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Becoming a State: Zionist and Palestinian Movements for National Liberation

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Becoming a State:
Zionist and Palestinian Movements for National Liberation

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
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August 2015

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Abstract

This study examines the road to statehood for the Zionist and Palestinian movements. There are three components which frame this investigation: 1. social movements and the practices in which they engage that are aimed at establishing statehood for a people; 2. distinctive configurations of the international system and the manner in which both the material and ideational foundations of that system pulls units towards conformity and predictable behavior; and finally, 3. the role of agency, that is, the way in which instrumentally rational individuals attempt to push the structure in which they are embedded towards a configuration that is better suited to their interests and objectives.

The most influential factor guiding these struggles for national liberation are those forces which emanate from the prevailing structure of the international system. Not only was it demonstrated that the established material and ideational preferences of existing states have strong bearing on a movement’s ideological orientation and by consequence its chosen course of struggle, but hegemonic order configurations also define political cleavages and in so doing present movement leaders with both tactical and strategic opportunities by harnessing or exploiting those cleavages. From the agency perspective, the cases showed that the leadership of each movement was highly influential in the determination of a movement’s success or failure.
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Chapter I: Introduction

Research Puzzle

Since the destruction of ancient Jerusalem by Roman legions in 70 CE, Jews the world over had maintained the dream of one day returning to their ancestral homeland. Yet, despite being relegated to the status of second-class citizen in the countries where they sought refuge, and in spite of repeated episodes of often violent persecution, over the centuries no serious effort towards the fulfillment of this dream was ever undertaken. It is therefore interesting that when in the nineteenth century several geographically, linguistically, and temporally disconnected ideologues proposed the active pursuit of such an endeavor, that these appeals obtained the level of critical mass within the Jewish communities of Europe. All the more intriguing is that what began in 1882 with an impetuous journey by fourteen impassioned university students intent on establishing an agricultural community in Palestine, soon transpired into a full-fledged movement for national liberation. This movement would go on to fulfill that millennia-old dream with the establishment of the State of Israel sixty-six years later; declaring independence on May 15, 1948.

What was the realization of a dream for world Jewry, however, quickly transpired into a nightmare for the Arab inhabitants of Palestinian. Shocked by the rapid influx of
Jewish immigrants and the corresponding transformation of that land into a burgeoning Jewish community, the call for establishing an independent Arab state in Palestine was all but assured. Towards this end, Palestinians have enjoyed a great deal of material and ideational support from regional allies as well as global powers. In addition, they have benefited significantly from an outpouring of public sympathy, both at home and abroad. It is therefore perplexing that in the course of some 100 years of struggle the Palestinian people have not been able to seize their rightful position as an equal member among the community of nations.

The success of the Zionist movement in achieving statehood is an exceptional case: the vast majority of Jews did not live Palestine; the movement did not enjoy widespread backing, not from world Jewry nor from the international community; and although the movement was able to make some land purchases, it was only able to muster scant material resources. These are all conditions that would ostensibly point to the movement’s inevitable failure. Conversely, the Palestinian movement for national liberation presents an exceptional case as well in that the Palestinians have not yet attained independent statehood despite possession of territory, an abundance of both material and moral support, and repeated confirmation of their legal right to do so by the international community.

Taken together, the contradictions presented by these two cases raise a puzzling question: Why is it that one national liberation movement attained their goal of statehood while the other movement has not yet reached that status? More specifically, how was it that the Zionist movement was able to forge international conditions conducive to the establishment of a Jewish state and that, when presented with the pivotal opportunity to
do so, the Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion was able to sufficiently mobilize world Jewry
towards this end while the Palestinian Organization leader Yasser Arafat, when facing a
similarly favorable structural alignment and a comparable level of internal mobilization
was not able to bring about the establishment of an independent State of Palestinian?

**National Liberation**

Struggles for national liberation have been waged on every corner of the globe, by
every categorization of people, and in every era (Beary, 2008; Armatige, 2007). Only a
small percentage of these struggles have acquired the sustained attention of the
international community and even fewer are likely to ever achieve their goal of
independent statehood. What is it that accounts for such disparity? Is it a particular
configuration of the attitudes, interests, institutional regimes, and established alliance
structures of the international order that allow a given movement to rise, persist, and
ultimately achieve its stated goal? Or is it the abilities, actions, and accessible resources
of the movements themselves that determine the outcome of struggles for national
liberation? Put another way, is it international structure that dictates the outcome of
struggles for national liberation? Is it the agency of the movement itself that determines
its fate? Or is it some combination of the two?

The majority of explanations for national liberation movement success focus on
those accounts that place emphasis on internal factors such as the role of leadership,
organizational efficiency and/or the movement’s capacity to mobilize resources and to
marshal those resources towards the movement’s immediate and long-term objectives
(Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000). In fact, among social movement theorists conventional
wisdom holds that the attainment of statehood rests firmly within the movement itself and
the pressure it can bring to bear on the target state. Group size, ethnic unity, resource
availability, recruitment capabilities, violence and attrition strategies, and political
prowess are most often postulated to be essential ingredients in the ‘quest for statehood’
recipe (Lim, 2010: 262-3). This suggests that agency and the movement’s composition
are the determinate factors. Can this really be? Certainly twenty-five million Kurds
would argue that size cannot be the crucial determining factor, nor would have Yugoslav
Partisans agreed that ethnic unity was the essential determinant in their favor. Exactly
what resources were mobilized against the Raj? Did violence in any way contribute to
Czech independence? Could one honestly consider Kosovo’s independence to be the
result of KLA political prowess or does great power preference provide a better
explanation?

Given a wealth of empirical evidence suggesting that internal forces may not be
the only factors responsible for determining national liberation movement success
(Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000), others have sought causation in those forces that are
external to the group (e.g. Miller and Kagan, 1997). Often such explanations focus on the
interests and inclinations of seminal external actors. The role of NATO in bringing about
statehood for the newly independent states of the former Yugoslavian Republic is a good
example of how external actors can be the crucial factor. The same could be said for the
case of East Timor where attainment of statehood could not have been possible without
the backing of western governments and the support of the United Nations. That East
Timorese independence was delayed by over 25 years, moreover, points to yet another
level of external constraints; that of the international system. Undeniably, configurations
of the international political order have a tremendous (but not necessarily decisive) impact on the outcome of national liberation movements. In the case of East Timor, it was a Cold War alignment wherein Indonesia’s reluctance to see the establishment of an independent communist government within the archipelago was defended by means of harsh repressive policies—policies that were supported by the anti-communist West.

Consistent with these accounts, both internal and external explanations figure prominently in the descriptions of Zionism’s success and the Palestinian’s frustrated aspirations. In fact, the Zionist and Palestinian movements provide an exceptional opportunity for analysis of both system effects and the role of agency on national liberation movement success or failure by presenting a study of two movements with historical attachments to, and vying for the same parcel of land in a dispute shaped by nearly identical hegemonic actors.\(^1\) These ‘mirror-image’ conflict characteristics are buttressed by the fact that both peoples were inspired by socialist-rooted, secular-nationalist ideologies and found solidarity in charismatic leaders who stood at the head of umbrella organizations with worldwide operations. Both movements, moreover, experienced factional splits on the basis of cultural-religious philosophies, as well as the tactical means of obtaining their strategic objective. Given these identical characteristics, it is puzzling that one group was able to achieve the objective of statehood while the other was not. Nevertheless, when one begins unpacking the idiosyncrasies of each movement and the structure in which it was embedded, clarification of the causes of these different outcomes begins to come into view.

\(^1\) Aside from China, all of the great powers have played pivotal roles in both the Zionist and Palestinian bids for statehood. Moreover, each movement successfully captured the attention of an attentive international public, while the role of regional powers has been instrumental in directing the course and outcome of each peoples’ struggle.
With reference to Zionism, among the most pervasive explanations for the movement’s success stems from the claim that the Holocaust was the singular most important factor allowing for the formation of the State of Israel (Segev, 2000). However, the claim that the Zionists would not have prevailed in obtaining their state in the absence of such a horrific genocide, while logically compelling, is highly dubious. In fact, the empirical record demonstrates that a variety of additional forces were at play. For example, from a structural perspective it was the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent rise of Great Britain as the regional hegemon in the wake of WWI that afforded Zionist leaders with the vital opening needed to establish a critical foothold in Palestine. Similarly, British decline after WWII, the rise of the US hegemony, fears of Soviet expansionalism in the Middle East, and Arab underestimation of Zionist capabilities were all important forces that provided the requisite structural space for the movement’s attainment of statehood.

Complementing these externally derived sources of Zionism’s success are those narratives that emphasize the role of agency. Most notable among these are those accounts that highlight the detailed planning of Theodor Herzl, the tireless labors and diplomatic skill of Chaim Weizmann, and the calculating yet charismatic leadership of David Ben-Gurion. Other explanations assign credit to Jewish militant groups and the wave of violence they perpetrated on British assets. From this perspective it is claimed that it was Jewish terrorism that effectively raised the cost of British occupation resulting in battle fatigue and ultimately the withdrawal of British forces from Palestine. Finally, there are those accounts that attribute Zionism’s success to the efforts of influential members of the American Jewish community who through political action were able to
secure the Truman Administration’s support for the establishment of the Jewish state (Snetsinger, 1974).

Palestinian inability to achieve statehood on the other hand, is most commonly attributed to the bi-polar geopolitical configuration that defined political relations throughout the Cold War and the resulting Israeli-Arab wars that prevented the emergence of an independent Palestinian leadership. Such explanations assert that it was the superpowers’ reluctance to aggravate their oil-rich Arab client states, their keen desire to avoid direct confrontation in the region, and in the wake of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, America’s unwavering support for the State of Israel that prevented the formation of a Palestinian state. Buttressing these system-level explanations are those that look to the effects of local external influences, and as a result, place the blame for Palestinian failure squarely in the hands of Arab states and inter-Arab politics. For example, as Sayigh and Shlaim observed, “the absence of even a semblance of Arab unity [throughout the Cold War] deprived the PLO its main means to build international consensus on the Palestine issue” (1997: 142).

Like Zionist success, Palestinian disappointment finds explanation in the internal dimension as well. Geographically dispersed as a result of al Nakba—the ‘great catastrophe’ of 1948—the Palestinian leadership was initially unable to mobilize the Palestinian people towards the aims of a mass movement. As a consequence, the fate of Palestinian statehood came to rest in the hands of Cairo throughout the 1950s and 1960s. In the wake of the 1967 Six-Day War, however, Yasser Arafat was able to seize the helm of the Palestinian Liberation Organization through the promotion of revolutionary
struggle, and in turn, establish an indigenous movement for national liberation independent of external control.

A skilled tactician, Arafat not only demonstrated the capacity to successfully confront Israeli forces, but in doing so, mobilized the Palestinian masses towards the aim of statehood while concomitantly fostering international sympathy for the Palestinian cause. Yet despite these notable achievements, the nature of the regime established by Arafat cultivated ideological divisions and political fractionalization. As As’ad Ghanem points out in *Palestinian Politics After Arafat: A Failed National Liberation Movement*, aside from Israeli opposition to an equitable solution to the Palestinian problem, it was “the rise of Hamas as an alternative to the PLO, and the consequent emergence of a struggle within the Palestinian leadership…[that] caused the failure of the Palestinian national liberation movement” (2010: 18-19). Nevertheless, the single most cofounding factor frustrating the Palestinian’s advance and final achievement of *de jure* recognition has been the condition of occupation and the Israeli government’s official policy vis-à-vis Palestinian statehood.

**Research Orientation and Study Structure**

When seeking insight into struggles for national liberation, it is common practice to focus on the conflict’s dynamics—those seemingly intractable positions that separate the warring parties, the barriers that frustrate efforts to reach a compromise, and the day-to-day events that direct and ultimately structure the course of hostilities. The inclination to pay particular attention to these characteristics is natural, after all it is these daily and ongoing disputes that dominate news headlines and present themselves as the most
obvious path to the conflict’s resolution. If for example, Israel would just stop building settlements we could finally address the key issue of territorial boundaries. If Palestinians would just stop inflicting violence on Israeli citizens, Israelis would feel secure and thus more amenable to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Or if the United States would merely step up and take a strong leadership role, the parties could be coaxed into signing a comprehensive and lasting peace accord. Surely if we could just resolve these and other core issues that lie at the heart of the conflict, this line of thinking goes, then peaceful resolution would certainly follow.

With regards to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it would be easy to write yet another treatise that perpetuates the viewpoints held by one side over the other. I could illustrate how it is Israeli occupation policy that stands in the way of a reasonable settlement. Alternatively I could demonstrate how it is Palestinian terrorism and allied rocket attacks that are the primary barriers to peace. I could argue that on the basis of historical, religious, or legal grounds that one side has a more legitimate claim to the land than the other. Or I could look inward to declare that it is domestic politics that stands in the way of the conflict’s resolution. Alternatively, I could look outward to find evidence for the claim that it is external sympathies, interests, and strategic calculations that are the principal reasons the conflict persists today.

Seeking to gain greater insight into the Gordian Knot that is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while avoiding the propensity to over emphasize the symptomatic and strategic positions adopted by the opposing parties throughout the conflict’s long and ongoing existence, I turn attention away from the particularities that have come to define the conflict to instead focus on the unique characteristics of the parties themselves and the
ways they interact within the structures in which they are rooted. This is not, therefore, a study into contentious issues or even the dynamics processes that unfold between parties engaged in hostilities. In fact, this study is not about relations between warring parties at all. Instead, it is an investigation into individual movements for national liberation viewed in relation to system-level influences rather than local conflict dynamics (although admittedly some attention will be given to these dynamics when the results of their effects are systemic). The definitive objective is the identification of both structural and internal forces that in their interaction drive, guide and ultimately determine the outcome of struggles for national liberation with the aim of marshaling these insights towards the objective of peace. In this sense, the Zionist and Palestinian experiences will serve as the basis for comparative analysis.

There are three components that frame this investigation: 1. social movements and the practices in which they engage that are aimed at establishing statehood for a people; 2. distinctive configurations of the international system and the manner in which both the material and ideational foundations of that system pulls units towards conformity and predictable behavior; and finally, 3. the role of agency, that is, the way in which instrumentally rational individuals attempt to push the structure in which they are embedded towards a configuration that is better suited to their interests and objectives. In the following chapter, I unpack the literature addressing each of these components to reveal the significant roles they play in the determination of a national liberation movement’s success or failure. I will hence extract from that review key variables thought to be indicative of a national liberation movement’s rise, course, and outcome within the context of a systems-level analysis.
In chapter three, I establish a theoretical framework and methodology to guide this investigation. The central aim will be to construct a matrix for evaluating the process of national liberation with an eye towards testing the supposition that it is the particular alignment of attitudes, elite strategies, states’ interests, established institutions and regimes, and the prevailing alliance structure of any given international system that allows a given movement to rise, persist, and ultimately achieve its stated goal. At the same time, the framework will allow us to appraise the assertion that it is the abilities, actions, and accessible resources of the movements themselves that are more determinate of their fate. In the end, the theoretical framework established in chapter three will provide an avenue for answering the questions: what instruments are made available to national liberation movement members when engaging with the international system? With these instruments in mind, to what degree is it that agency of the movement itself is responsible for movement advancement and struggle outcomes. Or alternatively, are the forces emanating from the international structure so strong that the fate of any given national liberation movement is sealed from the outset?

Towards this end, the third chapter will also lay out an inventory of factors that indicate the impact of agency and a separate inventory indicating the influences of structural forces. Once these lists are clearly defined, the second step of this process entails the development of a method for evaluation and assigning measure to the force of each indicator. For example, by defining parameters such, “central to the movement achieving its objective” as having a ‘very strong impact,’ or “gave the movement an advantage toward the attainment of its objective” as being strongly influential or “had no impact on the movement abilities to achieve its objective,” as having a low impact and so
on; it will be possible to establish a list of the forces that are expected to be essential to the quest for statehood recipe and those factors that are expected to be marginally important, have no impact, or to have negative effects.

Putting these indicators into play, the third step of this approach involves unraveling the historical record to, a) establish the movement’s immediate and long-term objectives, b) ascertain the degree to which these objective had been achieved, and c) discover the force or forces that were determinate of that outcome. This will be the central undertaking of chapters four and five. Mining the historiographies of first the Zionist movement and then the Palestinian movement, the study is inductive in its orientation and employs a heuristic methodology. The purpose of employing a heuristic approach is to discover, by developing an empathetic feel for each case, the texture of each movement and the forces of causation that allowed them advance their respective bids for statehood. In doing so, the chapters provide the raw material for evaluating the role of the influential variables extracted from the literature review and incorporated in the theoretical framework.

Guided by the theoretical framework and indicators established therein, chapter six takes on the final step in this process of heuristic investigation by evaluating the causal force of each indicator in the emergence, drive, and ultimate outcome of a national liberation struggles. The task will be to view each indicator in isolation to evaluate its influence on the movements’ ability to attain its various objectives (e.g. movement validation, international recognition, and sovereign affirmation). Although ascertaining an exact measure of influence for each variable is idealistic and untenable, a comparison of the two cases will allow us to discover which forces were essential to movement
advancement, which were helpful, and which did not matter at all. In the end, this process will allow us to either confirm or reject the hypotheses thoroughly enough to contribute practical insights into national liberation movement processes and outcomes with the aim of stimulating similar work grounded in an understanding of the constraining and facilitating forces of international structure. Finally, this chapter will conclude by evaluating both the benefits and limits of this study.
Chapter II:
Perspectives on Struggles for National Liberation

Questions

What is it that accounts for the emergence and ultimate success or failure of national liberation struggles? Is it structural pressures brought about by international norm development (Bercovitch et al, 1997) and economic modernization (Skocpol, 1979)? Or is success/failure the result of elite disaffection (Crenshaw, 1981) and elite competition (Horowitz, 1985)? Does the presence of natural resources have a contributing effect; resulting in the emergence and persistence of ‘conflict entrepreneurs’ who are motivated primarily by greed (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Fearon and Laitin, 2003) or ‘ethnic entrepreneurs’ who are able to successfully integrate greed with grievance to foster support from aggrieved populations (Lipschutz and Crawford, 1998)? Alternatively, could it be that great power interests rather than group characteristics and capabilities are the decisive factors—determining both the conflict’s course and its ultimate outcome (O’Leary and Triman, 2007:9)?

A large number of accounts explaining the fate of nationalist movements have been put forth, yet to date no unified understanding has been devised. Despite this impasse, I intend to demonstrate that progress towards a general theory of national liberation movement success can be made by recognizing and deciphering the impact of
defining indicators of success or failure common to all national liberation struggles. At this initial stage, I suggest that these include a leadership’s ability to forge unity of purpose among a specifically defined populace, the capacity of that populace to amass a requisite amount of both ideational and material resources, and the movement’s political aptitude for effectively marshalling those resources as an instrument for overcoming externally imposed barriers to statehood. These barriers in turn constitute a second set of indicators that may be determinate of movement’s success or failure; that is, the existing composition of structural conditions. These involve consideration of existing state wishes and especially great power interests, the constitution of international society and its prevailing attitude towards self-determination, and unalterable environmental conditions such as geography and the availability of natural resources.

**Literature Review**

At its core, the questions defining the parameters of this study are: how is it that peoples become nations, and in particular, how is it that nations become states? Accordingly, and following the guidance established above, the following literature review examines what is known or thought to be known about the success and failure of struggles for national liberation. On the one hand this will entail an assessment of social movements; how they are formed and under what conditions they succeed. What is it that accounts for their persistence, the tactics they choose to employ, and to what extent is leadership responsible for the achievement of their aims? On the other hand, this undertaking demands an evaluation of the literature appraising the role of external forces: the specific configurations of the ideational, political, and strategic orders in which
particular movements take place and the associated interests which sustain and drive those orders. All told, the questions which frame this study properly lend themselves to analysis within an agent/structure framework; examination of which will be pursued in the following chapter.

In what is arguably the most comprehensive and authoritative study on independence movements, at the turn of the century Ted Robert Gurr declared that the tsunami of ethnic and nationalist conflicts that swept across much of the world in the wake of World War II and throughout the 1990s had largely abated (2000: xiii). As the large number of case studies focused on individual independence movements reveal, there is good reason to have confidence in Gurr’s assessment. From Panama to Palau, the twentieth century witnessed resolution to the bulk of the world’s national liberation struggles. Independence movements motivated by colonial resentment in much of Africa and Asia or by anti-imperialist fervor such as those in Cuba and the rest of Latin America have, for the most part, been entirely resolved. Whether based in nationalist zeal such as the many anti-Portuguese movements of the 1960s and 1970s, ethnically centered as those in the former Yugoslav Republic, religiously driven as for example in Bangladesh, or externally imposed as was the case in East Timor, the twentieth century witnessed the attainment of sovereign independence for nearly 120 peoples and the realization of political autonomy for dozens of others.

Some of these successes were achieved through bloody civil wars (as in Algeria), some through non-violent transitions (as was the case with the Velvet Revolutions of the 1990s). Many were elitist-led (Indonesia), others the result of spontaneous popular uprisings (Korea). Sometimes statehood required outside intervention (East Timor and
Kosovo), at other times independence resulted because of outside intervention (Moldova). All told, the international community grew from approximately 82 recognized sovereign states in 1899 to 196 in the year 2014—this achievement in spite of a moderate rate of state extinction.

Despite this optimistic outlook, Gurr and others forewarned that where conflict had become deeply entrenched, veterans of ethnic and nationalist movements would continue to challenge the sovereignty and territorial integrity of targeted states with intensified vigor, endurance, and popularity (Gurr, 2000: xv and, Ganguly & MacDuff, 2003: 10). Indeed, although several groups accepted political compromises (the Provisional Irish Republican Army and the Free Aceh Movement for example), or in at least one case have been crushed by government forces (the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam), the vast majority of the 21st century’s unresolved independence movements have become evermore unwavering in their demands. As Dov Lynch observes, the result has been the emergence of “frozen conflicts [that] have produced an impasse of volatile stability” (in Beary, 2008: 105). Pointing to further reason for concern, David Armitage’s statistical study on the rise of movements for national liberation found strong correlation between the emergence of said movements and moments of hegemonic decline (2007: 110).

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2 The exact number of recognized sovereign states is difficult to pinpoint. As Worldatalas.com notes, “Many sources offer different answers.” This may be due to political bias and/or issues related to definition. See: http://geography.about.com/cs/countries/a/numbercountries.htm. Retrieved December 28, 2014.
The Role of Social Movements

Sidney Tarrow defines social movements as “collective challenges by people with common purpose and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities” (1994 3-4). In the earliest literature, these groups were seen as irrational, hysterical, and invariably as threatening entities (Blumer, 1939). Within this collective-behaviorist perspective, social movement participants were viewed as “intensely disconnected [and] wholly ignorant of the difficulties involved in their vast undertaking” (Hoffer, 1951: 7) and thus amounted to nothing more than anomalous political phenomena. With the emergence of social movements peopled by highly educated and economically well-off participants pressing for the expansion of civil rights, social justice, and withdraw from Vietnam, the view of social movements as being comprised of socially unstable and alienated malcontents gave way to structural accounts on the one hand, and rationalist and cultural explanations on the other (Garner, 1997: 5).

This rational actor/structural strain approach, the approach adopted here, seeks to understand the passage from structural configurations that give rise to conditions for change to movement mobilization and action by accounting for the effects of culture, politics, and rationality (Canel, 1997). In line with this view, Lipsky (1970), Jenkins and Perrow (1977), McAdam (1982) and others have observed that “the timing and fate of movements are largely dependent upon the opportunities afforded to activists by changes on the broader political system or structure.” Elaborating on this concept, Tarrow coined the term political opportunity structure: “consistent—but not necessarily formal, permanent or national—dimensions of the political environment that either encourage or discourage people from using collective action” (1994: 18).
Whereas the political opportunity structure within which individual struggles for independence take place form one dimension of the national liberation puzzle, the role of agency forms the other. As Eduardo Canel (1997) points out, it is rational leaders who “identify and define grievances, develop a group sense, devise strategies, and facilitate mobilization” and in so doing, play an instrumental role in the success or failure of individual social movements. In fact, the view taken here and around which this literature review is focused is that agency plays as much a role in the formulation of structure (and is thereby also determinate of movement success/failure) as do forces external to the movement and its capabilities. This is what McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly have identified as a soft structuralism approach—the idea that structures are contingent rather than strictly determined in the sense that they are seen as being sensitive to the nuances of political [and other] processes (1997: 145).

According to Tarrow, it is the specific configuration of a given political opportunity structure that provides the impetus for social movements. As he puts it, “Social movements form when ordinary citizens, sometimes encouraged by leaders, respond to changes in opportunities that lower the costs of collective action, reveal potential allies, and show where elites and authorities are vulnerable” (1994: 18).

Building upon this theme, in their empirical study of new social movements in Western Europe Kriesi et al (1995) identified four determinates of movement emergence: 1) National Cleavage Structures—established political conflicts between the center and the periphery, religious groups, urban dwellers and rural populaces, and/or economic classes; 2) Institutional Structures—specifically the strength of formal political institutions (i.e.
the state), established informal procedures, and the potential for mobilization in said environment; 3) Prevailing Elite Strategies—categorized as exclusive (repressive, confrontational, and polarizing) or inclusive (facilitative, cooperative, and assimilative); and 4) Available Alliance Structures—the configuration of power within a given political system, the availability of influential allies, and existing cleavages among elites.

In sum, their research demonstrated that countries with weak institutional structures that are relatively open, democratic, and possess political cultures that are facilitative, cooperative, and assimilative provide the greatest potential for social movement success. Moreover, the authors found that “salient traditional cleavages can be quite constraining…” (25) and that preoccupation with traditional struggles prevent new movements from entering the political arena.

Upon first glance, these observations are seemingly counterintuitive; at least as they pertain to struggles for national liberation. If for example, the opportunity structure in which a nationalist group finds itself is defined as democratic, open, and facilitative, than why should it be necessary that a national liberation movement emerge in the first place? Would it not be more productive to merely assert one’s rights and demands through available democratic and facilitative political processes? On the other hand, to say that salient traditional cleavages are so constraining as to override any endeavor to insert a new narrative into the political arena is to fundamentally misunderstand the impetus for national independence. As David Carment observes, it is the “systematic denial of minority aspirations, goals, values, and needs” and their overall mistreatment that gives rise to violent conflicts and calls for self-determination (2003: 29).
Yet, despite what on the face of it seems to be a disconnect between Kriesi’s findings and empirical observations of national liberation movement emergence, one should not be so quick to dismiss the Kriesi et al indicators. This is because Kriesi and his colleagues confined their study to the emergence of social movements within individual countries and therefore did not take into account the high-minded ambitions of national liberation movements and the unique do-or-die circumstances under which they take place. More fundamentally, they did not take recognition of the fact that struggles for national liberation are pursued not within any individual state, but are rather the product of movement interaction with the international community as a whole. It is therefore not national structures that are determinative, but rather, international ones.

Accordingly, this study will draw extensively on the Kriesi et al indicators of movement emergence and success, yet with a view to struggle between movement and international structure rather than national structures. Thus instead of speaking of national cleavages, I will examine the effects of international cleavages: ideological divisions between pluralists and solidarists for example; or separation between hegemonic interests and the interest of less powerful states. Likewise, rather than focusing solely on national institutional constraints, primary consideration will be given to international institutional structures and the procedural processes they demand. Similarly, when we speak of elite strategies it will states’ foreign policies and their cumulative approach to self-determination that will be of interest. Finally, it is not national power structures that will be the primary focus, but rather international and regional power structures and the effects of those structure on a movement’s ability to either rally allies and/or exploit preexisting cleavage among Member States.
Leadership

Traditional works on group leadership have focused on typologies and styles of individual leaders (e.g. Weber, 1945; Downton, 1966; Blondel, 1987) primarily in relation to problems of collective action (Olson, 1965) and resource mobilization (Tilly, 1977). Dovetailing these approaches are more contemporary studies that tend to focus on the process of leadership and the choice of violent or non-violent strategies (Van Acker, 2004; Misra, 2001: 21-22). Highlighting the possibility that the task-orientated choices taken by a leadership are crucial to determining a movement’s success or failure (Aminzade et al, 2001: 152), these studies underscore a simple yet key aspect of all social movements: that said movements are peopled by individuals. As McCarthy and Zald (1973), point out, within social movement organizations it is a relatively small group of people—leadership in particular—that is entirely responsible for movement success. It is leadership, for example, that mobilizes people, money, and other resources (Burklin, 1990: 9), and it is leaders who identify grievances, develop group identity, devise strategies, and facilitate mobilization by reducing opportunity costs though strategies of collective action (Canel, 1997).

Forming the rational core of national liberation movements, successful attainment of statehood is largely dependent upon the leadership’s actions and its ability to capitalize on preexisting conditions in order to unify the group, fan the flames of discontent, and create within the minds of its followers the image of an independent state wherein group interests will be safeguarded (Wood 1981: 123). In support of these objectives, recruitment and mobilization have been deemed crucial (Reagan and Norton, 2005: 326). Accordingly, in the drive to sustain group solidarity while concomitantly maintaining the
leadership’s position as the dominate faction, scholars have pointed to the importance of recruitment and the effects of elitist leadership preferences (Jackson and Rosberg 1984), the ability to exploit geography (Gates, 2003: 113), the exile of rival factions (Sayigh, 1997), the recruiting effectiveness of particular ideologies around which groups are organized (Cash, 1989), the composition of peer groups (Sageman, 2004), and/or the group’s long-term and short-term objectives (Weinstein, 2003). Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes evident that these capabilities may be more the product of the decisionmaking structure in which leaders operate (Aminzade et al: 154) and as comprised within the movement’s organizational constitution (US Army: 2007).

Focus on organizational structure has centered on the influences of preexisting social networks (Munson, 2001) and whether the group was founded upon religious unity or nationalist solidarity. Whereas religiously-based movements typically take the form of dispersed cell- networks, nearly all nationalist movements are hierarchically structured (ibid: 2-3,7). In contrast to contemporary popular thought, O’Leary and Silke (2007) found that hierarchically structured nationalist movements (be they secular, ethnic and/or Marxist) are better equipped to carrying out coordinated actions and are thus more prone to use violence than are religious-based groups (2007: 398). This has been attributed to the fact that hierarchically structured organizations allow for better use of skill-specialization and coordinated action (US Army, 2007: 7) and evidence indicating that hierarchy gives rise to asocial fractionalization among elites (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982: 24). In turn it has been found that fractionalization and the violence it gives rise to weakens in-group support (Misra, 2001: 22) and perpetuates state an advantage within competitive atmospheres (Gates, 2002: 122). Accordingly, leadership objectives may be
more dependent upon its capabilities vis-à-vis the state than on its professed grievance (Buhaug, 2006: 705), while the prospects for peaceful outcomes are often a function of a leadership’s longevity and its propensity to use violence (Chiozza and Choi, 2003).

