Introduction

Stephanie Latte Abdallah, Cedric Parizot

Introduction

The Shadows of the Wall: Reappraising the Israeli Occupation Regime

Stéphanie Latte Abdallah and Cédric Parizot

Author's manuscript to be published in Israelis and Palestinians in the Shadows of the Wall: Spaces of Separation and Occupation, Ashgate, 2015

Erected by Israel in 2002, the West Bank Wall is the most imposing, visible, and costly control edifice built since the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in June 1967. Built to embody the Israeli policy of unilateral separation (*hafrada*), it has become both the venue and target for local and international disputes. Now that it has received intensive media exposure, it has become the emblem of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict: concrete walls or sections of barriers put up by Israel in the West Bank now appear on the covers of publications targeting both the general public and the scientific community. Changes in the situation and the issues in the conflict are often summarized only through discussions revolving around the Wall.

But this edifice can also be seen as a trap. Mesmerized by the Wall, many local and international observers have lost touch with the processes and changes in Israeli occupation policies in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Considering the separation as complete, some observers even consider that the terms of the debate and conflict have changed; the Wall therefore hides as much as it reveals.

By bringing together anthropologists, sociologists, historians, political scientists, and economists, this book attempts to shift the focus from the Wall itself to the shadows it casts. It attempts to analyze the reconfigurations of Israeli occupation policies and therefore understand the nature of the separation implemented in the West Bank and Gaza over the past 20 years. Our perspective highlights the role of the local and international actors and institutions that have contributed to redeploying these systems of control, whether by participating in their administration or by circumventing or appropriating them for their own ends.

We will see how, whilst playing on the image of the border, the implementation of the Israeli separation policy causes a profound reorganization of the economic, social, and political relations of domination between Israeli and Palestinian populations. By perpetuating and increasing their relations of interdependence, the occupation regime is compromising the creation of a viable Palestinian State in a near future.

[Insert map I.1 on the next page so that it will face the text]

Map I.1   Separation Wall, July 2010

A World-Famous yet Unfinished Structure

Promoted by its partisans and detractors alike, the excessive media coverage of the Wall has contributed to making it the chief focus for local and international confrontations. But all this media attention makes the world forget that the principal role this barrier was designed to perform has not been achieved. In the context of local and international pressures that are difficult to reconcile, the planners have had to revise the route of the wall several times. Completion of the project has been postponed so many times that in 2014 it remained largely unfinished, and at that time, at least, created no territorial separation between Israelis and Palestinians.

The Materialization of a Security Policy

In Israel the building of the Wall was launched in response to increasing popular pressure as a result of an escalation of Palestinian suicide bombings that peaked in spring 2002 (Kershner 2005). The Israeli population demanded concrete, tangible measures from the Sharon government (Arieli and Sfard 2008). Apart from creating a climate of terror, these bombings challenged the ability of the state to defend its citizens (Dieckhoff 2003). The Wall was thus conceived as a way of ending the bombings and restoring the sovereignty of the state over its territory.

The left wing parties which included some of the chief promoters of the project (Rabinowitz 2003) depicted the construction of the Wall as a way of avoiding the reversal of the demographic balance in favor of the Arabs. Certain observers even thought that the Wall would complete the

building of the nation by giving Israel borders worthy of a modern state (Halper 2003; Arieli and Sfard 2008; Rabinowitz 2003). And following 9/11, the building of the Barrier was seen as erecting a border that many people considered, to use a neologism, õcivilizational,ö a rampart between the õfree worldö and õobscurantismö (Rabinowitz 2003).

Coming from the Israeli population and political class, this pressure continued and persuaded Ariel Sharon, who had hitherto been very skeptical about the Wall, to implement its construction. Sharon only agreed to the project on the condition that its path would incorporate the most significant groups of settlements and a large amount of land into Israeli territory (Arieli and Sfard 2008, p. 49). He saw this as a way of shifting the border of Israel past the Green Line[1] and making legitimate the land acquired for Israeli settlement (Snegaroff and Blum 2005). At the elections in 2006, in his õconvergenceö plan for the withdrawal of Israeli settlements from the east of the Wall, Ehud Olmert, head of the center-right Kadima party, presented the Wall as the de facto future border between the two states. Eight years later, on January 2014, a prominent Israeli think tank, the Institute for National Security Studies, also suggested relying on the Barrier route to fix the limit of Israeløs withdrawal from the West Bank if talks sponsored by the Americans failed. The Eastern limit of that õdisengagementö would be the Jordan Valley (Cohen 2014).

