⁸¹

Yet, other issues are in play which account for the mode of political engagement performed by these intellectuals, and the continuing dissonance between declaration and concrete practice. As a discourse, the one-state perspective, uttered by these intellectuals, repeats, despite their isomorphic trajectories, much of the presuppositions constitutive of the allegedly critical theories of post-representation and deliberation. An ontology of sameness is prefigured and *in fact* is taken to exist in their representations of the Palestinian political field. There is such a thing as an authentic Palestinian identity in their writings, which is present and which they are representing. This claim to authenticity is an effect of their claim to power, as examined in the last chapter, but when viewed through the Bourdieusian lense it has politically disabling

⁸⁰ Makdisi, Saree, Said, Palestine, and the Humanism of Liberation, *Critical Inquiry*, p. 453

⁸¹ Chakrabarty, Dipesh, Where is Now? *Critical Inquiry*, p. 461

outcomes similar to those encountered in post-representationalism and deliberative theory. It denies difference, or severely limits it, and so effectively denies politics, or renders it heavily constrained.

It should be noted that it is not unfair to use a Bourdieusian lense on these critical intellectuals. Their writings are littered with utterances regarding the political necessity of establishing, through a ‘unifying mechanism’, a ‘common goal in the Palestinian political field’ – which clearly for them ought to be decolonisation and liberation through a general struggle for a one-state solution.⁸² ‘Unity and representation are the common goods Palestinians must realise in order to advance their cause’, this position declares, which, as a statement, clearly indicates that on some level these “goods” are recognised as being absent in the present configuration of Palestinian politics.⁸³ The ‘task for intellectuals and others in a privileged position’, this position further contends, is in ‘making’ these “goods” an actual social reality.⁸⁴ So there is, to a certain extent, a homology between the Bourdieusian concerns found in the notion of political work, and the political goals professed by those intellectuals who produce the discourse of one-state.

More broadly, it is worthwhile mentioning that these agents subscribe to and are positioned in constructions of the intellectual that are oriented towards practical politics. Strong emphasis is given in the discourse of one-state to the passage from ‘vision and reflection’ to ‘action’. As those who create this standpoint declare, without practical ‘resistance, our vision would amount to no

⁸² Nabulsi, Karma, *Justice as the way forward*, in, Hilal, Jamil (ed.), *Where Now for Palestine: The Demise of the Two-State Solution*, pp. 233-252, p. 248

⁸³ Nabulsi, Karma, *Diary*, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 32, No. 20, 21 October, 2010, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v32/n20/karma-nabulsi/diary>, accessed 03/12/2010

⁸⁴ Nabulsi, Karma, *Justice as the way forward*, in, Hilal, Jamil (ed.), *Where Now for Palestine: The Demise of the Two-State Solution*, p. 249

more than arm-chair intellectualism, if not irrelevant sophistry'.⁸⁵ In terms of genealogy, moreover, their intellectualism is incorporative of critical visions inclined towards practical engagement. Frantz Fanon, for instance, identified a key political role for intellectuals in his theorisation of decolonisation and liberation, stating that their task was to assist in producing 'a new reality in action'.⁸⁶ Similarly, Antonio Gramsci, another intellectual forbear included in the discourse of one-state, famously refused to limit the praxis of intellectuals to 'eloquence', and instead promoted their 'active participation in practical life'.⁸⁷ The postcolonial tradition in which many of these intellectuals are positioned, furthermore, is consciously interested in more politically than 'just critique'.⁸⁸ It seeks an actual contribution to the dispelling of colonial relations.⁸⁹

Even in those instances when allegiance is professed to metaphysical goals, these intellectuals qualify this stance by insisting on their depositing and embodiment in a 'grassroots movement'.⁹⁰ Edward Said, for example, was very fond of Julien Benda's conception of intellectuals, and this famously asserted that intellectuals are those persons 'whose activity essentially is *not* the pursuit of practical aims'.⁹¹ Genealogically, this is where the notion of 'the truth unadorned' largely comes from in the discourse of one-state.⁹² Even here, though, as demonstrated above, this interest in metaphysics is oriented to a practical end, and this is why Said idealised an intellectual as someone who

⁸⁵ Barghouti, Omar, Re-Imagining Palestine: Self-determination, Ethical De-colonization, and Equality, *The One Democratic State Group*

⁸⁶ Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 112-179

⁸⁷ Gramsci, Antonio, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith), Lawrence and Wishart, London, 2005 (1971), p. 10

⁸⁸ Baylis, John, Smith, Steve, and, Owens, Patricia, *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (fourth edition), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008, pp. 188-9

⁸⁹ Gregory, Derek, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq*, pp. 7-9

⁹⁰ Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents*, pp. 195-6

⁹¹ Benda, Julien, *The Great Betrayal (La Trahison des Clercs)* (translated by Richard Aldington), George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., Broadway House, Carter Lane, E.C., London, 1928, pp. 29-30

⁹² Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 283

operates to ‘combine Gramsci and Benda’.⁹³ So the puzzle of stated aims and actual practice in the actions of these intellectuals is to a large degree addressed to their own terms of engagement.

Yet, this puzzle remains, and it is important to note that this type of divergence is quite frequently found in the study of intellectuals in politics.⁹⁴ Thus, for those people who are concerned with critical political thought, it seems a relatively significant issue. In regards to those intellectuals who are producing the discourse of one-state, it is clear, when using a Bourdieusian conceptual frame, that their interests in ‘collective will’ and common goals *can* only go so far.⁹⁵ This is because their discursive practice symbolically effaces difference in the Palestinian political field, or, rather, it restricts difference to divergent elites, to be more accurate.

As this position routinely writes, the ‘Oslo Accords served to fragment the Palestinian people’.⁹⁶ The language used in such statements is crucial as it evinces the assumption of a unity prior to this point. The temporality of the Palestinian political field and its narration from the standpoint of these intellectuals was analysed in the last chapter and shown to be problematic historically because it effectively amounts to a strategy of legitimation for their struggles in the present. At the same time, it is problematic politically. The temporal axis of before and after is not one of dissipation in the version of social reality constructed in the discourse of one-state. Rather it is one of separation.

⁹³ Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents*, pp. 195-6

⁹⁴ Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, p. 206

⁹⁵ Erakat, Noura, *Beyond Sterile Negotiations: Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy*, *Jadaliyya*

⁹⁶ Hilal, Jamil, *Palestinian Answers in the Arab Spring*, Al-Shabaka Policy Brief, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, p. 2. Beshara Doumani makes a very similar point in Abunimah, Ali, Barakat, Rans, Doumani, Beshara, Haddad, Toufic, Hilal, Jamil, al-Masri, Hani, Qato, Mezna, and, Youmans, Will, *Achieving a Palestinian Spring*, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, pp. 7-8

Whereas '[b]efore the "peace process" ... all representatives of the Palestinians' acted in accordance with the (foundational) premise that 'the various interests of the Palestinian people were inherently compatible', afterwards they did not.⁹⁷ National institutions lost their 'legitimacy and representative function', and this was due, as detailed previously, to their succumbing to "false" principles and narrow concerns.⁹⁸

It is at this point, so to speak, that these intellectuals enter the "game" more forcefully, using the crisis of legitimacy affecting political elites to assert their claim to power and more specifically their claim to represent the Palestinian people and their authentic voice. What is claimed, that is to say, is that while the Palestinian people are 'nowhere to be found' inside the boundaries of official political discourse, they are certainly present within the discursive limits of the discourse of one-state.⁹⁹

The problem with this claim, however, is that the Palestinian people are "nowhere to be found" within the boundaries of the counter-discourse of these intellectuals either. What is present instead is a textual construct known as the "people" or the "masses" that is imposed upon disparate singularities in the field without practices of engagement and re-creation. This process and its reiteration is a practice of representation, and given the immanent plurality of the field it necessarily entails a degree of appropriation in which the perspectives and interests of those who are represented are taken for those who represent. What is crucial here is not that symbolic violence has occurred (though of course this not

⁹⁷ Massad, Joseph, A., The Binational State and the Reunification of the Palestinian People, *Global Dialogue*, p. 123

⁹⁸ Abunimah, Ali, Toward Palestine's "Mubarak moment", *Al-Jazeera English*, 24 February 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/02/2011224141158174266.html>, accessed 12/08/2011

⁹⁹ Nabulsi, Karma, The Peace Process and the Palestinians: A Road Map to Mars, *International Affairs*, p. 230

something to be happy about), but rather when and how it has occurred. The figure of the “people” and its ‘collective political aspirations’ is not a materiality that has been produced through political work, victory and legitimate reconstruction; it has been produced instead in the minds of these intellectuals and their writings through concealment, denial and disavowal of difference; it has been created abstractly and imposed dogmatically upon Palestinians, so effacing whatever differences in visions and demands that might persist without the prospect of contention or accountability.¹⁰⁰

The certainty with which these intellectuals claim to know what Palestinians want and their insistence on possessing a monopoly on “truth” are symptomatic of this disavowal. So too is the varyingly implicit and explicit application of “false consciousness” to Palestinians who are seen to currently deviate from essentially common desires and interests (though as mentioned the charge of deviation is primarily made against “other” elites”). The effect of this disavowal politically is to enable the thought and representation of a collective Palestinian subject that is *already* mobilised and geared towards specific actions and objectives. As those who write this version of social reality declare: ‘It is time for leaders to follow the people’s determined movement toward a single democratic state’.¹⁰¹ This assertion is certainly fanciful in that at present the idea of a one-state solution has no concrete organisational reality or collectively embodied trajectory beyond these critics themselves.¹⁰² Yet it is entirely in keeping with the logic of appropriation carried out in this discourse.