Taking cues from these accounts, it can be surmised that fractionalization just may be the single greatest barrier to effective leadership. While hierarchically ordered movements facilitate efficient task-oriented action by making good use of diverse skill sets, where hierarchical decisionmaking structures deny equality of voice among elites the potential breakdown of unified leadership and in-group solidarity is high. Movement success then, may be a function of group cohesion, institutional strength, and ability of strong and charismatic leaders to maintain elite solidarity towards these ends. In addition, success appears to be contingent upon the leadership’s ability to exploit specialized-skills and to direct and deploy these and other group resources in a most effective manner. That is to say, in a manner that most efficiently brings the political opportunity structure into a configuration that is conducive to statehood.

**Violent and Non-violent Strategies**

Aside from group formation and mobilization, the leaders of national liberation movements have two definitive objectives: creating the *de facto* conditions of statehood in pursuit of *de jure* recognition. Towards these ends and as Martha Crenshaw demonstrates, violence alone is rarely enough to produce conditions for success (1996, : 260) and groups attempting such a strategy often bring about their own demise (O'Leary and Silke, 2007). Notable examples include the Shining Path’s recalcitrant anti-populist behavior (Misra, 2001: 22), the PLO’s inability to produce tangible gains through
violence (Sayigh: 18), and the Tamil Tigers’ stubborn pursuit of a totalitarian strategy (Ross, 2009). In like fashion, states relying exclusively on military force seldom bring about a group’s defeat (Jones and Libicki, 2008: 42). In fact, violent retaliatory strategies are more likely to bolster in-group solidarity (Ibid: xvii) as was witnessed in the case of British forces in Northern Ireland or the reaction to Israeli Defense Forces in Lebanon and in the Palestinian territories.

Scholarly accounts of strategic choice point to variety of overriding considerations that may or may not result in rational calculations to engage in violence. Primary among these point to regime type (Jebb et al, 2006: 130); the level, degree, and accountability of democratic state institutions (Van England and Rudolph, 2008; Giulianiano, 2006); the available mechanisms for peaceful protest (Misra, 2001: 19); political will (Rudolph, 2008: 182); balance of capabilities (Younis, 2000: 13-19; Crenshaw, 1978: 103-108); and the number of contending parties (Walter, 2006a). Strategies of violence are thus probable where the state is engaged in democratic transition (Kivimak and Thornig, 2002; O’Leary and Silke: 419), the group believes the state will make concessions (Walter, 2006b) and/or when the state believes it can achieve ‘peace with war’ (Wickramasinghe, 2009).

Conversely, empirical studies have demonstrated that negotiated peace is likely to be pursued by strong democracies (Dayton and Kriesberg, 2009: 117), where territory is separable (Wood, 1981: 112) and participants have become locked into a ‘mutually hurting stalemate’ (Zartman, 1993) leading to ‘war weariness’ (Mason and Fett, 1996) as a result of a protracted conflict (Mason et al, 1999). These observations draw attention to

3 Of the 648 groups in existence between 1968 and 2000 the authors found that only 7% were resolved by force (19).
the importance of a movement’s pursuit of diplomatic strategies; both in the formal realm and as a means of influencing public opinion. As Horowitz found, “whether a secessionist movement will achieve its aims…is determined largely by international politics, by the balance of interests, and forces beyond the state” (1985: 230): In other words, by external forces.

Because ultimately a national liberation movement’s aim is to achieve recognition of its cause as legitimate within the eyes of external audiences, it is incumbent upon a movement’s leadership to rally those forces that have not as yet recognized the movement’s legitimate legal status by whatever means available. One of the most effective tools for accomplishing this objective is through the implementation of an armalite and ballot box strategy (Maillot, 2005: 25). Although seemingly contradictory, when employed in tandem the deployment of these two tactics—violence on the one hand and formal diplomacy and the pursuit of political processes on the other—have strong potential to produce ripe conditions for a negotiated agreement. This observations has been confirmed by a number of empirical case studies; most notably the cases of the African National Congress (Van England, 2008), the Irish Republican Army (Frampton, 2009), and the Kosovo Liberation Army (Weller, 1999).

The implementation of persistent and far-reaching campaigns of public diplomacy have also been shown to be an effective tool for exerting pressure on target states and their allies. As International Affairs Specialist Raphael F. Perl points out, “terrorists [and national liberation movements] must have publicity in some form if they are to gain attention, inspire fear and respect, and secure favorable understanding of their cause, if not their act[s]” (1997). Defined as “a process of creating an overall international image
that enhances your ability to achieve diplomatic success” (Rourke and Boyer, 2010: G-10), in its most pragmatic form it is what Joseph Nye refers to as the deployment of *soft power*: “The ability to get other countries to want what you want” (1990: 166).

For a people whose access to international institutions, mainstream media outlets, and who have been deprived a fair hearing in both national and international forums, direct appeal to the international public may be the best hope for advancing their cause. Often opining elaborate and emotive treatises appealing to seemingly populace yet ideologically-infused sentiments, the leaders of national liberation movements create a universal sense of justice for their cause by embedding it within a historical narrative that validates the movement’s quest for statehood. These appeals, even when backed by violence, have been demonstrated to be a powerful tool in the battle for public opinion. As pointed out by Craig and George (1995), when effectively articulated by charismatic leaders, these ideas have the potential to not only stiffen their constituent’s resolve, but to mesmerize the entire world and thereby foster the creation of a supportive international populace who will in turn place pressure on their respective governments to address the national liberation movement’s grievances.

**Perspectives on System-Level Determinates of Success**

Thus far focus has centered on the role of agency and localized configurations of the political opportunity structure in which struggles for national liberation take place. It was established that group composition and its mobilization potential are dependent upon localized structural factors, leadership coherence, the effects of a movement’s institutional and decisionmaking apparatus, a leadership’s tactical choices, and its
strategic orientation. I now turn to a review of the literature addressing the systemic determinates of national liberation movement success or failure. This will entail assessment of the role external actors; including great powers, regional states, and other non-great power stakeholders. It will also involve examination of international public opinion and the effects it can have the course and outcome of struggles for national liberation. The remainder of the section will focus on the far-reaching and overarching impact international society—defined by the attitudes held by existing states and the power configurations that define their relations—has on the emergence, persistence, and eventual outcome of struggles for national liberation.

**External Actors**

At its broadest level, the literature addressing the impact of external actors on struggles for national liberation focuses on their system-level effects. As Carment and James (2000) point out, the conduct of external actors—in particular great powers—vis-à-vis a national liberation movement is more often guided by geopolitical interests than it is by sentiments of solidarity. Nevertheless, this is not to say that ideology plays no role in struggles for independence. As evidenced by the conduct of the great powers throughout the Cold War, ideology not only facilitated the interests of great powers in that it served as the foundation for strategically crucial alliances, it also provided the international public with comfort in the belief that “their sacrifices were worthwhile contributions to a historical process, the outcome of which was certain in the end” (Moran, 2001). Following this line of reasoning, it has been established that pre-existing
social and religious networks (Munson, 2001), ethnic loyalties, cultural attachments, and shared experiences, are contributing determinates of alliance configuration (Birch, 1978).

Where struggles for national liberation confound great power interests, great power alignment has been demonstrated to be a good indicator of a movement’s propensity to implement strategies of violence. Following Walter’s observation that national liberation movements almost always choose to fight to the finish rather than give-in to government forces—particularly in the absence of great power intervention and guarantees to enforce the terms of a negotiated settlement (1997: 335)—Benjamin Miller and Korina Kagan found that when great power interests were in accord, aggressive actions were highly constrained. When great powers adopt competitive postures on the other hand, belligerents were afforded broad freedom action (1997: 59-60). This condition, more often than not, favors the independence movement in that allows for easy access to weapons and freedom from external interference. As Crenshaw observed in the case of 1954 Algeria, in the absence of external pressure “the creation of a new nationalist movement determined to use violence was opportune”(1978: 6).

In extreme cases, regional and great powers may be compelled to take military action against the movement and/or its target state. While pressure to intervene is almost always based on geopolitical interests, pressure from below can have a seminal impact as well. As Polletta and Jasper point out, “It is a perception of shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly,” that allows individual citizens to identify and support such struggles (2001, 284). Jenson (1995) explains: “collective identity—generates resources, solidarity, alliance possibilities (and opposition), and ‘routes to representation’ (that is, institutional access). In other words, [it] helps to ‘make
opportunities’ within the prevailing political opportunity structure” (in Lim: 278-9). A good example of this phenomena is established by Audie Klotz (1995) who demonstrates that in the case of South Africa the power of ideas, embodied as international norms, have strong potential to transform local struggles into transnational movements, and in so doing, compel external actors to act in ways that may not necessarily serve their best interests.

Intervention can bring about an ultimate end to struggles for national liberation—either in favor of statehood or against depending on the orientation and political objectives sought by intervening parties. Whether justified on the basis of great and regional power interests or in the pursuit of the ‘sanctity of human life’ and the need to protect citizens from abuse (Murphy, 1996: 11-12) as enshrined in the *Responsibly to Protect*, the literature on intervention highlights several factors accounting for its employment and eventual outcome. With regard to the former, aside from the intervening states’ interests, fear of contagion resulting in regional anarchy (Keohane, 2002) has been demonstrated to be a central concern. So too has its potential effects on global economic conditions (Murdoch and Sandler, 2002), as well as the potential for engulfing peripheral ethnic communities (Saideman, 2002) and/or peoples bound by ideological solidarity (Wilhelmen, 2005). In the end however, the ultimate success of international intervention has been shown to be dependent upon the institutional reach and capabilities of the intervening parties (Fearon and Laitin, 2004), and their level of commitment (Fearon and Laitin, 1998).
International Society and the Determinates of Success

Because ultimately it is the assemblage of established sovereign states which grants statehood, it is the interests, attitudes, and predispositions of the international community that comprises much of the opportunity structure in which struggles for national liberation take place. Nonetheless, unlike many structural accounts of political phenomena that tend to view structure as reified and absolutely deterministic—“beyond the control of even the most capable leaders” (Lim 2010: 266) – the constructs that comprise international society are socially constructed and are therefore inherently pliable (Wendt, 1999). Indeed, although often measured in terms of decades rather than days, months, or even years; the structures that make up a society of states at any given moment are in constant flux as both the moral and security objectives of that society are the object of ongoing and eternal debate. Reflecting this continuous transitional state, perspectives on independence from an international society standpoint can divided among two debates. These entail the role of nationalism and prevailing attitudes on the justifications for self-determination on the one hand (Coppieters and Sakwa, 2003; Buchanan, 2006), and whether it is de facto conditions that establish statehood (Wellman, 2005) or de jure recognition that is the ultimate determinate movement success (Wight, 1977; Fabry, 2010).

There are rare exceptions to this rule. Most notably Northern Cyprus; a nation which has all of the attributes and functions of a state, but is nonetheless recognized as such by only one member of the international community (BBC, 2011: “Cyprus Country Profile,”).
Justifications for Self-Determination

Attitudes towards the principal of self-determination in international affairs have played a central role in the emergence and course of nationalist struggles as movements, target states, and other interested parties have pointed to various definitions to justify their respective claims. In the literature these can be divided into two broadly defined ideal types. Reflecting a traditionalist view are those who claim that self-determination exists *a priori* without regard to a group’s composition or its capabilities (Wellman, 2005: 97). Says Philoptt, “any group of individuals within a defined territory which desires to govern itself…prima facie has right to self-determination” (1995: 353). Beary notes, however, that the international community’s contending preference for the maintenance of territorial borders renders such international rulings ambiguous (2008: 102), and in the end, provide little support for non-colonial based independence movements (91). With this in mind, followers of the *a posteriori* view counter that in reality, “the legal situation adapts itself to the factual” (Beary: 91). Accordingly, if an independence movement is to garner international support, it is incumbent upon its leaders to establish ‘just cause’ (see e.g. Buchanan, 2006; Coppieters and Sakwa, 2003).

Following this line of reasoning, contemporary justifications for self-determination rest upon pragmatic considerations as well as an agent’s ability to demonstrate moral righteousness. Scholarly focus has centered on structural themes such as the availability of ‘divisible territory’ (Toft, 2003) or hegemonic decline (Armitage, 2007: 110), and on the effects of discriminatory policies. Noteworthy accounts of latter stress just cause on the basis of economic deprivation (Gurr et al, 1970), ethnic discrimination (Carment, 2003), and/or extreme state repression (Smith, 1986).
Importantly, these works provide insight into the strategic calculus of nationalist movements. According to Campos, groups airing their plight as a result of such injustices can sometimes pursue strategies of ‘extraversion,’ by internationalizing the conflict. This “allows the movement to overcome internal weaknesses while forcing the target state to reassess its policies in light of international opinion” (2003: 114). In extreme cases this can result in international recognition and legitimization of the ‘terrorists’ (Jebb et al, 2006: 233), or conversely, rationalize repressive violence against separatists by pointing to the changing nature of warfare, the inherent right to self-defense, and customary law’s adaptive role (Kenney, 2004).

**Nationalism**

The literature addressing the rise of nationalism reveals that in the modern era (since the Peace of Westphalia and especially subsequent to the French Revolution) the international community has demonstrated an ever growing penchant for nation-states: that is to say, human groupings who share a conviction of being congenitally related (a nation) and who form a political unit (a state) whose borders coincide or roughly coincide with the territorial distribution of that nation (Ritzer, 2007). The right to self-determination then, not only requires the forging of favorable material conditions and an appeal to overturn unjust conditions, but also a peoples’ ability to establish just cause by demonstrating national cohesion. Taking an even more extreme position, others have argued that nationalism, “a principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent” (Gellner, 1983: 1), is sufficient evidence for establishing just cause in the pursuit of self-determination.
It has been well established that the ‘stories’ peoples profess about their common identity in an effort to assert their legitimate right to self-determination are of two types—primordial and modernist. Primordial nationalists envision nationalism as ‘romantic’ a reflection of an ancient tendency among humans to organize into distinct groups based upon affinity of birth (Motyl, 2001). From this view “group attachments are unique, emotional, intense, and durable because they are based upon kinship and promoted along lines of common ancestry” (ibid: 272-3). In such cases, it has been demonstrated that nationalism can be a powerful instrument for movement leaders in that it affords them a persuasive tool: the ability to draw upon “ethno-symbolism”—the power of myth and memory—to trigger in-group sentiment, and in turn, mobilize the national group in response to external threats be they real or imagined (Smith, 1999).

Accordingly, primordialists-based movements for self-determination are likely to emerge when ethnic/cultural unity (Brown et al, 2001) and/or ancestral homelands are at risk (Karsh, 2001).

Modernists (sometimes referred to as civic nationalists) on the other hand hold, that nationalism is the product of rapid change brought about by political shifts (Breuilly, 1985) and/or the functional demands of modern economies (Hobsbawm, 1990). It is for this reason, scholars attached to the modernists school assert that nationalism only appeared and became a sociological necessity in the modern world (Gellner, 1983). From this perspective, Hobsbawn explains, “nations [are the product of] artifact, invention, and social engineering…” (1990: 10). The outcome of these efforts, according to Benedict Anderson, is the social construction of ‘civic’ nationalism premised on imagined communities: “imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never
know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (1991: 6).

The central proposition is that nationalism—more correctly, a grouping’s ability to demonstrate national cohesion—is the essential quantifier of self-determination. It is therefore vital that the stories a people tell themselves about the origin and nature of their being—either as the result of ancestral linkages or historical consequence—resonates within the minds of external actors as well. Often this is simply taken as a given, such as is the case with Irish nationalists, Kurdish separatists, or the Basques of Spain. In other cases, where a peoples’ assertion to national unity is not as clear or widely accepted, the pursuit of self-determination requires affirmative actions; deliberate efforts to forge within the consciousness of outside parties the validity of the group’s nationalist claim.

De facto vs. De Jure Qualification

One of the most central debates among scholars of statehood centers around the question of qualification; that is, under what conditions can a movement successfully attain the status of statehood. Is it through the forging of material conditions? Or is it legal recognition as a state by existing members of the international community that matters most? Those holding to the former view, point to the Montevideo Convention as establishing the baseline requisites of statehood. These include: that the group 1) be in possession of a permanent population, 2) that they hold possession of a divisible and defined territory, 3) that its people and its territory have an established government and, 4) that that government and its people are capable of conducting relations with other states (in Brownlie, 1998: 70). In their assessment “any group has a moral right to
succeed as long as its political divorce will leave it and the remainder state in a position to perform the requisite political functions” (Wellman, 2005: 1). This sentiment echoes the thoughts of British Foreign Secretary George Canning voiced nearly two centuries ago. As he observed:

We ought not to acknowledge the separate and independent existence of any [state], which is so doubtfully established, that the mere effect of that acknowledgement shall be to mix parties again in internal squabbles if not open hostilities (in Therry ed., 1836: 302-3).

It is for this reason that the promoters of the *de facto* argument declare that new states only “come into being because they have been capable of establishing structures of authority backed by a coercive apparatus of power” (Fabry, 2010: 2).

Those who promote the *de jure* school of state formation on the other hand, argue that this ‘declarative view’ is in empirical falsehood. Ultimately, they argue, mutual recognition of one’s independence forms the foundation of international society. It is for this reason that aspiring movements must convince existing member states that they are worthy of statehood: that they acknowledge the prevailing international society’s common interest and values, and as Bull (1995) notes, that they pledge to be…

bound by certain rules in their dealings with one another, such as that they should respect one another’s claims to independence, that they should honor agreements into which they enter, and that they should be subject to certain limitations in exercising force against one another (Bull, 1995: 13).

Martin Wight refers to this precondition as ‘legitimacy’—the “collective judgment of international society about rightful membership [among] the family of nations”—it is “the branch of international law that…seeks to lay policies to guide existing states in the manner of recognizing a new community as fulfilling the conditions
of statehood and qualifying for membership [within] the society of nations” (Wight, 1977: 153; 158). According to this constitutive view, the declarativist’s claim that an entity is entitled to sovereign statehood regardless of whether or not it is recognized as such by others (Grant, 1999: 19) simply cannot be true since ultimately statehood is a matter of mutual recognition. As Brownlie observes, “the political act of recognition is a precondition of the existence of legal rights…this is to say that the very personality of a state depends on the political decision of other states” (1998, 88). Accordingly, legitimacy is not a mere matter of establishing a set of requisite material conditions and declaring one’s allegiance to the prevailing set of principles that guide members of international society; rather it entails the convincing of existing states of one’s legitimacy. That the aspiring state is peace-loving and accepts the obligations of statehood as established under international law and is able and willing to carry out those obligations (UN Charter, Article 4.1).

Summary

Recapping the forgoing literature review with an eye towards forging a theoretical framework for the analysis of national liberation movement success/failure, the following conclusions can be asserted about struggles for national liberation; the influences, both internal and external, that guide their course; and the essential barriers that must be overcome if a national liberation movement is to achieve sovereign independence. For the sake of clarity, these indicators are divided among the three central elements that make up struggles for national liberation. These include the political opportunity structure in which they take place; the role of agency, that is to say the activities of the movement
itself; and exogenous variables such as attitudes towards self-determination and the influence, if any, of differing forms of nationalisms.

**Political Opportunity Structure**

Following the insights of McAdam (1982) and others, the emergence, timing, and fate of any national liberation movement is largely determined by changes in the political opportunity structure in which it is embedded. This is because, as Tarrow (1994) notes, any given political opportunity structure is comprised of continually evolving dimensions of the political environment that either encourage or discourage people from using collective action. Kriesi et al found that primary among these dimensions (as related to social movement emergence and success) are political cleavage structures within the prevailing political opportunity structure (hegemonic order), institutional structures, elite strategies, and alliance structures; or perhaps more correctly, ‘power structures.’

Comprised as the summation of attitudes, interests, and values held by existing states, it is the hegemonic order that is the primary target of a national liberation movement’s activities. Setting aside for the moment debates over *de facto vs. de jure* qualification, this is reasoned on the basis that a national liberation movement’s ultimate objective is to acquire legitimacy as an independent state in the eyes of its peers—that is to say, in the eyes of existing Member States. Achieving this objective thus requires some sort of shift in those existing attitudes, interests, and values so as to provide the political space for the emergence and acceptance of a new and sovereign equal.

As chapter three will explore in further detail, being the sum of all that is, it is the hegemonic order that guides a movement in its struggle for statehood. The norms that
channel states’ actions, the laws that constrain some behaviors while lending legitimacy to others, and the institutional rules of process and procedure all combine to define a clear path toward the objective of state. Nonetheless, while the map to statehood may be clearly marked, navigating around and/or overcoming the many hurdles that pepper that path along the way requires perceptive forethought, lucid understanding of exiting elite strategies and the motives that propel their actions, as well as an unclouded assessment of existing power structures and the manner in which movement members can either exploit power cleavage or show themselves to be a useful instrument in the attainment of existing state—particularly great power—interests. Navigating one’s way to statehood also requires unity of purpose among movement members, sustained focus on both short and long-term objectives, as well as the ability to demonstrate one’s worthiness (i.e. that the new state will have the capacity of statehood, will be peace-loving, and will uphold values, laws, and norms which sustain the prevailing hegemonic order).

Agency

When speaking of agency with regard to social movements, what we are really referring to is that movement’s leadership and the organizational structure it creates. As pertains to struggles for national liberation, Wood (1981) observed above that it is leadership that forms the movement’s rational core and it is leadership that capitalizes on preexisting conditions in the hegemonic order to unify the group, fan the flames of discontent, and to create within the minds of its followers the image of an independent state wherein group interests will be safeguarded. Aside from these essential instruments of mobilization and recruitment, it is leadership that forges a movement’s long-term
strategic plan and it is leadership that ‘reads’ the prevailing hegemonic order and devises tactical strategies for advancing the movement’s immediate aims.

In their pursuit of movement objectives, be they short or long-term, movement leaders have a variety of tools at their disposal. As gleaned from the proceeding literature review, these can be summarized as strategies of violence, formal diplomacy, public diplomacy, exploitation of power cleavages, and extraversion. At this point, no judgment will passed on the value or morality of any of these tactical choices except to say that a movement’s leadership must be very careful not to overplay his/her hand. Violent attacks perpetrated against a target state’s military forces or civilian leadership, for example, may be deemed acceptable by the international community, while attacks on unarmed civilians may not. Likewise, the pursuit of an extraversion strategy could easily backfire. Internationalizing the conflict may force the target state and its allies to reassess their policies in light of international opinion, but the mere act of questioning target state behavior could inspire others to question the actions of the movement itself.

In the execution of tactical and strategic activities, O’Leary and Silke (2007) found that hierarchically structured movements are better equipped to carrying out coordinated actions. This was attributed to the fact that hierarchically structured organizations allow for better use of skill-specialization and coordinated action (US Army, 2007: 7). Nevertheless, while hierarchal organization structures help to optimize and facilitate synchronized action, Jackson and Rosberg have demonstrate these same organization structure more readily give way to in-group fractionalization—particularly where leaders holding differing ideological, political, and/or strategic views than the mainstream are not afford equal voice in the decisionmaking process. In turn, Misra
(2001) was able to demonstrate that fractionalization just may pose the greatest barrier to movement success in that it weakens in-group support for political leaders while perpetuating state advantage within competitive atmospheres (Gates, 2002).

**Nationalism and Self-determination**

The idea that social systems are not merely mechanical outcomes, but rather the product of “an active constituting process, accomplished by, and consisting in, the doings of active subjects” (Giddens, 1993:121)—both nationalism and justifications for self-determination have strong bearing on the emergence and eventual outcome of struggles for national liberation. Be they primordial-based or civic, viewed as existing *a priori* or *a posteriori*, based on declarativist claims or that of constitutive recognition; the particular basis and justifications for a people’s nationalist claim to self-determination and independent sovereign statehood really does not matter. All that matters is that a majority of existing states—or at the very least, several ‘significant’ states—accept a movement’s asserted narrative as either valid or as serving their foreign policy objectives. Evidence for this assertion abounds: South Sudan, Kosovo, Taiwan, Northern Cyprus, Cyprus, and on and on.

Towards this end, members of a national liberation movement have at their disposal two types of audiences member they can appeal to: solidarist and pluralist. According to Jackson and Sørenson (2010: 136), the former stress the importance of the individual and place human rights over the rights of state. This affords militarily inferior movements and/or movements experiencing discrimination and/or state repression an avenue for rallying international support for their right to self-determination based on a
nationalist consciousness even where none had existed previously. Pluralist on the other hand, stress the importance of state sovereignty believing an international structure centered around sovereign states to be the surest means of preserving order and thereby justice for all. Hence, appealing to the later, national liberation movements can sometimes elicit support for their professed right to self-determination from existing states—particularly hegemonic powers—by demonstrating that their elevated status would bring about greater regional and/or global security.
Chapter III:
Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Framework

Are the conditions that bring about a national liberation movement’s success or failure generated from within the movement itself, or are forces external to group dynamics ultimately responsible for a movement’s successful bid for independence? In what ways do system-level forces condition a movement’s actions and its pathway to statehood? Are system effects strongly frustrating; constraining a movement’s activities and determinative of their ultimate fate? Or does the international system offer movement leaders a variety of opportunities to be harnessed in the pursuit of their cause?

Specifically, what have been the processes of interaction between Palestinian and Zionist movement members and the respective international systems in which they were imbedded and how have those processes been indicative of each movement’s outcome?

Struggles for national liberation are deeply imbed within a process of structuration—the idea that social systems are not merely mechanical outcomes; rather they are the product of “an active constituting process, accomplished by, and consisting in, the doings of active subjects” (Giddens, 1993:121). They are in other words, mutually constituted in the interactions of agents and structure. As Alexander Wendt points out:
human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live; and [in return] society is made up of social relationships, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors (Wendt, 1987: 337-338).

Accordingly, the route through which national liberation movements seek statehood involves a process of give and take between agents on the one hand and structure on the other. Viewed in this light, struggles for national liberation can be envisioned as dialogues between movement members and the existing states which constitute the international system in which they are all embedded. For its part, it is the specific configuration of the prevailing international system that sets the parameters for new state inclusion by defining institutional pathways to statehood and establishing the rules through which struggles can be pursued. This suggests that movement behavior is a function of system preference, the balance of power, and how units are positioned within the complex system of international society (Jervis, 1999: 5).

On the other hand, “[national liberation movements] do not merely react to [the international system] but seek a particular outcome or relationship” with it (ibid: 275). This requires not mere passive acceptance of prevailing structural configurations, but active efforts to change that configuration both materially and ideationally. Success is therefore also a function of a movement’s activities and its leadership’s ability to effectively assess the temperament of international society and to mobilize the full force of its resources towards its immediate and long-term aims in a manner that will have the greatest chance of advancing the objective of statehood.
The Process of National Liberation

This study employs a system-level analytic approach. The orientation is justified on the insight that ultimately it is the existing members of international society that both movements and target states seek to influence: the movement seeking recognition of its nationalist claim and right to self-determination by appealing to material and/or solidarist elements of that system; the target state seeking to suppress that claim by upholding its sovereign rights and the pluralist principle of territorial integrity. Illustrating the effects of structuration in the pursuit of these two competing objectives, the following descriptive examines system-level constraints and opportunities that lie in the path of struggles for national liberation. This is to say, the way in which the prevailing international system seeks to pull the movement towards conformity, while concomitantly, the movement seeks to push that same system towards a new configuration—a configuration that includes itself as a full and equal member of international society.

The International System

International society is the culmination of state’s preferences and a common attitude towards the proper ordering of international society (Bull, 1977). Consequently, the composition of any given international system is the product of both moral and security interests. Comprising the solidarist hemisphere of the international structure are those moral interests which define conceptions of justice and the civil ordering of international society, and in so doing, provide a national liberation movement with an avenue for justifying and receiving acceptance of its claim to self-determination on the
basis of universal right (Philoptt, 1995). Representing the pluralist view of international society are security interests variously defined as being the product of need, ambition, and above all, the desire for stability (Kaplan, 1957). Establishing oneself as a vital asset in the pursuit of those interests is therefore yet another avenue available to the leaders of liberation movements in that winning favor from among existing states—particularly great powers—is likely to facilitate their efforts to gain both recognition of and support for the cause of sovereign independence.

**Figure 3.1 – Composition of International Systems (Hegemonic Orders)**

As depicted in figure 3.1, it is great powers—by the utter preponderance of their capabilities—who have the strongest influence on the philosophical foundation of that system and thus make the most significant contributions to that society’s temperament as well as its morally and strategically informed constitution (the bold arrows). At the same time the diagram also highlights the role of non-great powers and the potential for counter-narratives that may or may not run parallel to great power preferences (the
dashed arrows). Significantly therefore, it illustrates that national liberation movements are not wholly subject to the whims of great powers, but rather, can sometimes garner the support of ‘non-aligned’ states affording movement members the ability to act in a manner which may be contrary to hegemonic interests but nonetheless enjoy the security of being supported by a significant sector of international society.

National Liberation Movements

Defined herein, a movement is the summation of group characteristics and capabilities which are themselves in part a direct byproduct of the prevailing international system. The narratives of identity which movement’s leaders marshal in an effort to justify their claim to self-determination are a central component of a movement’s personality; as are narratives of tragedy framed within the context of a people’s distinct historical experience. Oftentimes competing narratives arise resulting in fractionalization, and as a result, divergent paths to statehood. Nevertheless, while the narratives of uniqueness leaders tell are effective towards the recruitment of members and the mobilization of resources, these stories only tangentially account for the movement’s overall approach to statehood.

This assertion is based on the observation that it is the philosophical foundation of any given international system which sets the limits of available political ideologies that may come to underpin a movement’s personality. It is not the case, therefore, that movement leaders single-handedly craft a movement’s ideological identity—that they choose to be Marxist revolutionaries or pacifist democrats. Rather, as depicted in table 3.1, a movement’s ideological identity—although informed by historical experience and
common recognition of cultural myths (Geertz, 1973)—is primarily the product of prevailing political attitudes, common understandings of society’s moral and security interests, as well as the existing institutional structures that have been erected to preserve those attitudes and interests.

Beyond influencing a movement’s ideological foundation, figure 3.2 illustrates that international structures exert strong pressures on a movement’s active pursuit of statehood as well. For instance, the philosophical foundation of an international system, informed by the established international temperament, defines the institutional pathways to statehood and thus strongly influences a movement’s strategic pursuit of struggle. It is thus proposed that Zionism’s pursuit of legal permission to engage in a socialist-utopian state-building program can be seen as a product of late nineteenth century idealism.
Likewise, the Palestinian’s adoption of a Marist-revolutionary approach through armed struggle was reflective of a mid twentieth century anti-imperialist temperament.

Moreover, that the Palestinians adopted a more pragmatic approach based in a negotiated agreement is a response to hegemonic preferences which came to dominate the international temperament as America rose to prominence in the post-Cold War era.

![Figure 3.2 – System Origins of Movement Personality and Activities](image)

When viewed in combination with figure 3.1, it can be seen that the international temperament of any given international society is not merely indicative of a movement’s long-term strategic approach, but also presents to movement leaders a variety of opportunities to advance their shorter-term objectives. This is premised on the observation that the divided nature of a system’s international temperament presents movements with political cleavages that can be exploited to actively rally the resources of allies to their cause. These same cleavages afford the movement the ability to act in defiance of great power interests by summoning sentiments of solidarity as a means of counterbalancing the hegemonic will. Accordingly, the methodology for investigating the advance and ultimate outcome of national liberation movements established forthwith pays due attention to the process of structuration within the context of struggles for
national liberation. It sets forth a mechanism for evaluating the effects of systemic pressures on movement activities on the one hand, and the manner in which movement activities serve to re-frame international temperaments on the other.