In Israel, the Wall project had thus gradually brought together the political agendas of the left and the right. By combining elements of security, demographics, annexation and, to a certain extent, border strategy (Parizot 2009a), it had attracted consensus from all but extreme left activists fighting the occupation (Lamarche 2009, 2013).

Symbol of a Policy of Predation and Confinement
For the Palestinians the Wall is just one more way of stealing from them; its construction has resulted in numerous spoliations and destructions that have had disastrous economic consequences. These are

---

[1] The Green Line is the 1949 armistice line between Israel and Jordan. It runs through the heart of Jerusalem and divides the East (Palestinian sector) from the West, and the West Bank from Israel inside its 1948 borders.

regularly recorded by Palestinian NGOs as well as Israeli[2] and international NGOs and agencies.[3] Subject to repeated border closures and long periods of curfew since the beginning of the second Intifada (Bocco et al. 2002), the Palestinians have experienced the building of the Wall as a new way of imprisoning them. In fact, the Wall embodies the limits on movement progressively imposed on Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since the 1990s (Abu Zahra 2007). The Wall imprisons the Palestinians in a ghetto whose size has been gradually reduced to almost nothing. Lastly, it also fragments the Palestinian zones on the West Bank and isolates communities that have remained to the west of its path from those to the east. In 2013, for example, 11,000 Palestinians living in 32 communities found themselves trapped between the path of the Green Line and that of the Wall (UNOCHA 2013); if we add the 248,400[4] Palestinians in East Jerusalem, we get a total of 259,400 people.

[Insert map I.2 on the previous/next page so that it will face the text]

Map I.2   A, B and C areas in the West Bank

The Wall has not only taken farmers away from their land, it has also profoundly disrupted the economic and social relations between neighboring populations, between centers and their peripheries, just as it has reduced levels of access to health and education for certain communities. By doing so, the Wall has created more obstacles to the construction of a viable Palestinian economy and state.

---

[2] On the Palestinian side, see, for example, PENGON (2003); on the Israeli side, see the reports on the BøTselem site (http://www.btselem.org/english/accessed January 7, 2015) and Ir Amim (http://www.ir-amim.org.il/eng/accessed April 8, 2014).

[3] Regarding international agencies and teams, see, for example, the work of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, occupied Palestinian territory (http://www.ochaopt.org/), and also the series of reports drawn up by HPEG (2003) and Bocco et al. (2003).

[4] See õSpecial Statistical Bulletin on the 65th Anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba,ö May 14, 2013. Available at: http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?tabID=512&lang=en&ItemID=788&mid=3171&wversion=Staging, accessed February 4, 2014.

A Theatre of Local and International Conflicts

In order to seek international aid, Palestinian NGOs have launched a number of media campaigns. An example is the Stop Wall Campaign supported by PENGON, a federation of several local NGOs. Palestinians have been backed up by Israeli NGOs such as BøTselem and HaMoked,[5] as well as international NGOs. The information published on the internet by these organizations offers a counter narrative to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[6]

Local populations directly affected by progress in the building work also mobilized to launch non-violent types of opposition; on numerous occasions these campaigns have seen such groups taking their cases to the Israeli Supreme Court. These cases have enabled some plaintiffs to have building work suspended for a time or, in a few cases, to redraw the path of the Wall (Kershner 2005). Palestinian populations have also demonstrated every week, for instance at Biliøin and Naøalin, or Nabi Saleh focusing mainly on settlersø land grabs in their villages and surrounding areas. These villages have attracted considerable media attention as the focus of clashes between the Israeli army on one side and Palestinian, Israeli (such as Anarchists against the Wall), and international demonstrators[7] on the other (Lamarche 2011, 2013).

The Palestinian Authority (PA) has ended up using diplomatic channels. The international community has been moved to act several times. While the project to build a õsecurity barrierö to prevent Palestinian suicide bombers has not been challenged as such, the main international actors involved in the conflict (the United States, Europe, the United Nations, etc.) do not support Israeløs attempts to annex additional territory. In 2003 the United States intervened to halt the construction of certain portions which, in their opinion, directly threatened the process of building a Palestinian State;[8]

---

[5] Website: http://www.hamoked.org, accessed January 7, 2015.

[6] Website of the Israeli Ministry of Defense: http://www.seamzone.mod.gov.il/pages/eng/purpose.htm, accessed January 28, 2014.