¹⁰⁰ Sabawi, Samah, September and Beyond: Who Speaks in My Name?, Al-Shabaka Commentary, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, September 2011, http://al-shabaka.org/sites/default/files/alshabakacommentary_ssabawi_septemberandbeyond_sept2011.pdf, accessed 07/10/2011, p. 1

¹⁰¹ Abulhawa, Susan, and, Baroud, Ramzy, Palestine/Israel: A Single State, With Liberty And Justice For All, *Countercurrents*

¹⁰² Adam, Heribert, and, Moodley, Kogila, *Seeking Mandela: Peacemaking Between Israelis and Palestinians*, p. 176

Consequently, it is fair to argue that the discourse of one-state is in its present figuration an elitist position, and doubly so. It discursively and dogmatically imposes homogeneity upon a multiplex social world: and this symbolically erases difference in the Palestinian field beyond the elite stratum. Conflict is limited to this point. Indeed, somewhat simplistically, the social world emerges in this discourse as a neat bifurcation between ‘Osloized classes’ and ‘other Palestinians’, with the conditions of possibility for political work being heavily circumscribed as a result. Owing to the specific symbolic violence of this stance and its resultant decontextualisation of a particular social universe, politics in the field, and the precise relations of power it seeks to engender, is once again restricted to trying to modify the conduct of political and other elites by making them ‘join other Palestinians ... in the demand for a secular democratic state in Mandate Palestine’.¹⁰³ It is in this sense exactly that the discourse of one-state may be considered utopian. That is, through its depoliticising and essentialising of the vast majority of Palestinian society.

As such, it is also fair to argue, as some analysts have done so, that proponents of a one-state solution are divorced ‘from social reality’.¹⁰⁴ Yet the specificity of this separation has been so far missed. It is not the consequence of a blind refusal to see reality for what it is – which is usually what is meant by such criticisms (and which in any case is a highly problematic proposition given the inescapable partiality of perspective) – but rather is an outcome of the symbolic moves made by these intellectuals in order to advance a position of legitimate domination. By discursively absorbing diffuse and disparate positions within Palestinian social space into their own, these agents effectively impose a

¹⁰³ Eid, Haidar, Gaza 2009: Culture of resistance vs. defeat, *The Electronic Intifada*

¹⁰⁴ Peled, Yoav, Zionist Realities: Debating Israel-Palestine, *New Left Review*, p. 35

boundary between their point and others in this particular field. In Bourdieu's words, they 'thereby draw a boundary between themselves and ordinary people'; and this is because such others do not exist in this representation of social reality as they are rendered the same.¹⁰⁵ They therefore cannot be politically engaged and potentially reconstituted as a mobilised collective subject as there are no other points to change and to try and generalise.

In this instance, then, the practice of representation is not permitted to function as a constitutive force. It cannot work as a process of 'making practical groups' as envisioned by Bourdieu because words are not contested but coercively imposed on pluralistic social sectors.¹⁰⁶ What is left is a politics of representation as recitation, in which words are spoken from a (social) text that has been already written.¹⁰⁷ As proponents of a one-state solution assert: 'The only time when conflict arose is when one part of the Palestinian people acted to address its own immediate demands'.¹⁰⁸ The "when" of course is the 'original sin'¹⁰⁹ of the Oslo Accords and the "one part" is clearly the so-called 'Osloized classes'.¹¹⁰ What follows from this presumption of harmony prior to this point of partial discontinuity is a political logic of reintegration as a path to reunification.¹¹¹ The common goods of unity and representation that are sought after by those who construct the discourse of one-state are not to be temporarily produced through a political process of generalisation. They are to be *found*, rather, through the

¹⁰⁵ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 210-11

¹⁰⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre, What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, p. 8

¹⁰⁷ Thomassen, Lasse, Beyond Representation, *Parliamentary Affairs*, p. 117

¹⁰⁸ Hilal, Jamil, Palestinian Answers in the Arab Spring, Al-Shabaka Policy Brief, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, p. 2

¹⁰⁹ Doumani, Beshara, in, Abunimah, Ali, Barakat, Rans, Doumani, Beshara, Haddad, Toufic, Hilal, Jamil, al-Masri, Hani, Qato, Mezna, and, Youmans, Will, Achieving a Palestinian Spring, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*

¹¹⁰ Eid, Haidar, Gaza 2009: Culture of resistance vs. defeat, *The Electronic Intifada*

¹¹¹ Nabulsi, Karma, The single demand that can unite the Palestinian people, *The Guardian*, Tuesday 29 March, 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/mar/29/single-demand-unite-palestinian-people>, accessed 29/03/2011

practice of trying to convince “wayward” political elites to *return* to the common fold,¹¹² so enabling Palestinian social space – or what these intellectuals usually refer to as the PLO – to be ‘reconstituted as a *fully* representative body [emphasis added]’.¹¹³ Though it is power that these agents are principally after, the possibility for them to exercise a relation of domination is once more limited to attempting to impact the political leadership through the proclaimed authority of their voice. This is not an accident as it cannot be otherwise so long as the hegemonic frames constitutive of the discourse of one-state remain intact and reiterated.

So although it does not appear to have been a conscious intention of those who produce this discourse, they nevertheless enact and repeat a political logic that is highly reminiscent of that used in post-representationalist and deliberative theory. The effect of this, according to this particular instance, is quite debilitating politically. With the presumption of a general struggle and a prior unity within Palestinian social space, the one-state perspective contingently establishes lines that its producers cannot move beyond. Therefore, the prospect of transcending a particular subject-position and connecting with disparate social sectors through political work and transformation is temporarily denied in this discursive framework. Theoretically, this is what certain critics of post-representationalism and deliberative democracy have argued that the discursive

¹¹² Farsakh, Leila, Palestinians Imposing Agenda on Abbas, Al-Shabaka Policy Brief, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, November 2012, http://al-shabaka.org/sites/default/files/Farsakh_PolicyBrief_En_Nov_2012.pdf, accessed 14/11/2012, p. 2

¹¹³ Hijab, Nadia, The “Palestine Papers”: An Alternative Analysis for Action, Al-Shabaka Commentary, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, February 2011, http://al-shabaka.org/sites/default/files/alshabaka_nadiah_palestinepapers_commentary_eng_feb_2001.pdf, accessed 07/10/2011, p. 2

frames constitutive of these approaches will do; and consequently this study would suggest support for these claims.¹¹⁴

This is why for all its insistence on the need to produce a mobilised collective agent the critical practice of the discourse of one-state remains solely directed to “other” elites and primarily the historic Palestinian leadership. Its proponents are trying to ‘pressure the leadership’¹¹⁵ through their cultural authority, material resources and representativeness, and it is in this sense that they are ‘waiting for a new leadership to emerge’ that will implement the vision that they prescribe.¹¹⁶ Their politics amounts to waiting for the political leadership to heed their demands on the basis that they are already right and legitimate.¹¹⁷ As such they are struggling to exercise an indirect relation of power over the field and this is because, contingently, this pattern of political engagement is the only path available to them owing to their presumed control of “truth” and possession of universal legitimacy. Despite their pronouncements to the contrary, the political role of these intellectuals is temporarily rendered as one of Zygmunt Bauman’s quintessential modernist “legislator”.¹¹⁸ That is, in Janet Hart’s words, they are figures who ‘attempt to influence national policy and policymakers, but who for the most part inhabit[...] a [relatively] separate sphere as consultants and

¹¹⁴ Laclau, Ernesto, Democracy and the Question of Power, *Constellations*, pp. 3-14; Thomassen, Lasse, Beyond Representation?, *Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 111-126; Kioupiolis, Alexandros, Radicalizing Democracy, *Constellations*, pp. 137-154; Kohn, Margaret, Language, Power, and Persuasion: Toward a Critique of Deliberative Democracy, *Constellations*, pp. 423-4; Wedeen, Lisa, *Concepts and commitments in the Study of democracy*, in, Shapiro, Ian, Smith, Rogers M., and Masoud, Tarek E. (eds.), *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, p. 298; Young, Iris Marion, *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*, in, Benhabib, Seyla (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, pp. 120-135

¹¹⁵ Barghouti, Omar, Organizing for Self-Determination, Ethical De-Zionization and Resisting Apartheid, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*

¹¹⁶ Farsakh, Leila, The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinian Challenges and Prospects, *Middle East Journal*, p. 71

¹¹⁷ See Chakrabarty, Dipesh, Where is Now? *Critical Inquiry*, p. 461 for a general discussion of this tendency among “left” intellectuals.

¹¹⁸ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 4-5

tend[...] to avoid direct conversation with the masses'.¹¹⁹ This statement summarises the political role of these intellectuals very well, which has not been delineated through conscious choice, but through position and a struggle for symbolic power. The dominance of the utterance “speak truth to power” perhaps unwittingly captures this role; as does the label ‘policy advisor’, which is being increasingly used by these intellectuals.¹²⁰

The problem with this mode of critical practice from a Bourdieusian point of view is not only the category of a single contradiction amidst an underlying homogeneity in Palestinian social space. Nor is it only the assumption, stemming from the structural position of those who make it, that this contradiction can be removed through moral enlightenment, which reduces competing visions and interests to epistemological falsehoods as opposed to practical realities (symbolic or material). As mentioned previously, the historic Palestinian leadership has very “real” interests in preserving the present configuration of the political field (which is not to say that they do not have very “real” interests in modifying it as well).¹²¹ This point can be similarly applied to Hamas, which goes some way to explaining why governing institutions within both the West Bank and Gaza Strip are increasingly authoritarian and continue to be split.¹²² It is also fair to say that many Palestinians have an interest in preserving the status quo, *even if only on the grounds of the political uncertainties regarding the future*.¹²³ Social reality is considerably more

¹¹⁹ Hart, Janet, *Reading the Radical Subject: Gramsci, Glino, and Paralanguages of the Modern Nation*, in, Grigor Suny, Ronald, and, Kennedy, Michael D. (eds.), *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation*, p. 177

¹²⁰ See www.al-shabaka.org

¹²¹ International Crisis Group, *The Emperor has no Clothes: Palestinians and the End of the Peace Process*, *Middle East Report*, p. 30; International Crisis Group, *Tipping Point? Palestinians and the Search for a New Strategy*, *Middle East Report*, p. 2

¹²² Brown, Nathan J., *Gaza Five Years On: Hamas Settles In*, *The Carnegie Papers*

¹²³ Khalidi, Raja, and, Sobhi, Samour, *Neoliberalism as Liberation: The Statehood Program and the Remaking of the Palestinian National Movement*, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, pp. 16-17

complicated and tangible than these intellectuals make out, and from a Bourdieusian standpoint moral critique alone is an insufficient political strategy.