Methodology

Drawing upon the historical experiences of both Zionism and the Palestinian movement for national liberation, this study follows an inductive analytical methodology. The initial aim is to present an overall depiction of the individuals, resources, political factions, and bureaucratic procedures of decisionmaking that comprise each peoples’ movements. At the same time it will be necessary to expose system generated factors including the institutional foundation of a given international society, its mechanisms for facilitating interactions between the system’s units, the existence of political cleavages, and the role of elite strategies in conditioning prevailing alliance structures. Then, by employing a configurative-ideographic approach it will be possible to claim validity by allowing the facts on the ground to speak for themselves (Eckstein, 1975: 96).

As opposed to disciplined-configurative studies which “simply assume that ‘general laws’ are available” – that concrete configurations exist a priori and are thus validated by cases that confirm their existence (ibid: 104)—configurative-ideographic studies are “largely intuitive interpretation[s], claiming validity on the ground that intensive study and empathetic feel for cases provide authoritative insights into them” (ibid: 97). As such, Sidney Verba (1967) notes, “they do not easily add up” to reliable and valid statements of regularity about sets of cases. Nevertheless, this observation is mitigated on two grounds: 1) the interpretations they provide may be subtle but are
persuasive in that they suggest a genuine feel and understanding for the cases they treat, and 2) exponents of configurative-ideographic studies never claim that their studies ‘add up’ to theory, only that they provide interesting insights that may serve to discover new ways of thinking about existing problems (Eckstein, 1975).

Accordingly, the methodological approach employed here adds up to a heuristic case study. Paraphrasing Eckstein (104), the task of this work is to deliberately stimulate the imagination about how national liberation movements unfold and advance with the aim of discerning important general problems that arise in their associated struggles and possible theoretical explanations of ways in which those problems are overcome (Eckstein: 104). To do this, I first purpose a set of hypotheses which logically flow from the preceding literature review and established theoretical framework. Then, in accord with those hypotheses I delineate the historiography of both the Zionist and Palestinian struggles for national liberation with the aim of discovering variances or similarities in the manner in which each movement approached various hurdles in their respective paths to statehood. Not only will this strategy allow for a deep and empathetic feel for each case, but in doing so, afford both academics and practitioners a model for thinking about these struggles and their potential resolution in new and interesting ways.

In the pursuit of these tasks I rely extensively on primary documents: principally legal instruments from the League of Nations Treaty Series (LNTS), United Nations documentation including rules of procedure, meeting minutes, treaties, and resolution. I also draw upon first hand accounts, memos, and the internal reports of individual countries. Adding context to these structure-setting documents I incorporate the memoirs and speeches of seminal political leaders as well as a wealth of secondary sources. By
affording the ability to appraise contemporary analysis of on going events, these latter resources will be central to developing an empathetic feel and gaining insight into the ‘texture’ of each case; thus accenting the benefits of a heuristic approach.

**Definition of Variables**

The following definitions seek to capture the complex and multidimensional nature of both the dependant and independent variables that comprise struggles for national liberation. It is believed that by compartmentalizing the various elements that make up each of the defining variables we will be able to more closely pinpoint the exact force of causation at each level of a movement’s advancement. In the conclusion of the this study it will therefore be possible to better identify the forces that have propelled both the Zionist and Palestinian movements, and through comparative analysis, identify possible explanations for Zionism’s success and whether or not these insights can be marshaled to bring about a final and positive conclusion to the Palestinian cause.

**Dependent Variable: Statehood**

While statehood itself is a matter of quantifiable tangibles such as territorial possession, legal recognition, and political acceptance, this study’s focus on the *process of struggle*—i.e. the manner in which those attributes are acquired—demands a more robust conception of state. Accordingly, for the purpose of this study the dependant variable ‘statehood’ will be defined in three parts; each representative of the three stages of struggle a movement must pass through in its quest for independence. These included movement emergence and recognition, *de facto* recognition, and *de jure* affirmation.
Moreover, it should be noted that the following definitions place strong emphasis on (near) universal recognition over recognition granted by individual states or groups of states. This is reflective of this study’s viewpoint that it is only system-level inclusion that can effectively count as attaining a national liberation movement’s objectives.

**Movement Emergence and Recognition** – identified by internationally binding documentation stating that the goals and aspirations of a people and its governing bodies are not only legitimate, but constitute a fundamental objective of the international community as well. As postulated in the following hypotheses, I suggest that recognition of said status is the product of nationalist narratives, conditions of tragedy, and the interests of existing states; particularly great powers.

**De facto Recognition** – achieved when the aspiring state has a) met the requirements of statehood as defined by the Montevideo Convention (CSA, 1936; LNTS, Vol. 156: 25), b) it has, in accord with Foreign Secretary George Canning’s observation (see pg. 36), created a viable economic base and has establish the means to defend its defined territory, and c) that recognition of said status has been enshrined in internationally binding legislation defining the new entity as a *de facto* state endowed with certain rights and duties including the ability to participate in international forums in accordance with provisional rule 136 of the United Nations Rules of Procedure and provisional rule 59 of the Security Council.

**De Jure Affirmation** – establish as attained with the acceptance of the candidate state as a full and unrestricted member of the United Nations under Article 4 of the Charter. In
accordance with that guidance, the movement and its leaders must demonstrate that they are peace-loving and accept the obligations of statehood as established in the Charter. In addition because *de jure* affirmation ultimately rest with the Security Council whose members are ultimately concerned with sustained stability, it is reasoned that a) the state in question has secured its borders, and b) that its leadership is reasonably unified and resolved to settle differences through political processes rather than violence.

**Independent Variable: International System**

As described in the theoretical framework above, the international system in which a movement is embedded has strong causal force on the course and outcome of struggles for national liberation. The sources and potential effects of these forces will be briefly summarized below under the heading ‘institutional structure.’ In addition, because a primary aim of this study is to gain greater insight into the process of movement advancement, due attention is given to structurally generated mechanisms through which movement members can press their cause. These include, divergent elite strategies, political cleavages, and the availability of allies on the basis of solidarity and/or material interests.

*Institutional Structure* – Comprised of both moral and material interests of existing states, the institutional structure of a prevailing international society defines specific pathways to statehood. On the one hand, by defining what is legitimate and morally desirable—the international temperament—system-level norms drive movement members to behave in certain, acceptable ways. On the other hand, material interests, especially those of great powers, afford movement members leeway in negotiating their path to statehood. Upon
these criteria it is postulated that advancement from one stage of statehood to the next
(e.g. from emergence, to de facto recognition) can only come about with shifts in the
prevailing hegemonic order. That is to say, when either the moral or material foundations
of international society experiences such fundamental change as to establish new
governing institutions, thus creating new pathways thorough which movement leaders
can advance their cause.

*Elite Strategies* – a reflection of institutional structures, elite strategies define various
orientations adopted by existing states towards the validity of self-determination claims
or the movement itself. These can be confrontational in nature such as Israel’s posture
vis-à-vis Palestinian statehood or facilitative nature such as Great Britain’s early efforts
to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. As a whole, elite strategies define a system’s
alliance structure.

*Political Cleavages* – those system-wide divisions of interests and/or preferences—
whether moral or materially grounded—that afford movement leaders the ability to
harness or exploit specified cohorts of the international system towards their objective.
Concretely, they are the battlefield upon which struggles for national liberation take place
as movement members seek support by making themselves materially useful to great
power interests, or when that avenue is not available, seek to counter those interests by
rallying sentiments of solidarity from states opposed to prevailing hegemonic
preferences.
**Alliance Structure** – a product of elite strategies and/or political cleavages; the availability of allies whose resources—both material and solidarist—can be marshaled towards the advancement of statehood. Alternatively, the presence of existing states aligned against the movement’s cause.

**Independent Variable: National Liberation Movement**

Whereas international systems present movement’s with both hurdles to be overcome and opportunities to be seized, the independent variable ‘national liberation movement’ is the sum of resources available to a people in their quest for statehood. These included competency of leadership, narratives of both nationalism and conditions of tragedy, and the skillful deployment of violent and non-violent tactics. This study takes further note of rival factions and both the facilitating and frustrating roles they play in the drive for statehood.

**Leadership** – the capacity to effectively read the system-defined strategic environment and to deploy the proper mix of resources (including violence and diplomacy) that will best achieve the movements short and long-term aims. In support of this objective, the movement’s strategic planning and organizational decisionmaking structures will also be evaluated.

**Narratives** – the stories people project about the origins of their being as a unique culture and the accounts of suffering that those people have or continue to endure. Evaluated on the basis of resonance. That is, the degree to which those stories are accepted as valid by both in-group and external actors.
Tactics – the timing, location, and choice of mental and/or material resources expended to achieve the movements long and/or short-term objectives. These include the use of violence, the mobilization of diplomatic assets, and the implementation of public diplomacy campaigns. Measured by simply asking if the tactic achieved its intended purpose.

Fractionalization – the breakup of movement leaders and members on the basis of ideological or political differences, and/or differing strategic visions. Fractionalization is thought to facilitate the movement’s efforts in that differing factions bring additional outside resources to the cause. Alternatively, it can severely frustrate a movement’s efforts, particularly in the pursuit of de jure affirmation, in that the leadership is unable to present to seminal states a united front.

Hypotheses

The following set of hypotheses are drawn from the proceeding literature review placed within the context of the theoretical framework that guides this study. As noted, each of the case studies will be divided into three sections corresponding to the three stages of statehood defined above. Beginning with the case of Zionism, at the end of each of these sections the relevant hypotheses will be assessed—answering either yes or no to the hypothesized question or rating the hypothesized effect on a gradient of slightly, moderately, or strongly Then at the end of each chapter, an overall appraisal will be presented. In this regard the Palestinian case study will be more comprehensive as comparison with the Zionist experience will be evaluated throughout.
1) Movement emergence and mobilization is the product of repressive, confrontational, and polarizing political structures with inadequate institutional apparatuses for meeting the demands of a disenfranchised populace (Kriesi et al, 1995).

2) International system openings brought about by shifts in the hegemonic order are the only means though which a movement’s can emerge and advance.

3) Movement members are afforded greater policy options including the pursuit of violent strategies when great powers adopt competitive postures. Likewise, their actions are highly constrained when great power interests are in accord (Miller and Kagan, 1997).

4) A movement’s strategic and tactical approach is the product of hegemonic preferences and cleavages in the international temperament—i.e. pluralist vs. solidarist values (Jackson and Sorenson, 2013).

5) A movement’s founding ideology is the product of prevailing international temperament and that ideology in turn is determinate of a movement’s approach to statehood.

6) To obtain legal recognition as an equal, the narratives movement members project about the origin and nature of their being (their nationalist claim to self-determination) must find resonance within the minds of the majority of existing
members of the international community (Coppieters and Sakwa, 2003; Philoett, 1995).

7) The formation of a workable strategic plan for attaining statehood and the capacity to refrain from deviating from it is essential to the positive advancement and ultimate success of the movement’s objectives Wood (1981).

8) Allies are essential to a movement’s recognition, advancement and ultimate attainment of statehood (Kriesi et al, 1995).

9) Movement recognition and successful attainment of statehood can only be obtained when that objective is in the interests of at least one great power (O’Leary and Triman, 2007).

10) In-group fractionalization is the greatest barrier to movement advancement and success (Misra, 2001; Gates, 2002).
Chapter IV:
The Zionist Movement for National Liberation

Introduction

Zionism, the Jewish people’s movement for national liberation, emerged and took place within a worldwide opportunity structure which constituted an integral part of the wider historical process of emancipation of nations that commenced in the first half of the nineteenth century. Although over the course of some 1,800 years the dream of returning to Zion (Jerusalem) had been kept alive by Jew and gentile alike, it was not until the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte that the contours of the modern nation state began to coalesce within the consciousness of European society, and as a consequence, initiated a great Jewish awaking. This chapter untangles the final 100 years of struggle for Jewish self-determination to assess the role of both structural forces and movement characteristics which in the end led to the creation of the State of Israel in 1949.

Movement Emergence and Recognition

On August 31, 1897 nearly 200 delegates hailing from 17 countries and representing 69 Zionist societies met in Basel Switzerland to proclaim:

The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law.
The Congress contemplates the following means to the attainment of this end:

1. The promotion, on suitable lines, of the colonization of Palestine by Jewish agricultural and industrial workers.
2. The organization and binding together of the whole of Jewry by means of appropriate institutions, local and international, in accordance with the laws of each country.
3. The strengthening and fostering of Jewish national sentiment and consciousness.
4. Preparatory steps towards obtaining government consent, where necessary, to the attainment of the aim of Zionism (First Zionist Congress, 1897).

The First Zionist Congress, its formation of the Zionist Organization, and its subsequent adoption of the Basel Program was soon thereafter endorsed by 260 Russian and eastern European Zionist associations (JVL, “Zionism”; Israeli Knesset, 2008) and thus marks the emergence of the Jewish movement for national liberation.

Twenty years later, on November 2, 1917 Zionist leaders in London achieved yet another milestone in their quest for statehood: formal recognition of the movement’s objectives as a legitimate and obtainable goal by the reigning global hegemon of that time, Great Britain. This landmark amendment to British policy can be witnessed with the publication of the Balfour Declaration which reads:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (Balfour, 1917).

This fundamental structural opening was strengthen further on July 24, 1922 when members of the Council of the League of Nations voted unanimously, not only to incorporate the Balfour Declaration into the newly formulated Mandate for Palestine, but
to charge the Zionist movement itself with the responsibility of bringing its ambitions into fruition. These terms are made evident in Article 4 of the Mandate:

An appropriate Jewish agency shall be recognised as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine, and, subject always to the control of the Administration to assist and take part in the development of the country.

The Zionist organization, so long as its organization and constitution are in the opinion of the Mandatory appropriate, shall be recognised as such agency. It shall take steps in consultation with His Britannic Majesty's Government to secure the co-operation of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish national home (League of Nations, 1922).

Recalling the hypotheses pertaining to movement emergence and recognition as established in chapter three, it is presumed that tragedy befall the Jewish people in the period immediately prior to the convening of the First Zionist Congress and that this initial act of the Jewish movement for national liberation was only made possible by the rise of a far-sighted leader who was able to unite his people by invoking a primordial narrative of Self within the context of a repressive international system which offered no institutional avenues for redress other than open revolt. Moreover, that Zionist leaders were able to obtain recognition as a legitimate entity and effect concrete institutional transformation towards that end suggests that their historical narrative had been universally accepted, and thus too, their nationalist claim to self determination. It also suggests a shift in temperaments among members of the international community vis-à-vis Jews in general and nationalism specifically, as well as modification to material conditions within the international hegemonic order.
International System

Narration of the Jewish Diaspora is in many respects a history of Europe. From the height of Roman supremacy through the depths of the Dark Ages to the rise of Napoleon and the Age of Enlightenment, the lives of Jews were everywhere influenced by the economic, political, and social makeup of the European powers. This segment evaluates the impact of these forces on Jewish aspirations to one day return to their homeland—Eretz Israel. It then turns attention to the Zionist leadership and their ability to gain international recognition for that cause.

Age of Exile

As Roman administrator and noted historian Cassius Dio recorded in Roman History (c.235), tragedy befell the Jews of ancient Judea for the final time under the reign of Emperor Hadrian. The Bar Kokhba Revolt that had been trigged as result of anti-Jewish policies and Hadrian's building of a Roman temple on the site of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem was decidedly crushed between the years 131 and 135 CE. Under the command of Hadrian's military commander Julius Severus, Dio observed:

Fifty of [the Jew's] most important outposts and nine hundred and eighty-five of their most famous villages were razed to the ground. Five hundred and eighty thousand men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out. Thus nearly the whole of Judaea was made desolate (Book LXIX: 446-450).

Then, in an attempt to erase any memory of Judea, Hadrian renamed the province Syria Palaestina (after the Philistines) and Jews were forever forbidden from entering its rededicated capital.
For Jewish communities enduring the ensuing 1,800 years of exile, the quest for acceptance and harmonious living with their gentile neighbors was punctuated by regular episodes of torment, discrimination, and expulsion. Much of this suffering was brought on by the decrees of reigning popes and other religious leaders who persistently demonized the Jews and called for their destruction. One such example was Martin Luther’s 1543 *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (*On the Jews and Their Lies*) which called upon the Christian masses to set Jewish Synagogues and schools afire and to raze their homes; to deprive the Jews of their religious texts and their Rabbis of teaching, to enslave them; and in the end, should they fail to convert, drive them from the country like mad dogs (Luther, 1543: 7-16). The product of such vehement attacks was recurrent outbursts of anti-Semitic pogroms and the repeated destruction of Jewish communities throughout Europe. In fact, by Anderson, Johnson, and Koyama’s (2003) count, 1,399 such persecutions had broken out in 936 European cities between the years 1100 CE and 1800 CE.

**Age of Enlightenment**

What began as a revolution in thought with the philosophies of Bacon, Descartes, and Spinoza, soon transcended the ideational realm to bring about earth-shattering transformations in the material world. The Treaty of Westphalia (1648) brought to Europe an entirely new system of political order; an order based on sovereign states free from external control and endowed with the right of *cuius regio, eius religio* (Croxton, 1999: 574–575). Inspiring both the American and French Revolutions and promoting freedom of religion as well as the right to civic participation and equality under the law,
for a people long deprived of territorial possession these early temperamental advancements had little immediate effect.

Initially denied full rights of citizenship, it was only through the impassioned pleas of humanists such as Abbè Henri Grègoire and the persuasive logic voiced by nobleman such as Adrien Jean François Duport that Jews finally won their emancipation on September 27, 1791. Duport in particular, skillfully argued that to deny Jews the rights and privileges afforded other French citizens was a hypocrisy of the greatest order and in contravention of the Republic’s Constitution (Hunt, 1996: 99). The French National Assembly agreed issuing the following decree:

The National Assembly, considering that the conditions necessary to be a French citizen and to become an active citizen are fixed by the Constitution, and that every man meeting the said conditions, who swears the civic oath, and engages himself to fulfill all the duties that the Constitution imposes, has the right to all of the advantages that the Constitution assures;

Revokes all adjournments, reservations, and exceptions inserted into the preceding decrees relative to Jewish individuals who will swear the civic oath which will be regarded as a renunciation of all the privileges and exceptions introduced previously in their favor (French Republic National Assembly, 1791).

Nonetheless, as the historian Benzion Netanyahu (1944) points out, because enlightenment thinking of the time placed great value on the universal over the particular “emancipation offered the Jews freedom and equality with the Gentile citizens provided they assimilated into the national culture, while retaining only their cult and faith” [emphasis added] (Safran, 1965: 8). While the vast majority of Jews eagerly embraced the opportunity to assimilate, it soon became evident that total absorption would prove elusive. For although they would attain political and economic freedom, the Jews of western Europe were incapable of achieving social acceptance from a community which
remained conscious of Judaism’s ingrained particularism—a particularism which would forever place Eretz-Israel at the center of its worldview. As David Vital explains:

…the place of Erez-Israel in Jewish belief and in what might be termed Jewish outlook in its most representative and characteristic forms was precisely that element of Judaism which all those who strove to secularize Judaism were most anxious to be rid of. For the more powerfully and consistently one wished to emphasize the universal qualities of Judaism as a ‘world’ religion or ethical system, the more conscious one became of the fact that the attachment to Erez-Israel epitomized all that was particularistic and non-assimilable in it, non-reducible to universal categories (1975: 9).

Age of Emergence

Marching across the Levant in April 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte declared the Jews to be the “rightful heirs of Palestine.” ”Hasten,” he called out, “now is the moment, which may not return for thousands of years, to claim the restoration of [your] civic rights among the population of the universe which had been shamefully withheld from you for thousands of years, your political existence as a nation among the nations, and the unlimited natural right to worship Jehovah in accordance with your faith... (Bonaparte, 1799). While the sincerity of Napoleon’s calls for a Jewish Palestine may never be known, what is clear is that Napoleon viewed Jewish emancipation as a French strategic interest.

In part, the 1804 publication of the French Civil Code (1804; 1823) sought, in Napoleon’s own words, “to liberate the Jews and make them full citizens….to confer upon them all the legal rights of equality, liberty and fraternity as was enjoyed by the Catholics and Protestants.” “I thought,” he recalled, “that this would bring to France many riches because the Jews are numerous and they would come in large numbers to our country where they would enjoy more privileges than in any other nation” (as relayed 66
to his personal physician Dr. O’Meara on the Island of St, Helena on the 10th of November 1816; cited in: Weider, 1998). Similar rights of citizenship were afforded the Jews (and other non-traditional Europeans) in 1814 with the signing of the Congress of Vienna and the 1818 Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle where Jewish representatives were for the first time afforded a voice within the highest echelons of European politics (Kohler, 1918).

After 1700 years of exile, a glimmer of light could be detected within the institutional apparatus of Europe; nevertheless both social and geographic barriers were strongly aligned against the movement’s success. Unlike the Greeks, Serbs, Poles, and other peoples seeking political autonomy at that time, the Jews of Europe were geographically dispersed, spoke many different languages, and in the end, were not in possession of their ancestral homeland. At the same time, although their legal status was quick to change, social attitudes were not. As Odessa resident and pioneer Zionist activist Leo Pinsker observed:

[Although] the Jewish people had ceased to exist as an actual state, as a political entity, they could nevertheless not submit to total annihilation—they lived on spiritually as a nation. The world saw in this people the uncanny form of one of the dead walking among the living. The ghostlike apparition of a living corpse, a people without unity or organization, without land or bonds of unity, no longer alive, and yet walking among the living…A fear of [this] Jewish ghost has passed down the generations and the centuries. First as a breeder of prejudice, later in conjunction with other forces …it culminated in Judeophobia (Pinsker 1939, 9).

The source of this Judeophobia—this inability of the universal to absorb its particular—lay in human psychology and the natural antagonisms it breeds. As Netanyahu observed, “the loss of country could not render [the Jews] a deadly blow, for the simple reason that they never lost it…They kept alive the idea of their country, even
though they lost its material foundation, and the idea served as a unifying bond almost as potent as the real territory [emphasis in original] (Netanyahu 1944, 10). It was this unshakable bond reasoned Pinsker, and later Theodore Herzl, that was the source of anti-Semitism and it was that bond which posed the greatest threat to the Jewish people. For if the Jews were to submit to Europe’s prescription to the Jewish Problem—if they were to relinquish their history, intermarry, and assimilate—then surely the Jewish nation would cease to exist.

Nowhere was this sense of Judeophobia more evident than in the northern and eastern providences of Europe. In Norway, for example, the 1814 Constitution forbade Jews access to the kingdom (Constitution of Norway, 1814: § 2). This prohibition was soon thereafter adopted by the Kingdom of Sweden with the signing of the Convention of Moss (1814). In Czarist Russia Jewish residency was confined to the Pale of Settlement while so called May (temporary) Laws limited their access to higher education and certain ‘high’ offices, canceled their deeds and other holdings outside the Pale, and deprived Jews the right to conduct business on Christian holidays (1882; in Singer and Adler, 1906). In addition to these legal restrictions, the Jews of Russia were subjected to regular government-organized pogroms—the most severe of which took place in 1903.

*The New York Times* reported:

The anti-Jewish riots in Kishinev, Bessarabia, are worse than the censor will permit to publish. There was a well laid-out plan for the general massacre of Jews on the day following the Russian Easter. The mob was led by priests, and the general cry, "Kill the Jews," was taken-up all over the city. The Jews were taken wholly unaware and were slaughtered like sheep...Babies were literally torn to pieces by the frenzied and bloodthirsty mob. The local police made no attempt to check the reign of terror (Editor, New York Times, 1903).
Unabashed anti-Semitism was not restricted to the periphery of Europe moreover. Western Europeans also held a deep distrust of the Jews as was witnessed with the Dreyfus Affair. Reflecting on these seemingly unalterable social attitudes, Pinsker concluded:

The people among who we live will always and everywhere take a hostile attitude towards us, even one of superstitious fear, so long as we have no fatherland, or at least the semblance of one. There is something unnatural about a people without a territory, just as there is about a man without a shadow. Since this is so, our people must have its own territory, its own center (1944, 114).

Fortunately for the then nascent Zionist movement, a dramatic shift in the prevailing hegemonic order was about to merge with that outwardly negative European temperament vis-à-vis the Jews to find a mutually satisfactory solution to the ‘Jewish problem.’

Commenting on the Turkish Revolution of 1908, noted Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann stated, “I can see in that historical event nothing but the removal of three-fourths of the difficulties with which we have previously confronted” (Weizmann, 1909). Although the revolt heralded in a host of new hurdles for the Zionist movement to overcome—most enduringly the complexity of Jewish-Arab relations—the rise of France and especially Great Britain as regional hegemons and their subsequent signing of the Sykes-Picot Agreement made possible the Balfour Declaration and its inclusion into the Mandate for Palestine.

Many have attributed the granting of the Balfour Declaration as a debt of gratitude owed to Chaim Weizmann for his invention of a fermentation process allowing for the mass production of high explosives during the Great War (John, 1985). A closer
reading of the historical record demonstrates that the decision was far more strategic in nature. In his memoirs Prime Minister David Lloyd George reveals his thinking at that time:

There is no better proof of the value of the Balfour Declaration as a military move than the fact that Germany entered into negotiations with Turkey in an endeavor to provide an alternative scheme which would appeal to Zionists.

Another most cogent reason for the adoption by the Allies of the policy of the Declaration lay in the state of Russia herself…It was believed that if Great Britain declared for the fulfillment of Zionist aspirations in Palestine under her own pledge, one effect would be to bring Russian Jewry to the cause of the Entente.

It was believed, also, that such a declaration would have a potent influence upon world Jewry outside Russia, and secure for the Entente the aid of Jewish financial interests. In America, their aid in this respect would have a special value when the Allies had almost exhausted the gold and marketable securities available for American purchases. Such were the chief considerations which, in 1917, impelled the British Government towards making a contract with Jewry (1939: 726).

**Movement Approach**

Given their continued treatment as second-class citizens and a worldview transfixed on returning to Eretz-Israel, it is somewhat surprising that upon emancipation there was little enthusiasm within the Jewish community for reestablishing an independent Jewish state in Palestine; or anywhere else for that matter. The problem as identified by early proto-Zionist thinkers was that although the Jews were bound by book, blood, and history, they had not yet to develop a national consciousness. Moses Hess’ *Rome in Jerusalem*, for example, pointed out that the Jews would always remain strangers among the nations and peoples of Europe who for reasons of humanity and justice may emancipate them but would never respect them (1862: 74). “If the emancipation of the Jews is irreconcilable with Jewish nationality,” he continued, “then
the Jews must sacrifice emancipation to nationality.’ Accordingly, he reasoned, “the solution lie in Labor Zionism—a returning of the Jews to the Land of Israel where they would build a socialist utopia and find redemption in the tilling of the soil” (ibid: 174).

A mix of religious philosophy, enlightenment thinking, and secularism, Hess’s Labor Zionist movement would go on to become a central driving force in the rebuilding of Eretz- Israel. Nevertheless, for the Jews of Europe at that time—a mostly artesian and merchant middle class—the notion of resettling such a desolate and unforgiving land as Palestine held little appeal (Tsur, 1979). More than that, Hess’ prescription drew attention to the particularistic primordial bonds which had sustained the Jewish people throughout the centuries and argued for a re-birth of the Jewish nation founded upon that union. In other words, Hess glorified Jewish distinctiveness (their particularism) and warned against submission to the universal. In a world where the Jews were so recently emancipated seeking nothing more than assimilation, Hess’ ideas were largely ignored.

Having witnessed first-hand the swift and fervent rise of anti-Semitic attacks, former assimilationist turn proto-Zionist Leo Pinsker’s took a more scientific view. Describing the pervasive permanence of anti-Semitism in mechanical-psychological terms, Pinsker concluded that so long as Jews maintained their exclusive worldview they would never be accepted; not in Europe nor anywhere else. “This was not because of any overt prejudice,” Pinsker concluded:

Rather it was because rejection of other is a natural human condition, and the Jews for reasons of heredity, history, and self-loathing, had come to constitute a particular form of demonopathy which proceeded from an inherited aberration of the human mind (Pinsker, 1882: 11).
Seeking to put his ideas into effect, Pinsker published *Auto-Emancipation* in 1882 and set out to demonstrate that Jews could never be equals until they developed a national consciousness—a condition which could only be accomplished with the establishment of their own state. Towards this objective, he called for a convening of Jewish leaders and traveled throughout Germany and Poland to elicit their support. While Pinsker’s pamphlet managed to inspire a small group of university students to emigrate to Palestine—and in so doing, sparked the First Aliyah (wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine)—his efforts to mobilize influential Jewish leaders towards his objectives were met with disappointment. In a letter to his colleague Dr. Ruelf dated September 27, 1882 Pinsker summarized the fruits of his efforts:

> All were caught up in the whirlpool of emigration [mostly to the United States]. They listened to my words with great sympathy, shook their heads in agreement, even entered into a light debate; but either they did not understand me properly, or they refused to (in Netanyahu, 1944: 125).

That Hess’ appeals to primordial bonds and a religious dialectic emphasizing the rebuilding of Eretz Israel as a path to eternal redemption did not take root cannot be attributed to historical circumstance—these ideas had long been central components of the Jewish worldview. Likewise, that Pinsker’s psychologically deduced argument that Jews would continue to endure great oppression sparked little more than an ideologically infused social experiment by a few intellectuals should not be surprising—after all, the bitterness of tragedy had been well known among world Jewry for thousands of years. Instead, what was needed to launch such an immense enterprise was a man who understood the fact that “no human being was powerful or wealthy enough to transport a
people from one domicile to another—only an idea could create the necessary momentum” [emphasis added] (in Adler, 1970: 7).

Laying the foundations of that idea, Theodor Herzl’s Political Zionism as developed in his 1896 book Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State) went beyond mere intellectual and emotional pleas to establish a blueprint for the founding of a Jewish state. Departing from high-minded schemes of the past intended to influence elitist intellectuals, Herzl drew upon his journalistic talents to transmit a message to the common man. Simply put, his plan sought to obtain a legal charter through international discussion, diplomacy, positive political action, and was careful to emphasize no use of force (Herzl, 1896). Towards this objective, the plan envisaged the establishment of two bodies—a Society of Jews endowed with the power to negotiate on the behalf of the Jewish people and a Jewish Company which was to put into effect what the Society of Jews had scientifically and politically prepared (ibid: 50). To proceed otherwise, Herzl reasoned, would be to merely transfer the fate of the Jews from one form of arbitrary rule to another.