[7] Because these populations have again enjoyed the support of Israeli NGOs such as Taøayush, Anarchists Against the Wall, Gush Shalom, etc., and international associations such as the Internal Solidarity Movement or Les Missions civiles.

[8] This was why Ariel Sharon had to cancel the construction of the first portions of the Barrier between the Jordan valley and the region of Jenin. The original plan was to build the Wall not just to the west, but also to the east of the main Palestinian-

in July 2004 in an advisory opinion sought by the United Nations, the International Court of Justice at The Hague declared the route of the Wall in the West Bank illegal.[9]

In addition to pressure from the Palestinians and international community, action has also come from Israeli settlers: rather than halting the project, they have made efforts to ensure that their settlements would be on the right side of the Barrier. Their lobbying and appeals to the Israeli Supreme Court have been successful on several occasions (Blum and Snegaroff 2005; Backman 2006, p. 238ó59).

An Unfinished Project

The irreconcilable nature of local and international pressure has led the planners to revise the route of the Wall several times. They have gradually had to move it nearer and nearer to the Green Line and its path has become very winding and discontinuous.

These inconsistencies have created a rather absurd situation: from a strictly territorial viewpoint the barrier does not create any separation between Israeli and Palestinian territory, nor does it distinguish inside from outside. It also often separates some parts of Israel from others. Crossing the Wall does not necessarily mean a change of jurisdiction (Parizot 2009c): for example, Israeli drivers travelling from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea have to cross the Wall, but remain on a road that runs through an area controlled exclusively by Israel. Furthermore, the pursuit of settlement building behind the Wall has maintained Israeli enclaves on the Palestinian side. In order to protect these settlements as well as certain roads leading to them, õin-depth barriersö have been built, thereby maintaining õextraterritorial Israeli zonesö and breaking up the Palestinian territories even further. The

---

occupied zones of the West Bank. The eastern wall would have made it possible to keep the Jordan valley and its settlements inside Israel (Ariel and Sfard 2008, p. 43).

[9] The Court ruled by fourteen votes to one that the construction of a barrier in the Palestinian-occupied West Bank and around east Jerusalem was in breach of international law. It asked Israel to halt building work, demolish those sections located in the West Bank and make reparation for the damage caused. By thirteen votes to one, the court asked states not to recognize the de facto situation or assist Israel in maintaining or pursuing the construction (Finkelstein 2005, p. 204ó5).

more the route of the Wall has approached the Green Line,[10] the more õin-depth barriersö have been built and the more the Wall has created enclaves (Weizman 2007, p. 176).

[Insert map I.3 on previous/next page so that it will face the text]

Map I.3   Palestinian and Israeli areas in the West Bank, 2009

The Wall also divides Palestinian areas from the rest of the Palestinian territories. It firstly created a number of Palestinian enclaves on the Israeli side; then it defined Palestinian enclaves on the Palestinian side. Its tortuous path, attempting to include the maximum number of settlements on the Israeli side, created pockets encircling Palestinian communities on several sides. In 2009, to the east of the Wall, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA 2009) estimated that 125,000 Palestinians were surrounded by the barrier on three sides and that 26,000 were completely surrounded and only able to leave the enclaves by specially built bridges or tunnels.

Lastly, the inability of the Israelis to reconcile the local and international pressures has considerably slowed the construction of the barrier. While half the planned structure was completed between the summer of 2002 and the summer of 2006, between 2006 and 2012 only a further 12 percent was built. The initial schedule, which set the end of building work for 2008, has now considerably overrun. In July 2012 only two-thirds of the barrier had been finished (UNOCHA 2013) and many sections were not operational. Located in the heart of the West Bank, the sections that still have to be built have provokedô and will certainly provoke in the futureô greater opposition from the various parties. Since 2008 the Wall appears to have lost its status as a priority for the population and the government of Israel. In this context in which the suicide bombings have stopped and/or the separation is considered to have been effected and acknowledged, the Israelis no longer appear to care about it (Parizot 2009a).

---

[10] Shaul Ariel and Michael Sfard (2008, p. 42) stressed that initial forecasts caused Ariel Sharon to envisage the possibility of unilaterally annexing 45 percent of the West Bank. Successive re-estimates made under local and international pressure have reduced this area to less than 10 percent, i.e. to an area almost equivalent to what the negotiators envisaged at Taba (2001) and during the Geneva initiative (2003).