In addition, though, the problem with this critical practice from a Bourdieusian perspective is that its insistence on an active presence and a prior unity – *à la* post-representation and deliberation – denies the possibility of transcendence and mobilised collective action, which means that it is limited to a singular assault on extant institutions of political power. This appears to make it rather impotent politically as a potential force for change.

Subordinate Possibilities

The discourse of one-state, of course, is not a total system of knowledge and before proceeding to the concluding remarks of this chapter a relatively brief moment will be spent delineating what will be called here subordinate possibilities. This study has principally focused on what have been conceptualised – using a Bourdieusian lense – as the most crucial elements of this discourse and the position from which it is produced. It is therefore a partial reading and inevitably much has been left out, including as a result of temporal-spatial constraints. What this chapter has tried to do, however, is stress that the political conditions of possibility/impossibility delimited in this discourse through its hegemonic frames are constructed – albeit from a specific point in social space. As such, they are unstable, temporal and contingent. In short, they are by no means fixed categories with immutable effects. Moreover, it is the case that slippages in language and classification occur from these hegemonic frames within this discourse which configure Palestinian social reality in a much more nuanced and problematised fashion. Though these slippages are positioned

in a relation of subordination, they can be nevertheless conceived from a Bourdieusian perspective as implicitly containing political possibilities otherwise effaced by the utterances which dominate the constitutive and reiterative process of this discursive formation. These subordinate possibilities will be illustrated below.

In contrast to the dominant assertions which make up the discourse of one-state and which claim that ‘the Palestinian majority’ is essentially disposed towards a one-state solution, there are passages constitutive of this text that challenge this line of contention.¹²⁴ For example, individuals who produce and routinely subscribe to this dominant classification of social reality have occasionally publicly commented that ‘we don’t have a Palestinian majority, not even in the diaspora, for a one-state solution’.¹²⁵ This should not be taken as an annulment of their alternative convictions and affirmations, or be read as an indication that such claims are uttered disingenuously. Such ambivalences and contradictions are consistent with the Bourdieusian conceptual approach utilised in this study, which insists on the individual agent as a disintegrated, fractal and ongoing bodily subject.¹²⁶ A position is never fully constituted and the ambiguity permeating the discourse of one-state, even though effective through a relation of domination and subordination, is suggestive of a more fractal understanding of Palestinian social space amongst those agents who construct it. This in turn has implications for politics as will and representation.

¹²⁴ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 171

¹²⁵ Karmi, Ghada, Building an International Movement to Promote the One State Solution, *Conference on the One State for Palestine/Israel: A Country for All its Citizens*, University of Massachusetts, 28 and 29 March, 2009. A video recording of the conference sessions is available at <http://www.arabichour.org/One-state-Conference.htm>, accessed 03/10/2011

¹²⁶ Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power, *International Political Sociology*, pp. 242-3; Shapiro, Michael J., Bourdieu, the state and method, *Review of International Political Economy*, p. 612

Indeed, it is perhaps no coincidence that when ‘distinct and disparate grievances and vested interests among the Palestinian national body’ are admitted within this representation of social reality that a problematization of politics as principled critique and “speaking truth to power” enters more readily into the fray.¹²⁷ On this issue the Palestinian intellectual Noura Erakat seems to be especially prominent. While she frequently (re)produces many of the central attributes of the discourse of one-state, including the presumption of an already existing Palestinian ‘collective will’ and a politics of representation which conceives language as matching social reality as opposed to constituting it, she does overall present a more complicated picture of the field than her intellectual counterparts.¹²⁸ This is again somewhat contradictory, but her tenuous recognition of difference as a fact does appear to result in an explicit critique of moral engagement as a politics of liberation. In such instances, she moves away from the primacy of epistemology and correct philosophical interpretation that so characterises the dominant standpoint in this discourse, and begins to prioritise the need for active ‘mobilization ... [through a] political program (sic)’.¹²⁹

Of course, this language of mobilisation and programmatic politics is a longstanding feature of the discourse of one-state, and it is by no means confined to Erakat’s contributions. Yet what is important in her writings is that a generalised political programme is not typically categorised as a second order or ‘trivial’ matter that will stem automatically from positivist (re)interpretations;¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Erakat, Noura, in, Eid, Haidar, Sabawi, Samah, Qutami, Loubna, and, Erakat, Noura, Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, 20 March 2012, <http://al-shabaka.org/node/383>, accessed 20/06/2012

¹²⁸ Erakat, Noura, Beyond Sterile Negotiations: Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, *Jadaliyya*

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Qutami, Loubna, in, Eid, Haidar, Sabawi, Samah, Qutami, Loubna, and, Erakat, Noura, Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*

nor is it typically classified as a process that is already in motion with a logic that is inexorably moving towards a one-state solution.¹³¹ Rather than mimic the overwhelming certainty of those around her, which results in a rigid faith in causality and a blindness to plurality, the texts of Erakat contain much more emphasis on ‘the challenge of collective action’¹³² and an openness to political questions concerning ‘who will engender this platform, and how they will do it’.¹³³ As she states, ‘the question of “what next” will continue to loom large’, which implies a refusal to fully determine this and other political questions in advance of ‘practice’, by which she seems to mean direct practical engagement with others. For Erakat, rather than a panacea from which all else will follow, moral argument can only go so far.¹³⁴

Further, that this moral critique is principally aimed at the historic Palestinian leadership is likewise problematised by Erakat, more so than in other utterances constitutive of this discursive position. The critical practice of trying to exercise a relation of power over the leadership through a claim to superior knowledge and representational legitimacy is not promoted by Erakat (either explicitly or implicitly); the very possibility of modifying the conduct of established political elites in this way is scrutinised in her writings on the premise of their entrenched authoritarianism and ‘vested interests based on financial and political benefits accrued by the peace process industry and the state-building project’.¹³⁵ She is not alone in implying this point. A key distinction in her stance, however, is that

¹³¹ Ghanem, As’ad, Thank you for bringing us together, *Haaretz*

¹³² Erakat, Noura, in, Eid, Haidar, Sabawi, Samah, Qutami, Loubna, and, Erakat, Noura, Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*

¹³³ Erakat, Noura, Beyond Sterile Negotiations: Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, *Jadaliyya*

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Erakat, Noura, in, Eid, Haidar, Sabawi, Samah, Qutami, Loubna, and, Erakat, Noura, Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*

such political practices and interests are not typically defined as stemming from the Palestinian leadership being ‘unqualified’ to lead the struggle,¹³⁶ or from its ensnarement in ‘false promises of peace’.¹³⁷ Nor are these practices or interests typically categorised as resulting from a lack of ‘courage’¹³⁸ and ‘will’.¹³⁹ They are in short taken to be “real”, which is not to say that they are fixed, but which suggests that the prospect of reforming the political leadership is considerably more problematic than is ordinarily inscribed in the hegemonic frames which enact this vision.

When Erakat grants these objective differences in the field (which she does not do consistently), the challenge of confronting obstacles ‘impeding collective action’ assumes a much more materialist orientation.¹⁴⁰ This even includes the thought of constructing ‘some other body’ within which to ‘develop a national liberation strategy’ against the ‘PLO’ framework.¹⁴¹ Again, Erakat is not alone here, and others who construct the discourse of one-state have on occasion suggested this point.¹⁴² Yet they are far less sustained in this regard than Erakat, whose individual stance, seemingly because it permits difference across Palestinian social space, is not so idealist or rigidly confined by a politics of presence. The more interventionist and materialist political possibilities she raises in her work are to be sure highly inchoate. Nevertheless, they at least

¹³⁶ Sabawi, Samah, September and Beyond: Who Speaks in My Name?, Al-Shabaka Commentary, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, p. 3

¹³⁷ Abunimah, Ali, *One Country*, p. 170

¹³⁸ Qumsiyeh, Mazin, To liberate Palestine: courage, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 20-26 January 2011, Issue No. 1032, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1032/op152.htm>, accessed 13/07/2011

¹³⁹ Said, Edward W., *The Pen and the Sword*, p. 150

¹⁴⁰ Erakat, Noura, in, Eid, Haidar, Sabawi, Samah, Qutami, Loubna, and, Erakat, Noura, Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*

¹⁴¹ Erakat, Noura, Beyond Sterile Negotiations: Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, *Jadaliyya*

¹⁴² See, for example: Abunimah, Ali, Toward Palestine’s “Mubarak moment”, *Al-Jazeera English*; and, Hilal, Jamil, Palestinian Answers in the Arab Spring, Al-Shabaka Policy Brief, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*, pp. 1-7

point in a political direction that is to some degree consistent with the Bourdieusian view of work and will and representation, and which is otherwise effaced or at least heavily constrained through the reiteration of the dominant statements which establish this perspective.

