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# Definition of Peace and Reconciliation in the Middle East

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Glyn Secker, Patrick Hanlin, Gabriella Gricius,  
Majed Ashy, Abdul Kareem Al-Obaidi,  
Heyam Mohammed, Raja Tayeh, Irene Colthurst,  
Lane Smith, Dalit Yassour-Boroschowitz,  
Helena Syna Desivilya, Kamala Smith, Linda Jeffrey,  
William Tastle, Feryal Turan, Alev Yalcinkaya,  
and Rouba Youssef

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## Political and Economic Interests of the West in the Middle East

US foreign policy in the Middle East dates from its post-WWII Cold War with the USSR over spheres of influence, when Israel was central to

its goals. In the years following World War II, Pan-Arabism gained influence in the Middle East and North Africa. Led by Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, backed by the USSR, and inspired by the anticolonial revolt of the National Liberation Front (FLN) against the French in Algeria, this Pan-Arabism movement was seen by some as creating a potential for revolution across the Middle East and North Africa. The USA, UK, and France responded by backing specific autocratic regimes, in a bid to secure their military and oil-related interests in the Gulf region.

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G. Secker (✉)  
Board of Directors and Executive Committee member,  
Jews For Justice For Palestinians, London, UK  
e-mail: gmsecker@yahoo.co.uk

P. Hanlin  
Department of Psychology, Boston University, Boston,  
MA, USA

G. Gricius  
International Relations and Linguistics, Boston University  
Boston, USA

M. Ashy  
Psychology Department, Bay State College,  
Boston, MA, USA  
e-mail: majed.ashy@gmail.com

A.K. Al-Obaidi  
Institute of International Education,  
New York, NY, USA  
e-mail: kareemobedy60@yahoo.com;  
kareemobaidi@gmail.com

H. Mohammed  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction,  
College of Education, Kuwait University, Kuwait  
e-mail: mobarak1955@msn.com

R. Tayeh  
Director of Institutional Research, Doane College,  
Crete, NE, USA  
e-mail: rtayeh@unlserve.unl.edu;  
raja.tayeh@doane.edu

I. Colthurst  
Department of International Relations, San Diego  
University, San Diego, USA  
e-mail: irenecolth@gmail.com

L. Smith  
Senior Research Scholar (Retired),  
University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA  
e-mail: lanesmith0@gmail.com

D. Yassour-Boroschowitz  
Department of Human Services,  
Emek Yezreel College, Israel  
e-mail: DalitY@yvc.ac.il

As the decline of the British military presence in the Gulf accelerated after the end of the Second World War, the Nixon Doctrine was developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, under which the United States would prop up its regional allies (namely, the Shah of Iran, Turkey, and the Gulf states) and let them police the region by proxy. With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Washington saw the opportunity to deploy its forces in the Gulf. The “Carter Doctrine” created a rapid deployment force – later to be reorganized as CENTCOM, whose jurisdiction initially enveloped North Africa, the entire Middle East, and Central Asia, as well as the bordering areas of South Asia (Hanieh, 2011).

Even before its overpowering victory in the 1967 war, Israel became a key ally of the West, serving as a strategic local foothold for NATO against the USSR and its allies, as well as directly supplying “special forces” to aid the French against the FLN (which had the support of Nasser and the USSR), and against the liberation movement in the Congo. As reward, France supplied Israel with nuclear weaponry. This, along with US

military aid and funding, turned Israel into a leading global military power. In addition to providing armed support for French imperial interests, Israel joined the British-French military action against Nasser’s Egypt in the 1956 Suez Crisis, attacked Syria in 1966, and continued to act on behalf of NATO’s interests in the region. Nasser had closed the canal to Israeli shipping, and in the settlement of the dispute, Israel returned the Sinai, which it had captured, in exchange for use of the canal. The aftermath of the 1973 Israeli-Arab War brought a shift in political alignments in the region, led by post-Nasserist Egypt. Sadat of Egypt turned from the USSR to the USA, and with the promised gain of \$1.5 billion per annum in US aid to the Egyptian military (the largest sum after Israel), the way was clear to a peace agreement with Israel. A realignment in Arab attitudes to the USA and to Israel ensued; Pan-Arabism declined, and several Arab states joined the US-led bloc. Following the collapse of the USSR, Jordan joined the trend started by Egypt, signing a peace accord with Israel in 1994, thus securing two out of four of Israel’s borders with its neighbors.

Ben-Zvi (1998) demonstrates that a subtle but profound shift in American policy toward Israel began not, as is commonly held by historians and analysts, in 1962 with the Kennedy administration’s decision to sell Hawk anti-aircraft missiles to Israel but 4 years earlier in the second Eisenhower administration. This change in policy occurred not primarily because of domestic American politics but because of strategic factors in the Middle East and a recognition that Israel could be a strategic asset to the United States instead of a burden (Leiber, 1998). Only after the administration began to recognize the strategic dimension and to appreciate how shaky other pro-Western governments in the region actually were did it start to adopt a more explicitly cooperative policy toward Israel.

On October 24, 1973, when the Soviets threatened to deploy several airborne divisions to aid the surrounded Egyptian Third Army on the east side of the Suez Canal, the administration of President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger reacted vigorously (Leiber, 1998). As Uri Davis points out, the USA, through its direct involvement in the 1973 war, not only saved Israel

H.S. Desivilya  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology,  
Yezreel Valley College, Emek Yezreel, Israel  
e-mail: desiv@yvc.ac.il

K. Smith  
Behavioral Health Analyst, Abt Associates,  
Cambridge, MA, USA  
e-mail: kamala\_smith@abtaassoc.com

L. Jeffrey  
College of Education, Rowan University, Glassboro,  
NJ, USA  
e-mail: jeffrey@rowan.edu

W. Tastle  
Ithaca College of Business, New York, USA  
e-mail: tastle@ithaca.edu

F. Turan  
Department of Sociology, Ankara University,  
Ankara, Turkey  
e-mail: feryalturan@yahoo.com

A. Yalcinkaya  
Department of Psychology, Yeditepe, Istanbul, Turkey  
e-mail: yalcinkaya@prodigy.net;  
ayalcinkaya@yeditepe.edu.tr

R. Youssef  
Psychology, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI, USA  
e-mail: rosyruby@hotmail.com

but also “brought the area under its undisputed dominance, driving the USSR very rapidly from its positions of paramount influence in Egypt and Syria” (Davis, 1977). While American foreign aid to Israel amounted to \$3.2 billion in the years from 1949 to 1973, it grew to a total of \$75 billion for the period from 1974 to 1997. Indeed, by the late 1970s, Israel had become the largest single recipient of American foreign aid (Bard & Pipes, 1967, p. 6).