Separation: The Reorganization of the Israeli Occupation

If we are to understand the nature of the separation Israel has imposed on Palestinians, its territorial and institutional implications and its influence on the directions the conflict has taken and the stakes involved, we have to look back to the moment the separation was introduced in the early 1990s and then trace its subsequent readjustments. The separation policy was implemented differently at the time of the Oslo Accords (1993–2000) from the subsequent period (2000–2014). This policy has gradually reorganized the Israeli modes of civilian and military occupation to the extent that, by the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century this regime of occupation had come to seem permanent, taking complex territorial, administrative and institutional form. Moreover, the cost of the occupation appears to be increasingly covered by Palestinian and international actors.

1993–2000: The Oslo Negotiations

The separation policy was launched at the time of the First Intifada (1987–1993). Since December 1987 the confrontations between the occupying forces and the Palestinian population have revived the idea of borders in that they have given the landscape a line separating the areas the Palestinians lived in from those where the Israelis lived (Grinberg 2010). The confrontations highlighted the failure of the system of occupation deployed since June 1967 by Israel. The separation policy had been promoted by Itzhak Rabin, the minister of defence, then prime minister of the State of Israel from 1992 to 1995 (Arieli and Sfard 2008). The policy was based on the introduction of restrictions on movement including travel permits (Handel 2009a; Hanieh 2006; Hass 2002) that gradually put in place a system for filtering the Palestinians willing to enter into Israel (Parizot 2010). The boundaries imposed were no longer those of 1967; instead they confirmed the annexing of East Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. These regions had been forbidden to Palestinians from other regions of the West Bank at the beginning of 1993 (Abu Zahra 2007).

The Oslo negotiations followed by the signing of the Declaration of Principles in Washington in September 1993 reinforced this process of separation while giving it an administrative, negotiated dimension. Israel was able to delegate the administration of the occupied population to the PA created

in 1994. Between 1993 and 2000, as successive agreements were signed, the Israeli army withdrew from the zones in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip that had passed into Palestinian autonomy. In the euphoria of the first years, some saw these withdrawals as the prelude to a full disengagement of Israel from the West Bank and Gaza.

Nevertheless, at the end of the 1990s, due to the failure of the Oslo process, the occupation remained in place. Yet, its character had changed since the Palestinians and their international financial backers found themselves de facto involved in managing or supporting its costs. The PA quickly acquired the appearance and symbols of the quasi-state it had been supposed to become at the end of the interim period (1998). This process had been encouraged by the intervention of international organizations and institutions (European Union, United Nations, World Bank, cooperation with various countries and many NGOs, etc.) who got involved very early on to support the negotiation process and the construction of the economy and State of Palestine.[11] But this direct international aid to the budget of the PA was due to end in 1996, by which time it was thought that the Palestinian economy would have been relaunched and political and territorial sovereignty would be on the way to realization (Brynen 2000). But the rapid deterioration of the political situation has prevented the development of an independent Palestinian economy that was sufficiently robust to meet these costs. Sustained international aid has in fact become a way of ensuring the functioning of a PA and economy that could not survive independentlyô an authority which nevertheless took over in 1994 some portfolios and costs previously paid for by the Israeli authorities: health, education, police, taxation, etc. Therefore, international actors and the PA found themselves constrained to sub-contract part of the Israeli occupation (Bocco and Mansouri 2008; Latte Abdallah, 2011; Ophir, Givoni, and Hanafi 2009).

In territorial terms, the Oslo Accords led to the division of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into three types of zone, known as A, B, and C. In the A zones, Israel delegated security and civil

---

[11] At this time, 43 countries committed the sum of four billion dollars to support the building of institutions by the Palestinian Authority, to develop the economy, infrastructure, and civil society up to the end of the interim period. Part of this sum was intended directly to fund the Palestinian Authority and contributed largely to setting up its administration, its ministers and services (education, health, etc.), its security forces and police (Brynen 2000; Lia 2007).

control to the PA; in the B zones, the PA was responsible for public order and the internal security of the Palestinians while Israel reserved the right to act on any questions of external security. Lastly, the C zones remained under Israeli control.

The gradual deterioration of relations between the parties and the successive failures of negotiations have caused the withdrawal of the Israelis to be postponed on several occasions. The Israelis have also increased the number of *fait accompli* on the ground so that they will be in a position of strength when negotiations on the final status take place. Whilst agreeing to abandon some of the territories occupied in 1967, they have reorganized their civil and military occupation to increase their presence in the C zones.