Publication of Der Judenstaat was met with immediate controversy. The title itself aroused an emotional response. In the East, Herzl was seen as a modern day Moses—“the western Jew who had returned to his people to lead them to the Promised Land” (Adler, 1970: 24). Elsewhere, rabbis—both Orthodox and Reform—condemned his ideas as being contrary to the fundamental principals of Judaism. On the other hand, assimilationists feared his thesis would jeopardize their newfound political and economic freedoms. Meanwhile, members of the First Aliyah worried that so clear an exposition of Jewish nationalism would cause the Turkish government to frustrate Zionist ambitions in
Palestine (ibid: 23). Nevertheless, no one could deny Herzl’s magnetism: his appeal to the Jewish masses. As the Revisionist Zionist leader Ze’ev Jabotinsky later observed, “his personality, his demeanor, his majestic appearance embodied everything that Jews were not but sought to be” (in Rubinstein, 2000: 10).

The imagery of Herzl’s message, his exhaustive lobbying efforts, and his charismatic appeal were essential to the convening of the First Zionist Congress just one year after the publication of Der Judenstaat. Likewise, it was these same characteristics which Chaim Weizmann rallied in his efforts to win international favor. As one British official observed:

When the [First World] war began, his cause was hardly known…He once told me that 2,000 interviews had gone into the making of the Balfour Declaration. With unerring skill he adapted his arguments to the special circumstances of each statesman. To the British and Americans he could use biblical language and awake a deep emotional undertone; to other nationalities he more often talked in terms of interest. Mr. Lloyd George was told that Palestine was a little mountainous country not unlike Wales; with Lord Balfour the philosophical background of Zionism could be surveyed; for Lord Cecil the problem was placed in the setting of a new world organization; while to Lord Milner the extension of imperial power could be vividly portrayed (in John, 1985).

**Assessment of Applicable Hypotheses**

1. Was movement emergence the product of repressive institutional structures incapable of meeting the demands of this disenfranchised people?

   No. Conditions of repression and tragedy persisted for over 1800 years, yet no movement emerged. Moreover, while post-emancipation repression may have motivated some Jews to join the cause, it cannot be said that conditions of tragedy
were instrumental to movement emergence since only a few enthusiasts heeded early calls to settle Eretz-Israel.

2. Were narratives of Jewish nationalism understood and accepted by a majority of Europeans?

Yes. Ironically, as observed by both Hess and Pinsker, it was the Jews themselves who either did not understand or accept narratives of Jewish nationalism. Accordingly, Jews were more likely to embrace assimilation rather than emancipation. Nevertheless, in the eyes of many Europeans it was the particularistic nature of that nation which constituted a ‘Jewish Problem’ (the assumption that Jews would never fully assimilate) and thus compelled a solution to the ‘Jewish Question.’

3. Is it true that it was only through shifts in the prevailing international structure that institutional openings were made available so that a movement for Jewish national liberation was able to emerge?

Yes. Enlightenment thinking culminating in the Napoleonic Civil Code laid the foundational environment for movement emergence while the fall of the Ottoman Empire and subsequent rise of Great Britain as the region’s dominate hegemon allowed that movement to take on concrete dimensions.
4. Was movement recognition a product of great power interest.

Yes. As noted by Prime Minister David Lloyd George, adoption of the Balfour Declaration is best viewed as a military objective—encouraging Jews to promote the interests of the Entente and as a means of holding back German and French ambitions in the region.

5. Was Zionism’s adopted ideology and associated strategic approach as detailed in Theodor Herzl’s Der Judenstaat a reflection of the established international temperament.

Yes. Herzl’s promotion of political Zionism conformed with the rapidly developing international legal system guiding relations between sovereigns state that gained ground throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, his adoption of Hess’ Labor Zionism approach to state building financed by the creation of a joint-stock company to fund the creation of a socialist-utopia was a reflection of 19th century economic dogma and social idealism.

**De Facto Recognition**

On November 29, 1947 the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 181(II)—commonly known as the Partition Plan for Palestine. In doing so, the international body had in effect recognized the *de facto* existence of the Jewish State of Israel and an Arab State of Palestine (see figure 4.1). In part, it reads:
1. The Mandate for Palestine shall terminate as soon as possible but in any case not longer than 1 August 1948.

2. …The Mandatory Power shall use its best endeavours to ensure that an area situated in the territory of the Jewish State…shall be evacuated at the earliest possible date and in any event not later than 1 February 1948.

3. Independent Arab and Jewish States…will come into existence in Palestine two months after the evacuation of the Mandatory power has been completed but in any case not later than 1 October, 1948 (GAOR: A/RES/181(II)).

After vigorous parliamentary debate, Great Britain’s House of Commons recognized the partition of Palestine to be the most prudent path forward and on December 11th announced its intentions to terminate the Mandate at midnight on May 14, 1948 (HANSARD, 1947: Vol. 445). At 4pm on that date—eight hours prior to the official termination of British rule (due to Sabbath restrictions)—David Ben-Gurion declared, “We, the members of the National Council, representing the Jewish people in Palestine and the Zionist movement the world over…By virtue of our natural and historic right and the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel (PGI, 1947: No. 1). Eleven minutes later President Harry Truman declared, “The United States recognizes the
provisional government as the *de facto* authority of the new state of Israel” (Truman, 1947).

Guided by the variable definitions and process hypotheses which inform this study, this section seek to find causation for Zionism’s *de facto* recognition on the basis of several assumptions. 1) That movement members maintained unity in their steadfast execution of Theodor Herzl’s plan and were able to rally allies toward the attainment of that plan’s objectives. 2) That by adhering to hegemonic preferences while exploiting existing political cleavages in the prevailing international temperament, movement members were able to create the conditions of statehood as established in the Montevideo Convention as well as a viable economic and defense base; and in turn, were able to have those conditions recognized as a *de facto* state by the international community. 3) That in the final surge for *de facto* recognition a shift in hegemonic preferences had taken place resulting in divided great power interests thus affording movement leaders greater leeway in their tactical choices. 4) Finally, that *de facto* recognition was an interest of the system’s most significant great power.

For the sake of clarity, this section will be divided into two parts. The first subsection covers the early, mostly pro-Zionist environment. It then turns attention to the gradual erosion of external support, culminating with the British White Paper of 1939. The second subsection examines the consequences of this change in loyalties, the way in which WWII and the post-war hegemonic order re-orientated the movement’s objective and approach, as well as the consequent impact of an increasingly defiant and self-reliant Jewish offensive on great-power policy options.
International System (1917-1939)

Speaking to the audacity of the Balfour Declaration, noted journalist Arthur Koestle observed, “In that document one nation solemnly promised a second nation the country of a third” (1949: 4). Taking that observation several steps further, the territory promised was at that time still part of the Empire of a fourth. Meanwhile, even before the British had come into possession of that territory, and even before they had promised parts of it to the second, they were engage in negotiations with the leader of a fifth over the future of the entire region. A contract which they were unable to fulfill with the sighing of a treaty with yet a sixth (France).

Seeking to enlist Arab support for a revolt against Ottoman rulers, as early as 1914 British officials in Cairo entered into talks with the Sharif of Mecca Hussein Bin Ali. In exchange for Arab cooperation the High Commissioner to Cairo, Sir Henry McMahon, was authorized ensure Bin Ali Arab independence after the war within an ill-defined territory. In a series of correspondences taking place between 1915 and 1916, Bin Ali sought clarification on the precise territory promised. In a letter dated October 24, 1915 McMahon attempted to put the matter to rest by making a series of pledges which in
sum promised all of the Arabian Peninsula—“subject to modification”—excluding the districts of Mersin and Alexandria and portions of Syria lying west of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo—see figure 4.2 (McMahon, 1915). On the basis of Sir Henry’s pledge, Sharif Hussein declared war against the Ottoman on June 5, 1916.

Even before Hussein’s commitment, however, British officials were engaged in negotiations with French authorities over post-war spheres of influence in the region. These talks culminated with the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916; effectively ceasing to France much of what had been promised to Sharif Hussein (Figure 4.3). Complicating matters even further, the 1917 Balfour Declaration’s commitment to the Jews spurred Zionist ambitions which sought to reclaim their vision of the ancient Kingdom of Israel. All this done with little attention paid to the practical matter of addressing the citizenship right of those residents already living west of the Jordan River.

Figure 4.3 – The Sykes-Picot Agreement

Figure 4.4 – Zionist Vision
As the regional and global hegemon, Great Britain had its final say on the matter with publication of the 1922 White Paper. Recalling McMahon’s letter of October 1915, it declared:

This reservation has always been regarded by His Majesty’s Government as covering the Vilayet of Beirut and the independent Sanjak of Jerusalem. The whole of Palestine west of the Jordan was thus excluded from Sir H. McMahon’s pledge (Churchill, 1922).

Despite this affirmation of Jewish ambitions in the region, over the course of the next twenty-five years British policy towards the Zionist enterprise gradually eroded; in time, taking the form of outright hostility. Initially, modernization of the newly acquired territory was among the highest British priorities. Nevertheless, Great Britain’s dual commitments to “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people” (Balfour, 1917) while doing nothing “which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine” (Council of the League of Nations, 1922) were immediately exposed as incompatible and untenable.

Witnessing the rapid and expanding growth of the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine), Arab residents of Palestine quickly came to fear their subjection to a Jewish minority. These fears were confirmed with the arrival of a third wave of Jewish immigrants beginning in 1919. Freshly schooled in socialist Zionism, these idealist working-class pioneers joined forces with members of the Second Aliyah (1904-1914) to greatly expand the Jewish presence in Palestine through land purchases, infrastructure creation, and institution building. The potential for overt aggression between Arabs and Jews was further exasperated when members of Britain’s Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (OETA)—the very organization designated to facilitate the establishment
of a Jewish homeland in Palestine—began to demonstrate overt signs of anti-Semitism. Openly advocating a revocation of the Belfour Declaration, OETA leaders went so far as to instigate an Arab uprising (the Nebi Musa riots of 1920) against the Jews in the hopes of convincing the Entente powers of the dangers involved should they support the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine (Palin Commission, 1920).

The riots of 1920 were followed by similar organized uprisings in 1924, 1929, and from 1936 to 1939. In each case, the British government launched a commission of inquiry; ostensibly seeking to strike a balance between the fears of the two parties. From the Zionist’s perspective, however, each ensuing White Paper was more menacing than the former. In fact, to Yishuv members it appeared that the Arab populace of Palestine was being rewarded for their attacks on Jews and Jewish assets—that British elite structures were becoming more confrontational towards the Jewish cause while teaching the perpetuators of violence the benefits of their behavior.

The Churchill White Paper, for example, brought into the open developing political cleavages within the halls Parliament by demonstrating fissures with the government’s earlier support for “all necessary measures [to be] taken to encourage and stimulate immigration into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil.” (Faisal- Weizmann, 1919). Instead, the new policy sought to limit Jewish immigration by stating that it should not be “so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals” (Churchill, 1922). The White Paper further recommended establishing a joint Jewish-
Arab council to regulate Jewish immigration and called into question the scope of Great Britain’s earlier territorial commitment to Jewish settlement (ibid).

Then in reaction to the Western Wall riots of 1929, the Passfield White Paper of 1930 drew upon the findings of both the 1929 Shaw Commission and the 1930 Hope-Simpson Report to draw similar conclusions. Passfield and his colleagues found that the fundamental cause for Arab unrest in Palestine stemmed from:

the economic depression, under which they undoubtedly suffer at present, [that was] largely due to excessive Jewish immigration, and so long as some grounds exist upon which this suspicion may be plausibly represented to be well founded, there can be little hope of any improvement in the mutual relations of the two races (Passfield, 1930).

Upon that basis and in consideration of the economic and geographic capacity of Palestine, the Government of Great Britain took steps to limit Jewish land purchases while at the same time attempted to severely restrict Jewish immigration—“a move that in its implementation,” said Chaim Weizmann, “was in complete contravention to its earlier commitments” (1983(1): 606).

Fears of a British reversal on its earlier pledge to the Jewish people were confirmed in 1939 with publication of the MacDonald White Paper. Amplified by the Peel Commission’s recommendation for the partition of Palestine (1937: XXII), the Arab Riots of 1936-9 gave rise to yet another stiffening of British policy vis-à-vis the Yishuv. While David Ben-Gurion (1937) and other Zionist leaders (JTA, 1938) enthusiastically endorsed partition as a step towards statehood, the Woodhead Commission of 1938 found “the political, administrative and financial difficulties involved in the proposal to create independent Arab and Jewish States inside Palestine are so great that this solution of the problem [was] impracticable.” As a consequence, the 1939 MacDonald White Paper
departed radically from British policy of the past by calling for the creation of an independent Palestinian State within 10 years and noted “unequivocally” that it is not part of [His Majesty’s Government’s] policy that Palestine should become a Jewish State.” Towards this end, the Paper set strict limitation on Jewish land purchases and limited Jewish immigration to not more than 10,000 persons per year for five years. It then asserted that “after the period of five years, no further Jewish immigration [was to] be permitted unless the Arabs of Palestine are prepared to acquiesce in it” (MacDonald, 1939).

**Movement Approach (1917-1939)**

The international system of the 1920s and 1930s was one of both constriction and opportunity. On the one hand, Jews in many parts of the global were experiencing greater freedoms, better economic conditions, and could look to Palestine as a refuge of last resort. On the other hand, US restriction on Jewish immigration, growing anti-Semitic hostility in parts of Europe, and the rise of the Nazi party in Germany were all indicators pointing to the need for an autonomous Jewish state. As we have just seen, however, the Mandate power increasing came to see such an endeavor as a danger to its interests in the region, and to that end, sought to frustrate Zionist aims from the outset. Setting this policy into motion, the British White paper of 1922 states:

> The Secretary of State is of the opinion that before a further measure of self-government is extended to Palestine…the institutions of the country will have become well established; its financial credit will be based on firm foundations, and the Palestinian officials [in this context, both Arabs *and* Jews] will have been enabled to gain experience of sound methods of government (Churchill, 1922).
One consequence of this challenge was that the Jewish community in Palestine took measures to create an autonomous political infrastructure and security apparatus parallel to that of the British administration. In truth, the process had begun decades earlier.

In accord with Herzl’s original vision, the First Zionist Congress of 1897 set out to overcome four fundamental hurdles. First, establish the necessary political institutions and infrastructure that would serve as the foundations of a future state. Second, convince an as yet unenthusiastic world Jewry of the need for an independent Jewish state, and in that process, overcome deep and often rigid ideological, social, economic, political, and religious divisions. Third, establish a reliable source of financial resources needed to sustain and carry the movement forward. And finally, forge political alliances with influential powers in the drive to obtain legal recognition of the movement itself and its ultimate object.

As their first order of business, delegates to the First Zionist Congress established the World Zionist Congress—Herzl’s “Society of Jews.” A mostly democratic institution (woman could attend, but not vote), the WZC was “a synthesis of all forces to be found in Zionism,” (Weizmann, 1901; in 1983(1): 9) and quickly established itself as a centralized policymaking body; the final arbiter of what was and what was not to be considered official Zionist policy. This founding institution was accompanied by the formation of the World Zionist Organization—Herzl’s “Jewish Company.” As the administrative arm of the Zionist movement, the WZO was tasked with putting Congress’ policies into action. Primary among these duties was the making of preparations for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Ottoman-ruled Palestine.
The first undertaking pursued by the WZO was the raising of capital necessary for the implementation of the Zionist venture. It had always been Herzl’s hope that funding for the Zionist project would come from that small class of ‘Jewish money magnets’ who would invest in the movement if not for reasons of ideological solidarity, then for the prospects of profit (Herzl, 1896: 74–75). To the leadership’s dismay wealthy Jews, with few exceptions, proved to be neither Zionists nor willing to invest in the Jewish enterprise. Overcoming this setback, the leadership established Karen Keyemth Le Israel (the Jewish National Fund—JNF or KKL) in 1901. The agency was charged primarily with purchasing land in Palestine thorough its subordinate Karen Heyesod, but whose very creation yielded two unforeseen benefits.

In its efforts to raise finances for land purchases, KKL capitalized on the network of Jewish societies spread throughout Europe and North America to establish pro-Zionist organizations in every community. As part of its efforts to recruit supporters, KKL drew upon the local resources of these organizations to distribute ‘blue boxes’ (charity boxes) to individual families who could not afford to donate large sums but could support the movement with small amounts of pocket change. Not only did the blue box campaign alleviate the movement’s reliance on wealthy Jewish magnets; more importantly, it turned the movement into a truly mass movement in that it made even the most improvised contributor feel as if he/she was apart of something momentous. As KKL’s first president put it:

The idea of JNF caught the imagination of tens of thousands of people throughout the Diaspora, from the smallest Eastern European Shtetl to the largest American metropolis…The blue boxes forged a link of love between Diaspora Jewry and the land of Israel; between those living there and the idea of redeeming the land (Krementzky).
The blue box campaign and other like-minded initiatives also served as a bridge to those Jews who were willing to reject their Jewish identity, and in some cases were even hostile to the Zionist cause, but in the end, could not turn their backs on their fellow kinsmen. As Chaim Weizmann observed:

Those wealthy Jews who could not wholly divorce themselves from a feeling of responsibility toward their people, but at the same time could not identify themselves with the hopes of the masses, were prepared with a sort of left-handed generosity, on condition that their right hand did not know what the left hand was doing…They would give—with disclaimers; and we would accept—with reservations (Weizmann, 1949: 75).

Over time, however, critics of Herzlian Zionism became evermore vocal and nearly derailed the movement from its outset. On one side of the spectrum there were the staunch anti-Zionist. Hasidic Jews who rejected the movement’s aim of returning world Jewry to Eretz-Israel on the grounds that such a venture was contradictory to Talmudic teachings. Assimilationists on the other had rebuffed Zionism believing that if a Jewish state were to be establish their adopted home countries may demand their departure. Situated at the other end of the spectrum were revisionist Zionists headed by Ze’ev Jabotinsky. Revisionists believed that Herzl’s political-Zionism did not go far enough. They demanded that all of greater Israel should be reclaimed—in including that which extended into Transjordan (see Fig. 4.4)—and reclaimed by force rather than a negotiated legal charter.

In the middle rested the heart of the movement; including practical Zionists—socialist-minded settlers who sought to revive the Jewish community in Palestine through intensive Jewish immigration and rural development; cultural Zionists—those committed
to the rebirth of Jewish culture, the Hebrew language, intellectual scholarship, and spiritual being within the parameters of either a Jewish homeland or sovereign state; and Political Zionist whose sole aim was firmly established and affirmed by the First Zionist Congress in 1897 as the “creat[ion] for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law” (Basel Program, 1897).

In addition to these long-standing factions, an additional bloc emerged immediately upon adoption of the Basel Program. Territorialists sought to establish a Jewish homeland regardless of location. Their cause took on serious dimensions in 1903 when “His Majesty’s Government,” declared that it “will be prepared to entertain favourably proposals for the establishment of a Jewish Colony…if a suitable site had been found…in East Africa” (Clement, 1903). Whereas territorialists embraced the offer with full-vigor, political Zionists were only willing to consider the ‘Uganda Proposal’ as a temporary refuge. In particular, a safe haven for those Russian Jews in need of shelter. Upon further study, however, the Uganda proposal was deemed ill-suited to Jewish settlement and flatly rejected by the Seventh Zionist Congress of 1905. Feeling wholly betrayed, Territorialists led by Israel Zangwill walked out in protest; eventually withdrawing from the WZO to form the Jewish Territorialists Organization. The split nearly brought an abrupt end to the nascent movement.

Elucidating the costly effects of the divide, Weizmann pointed out that problem involved two sides of the same coin. On the one hand governments would not grant legal recognition to a non-entity while without an entity to settle, the Jewish people would remain uninspired. Weizmann therefore recommended to movement’s leaders that they continue in their diplomatic efforts to secure legal recognition (Weizmann, 1983-I: 65).
Concomitantly he asserting that foreign governments would only take serious note of the Zionist’s aspirations when the movement had demonstrated its capability of being in possession of Palestine—“so far we have made our claims” he declared, “but we haven’t shown that we can be of use” (1983-I: 67, 69). To this end, he unreservedly threw his support behind settlement in Palestine viewing such action as the only practical means of obtaining the political objective. In Congress he explained:

The Jewish people has not yet expressed a will. True, but show me the means you are to employ to get it to manifest its will. Is it not proof of will when a great part of the Zionist ranks goes to Palestine and says...‘in spite of the continuing critical situation, we shall go all the same, because there is no other way’ (Weizmann, 1983-I: 68).

Although not formally adopted as the singular operational mode of the WZO until the Tenth Congress of 1911, Weizmann’s ‘synthetic Zionism’ – the pursuit of international diplomatic efforts in combination with the active creation of a proto-state in Palestine – can be counted as one of the Zionist movement’s greatest achievements. A melding of factional aspirations allowing territorialists to return to the mainstream movement soon thereafter.

With the seed capital of less than £8 million—a fraction of what was deemed necessary to launch the envisioned program (Israeli Foreign Ministry, 2011)—the WZO founded the Jewish Colonial Trust and the Anglo-Palestine Bank in Jaffa “for the purpose of promoting Zionist work there and of furthering the economic development of the country” (JTA, 1934). While this important first step was essential for the provision of basic needs to new immigrants (olim), it was the blue box campaign which forged a national consciousness. Binding Jews across the globe in a common and universally understood cause, the campaign inspired thousands to embark on the arduous journey to
Palestine in search of redemption. Thus in accordance with the prescriptions set out by synthetic Zionism, at the international level the WZO, KKL, and the Jewish Agency looked over matters of fundraising, recruitment, and negotiations on behalf of the Jewish people, while in Palestine itself the movement began to take on a life of its own.

Described by the League of Nations (1921) as a largely barren area—“desolate to the last degree of desolation…undeveloped and under-populated [where] the methods of agriculture are, for the most part, primitive,” members of the second and third aliyahs transformed the land. As the League Nations reported:

[Jewish colonists] developed the culture of oranges and gave importance to the Jaffa orange trade. They cultivated the vine, and manufactured and exported wine. They drained swamps. They planted eucalyptus trees. They practiced, with modern methods, all the processes of agriculture. There are at the present time 64 of these settlements, large and small, with a population of some 15,000 (1921)

Aside from a network of agricultural settlements, by 1920 members of the Yishuv had begun to develop the institutions of self government, economic independence, and social enrichment. Vaad Leumi served as the national council and the executive arm of the legislative body; the Assembly of Representatives. The Assembly itself was populated by no less 19 democratically elected parties in 1920 and was thereafter dominated by the mostly left-leaning socialist parties Labor and Mapai—both dedicated to establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine with an emphasis on immigration and pioneering settlement (Edelheit, 2000: 549-550). Facilitating integration of newly arrived pioneers, the Jewish Agency settled olim on land acquired by Karen Hayesod and worked with the Histadrut labor union that had “established training centers, helped to absorb new immigrants, and funded and managed large-scale agricultural and industrial
enterprises” (Reich, 2008: 23). Finally, in response to Arab attacks and British reluctance to implement effective countermeasures, the Yishuv maintained a network of mostly defensive armed forces that gradually matured into a unified unit—the Haganah.

By 1939 it could not be denied that a de facto Jewish community had come into full existence in Palestine. As the MacDonald White Paper, perhaps reluctantly, summarized:

During the last two or three generations the Jews have recreated in Palestine a community now numbering 80,000, of whom about one fourth are farmers or workers upon the land. This community has its own political organs; an elected assembly for the direction of its domestic concerns; elected councils in the towns; and an organisation for the control of its schools. It has its elected Chief Rabbinate and Rabbinical Council for the direction of its religious affairs. Its business is conducted in Hebrew as a vernacular language, and a Hebrew press serves its needs. It has its distinctive intellectual life and displays considerable economic activity. This community, then, with its town and country population, its political, religious and social organisations, its own language, its own customs, its own life, has in fact ‘national’ characteristics (MacDonald, 1939).

**Movement Approach (1940 - 1947)**

With the outbreak of war in Europe, Zionist leaders faced a double dilemma. On the one hand they felt it prudent to demonstrate their loyalty to the British; viewing that path as the surest route to autonomous rule. On the other hand, they quickly surmised the fate which awaited European Jewry and accordingly recognized the need for mass immigration to Palestine—be it through legal channels or in violation of the 1939 White Paper’s dictates. With these dual challenges in mind, in September 1939 David Ben-Gurion succinctly articulated the movement’s new strategic posture: “we shall fight the war against Hitler as if there were no White Paper, and we shall fight the White Paper as if there were no war” (in Mortimer, 2002: 54). As a result, a more assertive posture and
proactive mode of operations came to dominate the strategic planning of the movement’s mainstream throughout the war. Some however, believed these reforms to be a retreat; far too passive in light of world Jewry’s existing challenges.

As early as 1923, a discernable split could be detected between the followers of synthetic Zionism—those who subscribed to a dual settlement-diplomacy strategy—and those who assessed matters in rigid realist terms; thinking it folly to proceed in any other manner than active self-assertion. As Ze’ev Jobotinsky explained:

It is of no importance whether we quote Herzl or Herbert Samuel to justify our activities. Colonization itself has its own explanation, integral and inescapable, and understood by every Arab and every Jew with his wits about him. Colonization can have only one goal. For the Palestinian Arabs this goal is inadmissible. This is in the nature of things. To change that nature is impossible.

This colonization can, therefore, continue and develop only under the protection of a force independent of the local population—an iron wall which the native population cannot break through. This is, in toto, our policy towards the Arabs. To formulate it any other way would only be hypocrisy (1923).

Staunchly adhering to their founder’s guiding principles which asserted that: “every Jew had the right to enter Palestine; only active retaliation would deter the Arabs; only Jewish armed force would ensure the Jewish state” (Jobotinsky in Sachar: 265-266), revisionists leaders organized under the banner, HaZack (strength) strongly urged mainstream Zionist leaders to abandon their policy of havalga (restraint). Unable to convince the Zionist Executive to adopt a more aggressive approach, revisionists withdrew from the WZO in 1935 to form the New Zionist Organization (NZO). The NZO and its paramilitary arm the Irgun soon thereafter emerged as a serious challenge to the mainstream Zionist leadership.
The outbreak of Arab riots in 1936 and the subsequent publication of the Peel Commission Report in 1937 inspired the NZO and its Irgun leadership to put into practice the philosophy of HaZack. Augmented by members of the Haganah who could no longer support the policy of havalga, the result was a three-pronged strategy that, in the end, forced Zionism’s mainstream to reassess its ultimate objective and consequent tactics. This strategy included 1) the forging of an “iron wall” through the creation of a proactive Jewish militia; 2) the pursuit of what Jabotinsky termed “the evacuation of Europe” by means of illegal immigration; and 3) the implementation of active retaliation as a means to deter Arab attacks while concomitantly raising the cost of British occupation. The latter of these approaches became entrenched on November 14, 1937 when Irgun units carried out 15 attacks on Arab targets; including city busses and cafes (Shindler, 2013:35). The incident set into motion a decade-long wave of Jewish resistance targeting both Arab and British assets.

Despite their commitment to the strategy of active retaliation, with the onset of World War II Irgun leaders declared a pause in operations against the British; turning the whole of their attention to anti-Nazi operations and defense of the Yishuv (Edelheit: 560). Viewing this shift in policy as a betrayal of the Irgun’s core principal of HaZach, Abraham Stern and several dozen like-mined associates split with the Irun to form Lehi—Fighters for the Freedom of Israel. For Stern and his disciples “Britain was the enemy because she occupied Palestine and thereby barred the way for Jewish independence” (Bauer: 1966, 203). It was therefore Lehi’s objective to “prove that Jewish nuisance value was no less dangerous than the Arab variety [that had led to British] capitulation to Arab demands contained in the White Paper” (ibid: 188).
That Great Britain and the Jewish nation no longer shared in a common interest was made resoundingly clear in 1942 at the Extraordinary Zionist Conference where American and other Zionist leaders affirmed their “unalterable rejection of the White Paper of May 1939 and denie[d] its moral or legal validity” (EZC, “Biltmore Program,” 1942). Shaming Britain, members urged:

…that the gates of Palestine be opened; that the Jewish Agency be vested with control of immigration into Palestine and with the necessary authority for upbuilding the country…and that Palestine be established as a Jewish Commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic world (Isseroff, 2008).

A radical departure from mainstream Zionist policy of the past, the Biltmore Program not only asserted the movement’s intention to defy British directives, it also revealed an intent to establish a sovereign Jewish state rather than merely settling for a Jewish homeland. In effect the meeting and its influential outcome represented a strategic shift towards a more assertive approach. More concretely, the meeting set the stage for a transfer of authority from the old guard—the internationally-centered political Zionists headed by Chaim Weizmann—to a new guard led by David Ben-Gurion and his Yishuv-based Mapai party. It also singled a rise in prominence of American Zionists; a bloc whose influence in Washington would later prove to be instrumental to the forging of US foreign policy vis-à-vis the Zionist struggle and the state of Israel itself.

While dictates of the Biltmore Declaration signaled a pivotal turn against the British, in reality the Zionist leadership vacillated between cooperation and resistance over the next seven years. Early on, it was decided that although the movement should resist British policy vis-à-vis the Yishuv, it needed to support Great Britain in its war
with Nazi Germany because that was a priority of the highest urgency. Importantly, this decision yielded the Haganah professional military training; an asset that later proved to be a decisive factor in the surge for statehood. In the meantime, the Haganah and its political leadership cooperated with the British when it served their larger interests—going so far as to assist British forces in the capture and arrest of rival Jewish factions. At other times—when it did not critically jeopardize their ultimate political objective—mainstream Zionists worked in concert with those same factions to frustrate and/or subvert British designs.

As the war wound down, Jewish resistance factions became evermore brazen. Although sometimes reigned in by Haganah forces who a) feared British reprisals, and b) sought to unite Jewish forces under a single command, violence persisted throughout the post-war period peaking with the assassination of British Minister of State Lord Moyne in 1944 and the 1946 bombing of the Mandate’s administrative headquarters housed in Jerusalem’s King Davis Hotel. As the Irgun’s post-war leader Menachem Begin explained, the organization’s ultimate objective was to increase the costs of British occupation; “to force her to change her policy, and ultimately, cause her to abandon Palestine altogether” (in Bauer: 1966: 202).

While the resistance was effective at rising the cost of continued British occupation, for their part the Haganah and Jewish Agency turned attention towards shaming British authorities. This entailed vocal pronouncements of Great Britain’s abandonment of the Jewish people in their hour of most need, as well as public acts of defiance thorough deliberate attempts to defy Great Britain’s immigration policy. The fruits of this public diplomacy campaign were realized in 1947 when British authorities
turned back refugees attempting to enter Palestine aboard the steamer ship *Exodus*. Followed closely by the international press, the decision to return these ailing refuges to a displaced persons camp in Germany caused the British profound public embarrassment. It also pressed members of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to find a resolution to the Jewish refugee problem as well a solution to the question of Palestine as a whole.