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## Two Zionisms

The second important thread contributing to current conflicts in the Middle East was the development of two forms of Zionism – Christian Zionism and Jewish Zionism. It is noteworthy that Christian Zionism predated Jewish Zionism by some 200–300 years. It had its roots in the Reformation, in the period of the Enlightenment, and in the movements for personal liberty that drove the French Revolution and the social reformers of England (Israel, 2001). It gained strength during the era leading into World War I and its aftermath. Joseph Chamberlain (1836–1914, British President of Board of Trade, Colonial Secretary), like others before him, recognized that Zionist goals provided opportunities for extending the British Empire. “He saw the Jews as a ready-made group of European colonizers available to settle, develop and hold all but empty land under the British aegis” (Tuchman, 2011, p. 189). The significance of Palestine in the British imperial plan came to rest primarily in its proximity to Egypt. Lord Kitchener (1850–1916), Britain’s Secretary of State for War, also took up the gauntlet, calling upon his government to “secure Palestine as a bulwark to the British position in Egypt as well as an overland link with the East” (Shariff, 1983, p. 70).

But it was in America that Evangelical and Fundamentalist Protestantism were to achieve a critical mass and to become an enduring component of national and, thus, international politics, including promotion of Zionism. William Blackstone’s 1887 book on biblical prophecy, *Jesus is Coming*, argued that the Jews had a biblical right to Palestine and would soon be restored there. By 1927, *Jesus is Coming* had been translated into 36 languages, including Hebrew, and

had sold one million copies. William Blackstone became one of the first Christian Zionists in America to actively lobby for the Zionist cause. In 1888, it was Blackstone who, on his return from Palestine, helped popularize the now infamous phrase “a land without a people and a people without a land” (Davis, 1995a, p. 6), later taken up by Golda Meir and brandished as a mantra.

In recent decades, as Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee stated, “The evangelical community is the largest and fastest-growing bloc of pro-Jewish sentiment in this country” (quoted in Flannery, 2004, p. 265). A further factor that stimulated the emergence of the Evangelical Christian Zionist movement’s political agenda was the election of Menachem Begin as Israel’s prime minister in May 1977. Prior to Begin’s election, Israeli politics had been dominated by the secular Labor Party. Begin’s Likud Party was dominated by hard-line military figures such as Rafael Eitan and Ariel Sharon and supported by the increasingly powerful settler movement and by small Orthodox religious parties.

According to Mead (2006), “Conspiracy theorists and secular scholars and journalists in the United States and abroad have looked to a Jewish conspiracy or, more euphemistically, to a ‘Jewish lobby’ to explain how U.S. support for Israel can grow while sympathy for Israel wanes among what was once the religious and intellectual establishment. A better answer lies in the dynamics of U.S. religion. Evangelicals have been gaining social and political power, while liberal Christians and secular intellectuals have been losing it. This should not be blamed on the Jews.” So here we have a startling point of conjunction, where the priorities of political economy converged with the dominant cultural beliefs, a synergistic reaction that has yet to run its course.

The second Zionism is the one that developed in the second half of the 1800s in Eastern Europe. Its proponents were Theodor Herzl, Moses Hess, Leon Pinsker, Vladimir Jabotinsky, Ben Gurion, and Chaim Weizmann. In essence, it was a categorical break with millennia of Jewish tradition and belief: it was a secular movement that rejected the Orthodox belief that a Jewish state could be established only after the coming of the Messiah and that any attempt to do so before the divine action

would be a sacrilege. It was also a rejection of the social philosophy by which Jewish communities over millennia had sought to live peacefully within wider societies and to manage the prejudices and anti-Semitism encountered therein as the inevitable inadequacies of the lived faiths of humans.

The objective of this second form of Zionism was the establishment of a Jewish nation state. Bizarrely, the proponents considered a variety of lands deemed to be empty, including Uganda, Argentina, and El Arish. The problem was that the world had already been divided up between the great empires, which did not consider any remaining territories to be up for grabs. Also, to create a new state in a world dominated by empires, there was the need for a powerful ideological motivation. These two factors quickly focused attention on Palestine, with a disregard for the fact that it was clearly inhabited. As atheists, these nationalists coolly quoted the biblical gift of the land of Palestine to the Jews, the biblical existence of Jewish kingdoms, and the flights from Egypt and from Jerusalem. To this was added the slogan “For a people without a land, a land without a people” (Blackstone, 1891, p. 17). In one swipe, this motto erased the Palestinians as a people and facilitated their definition as less than human. From its inception, therefore, this Zionism was racist; its target being a Semitic people, it was also anti-Semitic.

There is ample evidence of various forms of racism and anti-Semitism in the writings of the Zionists. For example, Arthur Ruppin (1913), cited in Sands (2009, p. 263), founder of the Sociology Department of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, asserted that “owing to the process of selection...the Ashkenazim are today superior in intelligence and scientific capacity to the Sephardi and Arabian Jews.” Dr. Aaron Sandler, a leading Zionist and a physician at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, was convinced that the Jewish people had always been a pure race. The most well known, Redcliffe Nathan Salaman from Hebrew University and member of its Board of Trustees, claimed to have identified a Jewish “allele” or version of a gene (ones that facilitate hereditary variation) and believed that Zionism was a eugenic project for improving the Jewish race (Sands, 2009, p. 2).

This academic tradition is the antecedent of today’s Israeli secondary schools’ curricula: according to a recent study by Nurit Peled-Elhanan, in many hundreds of school textbooks, there is no depiction of Arabs as a normal people. They are pictured in Ali Baba dress, with a camel, and described as vile, deviant, criminal people who do not pay taxes and live off the state (Sherwood, 2011). They are portrayed as primitive farmers and terrorists. There are no references to Palestinian children, doctors, teachers, engineers, or modern farmers. The killing of Palestinians is depicted as necessary for the survival of the nascent Jewish state. Peled-Elhanan (2012) argues that from kindergarten through the 12th grade, Israeli children are inculcated with chauvinistic patriotic ideas and a racism that prepares them for their compulsory military service. Thus, school education is contiguous with the Hesder Yeshivot, the combined religious-military schools in the Israeli Defense Force for new recruits directly from school. One such school produced a field leaflet calling for soldiers to show no mercy toward the enemy during Operation Cast Lead on Gaza Dec 2008–Jan 2009 (Associated French Press, 2009).

Jabotinsky translated the theory of a Jewish state into an applied program that he named “The Iron Wall.” It had three components: Jewish land, Jewish produce, and Jewish labor, to be acquired by any means necessary, which included the use of physical force and terror. This was the bedrock upon which the kibbutzim were fashioned and the policy that informed the early settlers – hence the clashes with Palestinians in the period between the two World Wars and the notorious Plan Dalet (Plan D) – the ruthless eradication of some 520 Palestinian villages in the Fertile Crescent through a combination of slaughter conducted by the Stern and Irgun Gangs, and the spreading of this terror to create the mass flight of the inhabitants, known as the Nakhba (Sayigh, 1979).