Moreover, despite being a largely individual stance, Erakat's is not an isolated standpoint. The writings of hers discussed here are usually if not primarily directed at other intellectuals who are producing the discourse of one-state, and indeed intellectually these engagements evince a semblance of discord between dominant and subordinate positions *within* this discourse.¹⁴³ As this shows, there are therefore differences internal to competing perspectives in the field as well as between them and these relations are likewise ongoing. So even though these internal relations of power may be relatively stable for a time, they remain intrinsically fluid and contestable. Because of the specificity of the dominant discursive frames these intellectuals (re)enact, and which they are positioned within, their political role is heavily restricted, with them being unable to move beyond the practice of principled critique directed primarily at the Palestinian leadership that they are already engaged in. As this section has sought to stress, however, this mode of critical practice is not entirely foreclosed, and other possibilities – albeit heavily subordinated ones – remain. Consequently, whatever conclusions are drawn here are necessarily contingent and heavily qualified.

¹⁴³ Erakat, Noura, in, Eid, Haidar, Sabawi, Samah, Qutami, Loubna, and, Erakat, Noura, Looking for a Leadership with a Strategy, Al-Shabaka Roundtable, *Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network*

Concluding Remarks

As this chapter has suggested, the precise language of power used in the discourse of one-state has effects that limit the possibilities of political action for those who utter it. Specifically, their claim to “truth” as an indispensable political resource for advancing the Palestinian struggle pushes their critical conduct in an overly idealist and philosophical direction; with political change as a result being reduced primarily to the revelation of epistemological foundations and an exercise of moral rectitude over “false” premises. While it is mainly through the mobilisation of cultural capital that these agents more forcefully enter the “game”, the manner in which they invest it in battles for domination proscribes the possibility of their engaging in a more extensive political project beyond principled critique. So, somewhat paradoxically, the specificity of their bid for legitimate domination over the field works to temporarily deprive them of the chance (however constrained) of actually exercising legitimate domination. This is because it operates to prioritise ideas and abstract critique as a force for transforming the social world *over* political work. In this respect, therefore, their bid for power has effects which function at the expense of the very process Bourdieu identified as essential for converting (cultural) capital into symbolic capital.

In addition, certain representational practices of these intellectuals have the effect of heavily circumscribing political possibilities in terms of their mode of critical engagement in the field. In much the same way as the language of “truth” subordinates political work to a moral struggle and so heavily forecloses this option, the presumption of an identity with the Palestinian “masses” permits these intellectuals to imagine unity in motion across social space that denies

particularity and thus the prospect of its political mediation and generalisation. The articulation of this prior unity results from the bid for symbolic authority launched by these intellectuals, as it enables them to claim to be legitimate spokespersons for the “people” and their cause. Yet, as this chapter has demonstrated, this move effectively leads to a politics of presence in which requisite collective action is always already present and as such cannot be practically made. For these intellectuals specifically the imposition of a prior unity on the field, through the textual construct of an essential “people”, restricts division in social space to the elite sphere. It is a battle among elites that they are engaged in and what their struggle is temporarily limited to.

As various critics of those who produce the discourse of one-state have argued, their strategy of resistance is ‘discursive’,¹⁴⁴ ‘abstract’,¹⁴⁵ and ‘declarative’,¹⁴⁶ by which is meant that it is ‘not real’,¹⁴⁷ and is unaccompanied by efforts to develop it into ‘a program (sic) of action’.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, such critics have contended that the one-state position is as a result ‘utopian’,¹⁴⁹ detached from reality¹⁵⁰ and the product of ‘disengaged intellectuals’.¹⁵¹ These criticisms are fair as descriptions of the mode of resistance practiced by these intellectuals. They do not, however, explain how this practice is so and not otherwise, except to occasionally suggest that it is simply a product of choice.¹⁵² They do not address the divergences between the goals professed by these intellectuals and

¹⁴⁴ Abu-Manneh, Bashir, The Question of Palestine: An Interview with Bashir Abu-Manneh, *New Politics*

¹⁴⁵ Chomsky, Noam, Advocacy and Realism, *Znet*

¹⁴⁶ Peled, Yoav, Zionist Realities: Debating Israel-Palestine, *New Left Review*, p. 27

¹⁴⁷ Abu-Manneh, Bashir, The Question of Palestine: An Interview with Bashir Abu-Manneh, *New Politics*

¹⁴⁸ Chomsky, Noam, Advocacy and Realism, *Znet*

¹⁴⁹ Abu-Manneh, Bashir, The Question of Palestine: An Interview with Bashir Abu-Manneh, *New Politics*

¹⁵⁰ Peled, Yoav, Zionist Realities: Debating Israel-Palestine, *New Left Review*, p. 35

¹⁵¹ Chomsky, Noam, Advocacy and Realism, *Znet*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

the action they take; nor do they seem especially interested in the question of how is it that this specific form of action has been taken, which in no small measure is a question generated by the distinct structuralist constructivist framework used in this research. Indeed, this assumes that no mode of action is fundamentally necessary and rejects the prospect of absolute freedom to choose.

This chapter has shown that this strategy of resistance is a consequence of the specific way in which these intellectuals make their bid for domination over the political field. The effect of this bid is to push critical action in an abstract direction as philosophy is prioritised over practicality and vast areas of social space are depoliticised resulting in a utopian vision that separates these agents from other people.

What should be emphasised, however, is that this is not an outcome of pure calculation and choice, which by implication means that the discrepancy between the declarative practice of these intellectuals and their insistence on the need to convert their ‘ideal’ into a ‘concrete movement’ cannot simply be reconciled by their choosing differently.¹⁵³ The manner of their bid for power and by extension the exact mode of their critical practice is oriented by their objective position in the field and intellectual *habitus*. These impose constraints on the objective resources such agents can mobilise and invest in the struggle, and at the same time seem to dispose them towards (re)producing a mode of practice that is consistent with their intellectual position, despite this being transposed to a more overtly political context. Such constraints and dispositions are not overdetermined, so preventing outright other forms of conduct. Yet, as the reading in this chapter would suggest, they impose limits which orient action in a

¹⁵³ Farsakh, Leila, The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinian Challenges and Prospects, *Middle East Journal*, p. 56

particular direction, to practices that these specific agents are preconditioned to engaging in and performing with authority.

This insight clearly has implications for the political role of these intellectuals in the Palestinian political field, and as has been suggested above their mode of critical practice *cannot* be otherwise *so long* as these orientations are reproduced in the hegemonic discursive frames they transmit. From a Bourdieusian perspective, this would indicate that their political role is implicitly conservative owing to their structural position in the field, along with the *habitus* that it generates. So as an agent for change their social efficacy is heavily restricted in a directly political sense.

The analysis above would seem to point to more general implications regarding the performance of critical thought and practice. As Bourdieu and other scholars using his perspective have argued, objective position and especially *habitus* may often work to constrain the possibility ‘of effective agency for change’, as opposed to enabling it; with this being so despite a clear interest in the contrary.¹⁵⁴ It is largely for this reason that Bourdieu is so insistent on reflexivity, and not just as the restricted strategising that is always available to agents in the field, but also as the social scientific and potentially liberating practice that was mentioned very briefly at the start of Chapter One. If the objective position and dispositions of a particular agent often impose limits on the prospect of effective critical engagement then it would appear important to reflect on such limits as a way of moving beyond them. As has been noted in this chapter, the critical or leftist intellectual has been hardly spared the

¹⁵⁴ Lovell, Terry, *Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self, Theory, Culture & Society*, p. 5

consequences of *habitus*,¹⁵⁵ and the individuals analysed above are not the first to have transposed an interest in Truth generated in the cultural (or modern scientific) field to the political marketplace. Nor are they the first to be seemingly caught by the conservative implications of such a move.¹⁵⁶

Within certain poststructuralist writings this insistence on the importance of reflecting on limits is likewise found, albeit with a grounding in an altogether different ontology than that implied by Bourdieu's social scientific reflexivity. David Campbell, for example, argues that what 'is required is an ethos of political criticism that is concerned with assumptions, limits, their historical production, social and political effects, and the possibility of going beyond them in thought and action'.¹⁵⁷ This proposed ethos of political criticism seems similar to that of Bourdieu's reflexivity, with a distinction being that it is unclear whether Campbell is explicitly calling for this ethos to be practiced by individuals on themselves in the process of their critical engagement. This is what Bourdieu considers especially significant, and as this chapter has suggested this does not seem misguided given that it is the effects of historically produced limits and assumptions that have curtailed the critical practice of certain intellectuals, effacing the possibility of their mobilising effective agency, and so the potential of their forging the type of relation they proclaim to desire.

Within the broad terrain of critical theory, as was noted at the beginning of Chapter One, Bourdieusian scholars have seen this reflexive practice as enabling knowledge 'of the social determinants of thought'. In turn, this has been viewed as being essential to 'liberating thought from the determinisms that weigh on it'.

¹⁵⁵ Shusterman, Richard, *Introduction: Bourdieu as Philosopher*, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, pp. 11-12

¹⁵⁶ Chakrabarty, Dipesh, *Where is Now? Critical Inquiry*, p. 461

¹⁵⁷ Campbell, David, *Beyond Choice: The Onto-Politics of Critique*, *International Relations*, p. 133

Further, this freedom, which is sometimes configured as exogenous to the social world and sometimes is configured as slightly less endogenous, has been regarded as vital to the critical practice of ‘concretely’ reinventing a given social universe.¹⁵⁸ So while *habitus* often works to constrain the prospect of effective resistance, this reflexive practice is often understood as being able to ameliorate the effects of this internalised structure.