**International System (1940 - 1947)**

Throughout the post-White Paper era British interests had been guided by the need to secure reliable sources of oil in support to the war effort, a desire to maintain low-levels of violence in Palestine so as to not divert forces from the European front, and a need to maintain lines of communications linking London and Delhi via Cairo and Jerusalem. In order to obtain these objectives, the government of Neville Chamberlain reasonably concluded that it was in Great Britain’s best interests to forge good relations with Arab leaders. As a consequence, Zionist leaders fumbled to develop a coherent strategy throughout the war and post-war periods while Great Britain’s stance toward the Yishuv and Palestine remained unyielding. Elsewhere, however, powerful forces alert to the images of Nazi death camps and aware of Great Britain’s policy refusing refugees the ability to find safety in Palestine made their voices clearly heard.

For its part, the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees concluded that the “treatment of the Jews by the Allies was little different than what they knew under the Nazis except we do not exterminate them.” Members accordingly, recommended “the quick evacuation of non-repatriable Jews in Germany and Austria, who wish it, to
Palestine” (1944). Meanwhile, U.S. Representatives responding to a sea of letters introduced two identical bills into the United States Congress, each demanding:

That the United States shall use its good offices and take appropriate measures to the end that the doors of Palestine shall be open for free entry of Jews into that country, and that there shall be full opportunity for colonization so that the Jewish people may ultimately reconstitute Palestine as a free and democratic commonwealth (US Congress: H. Res 418, and H. Res 419 in USCR 1944: 963).

President Truman assessed the push to allow Jewish refugees to enter Palestine as “good sense and good policy’ (in Reich: 37). Not everyone agreed. Secretary of War Henry L. Stinson, for example, warned that passage of the resolutions “would provoke dangerous repercussions in areas where we have many vital military interests” (1944: 563). The State Department concurred, “fear[ing] developments in Palestine would cause upheaval in the Arab world which the USSR might capitalize upon” (in Ottolenghi, 2004: 968). This fear was heightened on October 7, 1944 when the newly formed League of Arab States issued the Alexandria Protocol, declaring:

The Committee is of the opinion that the pledges binding the British Government and providing for the cessation of Jewish immigration, the preservation of Arab lands, and the achievement of independence for Palestine are permanent Arab rights whose prompt implementation would constitute a step toward the desired goal and toward the stabilization of peace and security… there can be no greater injustice and aggression than solving the problem of the Jews of Europe by another injustice, i.e., by inflicting injustice on the Arabs of Palestine (LAS, 1944).

In a letter dated April 5, 1945, President Roosevelt assured King Ibn Saud that he “would take no action, in [his] capacity as Chief of the Executive Branch of this Government, which might prove hostile to the Arab people” (1945: 623). He also assured the King that no decision would be made vis-à-vis Jewish refugees and Palestine without
consultation. Upon Truman’s ascension to the Oval Office, however, the new president calculated that a significant number of displaced persons could immigrate to Palestine without driving the Arab world into the hands of the Soviets. This assessment was based on the understanding that Saudi Arabia was intricately intertwined to the US economy, and moreover, that King Ibn Saud was desperately seeking stronger US guarantees against Soviet hostility (Ottolenghi: 971-972). As Truman biographer Michael Ottolenghi (2004) put it, the administration saw an opportunity to tie the regimes of the Middle East to the US without inserting US troops while at the same time shoring up its bulwark against soviet expansionism along the Northern Tier (967). This brought the White House’s strategic vision of the Middle East into accord with that of the War Department’s concerns while playing into the State Department’s three-pronged approach to Palestine: 1) working towards a peaceful resolution of the Jewish-Arab conflict, 2) denying Palestine and the region to the Soviets, and 3) ensuring that US troops would not be implicated in Palestine (ibid).

It was the last of these objectives which seemed to worry the Attlee government most. Truman himself had written Attlee requesting the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees into Palestine (Truman, 1945). However, given America’s freshly formulated foreign policy objectives, the United Kingdom feared that U.S. pressure for Jewish immigration would not be backed by US military commitments, thus leaving Great Britain to deal with the political and military consequences alone (Ottolenghi: 970). In reaction to the President’s ‘meddling,’ Attlee seized the opportunity to entangle the United States further; suggesting a joint committee be established with the aim of “[examining] the political, economic, and social conditions in Palestine as they bear upon
the problem of Jewish immigration and settlement therein and the well-being of the peoples living therein” (Anglo-American Committee, 1946).

The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry submitted its report to the governments of the United States and United Kingdom in April of 1946. “Profoundly impressed” by the Yishuv’s governing capacity, committee members deemed the immediate issuance of 100,000 immigration certificates to be appropriate (ibid: chp VIII). They further recommend that future Jewish immigration policy be conducted under the terms of the Mandate (i.e. unlimited) and that the Land Transfer Regulations of 1940 restricting Jewish land purchases be rescinded (ibid: chp. X). In sum, the report amounted to nothing less than a repudiation of the 1939 White Paper.

On the heels of the committee’s report and reflecting the extraordinary importance each administration attached to the situation in Palestine, in June 1946 President Truman established a cabinet-level commission on Palestine consisting of the Secretaries of State, the Secretary of War, and the Treasury. Similarly, Prime Minister Attlee appointed a high-level committee seated by representatives of the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, Treasury and the Military Services. Then, in keeping with their earlier commitment to jointly reach a unified policy, Attlee and Truman appointed a six member commission to examine the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee and to arrive at broad principals to guide future policy. The resulting Grady-Morrison Plan suggested that the British High Commissioner remain in control of defense, foreign relations, customs, and immigration while calling for a division of Palestine into semi-autonomous Arab and Jewish regions. They further recommended a repeal of the Land Transfer Regulation and called for a one-year allowance of 100,000
Jewish refugees to enter Palestine; after which, limits on immigration would be set by British authorities (Grady-Morrison, 1946, 652-68).

The Attlee Government estimated it would cost between £115,000,000 and £125,000,000 to absorb the additional 100,000 Jews and require between 300,000 and 400,000 additional soldiers to keep the peace. Apprising the President of these concerns, U.S. Secretary of State Byrnes reported: “the British are convinced that they would not be in the position to put the report into operation without substantial financial and military contributions from the US Gov[ernment]” (FRUS, 1946: 602). It was later reported back to London, that given the Jewish Agency’s rejection of the proposal as a basis for discussion⁵ and the intense feelings expressed by the American Jewish community, neither US political party would be able to support the committee’s proposals at that time (ibid: 674). For their part, the Arabs too condemned the plan; rejecting any form of partition and calling for the immediate independence of Palestine. Meanwhile, in Palestine itself Jewish terrorism persisted unabated as the Jewish Agency adamantly refused to assist British forces in their efforts to put an end to the bloodshed.

Unable to find a compromise between Jewish and Arab factions and no longer able to absorb the costs of administrating Palestine alone, the Prime Minister’s cabinet decided that “the right course of action was to submit the whole problem to the United Nations…if the settlement suggested by the United Nations were not acceptable to us” they concluded, “we should be at liberty to surrender the Mandate” (in Geddes, 1991: 245). On April 2, 1947 the United Kingdom Ambassador to the United Nations,

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⁵ The Agency demanded not only the immediate grant of 100,000 certificates, but full political and economic autonomy and the right to control immigration in that part of Palestine that it demanded to be designated as a Jewish State (FRUS, 1946: 680).
Alexander Cadogan, asked the Secretary-General to place the question of Palestine on the agenda of the General Assembly and suggested a special committee be formed to instruct the Assembly on a prudent path forward (GAOR: A/286). The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) submitted its findings to the Assembly on August 31, 1947; ultimately recommending the partitioning of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. *De facto* recognition of the State of Israel was thus achieved on November 29, 1947 with the Assembly’s adoption Resolution 181(II) and that resolution’s subsequent acceptance by both Great Britain and the United States, as well as the Soviet Union.

**Assessment of Applicable Hypotheses**

1. To what extent was a preconceived plan conducive the movement’s creation of *de facto* conditions?

   Strongly. Herzl’s *Der Judenstaat* provided a detailed blueprint for the movement’s organizational structure and established a strategic path for the attainment of Zionism’s objectives. That this plan was essential to advancing the cause and staying the course when things did not go as planned can be evidence in the innovation of the blue box campaign and Weizmann’s ability to return a divided movement to its foundational strategic approach by means of synthetic Zionism.

2. Were allies essential to attainment of *de facto* conditions and recognition?

   Moderately. It is difficult to conceive a scenario in which Zionism would have attained a firm and legitimatized foothold in Palestine (or anywhere else for that
matter) without the diplomatic and institutional support of Great Britain.

Nevertheless, as witnessed in each successive White Paper beginning in 1922, British support quickly diminished and no other allies ever emerged to afford the Zionists direct aid.

3. Did internal fractionalization facilitate or frustrate the movement’s efforts?

Moderately Facilitated. The Zionist movement was made up of many factions each promoting a differing ‘texture’ (i.e. cultural, religious, socialist, etc) to the movement’s secondary aims. These were largely resolved through the movement’s democratic institutional processes. Strategic divisions on the other hand, were far more confrontational. The political Zionist – Territorialist divide, for example, nearly derailed the Zionist project from its outset. Conversely, while the split between the mainstream and revisionists sometimes reached the level of internal violence, in the end the Irgun and Lehi’s acts of terrorism hastened Great Britain’s departure.

4. Did external political cleavages and divergent elite strategies condition the movement’s approach?

Yes. Aside from Chaim Weizmann’s ability to rally the support of a mostly accommodating British elite in 1917, the historiography reveals little evidence to indicate that Zionist leaders were able to exploit internal British divisions over Mandate policy. With the rise to prominence of the United States, however, both the movement’s leaders and their operatives were afford greater freedom of action. In
accord with Miller and Kagan’s (1997) prediction, the competitive postures take up by the great powers resulted in an increase in violence within Palestine and an expansion of illegal immigration activities abroad. At the same time, these political cleavages were exploited by Jewish political leaders to rally American support as a counter-balance to Great Britain’s defiant stance vis-à-vis Zionist ambitions.

5. Was de facto recognition preceded by a shift in the hegemonic order and was that shift fundamental to success?

Yes. World War II greatly diminished Great Britain’s hegemonic role, leaving the United States in a position of regional dominance. Hence with US backing, the decision to partition Palestine seemed to be an obvious choice for a war-ravaged international community seeking an expeditious solution to an intractable quagmire itself had created three decades earlier.

6. Was de facto recognition a great power interest?

Yes. The mounting refugee problem in Europe pointing to impending crisis demanded a comprehensive and lasting response. Opening Palestine to increased Jewish immigration seemed an obvious solution to all but Arab States and Great Britain—for its part, the Attlee government understood the increased pressures that would come to bear on its resources. As for the U.S. recognizing the crisis to be a U.S. interest, it was up to President Truman to find a solution while advancing America’s post-war regional role. Endorsing partition, Truman devised a strategy that
would advert disaster while keeping the Arab states aligned with the West and at the same time confound Soviet expansionalism into the Middle East.

**De Jure Affirmation**

On September 16, 1948 United Nations Mediator on Palestine, Folke Bernadotte, reported to the General Assembly the unalterable fact that “A Jewish State called Israel exists in Palestine and there are no sound reasons for assuming that it will not continue to do so” (GAOR: A/648). Despite this appreciable observation, the Jewish state of Israel had not yet been recognized as a legitimate entity—as a full member of the international community endowed with the legal rights and protections of states and burdened by the duties thereof. Nevertheless, unlike the Jewish state’s fight for *de facto* recognition—which from the convening of the First Zionist Congress to the Partition of Palestine lasted precisely 50 years—the struggle for the State of Israel’s *de jure* recognition was completed in less than a year. Not without a fight however.

**International System**

Bitterly opposed by the Arab Higher Committee in Palestine and surrounding Arab States, the decision to partition Palestine was meet with immediate armed conflict on the part of the Palestinian Arabs. Following an emergency meeting held on November 30, 1947, the Arab Higher Committee called for a three-day general strike to begin December 2nd. The Committee ordered a complete boycott of Jews and said that persons found dealing with Jews would be considered traitors. It announced that it would soon take the “necessary preliminary measures for implementing a non-cooperation policy in
preparation for a declared state of emergency” (JTA, 1947). In the spiral of violence that followed, the United Nations Palestine Commission reported that by April 3, 1948, some 1,977 persons had lost their lives while another 4,210 had been wounded—Arab civilians suffering the greatest losses in each category (GAOR: A/532).

In light of the ferocity demonstrated in opposition to partition, great powers including the United States, the Soviet Union, and France began to reassess their earlier support for partition. Despite wishing to establish herself as a central figure within the UN system while at the same time asserting herself as dominate power in the Middle East, France withdrew its support immediately after the historic UN vote hoping to maintain a low profile and to not agitate her Arab allies (Herschco, 2008). For the Soviets, although officially condemning Zionism as a form of “bourgeois nationalism” (Prochorov, 1977), foreign policy pragmatism took precedence over ideology. Believing that the new country would adopt socialism as its guiding principle—thus accelerating the decline of British influence in the Middle East—the USSR threw its full support behind the Zionist cause becoming the first nation to recognize Israel’s de jure status on May 17, 1948.

As for the Americans, on December 5, 1947 Secretary of State George Marshall announced the imposition of an arms embargo against all belligerents. The move was part of a larger strategy calling for the trusteeship of Palestine (Truman, 1948) and thus allow the administration to pursue a ‘middle way’—supporting the plan for partition while concomitantly encouraging a negotiated settlement between the Arabs and Jews. (USDS, 1945-1952). Moreover, certain the Soviets planned to arm the Arabs, the move was also intended to signal the USSR Americas preference to avoid direct confrontation.
For its part, Great Britain had been opposed to the plan from the start; believing partition would ultimately create an untenable security situation. With fears confirmed, members of the House of Commons met on December 11th 1947 to chart the Kingdom’s extrication from Palestine. Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Creech Jones, surmised the mood: “It was not for Britain, after it had given so much, to take up again the heavy commitments of bringing a new order fashioned by the United Nations into being in the face of new conflict” (1947: 1211).

In accord with this sentiment, it was decided that Great Britain would terminate the Mandate on May 15, 1948 (Four and one-half months prior to the deadline). In the meantime, Britain refused to cooperate in the partitioning of Palestine or to assist members of the Palestine Commission in its mission to enforce resolution 181(II).

With Great Britain ‘blockading’ implementation of the partition plan (A/532), the UN Security Council reluctant to provide the Commission with the requisite security attachment, and facing stringent opposition to partition by Arab factions, Zionist feared that the objective for which they had fought so hard may be immediately lost. Seizing the initiative, the Jewish Agency Executive determined that they would proclaim the establishment of the State of Israel upon formal dissolution of the Mandate. At 9am on May 14, 1948 the Union Jack was lowered over Jerusalem for the last time as the High Commissioner for Palestine and his British military commanders boarded a Britain-bound steamer ship in Haifa. At 4pm that afternoon, Chairman of the Executive, David Ben-Gurion, declared Israel’s independence. The following day, the fledging state submitted its formal application for membership to the United Nations.
In response, the Security Council posed several questions to the Jewish Agency in a letter dated May 18, 1948. The inquiry sought to 1) establish the territorial extent to which Jewish forces exercised control, as well as the extent to which Arab forces had entered the proposed Jewish state; 2) determine the Zionist’s intention to allow men of military age to enter Palestine; 3) ascertain the Jewish Agency’s willingness to cooperate with the Security Council Truce Commission, and in this regard, its status in working towards a negotiated peace with Arab authorities; and 4) learn of the Jewish nation’s intentions vis-à-vis the City of Jerusalem (SCOR: A/766). Despite submitting a detailed reply, the Jewish Agency was informed that Admissions Committee did have the requisite information proving that Israel was a viable state. During the course of the year to follow, both the Security Council and the General Assembly weighed in on the matter; ultimately defining the conditions that would prove Israel to be a workable state.

Surmised from a broad reading of Security Council debates (S/PV.383-6, S/PV.413 and S/PV.414), Resolution 59 (S/1045), General Assembly resolutions (e.g. A/RES/194 (III)) and various reports submitted by the Palestine Commission (A/532), the Palestinian Mediator (A/648 et al.), and the Conciliation Commission (A/992 et al), recognition of the State of Israel as a de jure entity hinged on five areas of concern. First and foremost was the issues of borders; that is, Israel’s ability to establish concrete and defensible borders that did not infringe on the rights of Palestinian Arabs or neighboring countries. On a related note, members of the world body voiced their concerns over Israel’s command and control capabilities; specifically its ability to rein in “irresponsible elements” (i.e. Irgun and Lehi terrorists) and the suspicion that Jewish forces were operating outside the immediate zone of conflict. Member States’ third concern entailed
Israel’s position towards the internationalization of Jerusalem. Their fourth worry centered on the plight of Palestinian refugees and Israel’s commitment to cooperate with Conciliation Commission officials in their efforts to implement the directives of the General Assembly’s resolution 194 (III). Finally, members of the General Assembly demanded assurances that Israel would comply with all UN resolutions.

Movement Approach

On May 15, 1948, just hours after David Ben-Gurion had declared Israel’s independence, the armies of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, and Egypt joined their Arab compatriots in Palestine in the fight to defeat partition. Lacking allies willing to lend military support, the Jewish community in Palestine was left to fend for itself. Yet despite being outnumbered 6 to 1, the battles which ensued favored an Israeli victory.

Although initially suffering great loses, by the end of May Israeli forces had turn the tide. The shift in momentum can be attributed to variety factors. Unlike the Arab forces which lacked modern equipment, were poorly trained, and whose leadership was more concerned about who would declare victory rather how that victory was to be achieved; having served with British during the war, Haganah soldiers (now the IDF) were well-trained, well-disciplined, more strongly motivated, and initially better equipped (Geddes: 293). Moreover, when supplies and equipment began to run low, Israeli operatives drew upon their experience as human traffickers during Operation Aliyah Bet (illegal immigration operations) to effectively evade enforcement of America’s arms embargo by smuggling weapons into the war zone; mostly from Czechoslovakia.
Demonstrating a will to abide by UN resolutions, on July 15th the Security Council determined that the Provisional Government of Israel accepted the Security Council’s repeated requests for a prolonged truce (SCOR: 773 / SCOR: 801) and that “States members to the Arab League ha[d] rejected successive appeals” (SCOR: S/902). Accordingly, battles between Arab and Jewish forces continued well into the winter of 1949. In the meantime, the provisional government faced yet another threat; a direct challenge to its authority and the outbreak of civil war.

On July 18, 1948 Irgun operatives attempted to land in Israel the Altalena – a transport ship whose hull was full of weapons and ammunition. By agreement with the provisional government, the ship was to be ported at Kfar Vitkin where its smuggled cargo would be off-loaded and handed over to IDF commanders. At the last minute, however, Irgun members diverted their landing to Tel Aviv in a move that was widely perceived as a challenge to the provisional government’s authority. A battle between the two units soon ensued; briefly pointing towards civil war. Recognizing the dangerous implications, Provisional Chairman David Ben-Gurion ordered the Altalena sunk and more than 200 Irgun fighters arrested. Subsequently, intensive talks between Ben-Gurion and Irgun leader Menachem Begin resulted in an August 27 accord whereby Begin agreed that Irgun soldiers would be fully integrated into the IDF.

Attempts to integrate renegade Jewish units into the IDF had began earlier when on April 9, 1948 Irgun and Lehi operatives entered the Arab village of Dier Yassin killing 107 civilians and badly blemishing Israel’s reputation around the world. Like their Irgun counterparts, the majority of Lehi operatives were integrated into regular IDF forces by the end of April 1948. Nevertheless, dispersed cells of Lehi operatives continued to
perpetrate acts of terrorism throughout country, especially in Jerusalem where the gang operated more freely. On September 17th 1948 one of these Jerusalem-based cells Gunned-down UN Mediator Count Folke Bernadotte – just one day after presenting his report the UN General Assembly. Lehi fighters had overplayed their hand and the reaction of the provisional government was as swift as it was harsh. Just three days after the assassination, the Israeli government passed the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance of 1948 (GOI, 1948: 33) and declared Lehi to be a terrorist organization. Its remaining members were summarily arrested.

Believing that a negotiated agreement could best be attained only when Israel was recognized as a *de jure* state (thus removing from the agenda that question) and encouraged by the progress Israel had made on the ground over the course of six months, the United States concurred with Israel’s decision to reapply for membership on November 29, 1948. The issue was formally taken up by Security Council members on December 11 and discussion proceeded through December 17 (SCOR: S/PV.383-6). Although many of the delegates’ statements included a nod to the Jews historical attachment to Palestine and their recent tragic experience, concerns over statehood remained substantive. While Member States voiced concern over the capture of Count Bernadotte’s assassins, Israel’s intentions vis-à-vis Jerusalem and its respect for international law and the dictates of the United Nations; the bulk of their concerns centered on Israel’s ability to establish viable and defendable borders. Unable to delineate clear boundaries that did not infringe on the rights of others and that would provide for regional peace and security, members to the Security Council voted down Israel’s second application for membership (SCOR:S/PV.383).
Disappointed by the Security Council’s rejection of Israel’s membership bid and believing that the “UN may not arrive at any satisfactory solution” (FRUS, 1948: 1680), Israeli military forces strengthened their positions vis-à-vis the Arab states. Achieving the first of its military objectives on February 24, 1949 the Provisional Government of Israel negotiated an armistice agreement with the Arab Republic Egypt; sending a signal that Israeli forces were establishing control. This momentum was carried forward throughout the spring as can be witnessed by the signing of ceasefire agreements between Israel and the governments of Lebanon (March 23), Jordan (April 3), and Syria (July 20).

Significantly, the new borders provided the Israel with additional territory on to which settle new immigrants. More importantly, the new borders afforded the beleaguered state an additional degree of strategic depth to protect her vulnerable center.

Believing questions of borders and security to be sufficiently addressed, the provisional government instituted a full diplomatic press. With an Egyptian armistice in hand, that same day Israel once again submitted its application for membership to the world body (SCOR: S/1267). The matter was taken up by the Security Council in earnest on March 2nd. Having heard the opinions of the Secretary General and in review of the historical measures taken by the United Nations in connection with the Palestine Question, on March 4th Council members passed resolution S/RES/69 which in part reads:

Figure 4.5 – Post War Border
The Security Council...1. Decides in its judgment that Israel is a peace-
loving State and is able and willing to carry out the obligations contained in
the Charter, and accordingly, 2. Recommends to the General Assembly that it

Text of this decision was forwarded to the General Assembly on March 7th for
their consideration.

On May 5, 1949 members of the General Assembly convened to deliberate
Israel’s status. Aside from debating their legal authority to grant statehood (to a state they
themselves had created) among their top concerns was the prospect that Israel would not
follow through on its obligation to uphold UN resolutions. The representative of Lebanon
succinctly listed the cause of anxiety, pointing out that:

The State of Israel, in its present form, directly contravened the previous
recommendations of the United Nations in at least three important respects: in its attitude on the problem of Arab refugees, on the delimitation of its
territorial boundaries, and on the question of Jerusalem (GAOR: A/AC.24.SR45).

In a speech lasting over two and half hours, Abba Eban address each of these
concerns; forcefully and convincingly making the legal, moral, and political case for
Israel’s de jure affirmation. With “fluency and accuracy, as his most potent weapons”
(Clader, 2002), the methodical, soft-spoken yet stern Eban gave exhaustive answers to
the Assembly’s questions; recapping in great detail the historical record, legal
precedence, the international community’s moral obligation, and the hypocrisy of tactics
implemented by those countries attempting to derail Israel’s application (Eban, 1949).

The force of Eban’s response could not be ignored. He presented to the Assembly
a peace-loving state founded upon entrenched democratic institutions that, unlike its Arab
neighbors, had demonstrated the ability and will uphold UN resolutions—going so far as
to arrests its own citizens where necessary to the enforcement of those values. A state embedded in a hostile neighborhood that had nonetheless succeed in securing its borders and welcomed the signing armistice agreements with its neighbors in accordance this the Security Council’s dictates. A state that was willing to work for a fair and equitable solution the question of refugees. A state who would protect and persevere the unique spiritual and religious character of Jerusalem in accordance with the Assembly’s resolution of November 1947 (GAOR: A/RES/181(II)). And finally, a state that did not hold any views or purse any policies that were inconsistence with the UN Charter or any of the resolutions passed therein (Eban, 1949).

Convening on May 11, 1949 the General assembly determined that:

Israel had presented itself as an eligible applicant for membership in the United Nations…the representative of Israel had given the Committee binding assurances of his Government's earnest desire to be a useful Member of the United Nations and to uphold the Charter and its principles (GAOR: A/PV.207).

It was further noted that in light of recent events, Israel could be expected to uphold current and future resolutions(ibid). With these thoughts in mind, the matter was put to a vote. With the passage of Resolution 273 (III) by a margin of 37 members voting in favor, 12 against, and 9 abstentions, the Zionist enterprise had achieved its long sought after goal of attaining de jure affirmation by a large majority of Member States.

**Assessment of Applicable Hypotheses**

1. Did Zionism’s narratives of nationalism and tragic suffering contribute to the movement’s de jure affirmation?
Slightly. Noted in the remarks of Security Council delegates, the Jews’ historical experience was taken into account but was not a substantive issue. As the record shows, greater concern lie with the nascent state’s ability to secure and hold its borders, its intention to be peace-loving, and its willingness to uphold various resolutions of the international community.

2. Were allies essential to attainment of de jure affirmation?

No. While the United States guided Israel through United Nations bureaucratic procedure, its arms embargo greatly frustrated the movement’s efforts to secure it borders. Likewise, France and Russia offered moral but no material support while Great Britain actively sought to confound establishment of the new state.

3. Was the movement’s tactical choice to employ both violence in combination with diplomatic measures a product of political cleavages and great power interests brought about by a shift the prevailing hegemonic order?

No. As noted in the previous section, Great Britain’s egress from the region shifted hegemonic influence to the United States. Political cleavages thus arose between not only the US and Great Britain, but to some extent, between Arabs states and the great powers as well. Nonetheless, it was system-level dictates that all but determined the Zionists’ activities. Diplomacy was the only system-defined means through which membership and thus de jure affirmation could be acquired. At the
same time, membership was made dependent upon the movement’s ability to secure its borders.

4. Did fractionalization facilitate or frustrate the movement’s effort to attain *de jure* affirmation?

Slightly Frustrating. Had the mainstream leadership been unable to rein in and absorb “irresponsible elements” as the United Nations had demanded, it is logical to conclude that failure to demonstrate this level of authority may have postponed the movement’s bid for *de jure* affirmation.

**Summary**

As established with the publication of *Der Judenstaat* and formalized by the First Zionist Congress, from its very inception the articulated path to Jewish national liberation was relatively straightforward, pragmatic, more than a bit optimistic, yet obtainable. The movement’s strategic guidance and ideological foundation were strongly reflective of a late nineteenth century international temperament which prescribed legal-diplomatic solutions to the pursuit of self-determination, yet provided space for grand social experiments attempting the creation of socialist utopias. Towards this end, Zionist leaders forged a sturdy democratically orientated organizational structure with both local and global reached. This afford the movement an ability to absorb differing ideological conceptions of the Jewish state-to-be while drawing upon the resources of Jewish communities the world over.
Exerting their intentions on the international community, Zionist leaders appealed to the pluralist preferences of the hegemonic order; presenting themselves as a means of ensuring the continued stability of a state system based on individual national independence while providing the world’s reigning hegemon an avenue for the achievement of its objectives. Taking advantage of this structural opening, Zionist leaders ardently pursued a comprehensive state building project forever changing conditions on the ground to create a *de facto* state, and by default, a situation that could not be undone. Then, when it was viewed that the movement no longer served the hegemon’s interests, Zionist leaders became evermore defiant; exploiting divergent great power elite strategies to pursue a policy of illegal immigration while employing violence in an effort to raise the costs of British occupation. Finally, movement leaders were able to capitalize upon political cleavages within the international structure to rally the support of one of the system’s newly rising hegemons, and in turn, gain favor for both their *de facto* recognition and *de jure* affirmation.

Along the way fractionalization did present troubling challenges to the movement’s authority, and at times, continued existence. Nevertheless, because divisions centered on the strategic means to attain the same objective and not on political rivalries making one faction’s survival dependent upon another’s ruin, these division never rose to the level of movement destruction. Likewise, the role of allies was not as expected. As the historical record lays bear, other than Great Britain’s initial support for the Zionist project, at no time did the material assistance of allies play a seminal role in Zionism’s success.
Chapter V:
The Palestinian Movement for National Liberation

Introduction

The Palestinian movement for national liberation is a direct response to Zionism and the challenges that ideology has pressed upon the Arab residents of Palestine over the course of some 125 years. The movement’s emergence and the character of its struggle are a product of an international structure that stressed the universality of self-determination, recommended a strategy of decolonization towards that end, and should that strategy fail, recognized the validity of Marxist-revolutionary tactics. Moreover, the movement’s advance has been significantly shaped by regional politics, tectonic shifts in the global hegemonic order, as well as disruptive internal strife. Following the pattern established in the previous chapter, this case study examines the past 100 years of Palestinian struggle for self-determination to assess the role of both structural forces and movement characteristics in the advancement of that cause. It further seeks to discover variance with the Zionist movement, determine if and where that variance was fundamental to the advance of the Palestinian independence, and to explain the differing paths to statehood as either a product of movement strategic and tactical choice, movement leadership capabilities, or as hypothesized, a function of international system dictates.
Movement Emergence and Recognition

In much the same way Theodore Herzl had assembled representatives of world Jewry in Basel Switzerland to define the aim of Zionism and the strategic course to be pursued towards its realization, on May 28, 1964 Ahmed Shukairy, with the consent of the Government of Egypt, gathered 388 Palestinian representatives in Jerusalem with the stated aim of establishing a movement for Palestinian liberation (PNC, 1964: §23). The established Palestinian National Covenant was then extensively amended in 1968 and renamed the Palestinian National Charter. Succinctly, the Charter defines the movement’s purposes and objectives as:

1. Palestine, with the boundaries it had during the British Mandate, is an indivisible territorial unit;
2. The Palestinian Arab people possess the legal right to their homeland;
3. The Palestinian identity is a genuine, essential, and inherent characteristic;
4. That there is a Palestinian community and that it has material, spiritual, and historical connection with Palestine are indisputable facts;
5. The phase in their history, through which the Palestinian people are now living, is that of national (watani) struggle for the liberation of Palestine;
6. Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine;
7. Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine are two complementary objectives;
8. The Arab Palestinian people, expressing themselves by the armed Palestinian revolution, reject all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine and reject all proposals aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian problem, or its internationalization (Palestine National Council, 1968).

Lending legitimacy to the nascent movement, members of the Arab League meeting in Rabat Morocco on October 28, 1974, declared the “Palestine Liberation Organization [to be] the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people” (LAS, 1974). Members further pledged “to support the Palestine Liberation Organization in the exercise of its responsibility at the national and international levels” (ibid).
Making good on this latter commitment, the Government of Syria—acting in accord with the General Assembly resolutions 3102 (XXVIII) of 1973, which “Urges that the national liberation movements recognized by the various regional intergovernmental organizations concerned be invited to participate in the Diplomatic Conference as observers in accordance with the practice of the United Nations” and resolution 3210 (XXIX) of October 14, 1974 inviting “the representative of the Palestinian people to participate in deliberations of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine”—introduced to the Assembly draft resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) for their consideration. Having heard the statement of the Palestinian representative Yasser Arafat on November 13, 1974 (GAOR: A/PV.2282), the Assembly affirmed by a vote of 95 in favor, 17 against, and 19 abstentions, the Palestinian’s right to self-determination, national independence, and sovereignty. They further agreed to recognized the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as a legitimate liberation movement; inviting its representatives to participate in meetings of the General Assembly and all international conferences convened by United Nations organs in the capacity of observer (GAOR: A/RES/3236[7] (XXIX)).