There is systemic racial discrimination against the 1.25 million Israeli Palestinian – the “present absent” and “the absent present” – the 1950 land law which dispossesses Palestinians of ownership if they were absent in 1967 or left their property temporarily; Israeli Palestinian villages have been “unrecognized,” so that services are denied

and building expansion prohibited; schools for Palestinians are of inferior quality (and they are obliged to use the very same textbooks identified as racist propaganda by Elhanan). To this list must be added severe employment discrimination against anyone who has not completed military service (nearly all Palestinians), and they are denied all but the most menial jobs in enterprises related to Israel's military industrial complex (Sheffer & Barak, 2010).

Overlaying and intertwining with all this is the racism toward the black Falasha Ethiopian Jews and toward Jews of low social status (Neslen, 2006). And finally there is the program of house demolitions: since 1967, 26,000 Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Negev have been cleared in a process of ethnic cleansing, and the pace of demolitions was continuing to accelerate in 2012.

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### Not in Our Name

There has been, however, an alternative Jewish tradition. In the same period and in the same geographical area where Jewish Zionism started, there was a wholly different movement. Its core was the BUND, an organization of Jewish workers in the nineteenth century whose wages and working conditions in the factories and sweatshops in Russia and Eastern Europe were extremely poor. It grew to represent tens of thousands and became a social and political movement. Its language was Yiddish, the vernacular language of the Jewish people of the day. It played a central role in the revolutionary period of the time, allying with the reformist Mensheviks. BUND had one clear policy that set it aside categorically from the Zionists: it believed that the solution to anti-Semitism and racism was the wholesale reform and restructuring of the power relations of society so as to remove from it the causes and mechanisms for its creation and regeneration. It was this movement that was in the ascent until the demise of the socialist and humanist ideals of the 1917 Russian Revolution in the years immediately following the First World War (Harman, 1967; Englert, 2012).

These values informed the original ideals of the Kibbutz Movement and those who constituted

the First and Second Aliyah (Weinstock, 1969), but their practical achievements were quickly appropriated by the political Zionists. The rise of Stalin saw the reinstigation of racism, anti-Semitism, and terror in the USSR. With the disappearance of their political opponents, the way was clear for the political Zionists. The foundations of the Jewish state were being laid in the interwar years and were accelerated during the rise of fascism (Brenner, 1983); with the revelation of the Holocaust, the movement became ineluctable. It thus displaced the whole tradition of Judaism, sometimes referred to or epitomized as Hillel Judaism, which held at its center such profound rabbinical tenets as follows: "That which is hurtful to you do not do to your neighbor"; "Receive every man as a friend"; "The world rests on justice, truth and peace"; "The hero of heroes is not he who defeats his enemy but he who turns his enemy into a friend"; and such sayings from the Mishna as, "All are harmed by the oppression of another" and "The sword comes by the delay of justice of by the perversion of justice." This historically sidelined polarity of Jewish identity now shows signs of reasserting itself in groups such as Rabbis for Human Rights, Jewish Voice for Peace in the USA, and Jews for Justice for Palestinians in the UK.

We recognize that issues in the Middle East go beyond the relations between Israel and the other states in the region. Nevertheless, we believe that the history behind the establishment of the Jewish state and the role of the West in establishing and supporting that state are vital to the understanding of many conflicts besetting the area today. In the findings reported in the next section, we consider definitions of peace and reconciliation from the region as a whole. Because our samples were nonrepresentative, we believe it would be inappropriate to make comparison between participants from Israel and participants from the other Middle Eastern countries sampled for this study or to compare Jews with Muslims or other religious groups within the region. Our broad question is: In the volatile region of the Middle East in the years 2006–2008, what kinds of definitions of peace and reconciliation could be found among ordinary citizens?



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## Methods

### The Sample

The Middle Eastern sample was comprised of 601 participants from Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. These participants had a mean age of 29 and a range from 18 to 80 years. There were 344 female participants, 226 male participants, and one participant who did not report gender. Regarding military service, 23% of the participants reported having been in the military, and 27% indicated that they had a relative who had served in the military. Approximately one-quarter of the participants (24%) indicated that they had participated in at least one protest activity.

### Coding

All participants were asked to respond to the Personal and Institutional Rights to Aggression and Peace Survey (PAIRTAPS; Malley-Morrison, Daskalopoulos, & You, 2006) developed by the Group on International Perspectives on Governmental Aggression and Peace (GIPGAP). In this chapter, we report on the definitions of peace and reconciliation provided by the Middle Eastern respondents.

Coding manuals for definitions of peace and reconciliation were developed using grounded theory, which identifies overarching themes with the qualitative responses; these themes become the basis for coding categories (Glaser & Strauss, 2007). In providing definitions of peace and reconciliation, many participants gave multiple definitions; consequently, their definitions were first separated, when appropriate, into codeable (thematic) units. This process of coding each thematic unit allowed us to identify all of the meanings that could be captured in a complex response and yielded an average of nearly two definitions per response. By using grounded theory when developing the manuals, rather than coding responses into predetermined categories,

the GIPGAP was able to identify specific categories inherent in the definitions and label those categories to reflect their content.

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## Definitions of Peace

### Coding System for Definitions of Peace

Definitions of peace were coded into four major coding categories: (a) negative peace, (b) positive peace, (c) question of achievability, and (d) perceived reality (e.g., statements appearing to reflect the participant's view of real-life events or circumstances related to peace). Each of these major categories included some general/unspecified definitions as well as a number of subcategories for more specific definitions. Very few responses were considered uncodeable. Although we used grounded theory methods to identify these categories, it is interesting that the two most prominent categories were negative and positive peace, quite consistent with the formulation of Galtung (1966), who has argued that scholars should stop defining peace as the opposite to or absence of war and conceptualize it more as the forms of justice and equality that are essential foundations for peace.

Responses coded into the *negative peace* category defined peace as an absence of some sort of aggression, violence, or conflict; that is, they defined peace in terms of what it was not. Subcategories included (a) *no conflict*, (b) *rejecting violence*, (c) *rejecting terrorism*, (d) *negative emotions*, and (e) *rejecting intimidation/threat*.