But from where exactly is this practice of reflexivity initiated if not from within the body of the agent? And if this is so, how is it possible to bypass the effects of *habitus* without resorting to metaphysical foundations and risking a politics of Truth and Emancipation of the sort critiqued in this chapter? The insights of this chapter would suggest that this sort of practice may indeed be important, as it has shown that open thinking does not necessarily point beyond itself. Yet, given that Bourdieu’s position somewhat contradictorily posits that one ‘cannot get out of [their] own *sens pratique* just by recognising that [they] have one’, the questions of how this practice is undertaken and to what extent it is even possible would appear to remain pertinent.¹⁵⁹ As this chapter has shown, these questions are not a singularly philosophical concern, as they may have significant political implications, especially in regards to the effective performance of critical thought and action.¹⁶⁰ Nonetheless, these questions cannot be addressed here and they would seem to be a point of departure towards future research.

Representation is also a key issue for Bourdieu, one that he considers essential to political struggle given the ineradicable plurality of the field in terms of both

¹⁵⁸ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Critical Thought as a Solvent of Doxa, Constellations*, p. 97

¹⁵⁹ Dreyfus, Hubert, Rabinow, Paul, *Can there be a Science of Existential Structure and Social Meaning?*, in, Shusterman, Richard (ed.), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, pp. 92-3

¹⁶⁰ Jabri, Vivienne, *Critical Thought and Political Agency in Time of War, International Relations*, p. 73

points of view and interests. Bourdieu is in agreement with other (usually poststructuralist and even more specifically deconstructionist) standpoints which envision representation in political terms as a potentially constitutive force, more so than a practice of citation.¹⁶¹ The centrality of representation to politics for Bourdieu is found in this creative aspect and its inherent instability. For him in particular, the constitutive force of words is temporarily determined by context and the position of the speaker; and it is through particular agents being able to legitimately impose certain categories on others that they are able to subordinate and so re-present differences as a generalised political subject. This process of symbolic violence is difficult and requires political work. Nevertheless, it is vital to the prospect of modifying established order as this can only occur in Bourdieu's view through particular forms of mobilised collective action. As a relation of power, moreover, it is partial and therefore mutable.

This particular stance on representation is rejected by alternative theories discussed in this work; with this occurring on the normative grounds that the violence intrinsic to representation is wrong and therefore should be avoided; and on the grounds that a genuinely universal subject is permissible and indeed is immanent to social structure. For different reasons (mainly power) some of these logics determining post-representationalist and deliberative perspectives are active in determining the articulation of the discourse of one-state, as well as delineating its effects. Specifically these are the presumption of a unified and substantive presence which symbolically obviates the possibility of direct political engagement across broad sectors of social space, and which therefore discounts the formation of a mobilised collective subject. What this chapter has shown to happen as a result of these presumptions is what certain critics of post-

¹⁶¹ Thomassen, Lasse, *Beyond Representation?*, *Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 111-126

representation and deliberation have theorised as happening as a consequence of the political logics that these perspectives follow. That is, there is an overbearing emphasis on immanence and underlying homogeneity that is politically disabling in terms of the varyingly critical agendas that these standpoints set for themselves.

In addition to seeming to offer support for these theorisations, this chapter would appear to indicate that in a social world predicated on incommensurable differences, stemming from individual temporal-spatial coordinates, there is a need for a politics of representation as a fought for relation of power that is constitutive of practical groups. This process inevitably contains a degree of symbolic violence, and therefore the question of how specifically this violence can be ameliorated is certainly appropriate, although it does not appear to have been addressed in any detail from the perspectives used and drawn upon in this study.¹⁶²

Nevertheless, if one accepts that general struggles are not generated automatically as an outcome of structure, and that an underlying sameness is not essentially inscribed in a given social framework, then it becomes difficult to see how else such collective political subjects can be brought into being. Again, according to the point of view adopted in this study, this is not a trifling political issue, especially for those who consider themselves to be critically oriented. Without someone constitutively ‘representing and articulating a collective identity, which does not emerge of its own ... there would be no collective agency to counter the persons and institutions that currently rule the world’.¹⁶³

¹⁶² See for example, Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Mystery of the Ministry: From Particular Wills to the General Will*, *Constellations*, pp. 41-3; Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Pointers on Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics*, in, Wacquant, Loïc J. D. (ed.), *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics: The Mystery of the Ministry*, p. 21; and, Thomassen, Lasse, *Beyond Representation?, Parliamentary Affairs*, pp. 119-20

¹⁶³ Thomassen, Lasse, *Beyond Representation?, Parliamentary Affairs*, p. 121

From the Bourdieusian standpoint, and certain deconstructionist perspectives which are similar to it on this issue, the disparate singularities which comprise the fluid matrix of social space are individually not enough to effectively challenge such extant relations of power;¹⁶⁴ and in this sense, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak stated some time ago, it would seem that representation as a constitutive force ‘has not withered away’ but is still vital to the prospect of political change.¹⁶⁵

Indeed, in her critique of representation as a politics of presence, which was addressed specifically to the field of postcolonial studies, Spivak used the concept of ‘epistemic violence’ which is not dissimilar to Bourdieu’s symbolic violence. She also warned of the dangers of (postcolonial) intellectuals assuming their depiction of the ‘subaltern’ to be a ‘transparent’ vocalising of a substantive presence and (inadvertently) ‘assimilating’ the figure of the subaltern into their own point of view. She warned specifically that this practice risked a ‘foreclosing of the necessity of the difficult task of counterhegemonic ideological production’ which consequently would lead ‘to an essentialist, utopian politics’.¹⁶⁶ Her critique, then, would appear to have a continuing saliency in regards to those intellectuals who produce the discourse of one-state; and as certain scholars have contended Spivak’s intervention continues to haunt postcolonial and subaltern studies more generally.

Given that proponents of a one-state solution largely operate from a postcolonial perspective, it may seem appropriate to question the extent to which the conclusions drawn in this chapter can be generalised across this standpoint,

¹⁶⁴ Laclau, Ernesto, Why Constructing a People is the Main Task of Radical Politics, *Critical Inquiry*, p. 674

¹⁶⁵ Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, in, Nelson, Cary, and, Grossberg, Lawrence (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Macmillan Education, Hampshire and London, 1988, pp. 275-294

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

both in relation to Palestine and perhaps more broadly. It is certainly true that representing the colonial object and so transforming such individuals into ‘history’s new subjects’ is a task that postcolonial critique has set for itself;¹⁶⁷ with such a task often being expressed in terms of a movement ‘to reclaim the power of words’.¹⁶⁸ To be sure such an impulse is laudable insofar as colonial discourse constitutes the colonial “other”. Yet it would still seem that it is asserted far too simplistically, without adequate attention being paid to the question of for whom exactly such power is claimed, and without reflection on the potentially stultifying political effects engendered by such critical engagement.

A cursory glance at other postcolonial writings on the Palestinian struggle would appear to indicate that for the most part such questions are ignored.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, it still remains a feature of postcolonial discourse for the theorist to take his or her perspectives and reify them as ‘the people’s anti-imperial epistemic responses to the colonial difference’.¹⁷⁰ However, it is to be stressed that such issues are only raised here tentatively and as another potential point of departure for further research. Owing to temporal-spatial constraints, a prolonged and more systematic engagement with these issues will have to wait for another time.

Finally, it is to be recognised that the conclusions drawn here are temporal and contingent. This is not only because they are the product of a very specific

¹⁶⁷ Young, Robert J. C., *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., Oxford, 2001, pp. 4-10

¹⁶⁸ Gregory, Derek, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq*, p. xiv

¹⁶⁹ See for example, *Ibid.*, pp. 98-106; Ashcroft, Bill, Representation and its discontents: Orientalism, Islam and the Palestinian Crisis, *Religion*, Vol. 34, 2004, pp. 113-121; and, Mavroudi, Elizabeth, Imagining a Shared State in Palestine-Israel, *Antipode*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 2010, pp. 152-178

¹⁷⁰ Mignolo, Walter D., and, Tlostanova, Madina V., Theorizing from the Borders: Shifting to Geo- and Body-Politics of Knowledge, *European Journal of Social Theory*, p. 208

reading and conceptual approach, but also because the discourse of one-state and those who produce it are not stationary and monolithic. As the last section of this chapter demonstrated, there are tensions within the stance adopted by these intellectuals, including discursive frames and representations which would appear less restrictive in their political implications than those generated by its dominant dispositions and hegemonic language. Specifically, these subordinate accounts more readily admit difference across Palestinian social space as a fact – as opposed to a moral deviation – which appears to orient critical thought in a more expansive direction. The less restricted possibilities opened up by such conceptualisations of the field are certainly inchoate at this stage. Nonetheless, they do seem to contain material and programmatic possibilities that are otherwise foreclosed by the overwhelmingly dominant articulation of this perspective.

More generally, this appreciation of ontological plurality and the widening effects it engenders would seem to support the view that ineradicable difference is the condition of possibility for effective political struggle. This condition is necessary though it cannot be prejudged as sufficient. There are always relations of power, struggle, and competing interests at stake. It only makes possible the fight.

Conclusion

It has been twenty years since the signing of the Oslo Accords between the PLO and Israel. The framework of negotiations set in motion by these Accords certainly led to profound changes in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For Palestinians in particular, the initiation of the Oslo peace process was widely conceived as marking the final act in a narrative of state. As such, the changes that commenced with the Oslo Accords were largely perceived as evolutionary. Negotiations and the creation of the PA were viewed as necessary steps towards the final destination of independent statehood and a two-state solution to the conflict. That this endpoint would be ultimately reached was for a while taken for granted, and even though the peace process has been effectively stalled since late 2000, there are Palestinian politicians who continue to publicly insist that such an outcome is inevitable.¹ Officially, the object of a negotiated two-state solution to the conflict and the establishment of an independent state on the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem remains the dominant position in the Palestinian political field.