Despite obtaining observer status, the Palestinian cause lacked the sort of hegemonic legitimacy initially enjoyed by their Zionist counterparts. Specifically, western powers did not support either of these initiatives believing that the stated aims of the PLO—liberation through armed struggle with the ultimate objective of supplanting an existing Member State—to be inconsistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter (GAOR: A/PV.2294). As a consequence, the Palestinian struggle for independence was relegated to the realm of exogenous conflicts: those emanating from
system-wide materialistic ambitions pitting East against West; inter-Arab antagonism in the drive for regional prominence; and an ideological conflict separating North and South. As a consequence and for reason explored below, it was not until the signing of the Declaration of Principles on September 13, 1993 and the subsequent Gaza–Jericho Agreement of May 4, 1994 that the Palestinian Liberation Organization was officially recognized as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people (GAOR: A/RES/180; S/1994/727). Then, in much the same way that the Mandate sought to facilitate the founding of a Jewish homeland in Palestine through the auspices of the Jewish Agency, a newly formed Palestinian Authority was endowed by the DOP and subsequent Oslo II Agreement with legislative, executive, social, and economic responsibilities to be exercised towards the objective of attaining Palestinian autonomy (ibid).

Given the extend timeframe in which the struggle for movement emergence and recognition took place—from the first sustained wave of Jewish immigration beginning in 1914 to universal recognition in 1994—as well as the differing levels of recognition attained along the way, it will be interesting to note factors that facilitated and frustrated Palestinian efforts. Was, for instance, the institutional structure of the international system confounding; closing off any attempt to assert Palestinian nationalism? If so was this the product of unyielding hegemonic preferences? Alternatively, could it be that the
Palestinian’s were unable to exploit great power political cleavages and thus incapable of asserting their case as a great power interest? Or as was the case with Zionism, was it fractionalization that stalled the movement’s advance?

Bearing in mind the hypotheses developed in chapter three, this section examines each of these possibilities as well as the forces which resulted in the movement’s ultimate success. This will entail examination of the movement’s nationalist narrative and its internalization by the international community. Comparably, inquiry into the conditions of tragedy that befell the Palestinian people during this period and which grew evermore grave as time passed will be assessed as a contributing factor. On the other hand, we can expect that movement formation and acceptance was the product of skillful leadership; the ability to exploit political cleavages in the face of Israel’s confounding tactics, placing pressure on the prevailing hegemonic powers to recognize the movement’s legitimate aspirations. Along the way, the role of fractionalization and allies will also be assessed.

In consideration of the extensive time span that frames the Palestinian pursuit for movement recognition this section is divided into two parts correlating to the movement’s emergence and then its recognition. These achievements are roughly delineated around the fundamental hegemonic shift that decisively realigned the movement’s strategic orientation—the pre and post-Six Day War eras.

**International System (1914 – 1969)**

Using the turn of the twentieth century as a launching point, a review of the Palestinian historical narrative reveals little which would indicate a sense of nationalism among the residents of Palestine living under Ottoman rule. In fact, quite the contrary.
The narrative illustrates a people who thought of themselves primarily as Arab, Muslim, Christian, or Jew; as a Jaffen, Jerusalemite or Nubulsi and lastly as a Palestinian (Khalidi, 1997: 146). This lack of national consciousness can be largely attributed to Ottoman political and economic policies which prevented the establishment of a unified educational system and deliberately sought to suppress notions of independence among the politically self-conscious Palestinian elite through a system of biased taxation which distributed tax monies collected from peasants and non-Muslims to this privileged class (Welty, 1995). As a result of these policies, the people of Palestine were more apt to view their identity in terms of locality or social status rather than as a nation. At the same time, they did not see themselves as mutually exclusive from other groups living in the region—being connected as they were through common history, religion, and Arab ethnicity.

It was only under British occupation and the emergence of Zionism that a true sense of Palestinian (or even Arab) nationalism began to coalesce. As noted cultural theorist Stuart Hall put it, “only when there is an Other can you know who you are” (1989: 16). Indeed, it was the emergence of a new narrative, one which defined the land of Palestine in wholly different terms and historical context that greatly contributed to the formation of a unified Palestinian identity. While widespread opposition to Zionism among the educated urban elite and politically active was present from the earliest stages of the Zionist movement, it was not until a 1914 editorial entitled “An Open Letter To Subscribers” published in the newspaper Filastin, which made repeated reference to the “Palestinian nation,” that the mass of Arab residents in Palestine began to associate themselves as a collective (Khalidi, 1997: 176). This association of identity defined in
terms of Other and attachment to the land of Palestine was further strengthened at the conclusion of WWI when the people of Palestine once again found their land occupied by an external power.

The inhabitants of Palestine had long perceived that control of the country was a highly sought after goal of the western powers. To considerable extent, this attitude did much to cement a sense of community and to spur notions of patriotic pride with regard to Arab possession of the Holy Land. It was therefore British occupation and its subsequent promotion of Jewish national aspirations in Eretz Israel which alerted Arab residents of Palestine to the emergence of an incompatible and dangerous reality. As one resident put it:

A nation which has long been in the depths of sleep only awakes if it is rudely shaken by events, and only arises little by little…This was the situation in Palestine, which for many centuries had been in the deepest sleep, until it was shaken by the great war, shocked by the Zionist movement, and violated by the illegal [British] policy, and awoke, little by little (Al-Sakakini, 1925: 9).

Like the Jews of Europe, Palestinian identity and its nationalist aspirations materialized under the weight of tragedy. Although the international community had made clear its demand that “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine” (Balfour, 1917; San Remo, 1920; League of Nations, 1922: §6), as has been established in the previous chapter, the Zionist movement, once initiated, became an unstoppable force. While a sharp increase in Jewish immigration, Jewish land purchases, the division of traditional geographical linkages, and the emergence of rival governmental and security apparatus served to unite Christian, Muslim, urbanite and peasant (Welty, 1995: 17-20), it was Arab
rejection of the 1947 Partition Plan and the ensuing war which produced a most devastating consequence for the Arab populace of Palestine.

Al-Nakba—the catastrophe of 1948—resulted in the exile of some 711,000 Palestinian residents and annexation of the proposed Arab state of Palestine by the governments of Israel, Transjordan, and Egypt (GAOR: A/1367/Rev.1). Taking up residence in neighboring Arab states, the fate of Palestinian refugees and their pursuit of self-determination was placed squarely in the hands of external actors. Unfortunately, Arab governments; self-conscious of their defeat, consumed by their own ambitions, and under pressure from their citizens to reject the State of Israel; adopted the attitude that no progress could be made until Israel fully restored the rights of Palestinian refugees. As the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine reported in October of 1950:

With the exception of Transjordan (Jordan), the Arab Governments maintained that the acceptance by Israel of the right of the refugees, as expressed in paragraph 11 of the resolution 194 (III), to return to their homes, must be regarded as the condition sine qua non for the discussion of other questions (GAOR: A/1367/Rev.1).

Israel’s commitment to accept 100,000 refugees immediately after the war and an additional 250,000 over time, was not enough to satisfy Arab demands (ibid). At the same time, King Abdullah of Jordan, with the blessings of Great Britain, made good on his plans to annex Arab portions of Palestine and fully integrate those territories into his kingdom. To this end, on December 1, 1948, the King convened the Jericho Convention with the aim of unifying the two banks (the east and west banks of the Jordan river).

Attended by several thousand Palestinians representative including notable community leaders such as the mayors of Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, the Arab Legion Military Governor General, military governors of all the districts, and other
notables (FRUS, 1948), delegates to this conference adopted the following resolutions; setting into motion events which would place Palestinians at the center of an unfolding inter-Arab rivalry. The document reads:

1. Palestine Arabs desire unity between Transjordan and Arab Palestine and therefore make known their wish that Arab Palestine be annexed immediately to Transjordan. They also recognize Abdullah as their King and request him proclaim himself King of new territory.

2. Palestine Arabs express gratitude to Arab states for their efforts in behalf of liberation of Palestine. (The delegates indicated that the object of this was to hint to the Arab states that their job was done).

3. Expression of thanks to Arab states for their generous assistance and support to Palestine Arab refugees.

4. Resolve that purport of first resolution be conveyed to King at once (ibid).

Two months later, the Jordanian Nationality Law was amended to grant every Palestinian Jordanian citizenship. In the meantime, remaining members of the Arab League felt the need to placate Arab public opinion which grew critical of the Arab governments for failing to secure a Palestinian state. They therefore sought a means to safeguard Arab claims over all of Palestine. Meanwhile they looked for a way to divest themselves from responsibility for losing the war (Shlaim, 1990: 40).

In an effort to meet these goals while at the same time frustrate Abdullah’s designs, Members of the Arab league founded the All-Palestine Government in the Gaza Strip on September 20, 1948. Initially headed by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husayni (former president of the Arab Higher Committee under the Mandate), the All-Palestine Government declared independence over the whole of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital on October 1, 1949 (Kassim, 1988: 294). Husayni then summoned his Holy War Army with the aim of liberating all of Palestine. Viewing such a
move as a direct challenge to his authority, King Abdullah ordered these forces disbanded. The King was summarily assassinated in July of 1951.

Political leaders of the short–lived and now defunct liberation movement then retreated to Cairo where they proved to be ineffectual. Accordingly, when in 1958 the Governments of Egypt and Syria decided to form a United Arab Republic, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser officially annulled the All-Palestine Government by decree; reasoning that the movement had failed to advance the Palestinian cause; even more, that it had failed to capture the imagination of the Palestinian people (in Geddes, 1991: 321).

While Palestinians of the West Bank had effectively relinquished their fate to King Abdullah of Jordan, the Egyptian plan to unite all Arabs under the banner of Pan-Arabism failed to launch an indigenous mass movement for national liberation among the Palestinian populace. Accordingly, members of the League of Arab States meeting in Alexandria Egypt on September 11, 1964 charged former Assistant-Secretary General to the All-Palestine Government, Ahmed Shukairy, with formulating an organization aimed at liberation and repatriation of the Palestinian people to their historical and natural homeland in accordance with the imperatives of Arab unity (LAS in SCOR: S/6003).

Like its predecessors, the reformulated All-Palestine Government based in Cairo – now the Palestinian Liberation Organization—initially failed in its duty to inspire a call to arms. This was due in part to the movement’s scant organizational capabilities; but perhaps more directly, as a result of Cairo’s discretion. Although the PLO and its newly established Liberation Army (PLA) were permitted to operate out of Gaza, their soldiers were closely monitored by President Nasser who feared that their activities may create
problems with Israel at inopportune moments. In the end, however, it was Nasser himself who invited catastrophe. Singing the praises of Pan-Arabism and singling out Israel as the solitary roadblock to that objective, in speeches broadcast throughout the Middle East Nasser managed to awake a sleeping giant. The Arab street, keen on restoring its honor, beseeched Arab leaders to seize the initiative. Swept up in a wave of nationalist enthusiasm, on May 23, 1967 President Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli ships. He concomitantly advanced his forces toward the Israeli border in the Sinai. Less than three weeks later the regional balance of power was fundamentally altered with a unexpected yet definitive Israeli victory; leading some elements of the Palestinian movement to seek another way.

Movement Approach (1914 - 1969)

As demonstrated above, Palestinian national identity did not come into full view until the fall of the Ottoman Empire and subsequent occupation of Palestine by British administrators. Furthermore, it did not fully congeal until the entire scope the Zionist project had made itself known. To some extent this explains why the Arab populace of Palestine was initially incapable of establishing a movement for liberation—not realizing that one was actually needed. Another explanation lies in the traditional bonds and class structures which had come to govern political and economic relations throughout the region for centuries. It is from this latter circumstance that the character of the Palestinian movement for national liberation took its form.

Attempts to solidify a unified movement for independence were frustrated by internal divisions among the Palestinian political elite even before British occupation. In
their efforts to dissuade political upheaval, Ottoman authorities established a highly inegalitarian class system whereby the upper strata of society was clearly set off from the vast majority of Palestinians peasants; favoring wealth, landownership, reputation, ascriptively acquired social status, and marriage into influential families (Tibawi, 1956: 14-16). Accordingly, as Nashif (1977) notes: “political power was largely concentrated at the upper tip of the socioeconomic pyramid composed of a small group of heads of old influential clans, other members of the landowning aristocracy, wealthy merchants and traders, and some professionals” (114). Thus it was the placing of personal ambitions over national interests that initially foiled any chance of forging a national liberation movement with the flexibility, operational coherence, and single-mindedness that the Zionists had achieved (Ibid: 120).

Manifestation of this consequence can be best observed in the rivalry pitting members of the al-Husayni family against those of the Nashashibi clan. Whereas the Nashashibi cohort was inclined to take a more conciliatory approach towards British authorities—believing that “Arab struggle against the Zionists and against the Mandate would be more effective if conducted within the framework of the Mandate itself” (Peretz, 1963: 261), Haj Amin al-Husayni believed a more aggressive stance was called for. First recognized for his role in inciting the Nebi Musa riots of 1920, Haj Amin soon rose to prominence as an effective leader and mobilizer of the Arab populace of Palestine. Sentenced in absentia for his role in instigating the riots, Husayni had fled to Damascus where his reputation earned him a senior position among his fellow Palestinian Arabs (Elpeleg, 1993: 7). So great was his popularity, that in 1921 British High Commissioner Samuel Herbert, on the advice of the British administration, set aside
Husayni’s prison sentence. He was subsequently appointed Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and president of the Supreme Muslim Council with the belief that these appointments would help to maintain peace in Jerusalem (ibid: 9).

Haj Amin’s ascent to these prominent positions made the Husayni family the most influential of all the Arab clans—it also served to deepen the divide with the Nashashibi’s and their allies. Although the two faction were able to jointly convene the First Palestine Arab Congress in 1919 resolving “to reject political Zionism and to accept British assistance on the condition that such assistance would not impinge upon sovereignty in Palestine” (Hassassian, 1990: 33), by the time of its sixth plenary it was evident that the Congress could not find a middle ground between those who sought independence through confrontation and those who promoted a more passive approach (PAC: 1923). In much the same fashion, neither the Supreme Muslim Council nor the subsequently formed Arab Higher Committee were able to forge a unified strategy. As Taysir Nashif lamented:

The prolonged inability of the two major factions …to present a workable political front rendered the Palestinian Arabs as a nation unable to achieve the tactical flexibility needed to deal effectively with the Zionist challenge either in Palestine itself or in relation to the Great Powers (211).

Despite these setbacks, or perhaps because of them, a new and more militant-minded breed of Palestinian nationalist emerged out the shadows of this internecine conflict. With Arab-British negotiations coming to an abrupt end in the wake of the 1929 Arab Uprising, young Muslim activists formed the pan-Arab independence party and organized themselves into clandestine revolutionary cells. As a whole, these quasi-political organizations were able to mobilize that sector of Palestinian society which was
not previously involved in the national liberation struggle and was irritated by the land-
owning elites as epitomized by the Husayni-Nashashibi rivalry. The most significant of 
these cells was headed by Shykh Izz al-Din al-Qassam.

In contrast to their ‘old guard’ contemporaries now reconstituted as the Arab 
Higher Committee, al-Qassam and likeminded Palestinians proposed the forging of ties 
with Arab states as a means of enhancing the effectiveness of the Palestinian national 
liberation movement and in support of militant activities. By early 1931, Izz al-Din 
fighters had organized militant units; engaging both British and Zionist elements directly. 
However, it was not until the Suez Crisis of 1956 and the ominous realization that the 
region’s balance of power was shifting in Israel’s favor that the strategy of direct struggle 
against the Zionists came to take on a new urgency. Spearheading this call to arms was 
Fatah; a movement inspired by the dictates of Shykh Izz al-Din al-Qassam and 
“apotheosized the peasant-as-heroic-guerilla [that would rise] up to avenge and reclaim 
the land” (Lybarger, 2007: 22).

Founded by Yasser Arafat, Salah Khalaf, and Khalil al-Wazir, Fatah’s strategic 
and ideological posture was a product of its time: the prevailing belief among colonized 
and recently decolonized states that revolutionary armed struggle was a legitimate tactic 
in the quest for self-determination—a sentiment expressly endorsed by the United 
Nations General Assembly in its resolution of November 30, 1973 (GAOR: A/3070 
(XXVIII): §2). Lacking resources, Fatah’s activities were initially limited to the 
declarative level. Nevertheless, lyrical credos underscored Fatah’s uniqueness, 
“popularizing the goal of direct Palestinian struggle against Israel” (Kurz, 2005:17). 
In turn, its amorphous concept of ‘Palestine first’ attracted hundreds of Palestinian recruits
from across the Arab world and soon transformed the nascent group into a mass
movement driven by the image of a new generation of young Palestinians taking up arms
in pursuit of self-determination.

That this image found strong resonance within the prevailing international
temperament of the 1950s, 60s and 70s; an atmosphere which endorsed revolutionary
fervor as a counter to all forms of colonialism and injustice, is not surprising. It is also
therefore no surprise that between the years 1959 and 1963 Arafat and his cohorts
competed with as many as 40 secret organizations, some boasting as many as 400
members expressing frustration with the passivity of the previous Palestinian leaders
(Kimmerling and Migdel, 1993: 208). Thus by the late 1960s, a discernable divide could
be detected between those who sought confrontation through conventional measures, and
those who endorsed guerrilla warfare as the primary means of destroying the Jewish state

Of these early ideological strains, four are most evident. Reflecting the pluralist
approach, the PLO drew upon traditional organization structures to promote a rationalist
approach to confrontation with Israel; occupying themselves with tactical questions such
as when and where the launching of an armed struggle would yield the most benefit
(Sayigh: 1997: 221). For their part, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
(DFLP) and likeminded leftists believed that Palestinian national goals could be achieved
only through a revolution of the masses. Adhering to Marxist-Leninist ideology, they
renounced acts of violence outside of Israel and instead promoted an uprising; not only
within the Palestinian populace, but among Arabs and international allies as well (ibid: 677). At the other end of the spectrum were both Islamist and Marxist groups which
viewed violence as the surest means of attaining the Palestinian’s ultimate goal—complete abolishment of the State of Israel. The former of these groups was represented by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). The latter by the Popular front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), its splinter ‘General Command’ faction (PFLP-GC), and perhaps most notoriously, the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO).

With Egypt seeking to funnel these rapidly emerging forces towards the aims of Arab and especially Egyptian government policy, the PLO and its military wing the Palestinian Army were seen by these fedayeen fighters as a threat. As Fatah founder Khalil al-Wazir explained, “the PLO had been created with the express purpose of preempting the revolutionary process among Palestinians” (in Sayigh, 1997: 101). It was meant to give the Palestinians the ‘illusion’ of determining their own destiny while simultaneously ensuring Arab state control over it. As Cheryl Rubenberg (2003) surmised the situation, “[the PLO] was created by Egypt, controlled by Egypt, and functioned primarily as an instrument of Egyptian diplomacy in Arab politics” (16).

Accordingly, the creation of the PLO represented a challenge to Fatah in its bid for primacy over the national struggle and a threat to its base of operations in the Gaza strip. Rising to the challenge, Fatah resorted to active, though sporadic engagement in violent struggle (Kurz, 2005: 18). By the eve of the 1967 War Fatah had completed 300 raids; at least twice as many as those emanating from fedayeen bases in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon (Brynen, 1990: 22). This fact, and as a consequence of the Arab armies’ shocking defeat in the Six Days War that resulted in Israeli occupation of all of Palestine the, divide between those who sought confrontation through conventional measures and those who endorsed guerrilla warfare as the primary means of reclaiming Palestine
became evermore apparent. It was within this post-war environment that Arafat and his colleagues were able to seize control of the now disgraced PLO.

Arab defeat in the Six Days War inspired a new generation of Palestinian revolutionaries to take matters into their own hands; confronting Israeli forces directly. After a barrage of persistent fedayeen raids into Israel culminating with an attack on an Israeli school bus on March 21, 1968, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) launched a counter offensive on Fatah headquarters located in the Jordanian village of Karamah. What was expected to be a relatively routine ‘clearing out’ mission turned out to be hard fought battle as Fatah-led forces were able to hold their ground. Although a tactical victory for Israel, the Battle of Karamah greatly enhanced Fatah’s, and especially Yasser Arafat’s credibility, and in turn, spurred massive Palestinian enrollment into Fatah’s ranks (Kurz, 2005: 18). By years end, Arafat and the Palestinian cause had become known worldwide. It was within this atmosphere of burgeoning popularity that Fatah gained control of the PLO in February of 1969 and Yasser Arafat was thereafter sworn in as the organization’s chairman and commander-in-chief of the Palestinian Revolutionary Forces.

Assessment of Applicable Hypotheses

1. Was movement emergence the product of repressive institutional structures incapable of meeting the demands of this disenfranchised people?

No. Conditions of repression and tragedy persisted for over 600 years under Ottoman rule, yet no movement emerged. Moreover, the British approach—though initially focused on Zionist settlement and thus confounding—provided institutional openings
for self-government as incorporated into the 1922 Mandate and evident by the administration’s attempts to forge Palestinian governing bodies.

2. Is it true that it was only through shifts in the prevailing international structure that institutional openings were made available so that a mass movement for Palestinian liberation was able to emerge?

Yes. As noted above, the conclusion of World War I brought to Palestine a hegemonic order that provided institutional pathways to self-government. Nevertheless, these openings (at least initially) were not of the sort that would be supportive of total Palestinian independence. Accordingly, it was only when the regional balance of power was fundamentally reordered in the wake of the Six Day War that an indigenous and truly independent unified movement for Palestinian liberation emerged.

3. Was the Fatah-led PLO’s adopted ideology and its associated strategic approach a reflection of the established international temperament?

Yes. Fatah’s adoption of a Marxist-socialist ideology promoting self-determination through revolutionary armed struggle was not only appropriate given the need to overthrow an occupying colonial power, but as expressed in United Nations resolution A/3070 such an orientation was the prevailing attitude among a large segment of international society as well.
4. Did allies play a central role in the successful emergence of a Palestinian movement for national liberation?

Yes, but not as a positive mentor. Although Arabs states devoted considerable resources in their two attempts to liberate Palestine and provided the foundations for the All-Palestine Government as well as the Palestinian Liberation Organization, as witnessed by Jordan’s Jericho Convention and subsequent annexation of the West Bank, as well as Egypt’s strict constraining measures over its Palestinian proxy organization, it is clear that these measures were taken in self-interest and did much to frustrate the emergence of an indigenous movement.

5. Did fractionalization play a facilitative or frustrating role in the movement’s emergence?

Strongly frustrating. Second only to Arab ‘meddling,’ internal maneuvering for political clout and differing opinions over the best means of achieving independence significantly stalled the movement’s formation. Nonetheless, these same division over strategic orientation brought differing approaches to the fore and coalesced at a ripe moment resulting in the adoption of a most appropriate strategy for that time.


Now under control of the resistance factions, the PLO established integrative institutions to interconnect the far-flung Palestinian communities into a well-defined political entity. Its cross-community social and cultural structures focused around
education, health, social assistance to martyrs' families, and artisan centers. Its professional associations, and its organizational network of constituent political groups provided vital linkages not only between the various Palestinian communities of the Diaspora, but between the Diaspora on the one hand and the Palestinians inside the occupied territories on the other (Hiklial, 1993: 46). At the national level as well, the organization underwent a considerable makeover.

Because Fatah was not the only faction urging for liberation through revolutionary armed struggle, upon their ascension to power Fatah leaders reoriented the fundamental composition and institutional structure of the PLO as a means of maintaining their position of dominance. Traditional faces disappeared as seats in the supreme legislative representative body—the Palestine National Council (PNC)—were more than halved. Moreover, whereas the PNC served as the representative of all Palestinian people both inside Palestine and in the Diaspora, as the highest decisionmaking body it set PLO policies and long-term plans (PLO, 1964). In practice, the PNC elected members of the Palestine Executive Committee which was headed by Chairman Arafat until his death in 2004. Charged with executing the policies and decisions set out by the PNC and the Central Council, the Executive served as the provisional state of Palestine and its members held portfolios in areas of highest importance; including foreign policy, military operations, and social welfare (SOP: 2015). To carry out these tasks, the Executive was provided with a Palestine Liberation Army that was supported by a Palestine National Fund (ibid).

As its first order of business, the Arafat-led PLO focused on direct military confrontation with Israel and began to conduct evermore brazen attacks against the
Jewish state using Jordanian territory as a launching platform. Initially the King, eager to portray himself as the rightful leader of the Palestinian people, allowed and even actively fostered these incursions (Richards and Ash, 2000). By January 1970, however, it was becoming fast apparent that the situation was spinning out of control when Palestinian militants erected pseudo-governments in several Jordanian cities (Shemesh, 1988: 132-133). Setting-up security check points, customs controls, and even going so far as to implement a system of visa controls, King Hussein faced not only the mounting threat of an Israeli invasion in retaliation for PLO attacks, but even more troubling, the usurpation of his kingdom (Richards and Ash, 2000).

In response, the King issued a 12 point Communiqué that in its effect was intended to deny the PLO the capacity to erect governmental institutions—including the capacity to establish a government-in-exile and then claim for itself authority over all or part of the West Bank (Shemesh, 1988: 138). PLO leaders pledged not to comply with the dictates of the Communiqué, even if that meant resistance by force. As a consequence, immediately thereafter direct confrontation between Jordanian and Palestinian forces broke out. The level of violence intensified in July of 1970 when King Hussein sought to expel PLO leaders from his territory. Violence came to a head on September 1 when radical elements of the PLO attempted to assassinate the him. The result was the outbreak of civil war and the events of Black September that would ultimately determine if Jordan would be ruled by the Palestine Liberation Organization or the Hashemite Monarchy (Shlaim, 2007: 301-302).

After 10 days of intense fighting, King Hussein, under great pressure from Egyptian president Abdul Nasser, was pressured into signing the Cairo Agreement of
1970 in which the King agreed to end martial law and all ‘abnormal conditions’, such as military rule (BBC, 1970). In effect, the agreement gave equal standing to the Palestinian leadership and afforded Palestinian organizations the right to operate in Jordan unconstrained. Nasser died of a sudden heart attack a day after signing the Cairo Agreement, however, and as a result the PLO lost its primary source of protection. Consequently, the King, who had no intention of upholding the agreement in any case, proceed with his plan to expel the PLO leadership and their fedayeen fighters. By September of 1971, the PLO was forced to reestablish its base of operations in the refugee camps of South Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Fatah’s counterparts were busy ushering an age of international terrorism by engaging in brazed attacks across the globe. In doing so, they successfully brought to the world’s attention the plight of the Palestinian people. For their part, Fatah militants now operating out of Lebanon focused their attention on the more straightforward strategy of direct confrontation with Israeli forces. Long constrained by the interests and interventions of others, Lebanon offered the Palestinian movement its first period of sustained political and military freedom (Brynen, 1989: 2) It was within this environment that the PLO was able to set up a virtual para-state; fortifying its political, social, and military apparatus while relentlessly launching guerilla sorties into Israel in accordance with its Ten-Point Program. Serving as the movement’s grand strategy, the program flatly rejected UN Resolution 242 for its relegation of the Palestinian struggle to that of a crisis of refugees and instead called for a phased effort to:

Liberate Palestinian territory and to establish the independent combatant national authority for the people over every part of Palestinian territory that is liberated…Once it is established, the Palestinian national authority will strive
to achieve a union of the confrontation countries, with the aim of completing the liberation of all Palestinian territory (PLO, 1974).

**International System (1973 – 1993)**

Firmly entrenched in South Lebanon, the PLO took advantage of its new found operational freedom to accrue a series of successful attacks on Israeli forces. Meanwhile, neighboring Arab states had launched a plan to regain not only lost Arab lands, but Arab honor as well. Pitting the best of America’s armaments against those of the Soviet Union, the October War of 1973 nearly brought the entire region to the brink of catastrophe as both American and Soviet leaders feared they may be drawn into direct conflict in defense of their respective client states. Seeking to avoid this danger, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger engaged each party through a process of shuttle diplomacy in the hopes of obtaining a ceasefire agreement. After nearly three weeks of intense effort, Kissinger had successfully mediated the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution 338 which not only brought hostilities to an end, but sought to address the root cause of the war as well by “Call[ing] upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts” (SCOR: A/338).

In accordance with the latter of these objectives and in recognition of the fact that the international community had proven itself incapable of enforcing the numerous armistice agreements signed by Israel and her neighbors since 1949, the United States and the Soviet Union convened a conference in Geneva aimed at resolving all outstanding issues in the Middle East. Although a noble first attempt to bring the warring parties together, the Geneva discussions failed to bring about the sort of stability that the
superpowers had hoped for. Several factors contributed to this outcome: 1) Syria did not send a delegation, 2) despite the PLO’s recent recognition in Rabat, failure to recognize Israel’s right to exist was a sine qua non for participation, and 3) both Israel and the United States had become suspicious of Soviet motives.

In the end, the Geneva process was abandon for a more direct approach.

Encouraged by the United States’ success in effecting the Sinai I and Sinai II Agreements of 1974 and 1975 respectively and reasoning that only the United States had any influence over Israel, Egypt’s President Anwar Sadat recognized that the surest means of achieving secure borders with the Jewish state was through direct negotiations monitored and guaranteed by the West. The consequent Framework for Peace in the Middle East of September 17, 1978 not only achieved its long-term objective of peace between Israel and the Republic of Egypt, it also set into motion a tenuous and often tumultuous process of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians by calling for:

Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian people [to] participate in negotiations on the resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects: To achieve that objective, negotiations relating to the West Bank and Gaza should proceed in three stages:

(a) ...there should be transitional arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza for a period not exceeding five years. In order to provide full autonomy to the inhabitants, under these arrangements the Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing governing authority has been freely elected...

(b) ...the parties will negotiate an agreement which will define the powers and responsibilities of the self-governing authority to be exercised in the West Bank and Gaza...

(c)…When the self-governing body authority (administrative council) in the West Bank and Gaza is established and inaugurated, the transitional period of five years will begin. As soon as possible, but no later than the third year after the beginning of the transitional period, negotiations will take place to
determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza...(Governments of Israel and Egypt, 1978).

To Yasser Arafat and his compatriots, the agreement was a betrayal. Not only had Sadat “excommunicated [Egypt] from its national role to liberate the occupied Arab land, especially Jerusalem, as well as the restoration of full national rights of the Arab people of Palestine” (Geddes, 1991: 378), but in doing so, accepted the principle of ‘land for peace’—a policy which the PLO viewed as a direct threat to its own objectives. Accordingly, PLO operatives, encouraged by the advantageous position they had acquired as a consequence of the Lebanese Civil War, used their near total control of southern Lebanon as a platform to intensify attacks on Israeli targets. However, in the wake of a particularly brutal attack on an Israel bus in March of 1978 (timed to derail peace talks), Israel launched operation Litani. The aim of this military intervention was to halt Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets by forcing PLO militants from their strongholds in the south of Lebanon to positions north of the Litani River. Unprepared for face-to-face confrontation with the IDF, PLO forces were quickly overwhelmed and by March 21st the Israelis had achieved their objective.