Definitions coded into the *positive peace* category focused on the necessary building blocks of a lasting peace or a culture of peace (e.g., fairness, reciprocity). The *positive peace* category includes two principal subcategories: (a) *prerequisites for peace* and (b) *outcomes*. The subcategories of *prerequisites for peace* are (a) *granting of human rights*, (b) *equality*, (c) *acceptance/tolerance* (including *understanding* and *solidarity* as an additional level of subcategories), (d) *democratic participation*, (e) *openness to working toward a mutual goal*, (f) *security*, and (g) *access to resources*. The *outcomes* subcategory

**Table 6.1** Examples of Middle Eastern definitions of peace

Category	Percent	Country	Gender	Age	Example
<i>Negative peace</i>	14				I
General/unspecified	3(16)	Bahrain	Male	31	Application of a rule no harm and mischief
Rejecting violence	7(43)	Turkey	Female	34	Living without war
Negative emotions	2(9)	Israel	Female	22	Peace, understanding, and cooperation with no hate
<i>Positive peace</i>	67				
General/unspecified	6(9)	Lebanon	Male	21	Happiness
Acceptance/tolerance	6(17)	Turkey	Female	19	Living of nations with tolerance and tranquility
Granting of human rights	2(3)	Kuwait	Female	34	Establishing security and stability and the protection of human rights
Solidarity	4(10)	Israel	Male	33	Neighborly relations between states that include open borders and full economic and touristic cooperation
<i>Question of achievability</i>	17				
General/unspecified	8(46)	Saudi Arabia	Female	24	Every human being has the right to live in peace
Unattainable	2(9)	Kuwait	Female	45	Not possible to establish
Strive for	6(36)	Afghanistan	Male	29	The ultimate quest in life
<i>Perceived reality</i>	1	Lebanon	Male	18	We did not know this in Lebanon, its something (not clear) if it worked, the war stopped

The first number in the percentage column refers to the percent of responses in the category or subcategory out of the total set of definitions of peace. The second number (in parentheses) refers to the percent of responses in the subcategories out of the major category set of definitions of peace

includes specific subcategories for (a) *positive emotions*, (b) *calm/tranquility*, and (c) *harmony*.

Definitions coded for *question of achievability* made some reference to the possibility of peace, often expressing some doubts about its achievability (with subcategories for *ideal*, *unattainable*, and *strive for*). Responses fitting into the *perspectives on reality* category generally referred to relevant events in the real world rather than constituting definitions. *Uncodeable* definitions, which were quite uncommon, generally appeared to be unrelated to peace.

## Distribution of Definitions of Peace: Results

Table 6.1 provides examples and percentages of definitions of peace in the major coding categories and subcategories. The most prevalent major category (67% of all the definitions of peace) was *positive peace*, and the most prevalent sub-

category was *security* – a subcategory of the *positive peace* category. The *positive peace* definitions focused on the structural foundations of peace and the benefits of peace, rather than on the absence of violence, and included responses coded into the subcategories for *prerequisites for peace* (which accounted for 64% of all the *positive peace* definitions) and *outcomes of peace* (which accounted for 36% of all *positive peace* definitions). One of the best examples of definitions falling into the *positive peace* category and being very consistent with Galtung's formulation comes from an 18-year-old Lebanese man who described peace as “giving, loving citizens, equality, respecting mutual rights”; the individual themes in this reply were coded into the *prerequisites* subcategories for *equality* and *granting of human rights*. *Openness to working toward a mutual goal* appeared in 5% of all the definitions and focused on cooperation. A 20-year-old female from Lebanon defined peace as the “right to live in an adequate environment.”

This response was coded for *granting of human rights* and *access to resources*. Three examples of *positive peace* (*understanding, security, and democratic participation*) can be seen in the multiunit definition of peace provided by a Jordanian woman who defined peace as “stability of things, common understanding between the government and the people.” A 51-year-old Afghan man defined peace as “security and stability,” which can also be seen as *prerequisites for peace*. A 20-year-old Turkish woman responded that peace is “That all people live together under one roof without any resentment, hate.” The components of this response were coded into three subcategories: *solidarity* (a *positive peace* response) and *rejecting* and *negative emotions* (*negative peace* subcategories). A 19-year-old Lebanese woman defined peace as “not lashing out and resolving issues”; this particular response was coded within the two subcategories *rejecting violence* (a *negative peace* definition) and *openness to working toward a mutual goal* (a *positive peace* definition).

A number of *positive peace* definitions focused on the *outcomes* of peace. For example, a 31-year-old man said that peace is a “key term for people living together in happiness, tranquility, and calmness,” an answer coded for *solidarity, positive emotion, and calm/tranquility*. Six percent of all responses were coded for *positive emotions*. Peace was equated with *calmness/tranquility* in 9% of the responses. A 30-year-old man from Lebanon defined peace as “relief,” which was coded for *positive outcome*.

Of the 1,196 codeable units for definitions of peace, only 14% were coded into one of the *negative peace* subcategories (i.e., *no conflict, rejecting violence, negative emotions, and/or rejecting intimidation*). A 20-year-old Lebanese woman responded that peace is “No War,” coded as *rejecting violence*. A 29-year-old Israeli woman responded that peace is “Life without attacks, wars, and no terrorist activity,” a multiunit definition coded for *rejecting violence, no conflict, and rejecting terrorism*. Only 2% of all responses (10% of the *negative peace* responses) were coded for *no conflict*, and only five responses were coded for *rejecting terrorism*.

The third coding category, *question of achievability/ideal* (17% of all responses), had subcategories for *unattainable, strive for, and spiritual/god*. Definitions placed in this category questioned the *possibility of achieving peace*, rather than defining peace. A 29-year-old Israeli woman described peace as “an unattainable thing, especially for those who truly need the peace”; this definition was coded for *unattainable* and *question of achievability/ideal*. A 29-year-old man from Bahrain said peace was “the demand of every nation,” a response that was coded into the *strive for* category. A 32-year-old man from Qatar defined peace as “in Islam,” which was coded into the *spiritual/god* category (for definitions referring to a godlike presence or entity that improved the possibility of achieving peace).

Responses coded for emphasis on *perceived reality* were generally descriptions of what seemed to respondents to be peace “on the ground.” A 31-year-old woman from Israel offered a response that was coded in the *perceived reality* category: “When rockets do not fall on us, when there are no sirens, and you do not have to go hide in shelters.” The definition of a 38-year-old woman who answered “My son because his name is ‘Peace’” was identified as *uncodeable* based on our coding system.