However, the force of this “pragmatist” contention has been severely weakened within the Palestinian context. This process has contributed to furthering specific dynamics in the political field, such as the growing significance of Hamas. Yet it is primarily the dynamic of stability that has undermined the social efficacy of “pragmatist” discourse. The Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem has become entrenched over the last two decades of the peace process, which does not amount to a departure,

¹ Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 150-206

but rather marks the continuation of a process that certainly stems back to 1967 and some would argue (including those figures analysed in this study) considerably earlier.

It was on the premise of being able to break this trajectory in the occupied territories, through negotiating a two-state solution to the conflict, that the legitimacy of the historic Palestinian leadership was largely founded.² Its failure to do so after nearly two decades of the Oslo peace process has therefore brought its narrative of state into dispute along with its own position of authority in the Palestinian political field. There was of course opposition to “pragmatism” prior to late 2000, but it certainly became more pronounced after this point in time, and for those intellectuals looked at in this study, it was enunciated with a much higher degree of regularity.

As this study has shown, the discourse of one-state incorporates a socially distinct reconceptualisation of the Palestinian struggle that is produced in opposition to the “pragmatist” standpoint. In this regard, the articulation of this discourse is fairly typical in that its efforts to reformulate a particular issue has occurred in response to, and has been enabled by, policy failure and a crisis of legitimacy for established elites.³ This discourse is not a pragmatic or purely technical response to material obstacles – that is, ‘facts on the ground’⁴ – in the occupied territories which have been perceived as making a viable Palestinian state impossible.⁵ The discourse of one-state, rather, amounts to a competing

² Sayigh, Yezid, *Armed Struggle*, p. 660

³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 242; Finnemore, Martha, and, Sikkink, Kathryn, Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics, *Annual Review of Political Science*, p. 406

⁴ Sussman, Gary, Is the Two-State Solution Dead?, *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, p. 39

⁵ Hermann, Tamar, The bi-national idea in Israel/Palestine: past and present, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 381-401; Khalidi, Rashid, *The Iron Cage*, pp. 206-7; and, Sussman, Gary, The Challenge to the Two-state Solution, *Middle East Report*, pp. 11-12

vision of what is at stake in the Palestinian political field in relation to its conflict with Israel (or more accurately political Zionism).

Within this perspective, “pragmatism” is simply wrong; and as a result the Palestinian struggle has to be rethought and redefined. These intellectuals are trying to do this through their critical practice. They promulgate a classificatory schema which, in contrast to the dominant “pragmatist” standpoint, envisions the Palestinian struggle as resisting and confronting Zionist settler colonialism. The possibility of a political-territorial compromise is denied in this version of social reality because such a move is conceived as being antithetical to Zionism (or rather its hegemonic political variant). To argue, then, as other analysts on this issue have done, that the discourse of one-state is a reaction to the closing window of opportunity for a viable two-state solution to the conflict is to misconstrue this contentious practice.⁶ What is at stake is much more significant than that, with this discourse being a direct challenge to the dominant conceptions and assumptions regarding what the conflict and the Palestinian struggle are fundamentally about.

Such battles over knowledge have implications in terms of what courses of political action are permissible. The logics of intelligibility constitutive of the discourse of one-state necessitate confrontation and the absolute defeat of political Zionism, which if recognised as legitimate across Palestinian social space certainly paves the way for a very different type of struggle than that inscribed in the logics of “pragmatism”.

This counter-knowledge, it ought to be stressed, has not emerged from nowhere. It has been shaped by Israel’s material and discursive practices in the context of the peace process, especially its continuing settlement expansion in the

⁶ Ibid.

occupied territories and disavowal of Palestinian political subjectivity. The continuation of these practices within the context of the peace process has led many of those who are constructing the discourse of one-state to question and then refute the epistemological assumptions on which “pragmatism” rests. It is for this reason that “pragmatism” has been reconceptualised as false by these intellectuals and challenged as such.

What additionally ought to be emphasised is that the content of the discourse of one-state is to a large degree structured by the objective positions in the field of those who utter it. Thus, this discourse may be understood not only as a competing definition of social reality, but also as one that incorporates particular standpoints. The Bourdieusian framework deployed in this study has enabled this understanding, especially its sub-concepts of *habitus* and structural homology. It is a finding that is important because it shows that these critical agents are engaged in a struggle over legitimate knowledge in the Palestinian arena, and are also interested in remaking this social space in their own specific image.

Their stance is structured by generalised historical tropes in the Palestinian political field, particularly those enunciated and reproduced from the period of “maximalist” and revolutionary domination. Furthermore, their stance is oriented by reflexivity and the calculation that certain words are likely to be found compelling and resonate positively at local and international levels. Yet, the vision of a one-state solution constructed by these intellectuals is strongly oriented by their notion of anti-colonial liberation, which has been largely generated in the cultural field of postcolonial studies, and which they are transposing to the political context of Palestine-Israel. Moreover, this vision is

structurally homologous with the predominantly diasporic position from which it is enunciated. While their particular understanding of what it means to be Palestinian is important in this regard, with this resulting in their ambivalent and resigned acceptance of the “pragmatist” position in the past, the anti-colonial humanism of their one-state stance, as well as its distaste for the nation-state idea, is specific to their objective position in cultural and transnational fields. So what is clear from this study is that while these intellectuals have “resumed” a relatively longstanding battle between “maximalist” and “pragmatist” positions in the Palestinian political field, they have done so in ways that correspond with their unique point in social space. One cannot say that the discourse of one-state is a straightforward re-articulation of an antecedent Palestinian perspective.

However, what one can say is that the enunciation of this discourse can be primarily explained as a bid for power over the Palestinian political field. As this research has demonstrated, this bid has been initiated, whether consciously or not, in terms of imposing a particular vision on social space, and as a claim to domination over the process of determining the future direction of the Palestinian struggle. Within the context of failure and political crisis of established authority, the issues at stake in the field can be conceived as revolving around the questions of what the Palestinian struggle means and who determines this classification. For those producing the discourse of one-state, the answer to these questions are their position-taking and their position. In keeping with Bourdieu’s theory of the field, a ‘double game’ has been shown to be underway in Palestinian social space, in which certain intellectuals are challenging the position of more dominant elites through a struggle to reformulate legitimate discourse *and* principles of hierarchy.⁷ This, it may be suggested, is one of the

⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, pp. 168-81

key findings of this study as it is from this point that the political limitations of the critical practice of these intellectuals is rendered intelligible; which in turn has enabled the generation of more general insights on the role of intellectuals in politics and on the relation between the practice of critical thought and the possibilities of political agency.

The symbolic aspect of the ‘double game’ initiated by these intellectuals is of course their critique of “pragmatism” and their counter-vision of a one-state solution. The objective aspect, by which is meant their efforts to reconstruct the principles of hierarchy in the Palestinian field, is the resources they have mobilised so as to play the “game” and contest established order. The main resource in this regard has been cultural capital, which has been asserted more specifically in this instance as a claim to “seeing reality” and “knowing better” than those elites who currently dominate this context. Knowledge as a privileged access to “truth” has been figured as politically indispensable within the version of social reality promulgated by these intellectuals. It is through this claim to indispensability that their bid for power is most clearly discernible. It is they who are able to ‘expose reality’⁸ because it is they who possess the knowledge to perceive it and inform others of what is ‘really’ going on.⁹ The dissemination of their knowledge, it is assumed, will have practically transformative effects, and it is on such a basis that these intellectuals primarily stake their claim to domination.

The centrality of power to the political struggles of intellectuals is a thesis that has been advanced in previous scholarly discussions on this topic, and this

⁸ Karmi, Ghada, Palestinians need a one-state solution, *The Guardian*

⁹ Said, Edward W., *The End of the Peace Process*, p. 50

research furthers understanding in this regard.¹⁰ What is also interesting about the particular case looked at here is its diasporic element. If the findings of this research do not directly challenge some of the conventional thinking on diaspora, they certainly expand the terms of debate.

From the point of view of diaspora studies, the discourse of one-state evinces many themes that are typical to this area. Most importantly, these include a strong emphasis on loss and exclusion, combined with a claim to belong. Such themes are not groundless, and for those diasporic agents examined in this study, they stem primarily from the particular circumstances of Palestinian history, as well as from a profound reordering of the political field that occurred in the early 1990s. The creation of the PA is crucial in this respect as its establishment is perceived by those who construct the discourse of one-state as coterminous with their symbolic and objective exclusion from formal Palestinian politics. As demonstrated, it is this antagonism that is vital to understanding this discourse as a diasporic practice.

This research indicates that claims to citizenship in a distinct *transnational* community may be an important element constitutive of diasporic practices. ‘I’m Palestinian too’, for example, is a statement that illustrates this point in this particular instance.¹¹ Such utterances signify disaffection with and resistance to formal political exclusion. Yet within this specific practice of diaspora they are accompanied by efforts to reconstruct boundaries of “inside” and “outside” within the transnational field. Though these diaspora intellectuals are certainly aggrieved at the contraction of formal politics to those Palestinians in the West

¹⁰ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 98-9; Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, p. 210; Verdery, Katherine, Konrad and Szelenyi’s model of socialism, twenty-five years later, in, *Rereading The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, *Theory and Society*, pp. 2-3

¹¹ Abulhawa, Susan, 60 Years of Dispossession, Humiliation, Oppression, *The Palestine Chronicle*

Bank and Gaza Strip, the practices of contention enunciated through the discourse of one-state are not solely concerned with expanding this limit to encompass those Palestinians positioned outside these territories. “Inside” and “outside” are not simply geographic markers in this particular case, with diasporic agents seeking to contest and transgress the formal lines of separation.¹² They are in addition unstable political limits that seek to draw boundaries between possession and lack.