In response to this incursion, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolutions 425 and 426 calling for the withdrawal of Israeli forces and the establishment of a United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). UNIFIL forces, however, made little attempt to halt the PLO’s rearmament and in the end “the PLO was granted a free hand in the building up of arms caches and supplies within the twenty-kilometer cordon sanitaire that the United Nations Security Council guaranteed Israel” (Gabriel, 1984: 57). Apprehending the dilemma faced by Israel, Menachem Begin began to seek an
internationally recognized provocation that would afford Israel a legitimate excuse for ridding itself of its northern threat. Accordingly, when on June 3, 1982 members of the Abu Nidal Organization attempted to assassinate Israel’s ambassador to the United Kingdom on the streets of London, Begin’s government used the occasion to justify a repeated effort to rout PLO operatives from their strongholds in southern Lebanon.

Israel’s full-scale invasion of Lebanon was met with several peace initiatives including the Fahad Plan put forth by Saudi Arabia and the Reagan plan of 1982. Ultimately it was Reagan’s envoy Philip C. Habib who was able to secure an agreement among the governments of Lebanon, Syria, and Israel, as well as the PLO leadership. That agreement demanded the evacuation from Lebanon of PLO leaders, offices, and combatants to be completed no later than September 3, 1982 (US Dept of State, 1982).

With their military cadres dispersed throughout the Middle East, Yasser Arafat and key members of the PLO leadership established new headquarters in Tunis and began to reassess the organization’s overarching goal of destroying Israel; emphasizing instead the more pragmatic aim of establishing a secular Palestinian authority in the West Bank and Gaza. This decision was met with condemnation by the PLO’s scattered militants who believed such a move would sap the movement of it revolutionary fervor and ensnarl its cadres in the day-today business of governing. The now floundering PLO was dealt yet another devastating blow when Palestinians of the inside (Gaza and the West Bank) demonstrated that they were no longer content to be subjugated to whims and interests of an externally based leadership.

By the late 1980s two things had become clear 1) the exiled PLO leadership was seemingly unaware of developments rapidly transpiring on the streets of Palestine, and 2)
as a consequence of this disarray and the PLO’s inability to fill the political void that had been created upon their departure from Lebanon, a new voice of representation had emerged. In the wake of the 1987 intifada, Hamas had firmly established its rejectionist position, and in so doing, solidified its support base as a direct challenge to the PLO’s authority. Yasser Arafat was therefore left with little choice. If he and the PLO leadership were to remain relevant, a bold initiative was required.

Engineering the Algiers Declaration of November 1988, Arafat called for a two-state solution to end the conflict with Israel. The Palestinian National Council promptly thereafter issued a Declaration of Independence which was immediately recognized by sixty, primarily Third World, countries (GAOR: A/43/877; SCOR: S/20278). One month later, Arafat stood before members of the United Nations General Assembly gathered in Geneva to declare:

The PLO will work for the achievement of a comprehensive settlement among the parties concerned in the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the State of Palestine, Israel and the other neighbouring States, within the framework of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1974) so as to guarantee equality and the balance of interests, especially our people's rights, in freedom, national independence, and respect the right to exist in peace and security... It [the Palestinian National Council] has also reaffirmed its rejection of terrorism in all its forms, including state terrorism, emphasizing its commitment to its past resolutions in this regard (Arafat, 1988)

Although just one year earlier the United States Congress had taken action to close all PLO offices operating in the United State and had adopted the Antiterrorism Act of 1987 which determined “the PLO and its affiliates [to be] terrorist organizations and a threat to the interests of the United States, it allies, and to international law” (US Congress, 1987), Arafat’s UN speech was accepted as meeting US conditions for
recognition. By denouncing terrorism and accepting in principal the UN Partition plan of historic Palestine, the PLO had outmaneuvered Hamas to gain U.S. recognition, Jordan’s relinquishment of the West Bank, and Israeli flexibility in recognition of Fatah’s role in quelling the violence (Kurz, 2001: 3).

Although excluded from the Madrid Peace Talks (instead being represented by the State of Jordan), Israel’s recently elected Labor Party saw a purpose in direct negotiations with the PLO—the only representative of Palestinian interests with the internationally recognized authority and legitimacy to conclude such an agreement (Flamhaft, 1996: 96). As a result, beginning in July 1992 representatives from the Government of Israel and the PLO began 14 months of clandestine negotiations in Oslo. Then in August of 1993, Israel and PLO negotiators emerged from talks shocking the world with a joint communiqué revealing that their representatives had been meeting secretly and that they were preparing to sign an agreement involving mutual recognition and gradual transition towards Palestinian autonomy. With the September 13, 1993 signing the Declaration of Principles (Oslo I) on the Whitehouse lawn, Yasser Arafat and his government-in-exile had finally achieved their long sought after goal of universal recognition and legitimacy.

Assessment of Applicable Hypotheses

1. Did external political cleavages and divergent elite strategies condition the movement’s approach to movement recognition?

Yes. Cold War tensions reached new heights in the immediate aftermath of the Six Day War thus affording the Palestinian leadership a great deal of leeway in the
pursuit of their objectives. While the ostensibly more pragmatic course of direct engagement with enemy forces yield few gains accept to mobilize internal support, it was international skyjackings and other worldwide operations which garnered the movement international attention and sympathy for the Palestinian cause. In turn the mainstream leadership was able to mobilize these attitudes towards attainment of legitimacy in international forums in spite of hegemonic objections.

2. Was movement recognition a product of great power interest.

Yes. With the fall of the Soviet Empire, the United States was left to manage global affairs on its own. To this end, President Bill Clinton stressed the effect on US national security of allowing regional conflicts fester; declaring that “where we can make a difference, we must be prepared to do so” (Clinton, 1999: 273). It was within this framework that the US administration saw in the recognition of the PLO a means of securing America’s regional interests—a reduction of Arab tensions on the street and animosity towards both Israel and the United States, while providing the Palestinians a pathway to a fair and just resolution of their cause.

3. Were allies essential to attainment of the PLO’s recognition?

Yes. Not only did Arab States play a central role in the attainment of the movement’s legitimacy within international institutions including the PLO’s status as an observer within the United Nations and it organs, but Egypt’s insistence that that solution to the Palestinian question be included in its 1978 peace treaty with
Israel laid the groundwork for all the progress the Palestinian movement has since made.

4. To what extent was a preconceived plan conducive to the movement’s recognition?

Slightly. The PLO’s Ten-Point Program did not advance the movement’s cause, in fact as recognized in Arafat’s speech before the General Assembly in 1988, the movement’s recognition demanded that some of the Program’s dictates be forcefully renounced.

**De Facto Recognition**

Less than one year after signing the Declaration of Principles, Yasser Arafat and the PLO leadership stepped off a plane in the Gaza strip, thus completing a roundtrip journey which had now retuned them to the place where their struggle began 27 years earlier. Over the course of nearly three decades the PLO had been forced to move its headquarters three times: from Gaza to Jordan, Jordan to Lebanon, and lastly setting up base in Tunisia. Now back on Palestinian soil and armed with an internationally backed agreement which envisaged the establishment of Palestinian autonomy leading to statehood, the PLO set out to fulfill the vision of Oslo.

Taking cues from the Zionist case, to complete this task the Palestinian leadership would need to proceed with resolve—building the institutions, infrastructure, and image of a state without being distracted by forces seeking to derail that objective. Pursuit of these tasks would require a skilled leadership with the ability to forge united political
support for the movement’s established course to statehood within Palestinian society and the agility to capitalize on external political cleavages in order to overcome Israel’s defiant elite strategies. Finally, as has been observed with all stages of success examined thus far, the Palestinian’s attainment of de facto recognition is likely to be preceded by a realignment of the hegemonic order and either facilitated or frustrated by the preferences of allies.

**Movement Approach (Arafat)**

From its founding in 1964, the PLO had established a variety of governmental, social, and military institutions. The Central Committee and Unified Command for example, were charged with unifying all militant groups in “popular revolutionary war [as] the main path to the liberation of Palestine” (Nassar, 1991: 56), while the PLO’s military department was charged with the supervision and coordination of all military activities. On the political front, the PLO National Council functioned as the Palestinian parliament; the Executive Committee served as its cabinet of ministers. In addition there was a political department which performed the duties of a ministry of foreign affairs, an information bureau which coordinated the movement’s propaganda and information dissemination activates, as well as a national fund which facilitated the movements financial activates including fund raising and budgeting. Lastly, the movement had established a number of social institutions, including the Social Affairs Department and Samed Institute which together provided services such as healthcare, welfare, education, and occupational training (ibid).
With the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DOP) and subsequent Oslo II Accord in September 1995, the PLO’s institutional apparatus, territorial jurisdiction, and governmental responsibilities were greatly expanded. As an initial step, the DOP transferred governing authority and responsibilities to the newly formed Palestinian Authority (PA), including the right to legislate and to enforce law and order. It further established interparty forums and mechanisms for dispute resolution, regional cooperation, and economic development in preparation of a final status agreement (DOP, 1993). Oslo II—known formally as the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip—established detailed plans for extending Palestinian self-rule to the occupied territories including all of the West Bank without prejudice to a future final status agreement. Toward this end, it set out a schedule for the withdraw of Israeli military forces from Palestinian controlled territories in the lead up to democratic elections to select a Palestinian Council (what became the Palestinian Authority) that would serve as the governing body for the Palestinian people and to which legal authority would be transferred by the Israeli military government and its civil administration.

In sum, the DOP and Oslo II were to provide the space, infrastructure, and capabilities for a robust and comprehensive state-building project to be implemented in the lead-up to negotiations on the final status of Israeli-Palestinian relations. Unfortunately, forces seeking to derail this endeavor, whether by design or consequence, quickly gained the upper hand.

From the moment PLO leaders decided to reestablish their base in the territories, Fatah’s civic affairs operations came into direct confrontation with Hamas-backed programs that had provided food and social subsidies to many Palestinians in an effort to
unite support for an uprising against Israel. Moreover, the PLO’s assertion that any future Palestinian state would be secular-democratic in form—be it leftist, communist, or Baathist—did not rest well with Brotherhood adherents who envisaged an Islamic nationalist state founded upon Quranic teachings (CRS: 1993). In turn this clash of objectives resulted in a geopolitical rift in that Hamas—on the grounds of shared beliefs and common vision—turned towards Islamic extremists based in Lebanon, Iran, Indonesia, Sudan and elsewhere for its sources of support. In contrast, the PLO—seeking to win favor from the West—allied itself with moderate Arab states.

Joining forces with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement, the Democratic and Islamic Nationalist Fronts, and several smaller factions, Hamas-led rejectionists demonstrated their resolve to derail the peace process on April 6, 1994 when they instituted a campaign of suicide bombings which was intended to discredit the PLO in both the eyes of the international community as well as the Palestinian populace. In response to these attacks, Israel demanded of the newly autonomous Fatah-led Palestinian Authority (PA)—which was now endowed with a “strong police force” in accordance with Article VIII of the Declaration of Principles—an all-out assault on its Palestinian rival. The PLO leadership, however, feared the outbreak of civil war; more than that, they feared an ensuing loss of popular support (Kurz, 2001: 4). In spite of these concerns, however, Arafat did act—engaging in a strategy of what Louis Kriesberg (1998) refers to as persuasive inducement (105). Seeking to gain concessions within the ongoing Oslo framework, Arafat demonstrated to the Israelis the alternative to his leadership while at the same time strengthening his position vis-à-vis that of Hamas by weakening, but not destroying his opponent’s support base. What resulted was not only a split between the
two factions on ideological and strategic grounds—a secular PLO accepting the State of Israel, Islamist Hamas calling for its irradiation—but their physical separation as well; Fatah ruling the West Bank, Hamas dominating Gaza.

This internecine Palestinian feud provided Israel with a basis to delay withdraw of its forces from areas to be handed over to the Palestinian authority. The conflict was further exploited by the recently elected Netanyahu government that implemented closures, proceeded with the construction of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and denied the release Palestinian prisoners on the basis of security concerns. Intra-Palestinian conflict had moreover frustrated efforts to build a viable economy in the Palestinian autonomous regions because international donors either could not find a suitable infrastructure through which to channel funds or simply did not fulfill their pledges (UNSCO, 1999). As a result, there developed a two-way path of blame and justification for non-action with each party accusing the other of recidivating (fig. 5.2).

**International System**

Despite these alleged transgressions, or perhaps because of them, a concerted effort was made to push the peace process forward. At President Bill Clinton’s insistence, Chairman Arafat and Prime Minster Netanyahu negotiated and signed the Wye River Memorandum in October of 1998. In essence the Memorandum was an agreement to resume implementation of Oslo II and the gradual handover of Palestinian autonomy. Although approved by the Knesset by a margin of 75-19, implementation of the Memorandum’s dictates was hampered by Netanyahu’s stubborn posture towards the peace process and shunning of US wishes that had ultimately driven the United States
**Figure 5.2—Summary of Declared Violations**

### Palestinian Grievances:
- Israel had not fulfilled its obligation to provide Palestinians safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank.
- Israel annexed land to build by-pass roads to Jewish settlements.
- Israel prevented the establishment of air- and sea-ports in Gaza as agreed to.
- Israel refused the release of 2,500 prisoners in Israeli jails as called for by the previous Israeli cabinet, justice minister and president.
- Israel expropriated Palestinian land.
- Israel refused agreement on Hebron withdraw because it was demanding to renegotiate the agreement, seeking to control one-third of the Hebron in order to expand its settlements.
- Israel demanded the right to carry out ‘hot pursuit’ of prisoners.
- Israel had not lived up to its agreements for further redeployment: a litmus test created by the interim agreements.—By creation of Oslo II, the West Bank was divided into areas A, B and C. In a four phased process Israeli forces were to gradually redeploy until all areas were in Palestinian control—(Musallam, 1999).

### Israeli Grievances:
- The PA failed in its obligation to renounce violence and to take all measures necessary to prevent acts of violence and terrorism against Israel.
- The PA refused to resolve all outstanding issues through bilateral negotiations, to resolve all disputes through peaceful means, and to cooperate in the creation of joint mechanism for negotiation and dispute settlement.
- The PA actively engaged in acts of incitement in contravention of the spirit of peace.
- The PA refused to apprehend, prosecute and detain known terrorists.
- The PA failed in its obligation to ensure that holy sites in the areas under the administration of the Palestinian Authority were to be duly respected and protected.
- The obligation to ensure that no armed forces other than the Palestinian police and Israeli military forces were to be established or operate in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was not adhered to.
- The obligation to confiscate illegal weapons was not fully carried out.
- The PA failed to maintain joint security and other cooperation mechanisms with Israel in order to ensure public order and security (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2000).
Memorandum’s dictates was hampered by Netanyahu’s stubborn posture towards the peace process and shunning of US wishes that had ultimately driven the United States and the Palestinians closer together while producing nothing of value for Israel in return (Ross, 2004: 490). Accordingly, if progress toward peace were to continue, it would have to wait for a change of leadership in Israel. That change came with the election of Ehud Barak in July 1999.

Unlike his predecessor who preferred a gradual approach, Barak sought to cut the Israeli-Arab Gordian knot with one bold stroke. Removing the phased approach from the agenda once and for all, the Barak Plan called upon Arab leaders to discuss the gamut of issues facing the parties and set a time table of 15 months (until October 2000) to reach a breakthrough on all tracks: a final status agreement between Israel and Palestine, peace agreements with Syria and Lebanon, and regional agreements for refugees and water rights (Rabinovich, 2004: 124; Barak, 1999). Yet as Arafat made clear in a June 1999 meeting with President Clinton, he believed it was much too early to discuss final status issues. His reasoning was clear; Israel had not honored its commitments as called for in the Wye agreements: it had not completed the redeployment its forces, it had not freed Palestinian prisoners, and it had not transferred Jerusalem suburbs to the Palestinian Autonomous Authority as agreed to (Enderlin, 2003: 16).

Arafat was trapped; if he refused to participate in the peace talks he would be blamed for derailing the peace process. If he agreed and the summit failed, once again the culpability would fall on his shoulders. In the end, at the urging of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Arafat reluctantly agreed to take part in the talks at Camp David (ibid: 170).
The Camp David Peace Summit commenced on July 11, 2000 and for the first time in seven years the fate of the Palestinian populace was once again in the hands of its PLO leadership. Despite Arafat’s apprehensions, the Palestinian delegation to Camp David and the subsequent Taba negotiations took up their task with full vigor. On the agenda were three of the most contentious issues faced by any negotiation team. These items included the fate of Palestinian refugees, final agreement on borders and outstanding security issues, and the most daunting task of all, determining the future physical, spiritual, and demographic configuration of Jerusalem. In the end, the Camp David summit and Taba peace talks failed to reach a firm agreement on any of these issues. Instead, violence and internecine conflict once again ensued.

Many have placed the blamed for the failure of Camp David and the subsequent outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada squarely on Arafat’s shoulders. Dennis Ross declared, “when all is said and done…negotiations failed mainly because they ran into a brick wall called Yasser Arafat” (in Haberman, 2001: 36). Prince Bandar Bin Sultan of Saudi Arabia lamented that “Arafat's failure to accept the deal in January of 2001 was a tragic mistake—a crime, really” (Walsh, 2003: 48). Meanwhile the US initiated Mitchell Report found that “Palestinian violence was planned by the PA leadership, and was aimed at provoking and incurring Palestinian casualties as a means of regaining the diplomatic initiative” (US Dept. of State, 2001). Viewed from the inside, “many people in the occupied territories were fed up with what they saw as the virtual dictatorship of Arafat and Fatah” (Pratt, 2006: 112). In this sense, the intifada provided Arafat and the PLO with a means of regaining legitimacy in eyes of the Palestinian public who were prone to
look upon the rising new generation of militants with admiration while remaining skeptical of Arafat’s old-guard pragmatism.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the cards were stacked firmly against the Palestinian delegation at Camp David and accordingly Arafat was justified in declining Barak’s ‘generous offer.’ Not only had the proposed agreement forced Arafat to cross red lines—for instance, with regards to Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem—but in essence, it amounted to the forfeiting of rights Palestinians were already entitled to by international law including the right of return and all territory east of the 1967 border. In any case, Yasser Arafat died on November 11, 2004 and with him died any sincere hope that the Oslo process would bring about Palestinian statehood. After seven years of arduous compromise and sacrifice, the Oslo process “had won [Palestinians] only shards of an independent state and had not, as they had hoped, improved their standard of living” (Bregman, 2003: 274). Even more foreboding, with the rise to power of Ariel Sharon, Palestinians found themselves walled in, impotent, and lacking a credible voice.

Sharon’s approach to the Palestinian problem was in stark contrast to that of his predecessors. Neither gradual nor negotiated, Sharron’s method was bold, deliberate, and one-sided. After a decade of agonizing negotiations and four years of unrestrained violence the Israeli public had little appetite for continued dialogue, nor did they sympathize with the plight of the Palestinian populace (Yaar and Hermann, 2004). It was within this environment that Sharron carried out his plans for disengagement.

Upon his election, construction began on a 700km security barrier designed to keep terrorist from entering Israeli territory. The barrier and its elaborate set of checkpoints, however, also cut links between individual Palestinian villages, and in some
cases, separated villages from their source of economic livelihood. The second element of Sharon’s plan was equally disruptive. Dismantling all Jewish settlements and subsequently withdrawing all Israel assets—civil and military—from the Gaza Strip, it was hoped that the Hamas-led territory would turn its attention to peaceful socioeconomic pursuits rather than violence. It did not. As a result, Sharon and his successors have dismissed the idea of building a West Bank–Gaza corridor citing security concerns. The effect has been to frustrate efforts to forge a unified Palestinian government and to establish an effective Palestinian economic infrastructure.

Not only had the Al-Asqa intifada elicited Israel’s ire, the international community was also forced to reassess its stance. Instead of fostering external support for the Palestinian cause, the uprising forced the international community to reconsider its prescribed path to Palestinian statehood. Accordingly, Moodley (2005) observed that “after Arafat’s death, Palestinian statehood was made dependent…on ending attacks against occupation forces, on instituting democracy and internal reform, [and] ending incitement in the media and history textbooks” (183). Moreover, in view of the realities created by the intifada, international donors began to recalculate their financial contributions to the Palestinians as well. Not only did these externally imposed restrictions result in striking income inequality within Palestinian society—the West Bank’s economy tied to Israel, the Gaza Strip cut off from the world (Hilal, 2010: 31)—but even more detrimental were the restrictions disallowing Palestinian control over its own economic future.

While able to participate in the drafting of budgets, decisions on fund allocations, the drawing up financial and long-term economic plans, and the determination of goals
and priorities, the PA had been reduced to the role of technical assistant in its own financial affairs. Thus from the outset of Oslo it has been international experts and private donors who have determined the trajectory of Palestinian economic policy (ibid: 33-34). In the wake of the second intifada, marginalization of Palestinian input on fiscal matters worsened. Moreover, as a consequence of the physical destruction of Palestine’s economic infrastructure and subsequent economic decline that resulted from Israel’s response to the intifada, donor aid shifted from development projects to covering recurrent expenditures including the salaries of PA officials. Accordingly, outside pressure primarily from Quartet members (the United Nations, European Union, Russia, and the United States) had focused insistently on governmental reforms rather than policies that would lead to the development of a practical economy worthy of independent statehood (ibid).

Movement Approach (Abu Mazan)

Public opinion polls conducted in the immediate post-Arafat era revealed a gain in public optimism toward the peace process, a willingness to compromise, and that public support for violence against Israelis, while still high, was fast declining (Shikaki, 2006: 2). Nevertheless, Palestinians of the West Bank soon realized that there sea with a few islands of Israeli settlements had been transformed into a collection of Palestinian enclaves surround by wide corridors controlled by the IDF (Ha’aretz, 2003). Conflict with Israel, however, soon became the least of the Palestinian’s problem as Yasser Arafat’s successor, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) was sworn in as Chairman of the PLO on November 11, 2004.
Just how entrenched and far-reaching conflict between the Palestinian’s two predominate political parties—Fatah’s PLO-dominated Palestinian Authority and Hamas’ Islamic Resistance Movement—had become was made apparent in the run-up to Palestinian legislative elections scheduled to take place in January 2006. Hamas’ grassroots organizing strategy, its promotion of the ‘resistance project,’ and its ability to gain the backing of regional actors enhanced its election prospects. Its role in providing basic social services, disillusionment with the peace process, and “revulsion at a decade of Fatah misrule,” seemed to have cemented its victory (Usher, 2006: 3). In the end, it was the fact that “Palestinians by and large were not voting for political Islam or the destruction of Israel,” said Hamas political leader Ghazi Hamad, rather “Hamas presented an alternative to rampant corruption, Oslo and the road map…[and] a proper balance between political and military struggle.” (ibid: 11).

With the swearing in of Hamas’ Ismail Haniya as the Palestinian Prime Minister on March 29, 2006, it quickly became apparent to all that the gun, not the olive branch, would guide the new government’s approach to statehood. Hamas’ refusal to recognize Israel, renounce violence, and to accept past agreements led Israel, Canada, the United State, and the European Union to cut ties with the newly formed government—providing only the very minimal amount of aid to Palestinian-based aid agencies as necessary to prevent a humanitarian crises (Labott, 2006). The cumulative result was a 75% cut in the PA’s monthly budget (CPJME, 2007: 1).

Attempting to overcome externally imposed financial and diplomatic isolation, as early as July 2006 PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Ismail Haniya sought out a means of forging a unity government that would meet western demands.
With the assistance of the Saudi government a power sharing formula based on a platform that in a roundabout way was aimed at meeting the three western stipulations—acceptance of Israel, acceptance of Oslo, and renouncement of violence—was reached in February of 2007 and a unity government established the following month (ibid). The new agreement did little to allay western concerns, however. In fact, the only western country to reestablish cordial relations with the unity government was the Government of Norway (2007). Moreover, because Hamas did not voluntarily negotiate the terms of the newly established unity government—being forced to do so by external pressures and at the insistence of Abbas and other Arab governments—its submission resulted in a high level of ambiguity with regards to the national leadership (CPJME, 2007: 2). This in turn garnered a great deal of frustration within Palestinian society.

Manifestations of this frustration became apparent even before unity talks began as Fatah supporters and Hamas-backed militants began to embark on differing paths toward statehood. For its part, Hamas launched raids into Israel culminating with the abduction of Corporal Gilad Shalit on June 5, 2006. This action invited Israeli retaliation and thus pitted Abbas’ cooperative orientation towards Israel against Hamas’ defiant stance (Moran, 2006). The result was a sharp escalation in internecine conflict edging towards civil war. Then, on May 27, 2007 Hamas boldly rejected Abbas’ request to halt rocket fire on Israeli targets and instead intensified its attacks (Reuters, 2007). Seeking to reign in Hamas-backed militants, Fatah forces confronted Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip; ultimately leading to a series of bloody battles culminating with the expulsion of the PA and Fatah forces from the Gaza Strip on June 14, 2007 (ibid).
Hamas’ take over of Gaza prompted President Abbas to declare a state of emergency, dismiss the government, and to form a new government with Salam Fayyad appointed to take up the post of Prime Minister. While several attempts at a Fatah-Hamas reconciliation have been made since 2007, the new Abbas-Fayyad government shifted its attention to unilateral measures designed to bring about sovereign Palestinian statehood within a two-year time frame. Drawing upon Prime Minister Fayyad’s experience as a World Bank advisor, the Palestinian Authority developed a program of action entitled, *Ending Occupation, Establishing the State*. The August 2009 program (aka the Fayyad plan) for the first time since the implementation of Oslo placed the entire gamut of issues facing the Palestinians squarely in their own hands. As noted in the document’s forward, the goals set out were both comprehensive and ambitious.

The program, which sets out our national goals and government policies, centers around the objective of building strong state institutions capable of providing, equitably and effectively, for the needs of our citizens, despite the occupation…

It is time for our people to obtain their unconditional freedom and national rights as required by international law. This calls for positive and proactive steps, both nationally and internationally, in order to end the occupation and reach a just and lasting political settlement in our region. For our part, we have to dedicate ourselves to the task of state-building…

The establishment of an independent, sovereign, and viable Palestinian state is fundamental for peace, security and stability in our region. Whereas Israeli settlement policies and activities continue to undermine the viability of the two-state solution, our government is determined to preserve and advance this solution…This is the path to freedom. This is the path to the creation of the independent state of Palestine on the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital (Palestinian National Authority, 2009).
The Fayyad Plan was forward looking; it focused unyieldingly on state-building efforts and refused to succumb to the all too common tendency to redress past wrongs rather than move forward when things got tough (Green, 2010: 3). The Plan broke with the past in that it sought to create an accountable governmental administration which encouraged the private sector to undertake economic initiatives (Simanovsky, 2011). By placing public investment under the oversight of the Ministry of Finance, linking budgeting to economic planning to ensure greater transparency, instituting modern audit and control measures, adopting international accounting standards, and enforcing payments of public utilities, the PA’s new approach greatly strengthen public confidence in the full range of newly established government departments (ibid).

Indeed, less than one year after implementing these reforms noticeable progress could be detected. Within the security sector, US-Israeli-Palestinian coordinated offensives dismantled illegal militias and created an overall safe environment for Palestinian businesses and citizens. As US Security Coordinator General Keith Dayton put it, “crime is down, Palestinian shops are open after dark and teenage girls in Jenin can visit their friends after dark without fear of being attacked” (in Simanovsky, 2011). In addition to restoring basic law and order, scaling back corruption, and reestablishing a measure of public confidence; roads were paved, institutions strengthened, services improved, and the investment climate greatly enhanced (Luck, 2011). In turn the new environment yielded almost immediate pay-offs. By 2011, not only had tax collection increased by 50% and thus the PA’s public debt nearly halved, but the PA could also boast an annual growth rate of 9% (Barthe, 2011). These improvements did not go unnoticed by the international community. By the end of 2010, the PA had received...
pledges of nearly one billion dollars in foreign investment (Simanovsky, 2011), and the World Bank had declared the PA to be “well positioned to establish a state at any time in the near future” (in Elgindy, 2013).

Success of the accelerated state-building project under the Fayyad plan and subsequent endorsements received by many in the international community convinced President Abbas that the time had come for the Palestinians to take their case to the United Nations. In a May 2011 editorial published in *The New York Times*, President Abbas itemized the political, economic, and social developments that had taken place within the Palestinian community since Al-Nakba—particularly those which had been achieved the past two years. He noted that in sum the Palestinians had met all the prerequisites to statehood as detailed in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States—the Palestinian right to self-determination had been confirmed time and again by the United Nations and various international institutions, Palestinians had legal claim to territory which was populated with a permanent Palestinian populace, and the PA had proven its capacity to enter into foreign relations with other states (Abbas, 2011).

In fact, as Abbas went on to note, “only the occupation of our land hinders us from reaching our full potential; it does not impede United Nations recognition” (ibid).

With the backing of the vast majority of nations, Abbas took his case for full UN membership as the *de jure* sovereign State of Palestine to the United Nations Security Council in September 2011. Because the United States held fast to its conviction that a true and lasting peace could only be achieved through direct negotiations, the Palestinians, recognizing that they would only be able to muster eight of the nine requisite votes for statehood, decided to put off their bid for full statehood membership
and instead pursued *de facto* recognition (Hume and Fantz, 2012). Taking their case to the General Assembly where the vote would be free from the threat of a US veto, on November 29, 2012—precisely 65 years to the day that that same body passed resolution 181 which once and for all ended the British rule and partitioned Palestine—the Palestinian Authority easily won support for their upgraded status from ‘observer’ to ‘non-member observer state’ by a vote of 138 to 9 with 41 abstentions. As noted in the General Assembly’s Resolution 67/19, the decision to confer the upgraded status was due, at least in part, to the efforts of Prime Minster Fayyad, his two-year plan, and the PA leadership’s ability to stick to that plan:

*Commending* the Palestinian National Authority’s 2009 plan for constructing the institutions of an independent Palestinian State within a two-year period, and welcoming the positive assessments in this regard about readiness for statehood by the World Bank, the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund and as reflected in the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee Chair conclusions of April 2011 and subsequent Chair conclusions, which determined that the Palestinian Authority is above the threshold for a functioning State in key sectors studied…

*Decides* to accord to Palestine non-member observer State status in the United Nations, without prejudice to the acquired rights, privileges and role of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the United Nations as the representative of the Palestinian people, in accordance with the relevant resolutions and practice… (GAOR: A/RES/67/19).