## Definitions of Peace: Exploratory Analyses

For the purpose of investigating potential group differences in the frequency of particular types of responses, exploratory chi-square analyses and Fisher’s exact tests were run. Responses in the *general nonspecific positive peace* category and responses indicating that peace means *security* were made by proportionately more men than women. A significantly higher proportion of women than men, however, equated peace with *positive emotions* and *calmness and tranquility*. A significantly higher proportion of respondents with military experience than their nonmilitary counterparts gave at least one definition in a *positive peace* category or subcategory, as well as providing



**Table 6.2** Definition of peace chi-square results

Category	Group 1 <sup>a</sup>		$\chi^2$
	Female	Male	
<i>Positive peace</i>			
General/unspecified	5	8	4.67*
Security	8	13	5.19*
Positive emotions	7	4	4.78*
Calm/tranquility	11	7	4.85*
	<i>Military</i>	<i>No military</i>	
<i>Negative peace presence</i> <sup>b</sup>	34	18	13.01***
<i>Positive peace presence</i> <sup>b</sup>	78	68	4.26*
General/unspecified	3	9	10.09**
Acceptance/tolerance	12	4	19.6***
Openness to working toward a mutual goal	11	3	21.17***
Security	4	13	16.32***
Calm/tranquility	10	5	5.08*
<i>Question of achievability</i>			
Strive for	2	7	9.13**
	<i>Relative</i>	<i>No relative</i>	
<i>Positive peace</i>			
General/unspecified	5	10	4.55*
Security	8	16	6.24*
Positive emotions	8	3	4.47*
	<i>Protest</i>	<i>No protest</i>	
<i>Positive peace presence</i> <sup>b</sup>	77	69	3.16*
Prerequisites for peace general/unspecified	8	4	4.92*
Calm/tranquility Question of achievability	8	11	3.24*
Strive for	5	8	3.35*

<sup>a</sup>The numbers in these columns are the percent of the group that gave responses falling into each of the specified categories

<sup>b</sup>“Presence” at the end of a variable name indicates that the participant provided at least one example of a response that was coded into that category and/or one of its subcategories. <sup>\*</sup>0.05 < *p* < 0.10, <sup>\*</sup>*p* ≤ 0.05, <sup>\*\*</sup>*p* ≤ 0.01, <sup>\*\*\*</sup>*p* ≤ 0.001

responses equating reconciliation with *acceptance and tolerance*, *openness to working toward mutual goals*, and *calmness and tranquility*; moreover, a significantly higher proportion of those with military experience gave at least one example of a *negative peace* definition. By contrast, proportionately more respondents without military experience gave a *general nonspecific* positive peace definition or equated peace with *security* (one of the positive peace subcategories) and indicated that peace is something to *strive for*. Proportionately more individuals with relatives in the military gave definitions equating reconciliation with *positive emotions*, whereas proportionately

more respondents without a military relative gave a *positive peace* definition and mentioned *security* specifically.

Differences between individuals with protest experience and those without experience were mostly at a marginally significant level. Proportionately more protestors than non-protestors gave at least one example of a *positive peace* response and an example of a general unspecified response, while proportionately more non-protestors equated peace with *calmness and tranquility* and declared people should *strive for* peace. A significantly higher proportion of protestors than non-protestors gave at least one example of a *prerequisite for peace*. Table 6.2

includes all significant and marginally significant chi-square results.

## Definitions of Reconciliation

### Coding System for Definitions of Reconciliation

Definitions of reconciliation were coded into four major categories, most of which had subcategories. The major categories were (a) *process*, (b) *state*, (c) *human characteristic*, (d) *future orientation*, and (e) *question of achievability/ideal*. The *process* category has nine subcategories: (a) *moving on*, (b) *engaging in apology and forgiveness*, (c) *making reparations/compensations*, (d) *resolving/fixing*, (e) *recognizing/acknowledging/respecting*, (f) *coming to terms/agreeing/compromising/negotiating*, (g) *understanding*, (h) *uniting*, and (i) *preventing*. Four of these nine subcategories have an additional level of subcategories. Specifically, *moving on* has a subcategory for responses indicating that reconciliation is an *active* process. *Apology and forgiveness* has a subcategory called *without forgetting*. *Making amends* is a subcategory within *resolving/fixing*. *Uniting* has two subcategories, which are *healing/reuniting* and *building new relationship with former enemy*.

The second major category, labeled *state*, includes responses mentioning endpoints of a reconciliation process. The *state* category has three subcategories, which are *peace*, *end of conflict*, and *emotional state*. The third major category, *human characteristic*, applies to definitions suggesting that reconciliation is a product of human nature or the human condition. The *future orientation* category has responses that imply an ongoing process that will continue into the future. The *question of achievability/ideal* category, which has one subcategory (*strive for*), includes responses questioning the achievability of reconciliation or describing it as an ideal. For more information regarding coding and the coding manuals, please refer to the introductory definitions chapter, Chap. 2, focusing on coding procedures.

## Distribution of Definitions of Reconciliation: Results

Among the definitions of reconciliation, the most prevalent (34%) were the responses coded for *process*; the most common example of *process* themes was *come to terms* (*come to terms*, *agreement*, *compromise*, and *negotiate*). These definitions portrayed reconciliation as a process achieved through compromises, negotiation, or some sort of agreement. One example was from a 28-year-old Israeli woman who said reconciliation is “Acceptance, agreement, the beginning of a new way”; this multipart response was coded within three *process* subcategories: *unite*, *recognize*, and *come to terms*. Fifteen percent of all the definitions of reconciliation fell into the subcategory of *process* for *come to terms*. A 65-year-old man from Israel defined reconciliation as “an attempt to erase the violence of the past and willingness to return to a routine and to start a new page.” This definition characterizes reconciliation as an *active* effort to *move on*.

The major category of *process* also included subcategories for *apology and forgiveness* and *building a new relation*. Examples of both of these subcategories can be found in the definition given by a 51-year-old Israeli woman, who defined reconciliation as “forgiveness and rehabilitating the relationship between former enemies.” While the *apology and forgiveness* subcategory describes reconciliation as a process of apology, the *building new relation* subcategory portrays reconciliation as a new friendship (generally with a former enemy). A 19-year-old woman from Lebanon defined reconciliation as “to admit the mistake and have the desire to correct it and compensate for it”; this complex response contained units coded for *recognize*, *reparations/compensations*, and *resolve/fix*.

A 37-year-old woman from Israel defined reconciliation as “a process that is supposed to lead to peace, in which each side that was preoccupied by the past examines itself and tries to accept, or at least understand, the other side.” This was coded for *recognize* and *understand*. As a subcategory of *acceptance/tolerance* (which is a subcategory of *process*), *understanding* applied

to definitions that promoted understanding as a key component of reconciliation. An 18-year-old woman from Saudi Arabia defined reconciliation as “attempting to rebuild bridges”; this was coded into *healing/reuniting*, applying to definitions portraying reconciliation as a healing process or an event that focused on a reunion of old friends or enemies.

The second most common type of definition, comprising 28% of all the definitions of reconciliation, identified reconciliation with some form of end *state*, as an achieved outcome or a characteristic of reconciled societies. Responses in this category were further divided into subcategories based on whether they focused on *peace*, *end of conflict*, or an *emotional state*. Responses coded for *emotional state* linked reconciliation with an emotional end state, which frequently occurred within definitions, as the end result of actions taken to achieve reconciliation. A 29-year-old Jordanian man said reconciliation is “an agreement between two sides stating not to harm the other side or aggress against him”; this response was coded into the *state* subcategory *end of conflict*. A 43-year-old woman from Kuwait described reconciliation as “a method of humiliation and dishonor and to forget everything in order to achieve personal interests.” This multiunit response was coded into the *emotional state* subcategory as well as into the process subcategory *active move on*.