According to the utterances constitutive of the discourse of one-state, diaspora is the political “inside” within the transnational field. It is *only* from this site that Palestinians (and more precisely certain Palestinian intellectuals) can analyse, evaluate, and legislate on the “common good”. This is because it is the only site that is relatively detached in Palestinian social space, so enabling this process of contemplation and legislation to be carried out to the fullest extent possible. This assertion rests once again on the assumption that knowledge as an exposure of “reality” will inevitably lead to material change, which stems from the intellectual position of those diaspora agents who disseminate it within transnational social space. In this regard, therefore, the political conduct of these agents as diaspora cannot be considered separately from their conduct as intellectuals.

That is to say, the diasporic position of those constructing the discourse of one-state has encouraged the particular form of their political intervention, not just with respect to the specific vision of a one-state solution contained within their discourse, but also in relation to the the precise mode of political

¹² Bauböck, Rainer, Towards a Political Theory of Migrant Transnationalism, *International Migration Review*, pp. 719-20; Turner, Simon, The waxing and waning of the political field in Burundi and its diaspora, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 745-7

contestation they are engaged in. On this point about mode of contestation, however, this encouragement seems to have occurred only insofar as the diasporic position of these agents complements their position as intellectuals. Diaspora and its hierarchization in this version of the social world in fact works in tandem with the privileged access to “truth” that these agents claim to possess and have mobilised as a politics of liberation. As this research showed, the temporal autonomy and material security of diaspora as a sociological space are incorporated in the political stance of these intellectuals as vital conditions for their effective performance of analysis and theory. Nevertheless, it remains the case that it is the political efficacy they invest in analysis and theory, in their position as intellectuals, that primarily accounts for the political position they take. Diaspora is subordinated to “the intellectual” in this relation of complementarity. Thus, while it would be wrong to suggest that the diasporic position of these agents has had no influence on the kind of political position they have adopted, in this particular instance its effect in this regard appears to have been to compound the intellectualist dispositions of these agents during their movement into the (transnational) field of political struggles. The construction of diaspora as a 'pure spac[e] of thought' that contributes to 'exciting possibilities for the intellectual' is not a move unique to those producing the discourse of one-state, and this relation of complementarity has been enacted within general discussions on these topics.¹³ With respect to the politics of the discourse of one-state, the main point here is that diaspora is a factor shaping the struggle for the political “inside” within Palestinian politics in the sense that its conditions of autonomy and security are taken to further the acquisition and

¹³See, for example, Radhakrishnan, Rajagopalan, *Diasporic Mediation: Between Home and Location*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London, 1996, p. 173

circulation of emancipatory knowledge. From the point of view of this discourse, “other” Palestinians lack these conditions and resources and so are severely restricted in terms of their being able to initiate an effective politics.

It is along these lines, then, that proponents of a one-state solution are seeking to enact what Engin Isin calls ‘new boundaries of citizenship’. This is a struggle that is taking place across transnational social space, largely in response to the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion imposed upon them by the PA regime.¹⁴ What is interesting about this struggle from the point of view of diaspora studies is that it is not primarily articulated through the assertion of membership in a particular *demos*, though this is clearly a part of it. It is, rather, asserted through a socially constructed binary of possession and lack, which, within the discourse of one-state at least, works to produce those who make this claim as political subjects who are fully qualified to act politically in relation to those who are not. The relation of force sought after and prefigured *discursively* in this discourse is one in which these diaspora intellectuals are entitled to arbitrate on matters of general political concern. So while studies of diaspora and transnationalism have emphasised citizenship in this setting, the findings of this research would seem to point to a broadening of this issue to encompass dispute not just over status but over practice as well. “Who is a citizen?” may therefore take on a different meaning in this context.

“Truth”, as articulated in the discourse of one-state, includes the category of the “people”. This is not, it ought to be stressed, an uncommon claim within the contentious practices of intellectuals in politics. Within the sociology of intellectuals there is a strong tradition of such agents assuming their interests ‘to

¹⁴ Isin, Engin. F., Who is the new citizen? Towards a Genealogy, *Citizenship Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1997, pp. 115-132, p. 131

be coterminous with the interests of society as a whole'.¹⁵ Often intellectuals take for granted that their position is somehow special, with it being positioned above or separate to narrow concerns.¹⁶ Such presumed detachment is considered as enabling their surveying and problematising of issues confronting society in general, which in turn allows them to formulate what Julien Benda referred to many years ago as 'general ideas'.¹⁷ The converse of this contention within the sociology of intellectuals would appear to be the notion of organicity. In this view, the intellectual is not detached but organically bound to a specific group and is thus able to articulate its perspectives and aspirations. As a social category, intellectuals 'emerge from and serve other social groups' in this tradition.¹⁸

This study has shown that both of these sociological traditions are reproduced in the discourse of one-state. On the one hand, the intellectuals who produce the discourse of one-state claim to have a special access to "truth" and a relative detachment that enables them to determine the "common good". On the other hand, they claim to be organic in that they are bound and seamlessly attached to others in society. The "truth" in this regard is not only a purely objective reality mystified and obscured by partiality, ignorance and "false" consciousness. In addition, it is defined in this discourse as a lived and embodied experience. '[T]he 11 million Palestinians living under occupation, apartheid and as stateless refugees are living the truth', and so in speaking "the truth to power", this is also what these intellectuals mean by "truth".¹⁹ They are speaking for others – in this case the Palestinian "people" – whom they represent and serve in so doing.

¹⁵ Kurzman, Charles, and, Owens, Lynn, *The Sociology of Intellectuals*, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 65

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Benda, Julien, quoted in, *ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-7

¹⁹ Karkar, Sonja, *Talking Palestine to power*, *The Electronic Intifada*

Their voice is the voice of the “people” and this is historicised and so authenticated as such within their (re)narration of the past. Indeed, this unity is effectively essentialized within this discourse and as a result is contingently rendered unchanging. It is reified as a fixed principle.

This research has demonstrated that these sociological traditions are not simply different approaches to the study of intellectuals, but are implicated in social conflict and struggles for power. This is a finding that supports Zygmunt Bauman’s perceptive observation that ‘[d]efinitions of the intellectual ... are all self-definitions’, which presuppose the authority to draw such lines of demarcation, and which effectively create the category of non-intellectuals, who within this relation of distinction at least are typically figured in a subordinate position.²⁰ As occupants of a distinct social position, intellectuals are certainly different in the Bourdieusian sense that each point in social space incorporates a particular temporal-spatial trajectory. Intellectuals are not, however, intrinsically special, nor are they intrinsically organic. The mobilisation and (re)articulation of such tropes in social space must be considered as an outcome of this distinct social position, which historically has been excessively interested in “truth” and generalities.²¹ Yet, it is precisely such interests that are particularised further through the sociological traditions invoked here, as they are cast as being beyond the reach of all others, either through their lacking requisite knowledge and abilities, or through their inability to speak and so articulate their demands.

The discourse of one-state evidences these two broad (self-) definitions of the intellectual working in tandem with one another, which stems from the rather

²⁰ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 8-9

²¹ Kurzman, Charles, and Owens, Lynn, *The Sociology of Intellectuals*, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 78. Also see Bigo, Didier, Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, *Practices of Power*, *International Political Sociology*, p. 230

eclectic intellectual genealogy incorporated within this perspective – in particular Edward Said’s strong taste for Bendaesque *and* Gramscian notions of the intellectual – and from creative practice.²² The effect of these definitions, as inscribed within this discourse, is to advance the social position of those who make them as politically indispensable and uniquely disposed to legitimately speak for others. What they work to do, as this study has demonstrated, is secure for these agents a preeminent political role on the grounds that they “know better” as rational subjects *and* as representatives of a wider social group. The sociological traditions invoked and reproduced in the discourse of one-state are tied to battles for domination between differently positioned agents within a particular field of struggles. Definitions of the intellectual, whether as special or organic, are tied to struggles to classify ‘the legitimate principles of division of the field’.²³ They are not descriptions which match “reality” to greater or lesser degrees and nor are they simply normative ideals which individuals fulfil or fall short of.²⁴ They are inseparable from relations of power.

The struggle for power launched through the discourse of one-state is somewhat paradoxical, however, and it does raise more general questions about the role of intellectuals in politics and the relation between the practice of critical thought and its relation to practical possibilities. As has been made clear in this study, the specificity of the bid for domination in this discourse is far from being unique to those who produce it; they initiate this struggle through the reiteration of longstanding discourses constitutive of the sociology of intellectuals. So in this respect the discourse of one-state cannot be considered *sui generis*. What is

²² Said, Edward W., *Peace and its Discontents*, pp. 195-6

²³ Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 242

²⁴ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, pp. 8-9; Karabel, Jerome, *Towards a Theory of Intellectuals and Politics*, *Theory and Society*, pp. 205-7

ordinarily specific to the social position occupied by intellectuals is its ‘relative monopoly of complex knowledge’, coupled with an interest in generalities, or what from a Bourdieusian standpoint might be termed disinterest.²⁵ This skews contest in a certain direction, or at least this is how it looks from a Bourdieusian perspective. The form of capital that they have at their disposal, and which they can therefore mobilise and invest in struggles for domination, is cultural. As such, they are typically occupants of an objective position that orients them towards legitimising bids for power on the basis of their possession of cultivated dispositions and academic qualifications.

This is not fixed, of course, and a fundamental criterion of Bourdieu’s field theory is the interconvertibility of capital and by implication the instability of the principles of hierarchy that determine social space at a given moment in time. Yet, the corresponding versions of social reality that seem to stem from this objective orientation appear to generate significant limitations on the political role of intellectuals (or, again, they appear to do so from a Bourdieusian perspective). The special access to knowledge, or “truth” as it is claimed in the discourse of one-state, is the principal resource on which intellectuals legitimise their political interventions.²⁶ Such a process is only capable of working and making sense, however, if a corresponding ontology of “truth” is said to underlie politics and more precisely political change. Implicit within such legitimising strategies, as scholars such as Dipesh Chakrabarty have argued in relation to critical intellectuals generally, is the positive assumption that people who are ‘exposed to a rational elaboration of the state of the world’ will start ‘to act rationally’. Underpinning such battles for domination is an ‘implicit faith in the

²⁵ Verdery, Katherine, Konrad and Szelenyi’s model of socialism, twenty-five years later, in, Rereading *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, Theory and Society*, pp. 2-3

²⁶ Ibid.

rational construction of politics',²⁷ which certainly looks dubious through the Bourdieusian lense deployed in this study, but which is logically necessary if the primacy of "truth" is to have any social effect.