**Assessment of Applicable Hypotheses**

1. Were allies essential to attainment of *de facto* conditions and recognition?

   Yes. The divide between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority brought differing resources to the Palestinian cause. For its part, Hamas appealed to Islamist-minded states to gain financial and military aid. The PA acquired both technical assistance
and monetary support, primarily from Quartet members. It also received moral support from a vast majority of states sympathetic to the Palestinian plight. While all these sources of assistance were a significant factor in promoting each faction’s objectives, it was only support to the PA that can be considered essential in bringing about *de facto* recognition of the Palestinian state.

2. Did internal fractionalization facilitate or frustrate the movement’s efforts?

Moderately Frustrating. Oslo’s elevation of the Fatah-led PA to a privileged status presented a direct challenge to the widespread popular support Hamas had enjoyed prior to its implementation. The result was a steady escalation in violence as each party sought to demonstrate its dedication to the cause through armed struggle culminating in civil war. Realizing the destructive consequence, Abu Mazan stirred the mainstream away from violence to instead advance the cause by implementing a strategy of persuasive inducement and thereby regained western support.

3. To what extent was a preconceived plan conducive the movement’s creation of *de facto* conditions?

Strongly Conducive. The historiography clearly demonstrates that the Fayyad Plan was the single most significant factor allowing for Palestine’s *de facto* recognition. Not only did the plan define a path towards a prudent and comprehensive state-building project, but in its implementation the Mazan government was able to
demonstrate its ability to stay the course—particularly in light of Israel’s ever intrusive occupation policies—and in doing so win not only renewed financial backing, but support for their statehood bid as well.

4. Did external political cleavages and divergent elite strategies condition the movement’s approach?

Yes. As just noted, Israeli policy and Hamas’ defiant posture pushed the Manan government to act unilaterally. While the PA was forced to abandon its ambition for *de jure* recognition, its unilateral move afforded it the ability to rally near universal support for *de facto* in spite of Israeli and American protests.

5. Was *de facto* recognition preceded by a shift in the hegemonic order and was that shift fundamental to success?

No. Although no definitive shift in the global hegemonic order can be detected within the established timeframe, the region itself was experiencing a significant reorientation of its traditional power structures. Precipitated by a US military withdraw, the Arab Spring promised a new future for the Middle East. Nevertheless, by the time of the UN vote on statehood, the prospects of an Arab Winter were beginning to emerge. Aside from America’s long-standing policy promoting a negotiated peace, this prospect likely contributed to the administration’s decision to steadfastly support its regional proxy, Israel.
De Jure Affirmation

Despite the Palestinian Authority’s upgraded status, the fact remains that the Palestinian national liberation movement’s full aspirations remain unfulfilled. And while their position as a non-member state affords them an array of useful tools for combating the ill effects of occupation, many barriers still stand in their way. The most evident of these barriers is the movement’s inability to forge a unified front with its Hamas rival. The PA remains a weak government that derives its authority from the role it has played in the internationally supported peace process, not so much by the consent of the Palestinian people themselves. Moreover, no matter the niceties of titles and status upgrades, the fact remains that Palestine is far from free to pursue an independent path. Not only does Israeli occupation bear on the day to day lives of Palestinian citizens, but international donors and regional governments have much say on the policies and strategies employed by Abbas and his associates. That said, if a truly sovereign Palestinian state is to take root, accommodation with Israel must be reached—either by force of facts, international pressure, or through a comprehensive and final negotiated peace settlement.

International System

As was witnessed with the passing of UN resolution 67/19, all but nine countries are supportive of Palestinian statehood. Moreover, of the nine voting against, only three—The United States, Canada, and Israel—can be said to exert real influence on the

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6 Canada, Czech Republic, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Panama, United States.
matter. Moreover, since that historic vote, on October 30, 2014 the Government of Sweden became the first to recognize Palestine’s *de jure* status (Sweden, 2014). Then on May 13, 2015 the Holy See issued a joint communiqué with the Government of Palestine signaling its recognition of Palestine’s upgraded status as well (Holy See and State of Palestine, 2015).

As the case for full recognition of Palestine’s *de jure* status becomes ever stronger, it should be recognized that those states voting against *de facto* recognition, save possibly Israel, do not reject the notion of a fully sovereign Palestinian state; rather it is their firm conviction that any said status change must be achieved through a process of dialogue and conciliation. As recognized early on by Truman’s State Department, lasting resolution to the claims of both Jews and Arabs can only be achieved through comprehensive negotiations (USDS, 1945-1952). Similar to United Nations Resolution 242, this notion is predicated on the experience that unilateral action taken by one side will only result in escalation by the other. Thus, recalling the ramifications of the international community’s fateful decision of 1947, those withholding their support for *imposing* Palestinian statehood recognize that lasting peace can only result through the agreement of both parties based on the tried and tested policy of land for peace.

Despite this optimistic outlook, however, both Palestinians and Israelis have grown evermore leery of each others intentions. For their part, Israelis feel that, not only have they endured successive rounds of increasingly lethal rocket fire into their cities, they do not view the Mazen government as a credible partner for peace; citing the PA’s failure to reach agreements with Israel in 2000, 2008, and 2014. As a result, a sense of dread has befallen the once vocal proponents of a two-state solution; a sense that has
permeated the Israeli left and center-left populations who are now more prone to focus their political clout on other, domestic, social ills. The result has the emergence of spoilers on both sides further complicated by the rise to dominance of hardliners headed by Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud party who recognize that some sort of accommodation must be made with the Palestinians, but true to their revisionist heritage, are determined to forge unalterable geographic and demographic conditions that would enhance Israel’s spiritual and strategic depth while reducing any future Palestinian state to a mere shard of what is due.

**National Liberation Movement**

In its effect, resolution 67/19 recognized a state where in actual material terms only the contours of one exists. It is true however, that since 1994 the Palestinians have constructed the requisite infrastructure, institutions, and economic foundations of a viable state and thus their *de facto* recognition is more than justified. Nevertheless, their physical hold on the territory set aside by international law to be the foundation of the future *de jure* state is tenuous at best—the occupation administration of the Israeli government controlling nearly every aspect of activity therein.

Hence like the Israelis, Palestinians are also suspicious of Israel’s sincerity. Failed peace talks, expanded settlement building, restricted access to Jerusalem and other parts of Palestinian territory combined with the bellicose statements of more than a few Israeli leaders have only served to reinforce such sentiments. It is therefore not surprising that Abu Mazen’s approach to *de jure* recognition has been defiant in nature—falling back on the sort of unilateralism that had served the movement well in the past.
Held in check by Israel’s steadfast refusal to institute the directives of UN resolutions 242, 194 and others and overwhelmed by Israel’s unquestioned military supremacy, the Mazan government has chosen to harness its newly acquired tools as afforded it by resolution 67/19 to bring strong international pressure to bear on the occupying power and its activities. In an attempt to overcome Palestine’s weakness vis-à-vis Israel, Mazan has now taken his case to the International Criminal Court in the hope of receiving an internationally binding ruling on Israel’s illegal occupation policies. While such a ruling would succeed in shaming Israel and is likely to force change in its occupation strategies, it is unlikely to bring Palestine any close to (near) universal de jure recognition.

Assessment and Prospects

Taking into account the lessons gleaned from both case historiographies and the theoretical orientation which has guided this study, it is possible to identify several patterns that may be useful in bringing about a successful conclusion to the Palestinian struggle for national liberation.

Both case demonstrate the value of forward looking plans of action that are positive in their orientation (i.e. focused on means to advance the cause rather than an overemphasis on destroying the enemy). Theodor Herzl’s Der Judenstaat undoubtedly set the Zionists on an unstoppable course to de facto recognition. Likewise, the Fayyad Plan put the Palestinian Authority on a unilateral path to recognition impervious to forces seeking to derail that effort. Accordingly, it is reasonable to conclude that formation of a like-fashioned plan for achieving (near) universal recognition of the de
"de jure" state of Palestine would be among the greatest assets toward achieving this objective. Drawing on the insights revealed by the two cases, such a plan should address each of the following issues / opportunities.

1. Recognizing the international community’s demand that mainstream Zionist leaders rein in renegade factions and that this condition was established as a prerequisite to "de jure" recognition, a central component of any comprehensive plan for attaining Palestine’s "de jure" recognition must find a way of dealing with Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and to a lesser extent, other like-minded factions. Preferably this would entail a mechanism for absorbing these elements into the mainstream and political processes for resolving outstanding disagreements. A minimum condition of any such agreement would have to incorporate an instrument for guaranteeing the cessation of rocket fire into Israel throughout the plan’s implementation. For unlike Great Britain, the Israelis will not simply leave and thus sustained levels of violence would only serve to justify Israeli designs to derail the plan’s implementation. Should it be found impossible to find a mutually acceptable agreement with rival factions, a contingency plan should be devised allowing the PA to part ways (at least temporarily) in order to advance the established plan unilaterally.

2. Although already established in the many framework agreements completed to date, the plan should included a precise statement of its objectives. This would be a step beyond what the Zionists were able to achieve, and in its publication would serve to alleviate many of the fears that exist on both sides of the table. What will a sovereign state of Palestine look like? What will be it borders? Where will its capital
be placed? How will its economy function? What instruments of defense will it
employ? What of its future? In each case, the objectives of the state-to-be should be
stated in the affirmative while explicitly detailing acceptable areas open to
negotiation after de jure recognition is granted.

3. The established plan must incorporate a mechanism for exploiting existing political
cleavages within Israeli society as well as differing strategies to the question of
Palestine as promoted by individual elite groupings. The objective being to place
strong pressure on Israeli rejectionists from within Israel itself as well as externally,
strategies to rally the support of allies—while taking recognition of allies’ self-
interest—must be incorporated into the plan as well. Moreover, given the
Palestinian’s militarily disadvantaged position and the disastrous consequences of
past military offensives pursued by their allies, emphasis should be placed on
diplomacy over violence. Nevertheless, as the Zionist case demonstrated, violence
may be warranted in order to hold borders. Thus violence perpetuated against Israeli
military targets within the bounds of the 1967 border is not only justified, it may be
necessary. It should be recognized, however, that to operate outside these strictly
established parameters (e.g. in Israel proper or against civilians) could result in
severe blowback—particularly in the present era wherein all great powers are
strongly aligned against acts of terrorism.

4. Finally, in the same way that Zionist leader’s were able to pressure Great Britain in
to capitulating politically—abstaining rather than vetoing Israel’s admission to the
United Nations—by rallying the diplomatic assets of the United States; the
Palestinian leadership must devise a plan for the attainment America’s passive acceptance. This needs to entail a strategy through which European leaders will see it as their strong interest to place sustained pressure on the United States for its abstention (or preferably endorsement). Again, taking note of Israel’s experience, these efforts will be greatly enhanced by a strategy for demonstrating that the government of Palestine exercises complete and singular control over its territory (which depending on inter-faction negotiations may only include the West Bank) and has developed mechanisms for addressing potentially violent outburst, is capable of minimally defending itself, does not harbor belligerent intentions, is willing and able to uphold the values and dictates of the international community.

Summary

Like the Zionist movement, the Palestinian struggle for self-determination emerged under conditions of tragedy. Nevertheless and also in accord with the Zionist experience, it was not tragedy that launched a truly unified and indigenous movement, rather movement emergence was made possible by a fundamental reordering the regional balance of power and the consequent adjustments to hegemonic alignments. Moreover, the movement that emerged found a high degree of acceptance and accommodation within the prevailing international temperament despite adopting an ideology and associated strategy that was in opposition to western great power preferences. This later observation highlights the various political cleavages—East vs. West, North vs. South, and secular Arab vs. Islamist—that movement leaders have been able to exploit or rally throughout their struggle.
On the other hand, unlike the Zionist movement which rapidly developed during its formative, the Palestinian formative years were marked by great leaps forward punctuated by debilitating setbacks. Although fractionalization has at times severely constrained the movement’s progress, for the most part these setback were externally induced—be it Israeli occupation policy, refusal on the leaderships part to submit to great power demands, or the activities of allies ostensively supporting the movement, but in acting in their own self-interest, frustrating the movement’s advancement. Elsewhere, the Palestinian leadership has been highly effective at rally solidarist support—even in their pursuit of a pluralist objective. In the end however, just as was the case with Zionism, marked advances in the movement’s cause always came on the heels of hegemonic decline and the emergence of a newly configured international system.

Today the Palestinian people are well positioned to execute the final stage of their struggle. In addition to the widespread support they have enjoyed from members of the Global South for decades, western European countries are also moving towards full recognition as evidenced in the European Union’s December 17, 2014 resolution. And while the United States and Israel remain resolute in their opposition to an imposed state in the absence of a mediated agreement, it just may be the case that with Islamist militant inching closer to the borders of more moderate states in the region, the West Bank secular PLO could establish itself a linchpin of stability, thus elevating its negotiating position vis-à-vis Israel and the United States.
Chapter VI: Conclusion

The Puzzle

Summary

This study has examined the story of two peoples—Jews and Palestinians—who through the fate of history, found their respective quests for self-determination to be intricately intertwined and conditioned by many of the same forces. At the same time, the two peoples pursued their respective quests for statehood in distinctly different manners by making use of separate pathways to statehood and by capitalizing upon differing elements of the structures in which they were embedded to advance their respective causes. Because each movement faced unique constraining and facilitating forces, it was also found that ultimately the interests and preferences of existing states, especially great powers, explained these unexpected outcomes.

Approach

This study asked: 1) are movement-international system interactions a good indicator of national liberation movement emergence, advancement, and outcome? And 2) what attributes of the international system must be overcome or otherwise harnessed by movement leaders that will ultimately propel them towards their final status? These questions properly lend themselves to analysis within a structure vs. agency framework. Evaluating the respective influence of agency and structure on the course and outcome of
struggles for national liberation, the approach drew upon the historical experiences of two exceptional cases. Zionism, it was proposed, constituted what Harry Eckstein (1975) refers to as a crucial case in that it succeeded in achieving statehood under conditions that would seemingly lead to failure—most noticeably: non-possession of territory, strong internal divisions including a majority sector of Jewish society which was staunchly opposed to statehood, and the rapid evaporation of hegemonic (British) support between the years 1936 and 1948. Similarly, it was suggested that the Palestinian movement for national liberation is representative of a crucial case being that the movement has thus far been unable to attain statehood despite enjoying strong and widespread external support, being wholly united internally in the cause of statehood, and being in possession of a national territory—albeit severely restricted by Israel’s occupation policies.

The task was thus to discover through inductive investigation potential explanations for these divergent and seemingly counterintuitive outcomes. By situating the historiography of each movement within the context of the hegemonic order in which it was embedded it was possible to ask of each case what was the impact of externally imposed structures. For example, how were institutionally defined pathways to statehood determinative of movement activities? What role did outside elite strategies play in formulating systemic political cleavages and how did these cleavages influence alliance structures and the capacity to rally outside powers to one’s cause? Alternatively, situating a movement’s progress within the opportunity structure that defines its path to statehood allowed us to inquire whether or not narratives of nationalism and conditions of tragedy significantly contributed to the positive reception of each movement’s claims to self-determination. It furthermore allowed us to assess the value of both violent and non-
violent strategies as well as a leadership’s capacity to effectively deploy each of these instruments in a manner that holistically advances the movement’s immediate and long-term objectives.

Findings

As illustrated in both case studies, the most influential factor guiding these struggles for national liberation are those forces which emanate from the prevailing structure of the international system. Not only was it demonstrated that the established material and ideational preferences of existing states have strong bearing on a movement’s ideological orientation and by consequence its chosen course of struggle, but hegemonic order configurations also define political cleavages and in so doing present movement leaders with both tactical and strategic opportunities by harnessing or exploiting those cleavages. In a similar fashion it was shown that elite strategies can serve as both a source of opportunity or conflict. In this sense they are the battlefields upon which struggles for national liberation take place. Accordingly, elite strategies are telling of one’s tactical approach in that they are the hurdle to be overcome, or in the case of alliance structures, the resource to be mobilized. With regard to the latter, the case studies reveal alliances to be somewhat helpful but always outside movement leaders’ sphere of control. Not only will allies be inclined to prioritize their own interests over that of the movement’s, but their assistance may also suppress the development of indigenous capabilities and a movement’s freedom of action.

From the agency perspective, the cases showed that the leadership of each movement was highly influential in the determination of a movement’s success or failure.
Narratives of nationalism were deemed relatively unproblematic, and beyond group emergence, insignificant. Similarly, conditions of tragedy were shown to be effective at rallying external support but in the end could not override the prevailing hegemonic will. In sharp contrast, it is leadership that strongly influences the course of struggle and its eventual outcome. In this regard, planning and long-term vision were essential in that they informed and guided each movements’ activities. Accordingly, in both cases it was found that the choice to deploy violence or more benign measures to advance the cause of statehood was the product of international temperament and the immediate challenge faced. It is thus leadership decisionmaking, not the instrument itself, that matters most.

Facilitating the decisionmaking process is the movement’s organizational structure. There is good evidence to show that hierarchal organizational structures make good use of all available resources while charismatic leadership is essential to mobilizing both internal and external supporters. Finally, together the case studies demonstrate that while fractionalization can enhance a movement’s efforts, when based upon political one-upmanship it can also be a highly destructive force hindering the achievement of statehood in that great powers are averse to recognizing new states where internal strife persists and may in fact worsen.

Overall the case studies revealed that it is the hegemonic order in which each national liberation movement was embedded that had the greatest impact on its advance towards statehood and its present status. As defined in the theoretical framework that informs this study, it is the hegemonic order; comprised of both material interests and the ideational preferences of existing states; that defines the institutional structure of the international system, informs the temperament of that system, and in doing so, drives the
course of struggle. This was reasoned upon two insights as confirmed within each of the cases studies. First, by establishing the rules that guide system behavior and forging parallel institutions to enforce and support those rules, it is hegemonic order that determines the pathways to statehood available to movement leaders. Second, although hegemonic powers have the greatest influence on the composition of that order, the international system is far from unified and thus affords the leaders of national liberation movements the ability to exploit or otherwise capitalize upon political cleavages and/or divergent elite strategies.

This latter insight highlights the strong influence leadership has on the course and outcome of both nationalist struggles. Forming the rational core of the liberation movement it is leadership which unifies group members, fans the flames of discontent, and creates within the minds of its followers the image of an independent state wherein group interests will be safeguarded. More directly, it is movement leadership that interprets and responds to the international temperament to devise strategic and tactical plans, erect appropriate organizational structures, and in the end, drives the movement along its course to statehood by appealing to the various material and ideational interests of existing states. With these observations in mind, Table 7.1 on the following page rates the causal force of each of the independent variables examined in this study.
Table 6.1 – Summary of Variable Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional System</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>Determinate of movement progression, ideology and strategy.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement Leadership</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The rational core whose planning, vision, and decisions drive a movement’s advance and its chances for success.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Played a strong role in advancing both causes. For Zionist, bombing of King David Hotel contributed to British withdraw. Palestinian skyjackings attracted attention to the movement.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Cleavages</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>Key instrument for advancing cause. Either by making oneself useful to material interests of others or by exploiting ideational cleavages.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite Strategies</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>Telling of tactical approach. The arena defining the hurdles (elites) to be overcome or the resources (elites) to be mobilize.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomacy</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Significant for advancing cause at each stage, but influenced by the prevailing, hegemonic order.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance Structure</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>May contribute to movement advance/success, but only when in the interest of allies. Otherwise allies are prone to exert strong constraining effects.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions of Tragedy</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Useful for mobilizing solidarist support, but at their very best are incapable of advancing movement beyond <em>de facto</em> recognition.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fractionalization</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Has a confounding effect when based on incompatible political or strategic objectives. Can moderately facilitate movement advancement by rallying added resources to the cause.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist Narratives</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Fundamental to in-group cohesion and external recognition, but beyond movement emergence they are mostly inconsequential.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: 1 = Very Strong, 2 = Strong, 3 = Moderate, 4 = Low
Assessment of Hypotheses

1) Movement emergence and mobilization is the product of repressive, confrontational, and polarizing political structures with inadequate institutional apparatuses for meeting the demands of a disenfranchised populace (Kriesi et al, 1995).

**False:** While these factors may *inspire* movement emergence, both movements had extended experiences with confounding structures prior to movement formation. Accordingly, this study found David Armitage’s (2007) observation that movement emergence is the product of hegemonic decline to be a far better indicator (see next).

2) International system openings brought about by shifts in the hegemonic order are the only means though which movements can emerge and advance.

**True:** Both cases support the proposition that institutional openings must first take place before a movement can advance. For Zionists it was the Napoleonic Code, Great Britain’s rise to power as the region’s hegemon, WWII, and Americas’ inheritance of Britain’s regional role. For the Palestinians it has been British occupation, the rise of America as the regional hegemon, Egypt’s defeat in 1967 and its turn to the West, and the egress of Russia’s influence coupled with America’s alignment with Israel.
3) Movement members are afforded greater policy options including the pursuit of violent strategies when great powers adopt competitive postures. Likewise, their actions are highly constrained when great power interests are in accord (Miller and Kagan, 1997).

**True:** US – UK divisions over Jewish immigration and partition afforded Zionists leaders ample space to pursue both violent and illegal activities. Palestinian leaders were able to engage in both guerilla warfare and terrorism throughout much of the Cold War. In contrast their activities were strongly constrained during the periods of both Great Britain and the United States unilateral hegemonic rule (1914-1945 and the post-Cold era respectively).

4) A movement’s strategic and tactical approach is the product of hegemonic preferences and cleavages in the international temperament—i.e. pluralist vs. solidarist values (Jackson and Sorenson, 2013).

**True:** Initially, Zionists appealed to pluralist values to take advantage of hegemonic material interest to launch and advance their movement and rallied solidarist support when those material interests shifted and in the wake of WWII. Never being presented with a genuine opportunity to serve hegemonic interests, Palestinian leaders have instead appealed to solidarists for support as a means to counter confrontational hegemons.
5) A movement’s founding ideology is the product of prevailing international temperament and that ideology in turn is determinate of its approach to statehood.

**True:** Both cases demonstrate evidence of this assertion. Zionists adopted a utopian-Marxist ideology reflective of late eighteenth century idealism and accordingly focused their attention on building a socialist utopia. The PLO of 1968 adopted a Marxist-revolutionary ideology reflective of mid-twentieth century anti-imperialist sentiment and pursued their struggle through armed conflict.

6) To obtain legal recognition as an equal (full statehood), the narratives movement members project about the origin and nature of their being (their nationalist claim to self-determination) must find resonance within the minds of the majority of existing members of the international community (Coppieters and Sakwa, 2003; Philoptt, 1995).

**True:** The Zionist’s primordial narrative was well understood by European powers of the eighteenth century and played a vital role in the granting of a charter to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. At the same time, Palestinian nationalist identity and associated right to self-determination was incorporated into legal instruments such as the San Remo Agreement, the Mandate for Palestine and numerous United Nations resolutions.
7) The formation of a workable strategic plan for attaining statehood and the capacity to refrain from deviating from it is essential to the positive advancement and ultimate success of the movement’s objectives (Wood, 1981).

**True:** The Zionist case demonstrated that planning can greatly facilitate a movement’s advancement; particularly throughout its formative years. Likewise the Palestinian case showed the right plan for the right time can be highly effective. For instance, their Ten-Point Program, while not achieving all of its objectives, did garner the movement widespread support. Moreover, in the absence of the Fayyad Plan the movement’s *de facto* recognition would likely have not been attained.

8) Allies are essential to a movement’s recognition, advancement and ultimate attainment of statehood (Kriesi et al, 1995).

**False:** Although Zionists initially received both moral and material support from Great Britain, during the formative years of struggle (1936 – 1949) they received no outside support except for the availability of weapons via Czechoslovakia. In contrast, Palestinian’s have received support from various powerful allies throughout their struggle. In spite of this they have yet to attain statehood. Moreover, the case study demonstrated that often the Palestinian’s allies worked against their interests.
9) Movement recognition and successful attainment of statehood can only be obtained when that objective is in the interests of at least one great power (O’Leary and Triman, 2007).

**True:** Especially with regard to the sort of universal *de jure* recognition national liberation movements require since it is only the Security Council that can grant membership and thus advance universal recognition of a state’s legal legitimacy (UN XIV: Rule 136). Accordingly, if any one great power were to use its veto to frustrate recognition (as the United States has threatened to do with regards to Palestinian statehood in the absence of a negotiated agreement) said status could not be attained.

10) In-group fractionalization is the greatest barrier to movement advancement and success (Misra, 2001; Gates, 2002).

**False:** When based upon contradictory strategic visions such as those witnessed between mainstream Zionism and the Irgun on the one hand, and the PLO and Hamas on the other, fractionalization can have strong confounding effects. Nevertheless, as the 1948 Ben-Gurion—Began standoff illustrates, these barriers are not insurmountable so long as each party is able to envision the higher objective (i.e. advancement of the movement’s primary goals).
The Contribution

This study has set out to explore the nature and force of system-level constructs on nationalist struggles. Acknowledging that the ultimate objective of any given national liberation movement is the attainment of international legitimacy, it was reasoned that beyond examining a movement’s interactions with its target state, focused attention must also be given to ways in which existing states can both facilitate and frustrate a movement’s efforts. While the literature on nationalist struggles provide rich context and insight into the dynamics of target state/movement exchanges, too little attention has been given to the role of international system/movement relations in bringing about the success or failure of people’s quest for statehood. One contribution of this study is its heuristic approach and consequent ability to discover interesting ways in which movement activities and the international system interact and the resulting insights into how struggles for national liberation are pursued within the any given hegemonic order.

Explicitly, it demonstrated that because divisions exists over the proper ordering of international society and the values which should take precedence in the pursuit global justice, national liberation movements are able to latch onto or otherwise exploit these political cleavages in their efforts to overcome confrontational elite strategies. While it is undoubtedly true that a movement’s day-to-day tactical and strategic activities are indeed aimed at influencing a target state, viewed through this paradigm these activities are less about directly changing the position of the target state itself than they are about influencing the policy preferences of the international system in which both the movement and target states find themselves. This observation provides both fertile
ground for scholars and practitioners alike. For those who seek to further our understanding of independence movements and the acquisition of statehood and those who can draw upon these insights to resituate like conflicts and in doing so, seek out innovative pathways to their resolution.

**Limits to Research**

This study of Palestinian and Jewish independence struggles was a comparative exploration of two exceptional cases each amounting to a crucial case in that their course of struggle and current status defy what one would reasonably expect to find. In the case of Zionism this amounted to focused assessment of local determinates as well internationally derived forces since it was the global hegemon itself which had the strongest impact on the movement’s activities. Conversely, while shifting regional power structures and the preferences of neighboring states were assessed in regard to the Palestinian struggle, some may argue that too little attention was paid to role of Israeli policy in constraining Palestinian efforts to advance their cause.

This omission was deemed justified on the basis of a) the study’s focus on system-level interactions and b) that the constraining effects of Israeli policy and interests can be taken as a given defining characteristic of a national liberation movement’s challenge with respect to a target state. In retrospect, and as a wealth of studies examining this specific topic demonstrate, such analysis could have provided better context to Palestinian strategic and tactical pursuits. Nevertheless, it was determined that inclusion of this dynamic would distract attention from this study’s focus and orientation which prioritizes international structure over secondary-level accounts.
Similarly, this same omission could be said to ignore Israel’s ‘special relationship’ with the United States and the frustrating conditions this imposes on Palestinian ambitions. The study acknowledged and explored the strong constraining effects US preferences have had on the Palestinian’s bid for statehood and discussed at length the means through which the Palestinian leadership has sought to overcome these barriers. It does not, however, give sustained attention to arguments such as those postulated by Mearsheimer and Walt (2006) which give significant explanatory power to Israeli and diasporic Jewish meddling in US policy formation with regard to the final status of Palestine.

While there is little doubt that Israeli officials, the American Israel Political Affairs Committee, and Jewish-American voters are very active in promoting the interests of Israel, to attribute US policy to Israeli interests is to ignore the well established fact highlighted by realists that any nation will always act in its own best interest. For hegemons, stability is first and foremost their greatest concern (Gilpin, 1988). Accordingly, while the granting of Palestinian statehood would bolster the Westphalia system and thus offer one path to stability; in the most unstable region of the world it should come as no surprising that the United States would enlist a proxy (Israel) to enforce its will. Not only does this explain America’s tough stance vis-à-vis Palestinian statehood (Bush, 2002), it also explains the Bush administration’s decision to pursue a two-state solution in the wake of 9-11 in order to ease tensions and anti-American sentiment in the region by demonstrating progress on the Palestine front (Bush, 2008). While US and Israeli interests may enter into alignment, from a realist
perspective—the perspective adopted throughout this study—one should not conflate alignment with influence.

A more appropriate criticism of this study could be leveled at its methodological approach and use of secondary resources. With regard to the latter, as is evident in each of the case historiographies a concerted effort was made to rely on and prioritize the use of primary resources. In this regard the study draws extensively on League of Nations and Untied Nations documentation including rules of procedure, debate minutes, treaties, and resolutions. Similarly, first hand accounts, memos and internal reports were pulled from the national archives of relevant actors; most specifically those of Great Britain, the United States, Israel, and where available, both the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. Adding context to these predominantly legal and political instruments, the study draws on the essays, memoirs, and speeches of seminal political leaders, as well as *The Statesman Yearbook* and other sources of compiled demographic data. Where said sources were unavailable, secondary resources bridge the missing elements of the respective narratives to paint a full picture. This was especially the case with regard to the Palestinian historiography wherein pre-1968 documentation was particularly scarce as were English versions of the organization’s meeting minutes and leadership’s strategic thinking.

With reference to the former criticism—that the methodological approach employed herein fails to definitively establish causal relationships between structural forces and movement activities and outcomes that can be generalized to the full body of national liberation struggles—there is some necessary incompleteness in the study. This is due partly to the exceptional character of the cases themselves. Unlike the far more
common nationalist movements defined by a people attempting to succeed from an established state, the two movement’s singular reliance on system-level forces to formally establish them as states promised to offer a clear lens into the raw impacts of the system effects on the processes and outcomes of these national liberation movement. Moreover, and as a consequence of the difficulty in separating system level impacts, the vast majority of studies on nationalist struggles focus on movement-target state interactions and at best only tangentially address the facilitating factors and systemic restraints that limit the attainment of statehood. As a result, being informed primarily by that literature this study employed an inductive approach with the aim of theory generation rather the theory confirmation. As Eckstein (1975) makes clear, this differs considerably from disciplined-configurative studies which simply assume that general laws already exist and are available for testing through deductive analysis.

In sum then, this work amounts to a heuristic case study. It has relied upon an inductive methodology to deliberately stimulate the imagination in order to discern important general problems and to generate possible theoretical solutions to those problems (Eckstein: 104). In this respect, the central problem was defined as ‘finding out’ the frustrating and facilitating effects of system-level influences on struggles for national liberation and the ways in which these same influences are determinate of a movement’s activities. A secondary problem was to establish how a movement’s capabilities influence its response to structurally imposed constraints or opportunities. Then, guided by the indicators of social movement success at the national level of analysis, these same yet slightly modified variables were drawn upon to generate theoretical explanations of their observed effects as witnessed in each of the cases examined. It is hoped that the insights
drawn herein will stimulate similar works examining the causal effects of system-level influences on the course of other struggles for national liberation.
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