Twenty-one percent of all the definitions of reconciliation fell into the major category for *question of achievability/ideal*, which included the subcategories *ideal*, *strive for*, and *spiritual/god*. A 30-year-old Lebanese woman defined reconciliation as “a must,” which was coded under reconciliation into the subcategory *strive for*. A 30-year-old Iraqi man described reconciliation as “God’s work,” which was coded into the *spiritual/god* subcategory. A 25-year-old Lebanese man’s definition of reconciliation as “great, fair, and just” was coded into the *ideal* category. *Future orientation* was one category that had no subcategories to describe definitions that referred to reconciliation as something that would take place in the future. For example, a 32-year-old woman from Jordan defined reconciliation as

“something that leads to safety and stability.” Only a few responses were characterized as *uncodeable*. For example, a 19-year-old man from Oman defined reconciliation, as “I don’t know.” Only three of all the definitions were coded into the major category for definitions portraying identified reconciliation as a *human characteristic*. Table 6.3 includes percentages and examples of responses for definitions of reconciliation.

### Definitions of Reconciliation: Exploratory Analyses

Chi-square and Fisher’s exact tests were conducted on an exploratory basis to look for any group differences in the frequency of specific definitional themes. These analyses indicated that a greater proportion of men than women gave definitions identifying reconciliation with *resolving or fixing*, at a marginally significant level. A significantly higher proportion of individuals with no military experience gave definitions equating reconciliation with *peace* than did those with military experience. Differences between individuals with relatives in the military and those without such relatives emerged in two of the major categories. A greater proportion of respondents without service relatives gave at least one example of reconciliation as a *process*, at a marginally significant level. However, proportionately more respondents with relatives in the military gave at least one example of a definition addressing the *achievability* of reconciliation. Finally, proportionately more antiwar protestors than non-protestors gave at least one example of a *process* definition of reconciliation and in particular were more likely to provide a definition focusing on *recognition*, *acknowledgement*, and *respect*. On the other hand, proportionately more non-protestors than protestors provided at least one example of a response coded into the major category for *state* or one of its subcategories and specifically gave more responses identifying reconciliation with *peace*. Table 6.4 includes all significant and marginally significant chi-square results.

**Table 6.3** Examples of Middle Eastern definitions of reconciliation

Category	Percent	Country	Gender	Age	Example
<i>Process</i>	46				
General/unspecified	7(16)	Israel	Male	23	To reach reconciliation, a wind of “appeasement” must blow between the enemies
Move on	1(3)	Kuwait	Male	30	It is forgetting what happened or bad things between two or more sides
Recognize/acknowledge/ respect	5(12)	Lebanon	Male	53	Decreasing the differences
Uniting	5(12)	Iraq	Female	29	Collaboration among another
<i>State</i>	28				
General/unspecified	5(19)	Kuwait	Male	24	Something that leads to safety and stability
Peace	13(44)	Bahrain	Male	33	Making peace between the sides
End of conflict	5(19)	Israel	Female	58	Moving from a state of war and disconnect to closeness and mutual respect
Emotional state	5(18)	Oman	Male	21	Friendship and love
<i>Question of achievability</i>	21				
General/unspecified	15(69)	Bahrain	Male	44	Wanted
Strive for	6(29)	Qatar	Male	32	A demand but not with all people
<i>Future orientation</i>	3	Israel	Male	24	Leaving baggage behind and venturing on a new path

The first number in the percent column refers to the percentage of responses in that category out of all the definitions of reconciliation. The second number (in parentheses) refers to the percentages in the subcategory out of all the definitions in the major category to which that subcategory belongs

**Table 6.4** Definition of reconciliation chi-square results

Category	Group 1 <sup>a</sup>	Group 2 <sup>a</sup>	$\chi^2$
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	
<i>Process</i>			
Resolve/fix	1	3	2.98 <sup>^</sup>
	<i>Military</i>	<i>No military</i>	
<i>State</i>			
Peace	9	16	4.56 <sup>*</sup>
	<i>Relative</i>	<i>No relative</i>	
<i>Process presence</i> <sup>b</sup>	62	74	3.26 <sup>^</sup>
<i>Achievability/ideal presence</i> <sup>b</sup>	47	33	4.35 <sup>*</sup>
	<i>Protest</i>	<i>No protest</i>	
<i>Process presence</i> <sup>b</sup>	81	63	9.1 <sup>**</sup>
Recognize, acknowledge, respect	10	4	7.64 <sup>**</sup>
<i>State presence</i> <sup>b</sup>	25	37	3.89 <sup>*</sup>
Peace	7	12	2.73 <sup>^</sup>

<sup>a</sup>The numbers in these columns are the percent of the group that gave responses falling into each of the specified categories

<sup>b</sup>“Presence” at the end of a variable name indicates that the participant provided at least one example of a response that was coded into that category and/or one of its subcategories. <sup>^</sup>0.05 < *p* < 0.10, <sup>\*</sup>*p* ≤ 0.05, <sup>\*\*</sup>*p* ≤ 0.01, <sup>\*\*\*</sup>*p* ≤ 0.001

## Discussion

Positive peace definitions predominated in responses of participants from the Middle East. Thus, rather than viewing peace just as the cessation of violence, the majority of participants focused on structural requirements for lasting peace such as justice and fairness, as well as describing the benefits of peace. A substantial portion of the definitions indicated that peace means security. Men and individuals with relatives in the military were particularly likely to focus on security as compared with their counterparts. Regarding definitions of reconciliation, the most common type of response identified reconciliation as a process such as coming to terms, making agreements, compromising, and negotiating. Protestors and individuals without any relatives in the military were particularly likely to give at least one example of reconciliation as a process, and individuals without military experience were particularly likely to equate reconciliation with peace.

These survey responses were collected approximately 3–5 years before the publication of this book. The Middle East continues to be a region of considerable volatility. As this book went to press, the world was still reeling from about 14 months of revolutionary activity in the Middle East. What is likely to happen next? The necessary and sufficient conditions for the just resolution of conflict arise when a watershed or tipping point in the balance of power is reached, such that each party to the conflict can believe that, on the balance of probabilities, it may have more to gain by the cessation of conflict than by its continuance.

As Secker (2011) commented extensively in JNews, “The US and the EU seem to be teetering between an attempt to curb the uprisings or prevent them spreading, and an attempt to more discreetly manipulate their results and harness them to protect their interests. One scenario for the Western response would be to support existing regimes. This might entail approval of brutal suppression in some countries, and temporary concessions and apparent political change in others, followed by slow reversion to an authoritarian status quo, with the option of improved economic exchange and development.”