The consequences of this logic have been shown to be politically disabling in this particular instance, though this insight has broader implications, especially as the 'problem' of "truth" is a pertinent issue the literature on critical – or 'left' – intellectuals.²⁸ As this study has suggested, this problem specifically is one of reduction: politics is effectively reduced to a positivist equation, with "truth" being rendered as the cause of emancipation. The temporality between these two points may not be immediate or even relatively short. Nonetheless, the primacy of "truth" rests on this teleological assumption, which makes enlightenment the quintessential political task and the "philosopher" the quintessential political agent.²⁹ It is the tautology of this logic that seems to deprive those intellectuals who construct the discourse of one-state of the possibility of playing a more directly engaged and constitutive political role, which is reinforced by their practical sense as agents positioned in the cultural field and their disposition as a result towards the reproduction of an 'intellectual mode of praxis'.³⁰ This logic, moreover, as it is reiterated in this discourse, amounts to a particular inflection on what is a historically sedimented and basic modernist idea.³¹ The problem of "truth", therefore, appears to be of wide significance, especially to those who are interested in socially effective critical thought.

²⁷ Chakrabarty, Dipesh, *Where is Now? Critical Inquiry*, p. 461

²⁸ Ibid; Talshir, Gayil, *The Intellectual as a Political Actor? Four Models of Theory/Praxis, Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, p. 219

²⁹ Asad, Talal, *Reflections on Blasphemy and Secular Criticism*, in, de Vries, Hent (ed.), *Religion: Beyond a Concept*, Fordham University Press, New York, pp. 580-609, pp. 600-2

³⁰ Bauman, Zygmunt, *Legislators and Interpreters*, p. 18

³¹ Asad, Talal, *Reflections on Blasphemy and Secular Criticism*, in, de Vries, Hent (ed.), *Religion: Beyond a Concept*, pp. 600-2

What this study has suggested in making this insight, then, is not simply that intellectuals are precisely that, too intellectual, to play a socially efficacious political role and that consequently they ought to leave their “ivory tower” and come down to earth so as to be more effective. To be sure there has been a strong tendency for intellectuals to define themselves as somehow ‘not of this world’,³² and to position themselves as being closer to ‘the “spirit”’ of universality than others.³³ The discourse of one-state has repeatedly performed such tropes. Indeed, there often has been an excoriating critique of intellectuals on these grounds, with them being chastised for being overly rational³⁴ and for ‘arrogantly sit[ting] in their ivory tower’ refusing to initiate or partake in the ‘mundane work of justice and practical devotion to a social and political cause’.³⁵ As this research has illustrated, this type of criticism has been hurled at those individuals responsible for the production and social transmission of the discourse of one-state.

The findings of this research point instead towards a structural constraint on the political role intellectuals *can* play. In this sense, the classic debate on how intellectuals ought to behave seems somewhat misguided and implicitly grants them far too much freedom of manoeuvre. As this study has suggested, the objective position and *habitus* of intellectuals would appear to orient their critical engagement in the field in a particular direction at the expense of other modes of political conduct. These ‘social determinants’ of practice, as figures such as Loïc Wacquant call them, which include specific resources and internalised

³² Benda, Julien, *The Great Betrayal*, pp. 152-3

³³ Pels, Dick, *The Intellectual as Stranger: Studies in Spokespersonship*, Routledge, London and New York, 2000, p. 133

³⁴ Kurzman, Charles, and, Owens, Lynn, The Sociology of Intellectuals, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 81

³⁵ Pels, Dick, *The Intellectual as Stranger: Studies in Spokespersonship*, p. 131

dispositions, seem to structure the critical action of intellectuals.³⁶ In the context of political engagement, they incline them towards an exaltation of knowledge and “truth”, which in turn works to temporarily subordinate important political possibilities, thus limiting what such agents can do. It is in this respect, furthermore, that intellectuals are considered different in this study, but not special.³⁷ They are structured like every other agent in the field. Yet the specificity of this structuring is largely determined by the particular position that they occupy in social space.

So what is the political role of intellectuals? Of course any answer offered here is intrinsically limited given the scope of analysis and the particular conceptual lense through which this issue has been approached. Nevertheless, the answer *suggested* by this research is that “it depends”. It depends on the extent to which the social determinants that seem to be implicated in the position occupied by intellectuals in the field can be mitigated.

The Bourdieusian response to this issue, as noted throughout this research, is to advocate a practice of social scientific reflexivity, which is an ethos that is implicitly advanced by certain poststructuralist theorists as well. To do this, however, as has been likewise suggested, would appear to necessitate an exteriority to social practice that for most of Bourdieu’s theorisations does not exist, and which for poststructuralism certainly does not. So how does one do this without resorting to metaphysical criteria and re-enacting the relations of power encountered in this research, along with their disabling political effects? How does one actively escape the constraining relations in which they are implicated and so open *possibilities* for practices of effective political change?

³⁶ Wacquant, Loïc J. D., *Critical Thought as a Solvent of Doxa, Constellations*, p. 97

³⁷ Pels, Dick, *Knowledge Politics and Anti-Politics: Toward a Critical Appraisal of Bourdieu’s Concept of Intellectual Autonomy, Theory and Society*, p. 98

To what extent is this even possible? These questions have been shown to be important by this study, yet their answers are far from being clear. As such, they seem to represent a point of departure for future research in this area.

Therefore, it appears that the political role of intellectuals is structurally constrained and limited by a strong tendency towards the practice of abstract critique. This is clearly insufficient politically according to the Bourdieusian framework used in this study, but it is nonetheless significant, even if it does fall far short of the dominant position that certain cultural elites appear to aspire to through their battles in the field. Even though the political possibilities for effective change are largely subordinated to a logic of enlightenment within the one-state discourse, the intellectuals who articulate it have still prised open conceptual horizons that not so long ago were heavily foreclosed. This is not an insignificant achievement, and while there are specific limits to what these agents can do politically, stemming from their objective position and intellectual *habitus*, their counter-knowledge *might* continue to radiate across social space and acquire a materiality that otherwise might not have existed.³⁸ So it is in this rather hopeful sense that intellectuals may be considered as playing a necessary political role.³⁹

A claim to unity with the “people” is also articulated in the discourse of one-state and in this respect the particular stance of these intellectuals is presumed to be coterminous with Palestinians generally. Such a claim is typically advanced in the social practices of intellectuals in politics, and is done so in order to legitimise their particular position in the field of struggles. The effects of such a

³⁸ Kurzman, Charles, and Owens, Lynn, The Sociology of Intellectuals, *American Review of Sociology*, p. 73

³⁹ Campbell, David, Beyond Choice: The Onto-Politics of Critique, *International Relations*, p. 130

claim appear to be once again problematic in terms of enabling a political role beyond the reiteration of abstract critique. This is because the absorption of broad and diverse points in social space under the discursive device of the “people” results in the symbolic effacement of difference in the field and with it the possibility of its engagement and reconstruction as a mobilised collective subject. The presumption of a prior unity not only obviates the need for such political work, but also temporarily denies the conditions for its initiation. It is because of such symbolic violence, which stems from their bid for power, that the mode of critical practice performed by these intellectuals remains largely abstract and socially detached. As has been further suggested, this cannot be otherwise so long as such symbolic violence is reiterated.

On top of contributing to the scholarly literature on the sociology of intellectuals, this research would appear to make a contribution to a significant debate on the politics of representation. Again this contribution is limited insofar as it is derived from a very specific case study and as such cannot be considered a grand statement with unquestionable validity. Yet the engagement that has been carried out in this study with the politics of representation enunciated in theories of post-representationalism and deliberative democracy (via the discourse of one-state and from a Bourdieusian standpoint) would seem to generate support for certain criticisms of these perspectives, which in turn point towards an underlying conception of politics in which incommensurable differences are the conditions of possibility for political contest and modified relations of power. The prefiguring of an underlying sameness within a given social structure and its teleological unfolding, whether through logics of self-propulsion generated by the structure or through its uncovering in reasonable

debate, denies the active construction of a collective political subject as it is rendered always already present and in motion in such accounts of the social world. Such prefiguring is enacted within the discourse of one-state, and as this study has shown, it has essentialising and utopian political consequences that deny or severely limit the points of contention in the field.

Further research is required on the issues raised in this study on the role of intellectuals in politics and the restricted possibilities that seem to stem from their social position and universalising tendencies. As mentioned briefly, postcolonialism and the figure of the “postcolonial intellectual” might be a useful avenue for broadening the scope of analysis conducted in this research. A cursory glance at texts constitutive of this perspective would seem to further suggest that the findings of this research are not unique to the discourse of one-state. However, this point is only raised tentatively and with a view to the future.

The one-state discourse certainly challenges the official Palestinian order, both symbolically and objectively. In this respect, it may be considered a counter-discourse and a critical mode of practice. Yet as this study has suggested, such practices cannot be detached from the relations of power in which they are embedded, and indeed the legitimating strategies enacted through them may work to limit the prospects of socially effective political agency. So in this regard it seems vital to problematise the relation between the practice of critical thought and the possibilities of political agency. The critical stances adopted by specific agents may contingently generate conservative political effects.

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