The persistence of a determined movement in Arab countries able to overthrow oppressive regimes could lead to an alternative scenario: that the Muslim Brotherhood poses no immediate threat, that therefore the revolutions in North Africa and Egypt need not pose an “Islamic threat,” and that there is the prospect of social and political integration with the West, with the opportunity to develop liberal social democracies allied to the West, through a neoliberal “Marshall Plan.” The MENA, with high levels of educated populations and large unskilled workforce, are rich pools of labor offering a potential for international investment and economic exploitation.

In Tunisia and Egypt, a Western “hands-off” policy has been maintained, at least in public. Despite the strong showing in Egyptian elections by the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafist Nour Party, there have been no serious fears of an Islamic fundamentalist threat. Other moderate groups made reasonable advances. The trade

unions, which have yet to obtain a formal route into the electoral process, have organized very extensive industrial action and have significant new structures, thus building the power of the opposition. In Tunisia, the General Trade Union branches, together with social democratic movements, have been leading the action.

But, as Secker (2011) observed in JNews, the changes there are by no means secure; in 2011–2012, one could see something resembling “dual power” in Egypt: an unstable balance between popular power combined with the trade unions on the one hand and the military, still intact, on the other. The interim government’s response to youth demonstrations in Tahrir Square made clear the regime’s force was still intact with repetitions of prohibitions, violent dispersals, arrests, and torture. And very significantly in relation to Israel, when Egyptian demonstrators attempted to reach Gaza en masse via the Rafah Crossing, they were turned back by the Egyptian military and were obliged to resort to a mass demonstration in Tahrir Square.

With respect to Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, we saw a very different Western response, with the USA prepared to do all in its power to maintain the Saudi leadership and power structures intact. Bahrain is a regional base for the US Navy and Air Force and a wedge between Saudi Arabia and Iran, it has seen both rebellion and increasingly brutal repression by the regime, but despite reports of escalating violations there, the USA and EU gave tacit approval to Saudi Arabia to send in its troops to quell the rebellion. The USA, the UK, and French military support for the Libyan opposition against an unpredictable dictator, and the UN endorsement of this action, with the conference in London on March 29, 2011, attended by 40 bodies and countries, including the USA, Canada, Australia, the World Bank, the UN Secretary General, the Arab League, the Islamic Conference, and virtually the whole of the EU, followed by rapid disengagement, was unprecedented. Qaddafi’s eccentric rule of Libya had frustrated its inclusion into the new international financial order as exercised by the Gulf states, the USA, and the international financial institutions (IFIs). The revolution provided the



West with an opportunity to reassert control of the oil revenues, and Qaddafi's threats of genocidal assaults on civilian populations (inflated by Western media), together with his known gross violations of human rights, furnished the justification.

These events lead to a pivotal component absent from most discussions of the conflict and its possible resolution: the increasing financial influence over the MENA countries, and therefore on the Arab Spring, by the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Gulf states have become the mechanism through which Western finance, and the USA in particular, controls the region – with Israel and the Gulf states lining up on the same side (Hanieh, 2012). Mubarak accelerated the neoliberalism, enacting land reforms that deregulated rents, and forced farmers off their farms and into the cities in droves. The result was the enrichment of a tiny elite and the impoverishment of the vast majority (Mitchell, 1999). It was this action that laid the foundations of the Egyptian Arab Spring. Integrated into this complex are the primary Palestinian corporations, the first step in this process being the Oslo Accords. Thus, neoliberalism is offering both the solution to and the compounding of the political unrest.

In a JNews article, Secker (2011) wrote, "Israel has for some time been threatening another Cast Lead-style attack on Gaza. As a possible response to the Palestinian Authority's plan to obtain UN recognition of a Palestinian state last September (2011), some members of the coalition have suggested a full annexation of the West Bank. The total absence of any easing of the repressive measures either on Gaza or in the West Bank has offered nothing to Hamas, which is under pressure from jihadist breakaway groups to resume hostilities with Israel. If this provides Israel with a peg on which to hang a second Operation Cast Lead it could well backfire, igniting the whole region and possibly spurring the US into preemptive action with a push for a Palestinian settlement."

Members of the US administration have been at pains to point out how wrong this approach is. During the J Street conference in March 2011, Dennis Ross, then Special Assistant to the

President and Senior Director of Central Regional Policy, stated that "The US had made a strategic miscalculation in backing the authoritarian regimes in the ME, that the nature of the rebellions is characterized by joint Christian/Muslim programs, and that the US has therefore allocated \$150million to assist institution building among civil society." Ross stated that "Repression does not pay," that each and every government in the Middle East has responsibility for political freedom and human rights, and that the White House has been looking at regional reform over the last 6 months. He reiterated firm support for Israel, but stated that "it is not acceptable to get stuck in an unacceptable status quo" and that the longer the impasse lasts the more difficult it becomes to solve, for example, the possibility of a two-state solution in the context of demographic changes. He stated that reform and peace go hand in hand. He repeated that the status quo is unsustainable and that the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt did not aid peace with the Palestinians and concluded by saying that genuine democracy in Egypt combined with a genuine peace with Israel will significantly aid a resolution with the Palestinian Authority. Clearly, these words were intended for Israel's ears, but in case it did not register, Hillary Clinton repeated it: "The status quo between Palestinians and Israelis is no more sustainable than the political systems that have crumbled in recent months.... the only way to meet both people's aspirations is through a two-state solution" (Secker, 2011). The US administration is thus caught between its drive for neoliberal reforms in the region, which impoverish the bulk of the population, and the need that it therefore creates for authoritarian governments, and a need to move sufficiently toward political liberalization to accommodate the uprisings.

The USA has had to recognize the powerful movements for democracy. Repressing the revolutions across the region would entail commitments on the scale of the Iraq/Afghanistan interventions, and this is neither economically nor politically an option. At the same time, the establishment of even tentative forms of democracy in the region is having a major impact on the Palestinians, including the Fatah-dominated

Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, Hamas authorities in Gaza, and Palestinians in Israel.

A genuine process for a just settlement of the Palestinian question, if achieved, combined with less oppressive governments in the Middle East and North Africa, would weaken the rationale for and the grip of the regime in Iran, where there have been significant street demonstrations, brutally suppressed, and where the forces of social democracy might eventually gain the ascendancy. Such a success would remove the pretext for Israel's aggression toward Iran, with its threats of preemptive strikes. Such calming of the political environment in the Middle East would facilitate the eventual withdrawal of the US military from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the consequent reduction in war expenditure would afford the West the opportunity to move in a different direction.

One source of optimism in favor of resolution of the Palestinian question is the amazing spirit and humanity of the Palestinian people. That they have maintained their faith in a just resolution and sustained a distinction between Jews on the one hand and Israel and its political Zionism on the other as their persecutors is frankly astounding. But they remain pitted against the fourth most powerful military force in the world. Their hope, therefore, lies with the Arab Spring and in particular with Egypt. If democratic advances, however limited, become established in the Middle East and North Africa, particularly in Egypt, then on the one hand public opinion is unlikely to continue to allow its government to collude with Israeli policies, and on the other hand Israel's regional belligerence and its aggression toward the Palestinians would become counterproductive with respect to the regional interests of the superpowers, which would be based on liberal economic trade and development.

It is also clear that the youth in Egypt – the April 5th group – are unlikely to be able to hold the streets in the long term in the face of the military. If the Tahrir Square banner demanding regime change is to be honored, then the old regime needs to be challenged by the core of the society, by its economic backbone – that is, by its production workers in the industrial, manufacturing, and service industries. This would be true for

any society at such an historical juncture but is particularly pertinent in Egypt where the military, that is, the leading figures themselves, own large sectors of the economy, from armament production to straight commercial enterprises. It is the organizations of the workforces in these enterprises that is critical. And the tradition is there.

In 1938, textile workers in Egypt went on strike for the first time, demanding the two 12-h shifts be changed to three 8-h shifts. This marked the beginning of their fight for a fundamental change in the system. A decade later, in 1947, they organized another strike to demand the reinstatement of colleagues dismissed for demanding better working conditions. Tanks entered Mahalla for the first time to suppress the workers, killing three and injuring 17.

In July 1952, a group of army officers led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser overthrew Egypt's monarchy; this inspired the Mahalla factory workers who went on strike over long-standing grievances. They were in for a rude awakening – the strike was brutally suppressed by the army. Unrest at the factory continued throughout the early 1980s and in 1986; they struck again over their demand for a 30-day monthly wage rather than the 26-day wage. The company eventually caved in. In 1988, Hosni Mubarak announced the cancellation of special school grants to workers. Within hours, 20,000 factory workers were out on the streets in protest. For the first time, workers were making political demands. The government responded to the strike with an iron fist, and to this day, many workers still remember the brutal treatment meted out by the security forces.

When, in April 2008, 10,000 workers took to the streets to protest against privatization and corruption, they chanted “Down with Hosni Mubarak.” It was the first anti-Mubarak protest to take place since the president came to power in 1981, and it would serve as a spark for others. The strikers received widespread support from outside the factory walls. The large picture of Mubarak in Mahalla Square was pulled down and burned. A giant step had been taken toward breaking the barrier of fear, and a clear message was delivered to the regime. The workers clashed with thousands of policemen, who used tear gas

and guns to quash the demonstrations; dozens were injured and three, including a young boy, were killed. The brutal force to silence unarmed and peaceful protesters became engraved in the memory of the city. State security eventually occupied the city, taking over control of the factory. Other Egyptian workers learned from Mahalla, and their plight came to symbolize the broader issue of deteriorating living standards for the majority of Egyptians, and their action was the connection between economic and political demands (Al Jazeera, 2012).

According to Alexander (2012), there is an aspect of the Arab Spring that has been ignored by the Western press – specifically, the mass strikes of September 2011 that paralyzed the government and the military council and opened up the road to the crisis of November. The independent unions and strike committees that led these strikes are part of what is now probably the biggest social movement in Egypt (with the possible exception of the Muslim Brotherhood) and certainly the biggest organized movement with real roots in the everyday struggles of the poor. The workers' organizations that have grown up since February 2011, with their roots in the pre-revolutionary strike waves, have already shown a remarkable degree of common purpose in articulating a set of demands for social justice and the "cleansing" of the state apparatus (Secker, 2011). So the tipping point is in the lap of the Arab Spring in general and in the organized urban workers of Egypt in particular. The opposition in Egypt may just be strong enough to shift the balance of power, at least in the short term. If this shift does occur, it will have a dramatic effect within the West bank, for Palestinian workers are likely to respond to their Egyptian counterparts, and any industrial action over job security, wages, and working conditions would bring them into direct conflict with the commercial and financial dimensions of the Oslo Accords, and by implication with its managers, the Palestinian Authority.

It is notoriously difficult to combine social reforms with the maintenance of authoritarian control. The instability of such arrangements

increases in proportion to the strength and the depth of the oppositional organizations. Such a balance is in process in Morocco, but it is early days. The history and the power of the organized opposition in Egypt is an entirely different proposition. Any government with a reforming agenda would seriously struggle to achieve credibility, would require considerable political skills, and would have to be authorized by the USA, the GCC, and the IFIs to extend freedoms, redistribute wealth, address calls for renationalizations, and extend civil participation. This would place the organized sections of Egyptian society, in particular the trade unions (EFITU), the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Salafist Nour Party, at the forefront. This contradiction, the prospect of easing the bars on the door, must place the USA, the Gulf states, the IFIs and not least the generals in a state of extreme anxiety. Given the abject failure of the current neoliberalization policy, they are caught between two stools: their commitment to the Gulf states on the one hand and their need to accommodate democratic freedoms on the other.

A second contradiction in the Middle East of 2012 was the strain between President Obama, representing the liberal Protestant sector of American society that was dominant in the latter half of the twentieth century, and the Evangelicals, whose Christian Zionism both served and drove US policy in the region for the last two decades. History informs us that in the final analysis, it has always been the national interests of the political economy that have been dominant. Since the Arab Spring, however, attempts to restart the peace process, with calls to halt the building of settlements in the West Bank, brought the White House into conflict not only with Netanyahu but the whole of Congress. Can a united opposition be overcome? Because Israel, from its inception, has been recognized by the people of the Middle East and North Africa as, in Nixon's words, the Sixth Fleet of the USA, the Palestinian cause has always been central in Arab consciousness. The litmus test, therefore, for the whole region is the Rafah Crossing – literally, watch this small space.

## Conclusion: Conflict and Resolution

For the Evangelicals, the Israel/Palestine issue is not a question of conflict and conflict resolution; it is about the millennium, Christ's Second Coming, and the Rapture (the expunging of the sinful and the saving of the redeemable). Those who oppose the consolidation of the Jewish return and the creation of Eretz (Greater) Israel are seen to be preventing God's saving of the world; they are thereby understood as a force of evil and to be vanquished. It is existential; it is nonnegotiable. The only resolution is the utter fulfillment of God's word.

Like Gramsci, I hold fast to my optimism of the will, while maintaining pessimism of the intellect. Even after a resolution of the primary conflict, both the physical and the psychological walls will persist. A decade after the military conflict in Northern Ireland was brought to an end, there are still tall barriers between the communities. Conflict resolution necessarily has two phases. In Northern Ireland, the second phase of resolution and reconciliation is still very much in process. So far, no formal "truth and reconciliation" processes have taken place.

After any resolution of the primary conflict in Palestine, both the physical and the psychological walls will persist. And because for me the subtext of our banner head, Jews For Justice For Palestinians – *Two Peoples, One Future* – is a deep philosophical statement, the resolution is a necessary process and is axiomatic for the reclamation of our humanity.

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