On the eve of the Second Intifada (2000), these redeployments had left a patchwork of Palestinian enclaves that were isolated from one another. In the West Bank, the A zones at the time only accounted for 17 percent of the West Bank, the B zones 23 percent, and the C zones 60 percent. In the Gaza Strip, the independent Palestinian zones covered 65 percent of the territory, the Israelis maintaining control of the remainder of zones in which there were settlements.

The isolation of the enclaves was reinforced particularly as a response to Palestinian suicide bombings in Israeli towns, and in order to pursue the separation policy the army increased the number of closures and drastically increased controls on Palestinian workers employed in Israel (Farsakh 2002, 2005; Kelly 2006; Parizot 2008). This period was therefore seen by the Palestinians as the affirmation of a policy of confinement and hardening of the occupation mechanisms. It was also in this context and that of the failure of the Oslo negotiations that the Second Intifada broke out in September 2000.

2000ó2014: Separation and Interconnectedness

The readjustments made by the Israeli occupation regime at the beginning of the twenty-first century were radically different in character from those made during the previous period. And for good reason: the Israelis no longer saw the future in the same way as they did during the Oslo Accords period. Since the start of the Second Intifada most members of the Israeli ruling class along with its ordinary citizens were convinced that a negotiated solution to the conflict was now impossible (Cypel 2005). The Israeli

redeployments during this period therefore tried both to regain long-term control over security in the Palestinian enclaves and move unilateral separation forward.

During the Second Intifada (2000–2004) the Israeli army entered regularly the autonomous Palestinian areas to attack the armed groups; in 2002, in an operation codenamed 'Defensive Shield' (*homat magen*), the Israeli army massively invaded these zones. It directly targeted the PA's forces and infrastructure, accusing it of being mainly responsible for the uprising and Palestinian suicide bombings in Israeli towns. The Palestinian security forces were besieged in their barracks along with the President of the PA, Yasser Arafat who, until his death in 2004, was confined in his compound in Ramallah. Furthermore, the Palestinian populations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank were subjected to unprecedented closures and curfews (Bocco et al. 2002a, 2002b).

At the same time, in the face of Israeli popular pressure demanding that the state take tangible measures to end the suicide bombings and impose a unilateral solution to the conflict, the political leaders have opted to pursue and implement the policy of separation from the Palestinians. It was also during summer 2002, a few months after organizing the renewed invasion of the Palestinian enclaves, that the Sharon government agreed to launch the building of the Wall (Arieli and Sfard 2008).

The combination of these two approaches led to the implementation of new Israeli control mechanisms. But the way these mechanisms operate is very different in the West Bank from the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank the army reinforced its long-term presence, maintaining a solid encirclement around the Palestinian enclaves by setting up a large number of outposts around the zones and increasing the number of checkpoints and obstacles on the roads linking them (trenches, road blocks, earth mounds, concrete blocks, watchtowers, etc.).[12] In this way it sought to reduce interaction with the Palestinians while maintaining tight control over their movements (Ben Ari et al. 2004)[13] and

---

[12] Since 2002 the number of obstacles controlling the movement of Palestinians has constantly risen. In June 2009, the United Nations listed 698, including 76 permanent and 23 partial checkpoints (OCHA 2009).

[13] Between 1994 and 1999 the Israeli army imposed 443 closure days, an average of two and a half months each year. These measures had serious repercussions on Palestinian employment and economy and had a decisive effect on the flow of labor into Israel. Between 1992 and 1996 the number of Palestinian workers crossing the Line fell by 51 percent. It started to rise in 1997 and reached 145,000 people in August 2000 (Parizot 2008).

reserving itself the right to intervene regularly in the heart of their living space (Amidror 2007). These operations included targeted assassinations, arrests, and intelligence operations (Cohen 2009; Latte Abdallah, Natsheh, and Parizot, in this volume; Razoux 2006; Weizman 2007).

Such controls have become more oppressive as the number of settlements kept on increasing. In 2011, the number of settlers in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) reached 520,000 people (UNOCHA 2012). The rhythm of increase was equivalent on both sides of the Wall.[14] If communal areas and those under the jurisdiction of regional councils are included, the 122 Israeli settlements alone control 41.9 percent of the West Bank or nearly 80 percent of the C zones under Israeli jurisdiction. This area works out even larger if the bypass roads are included. Although they ease travel for the settlers and the army by making it unnecessary for them to pass through Palestinian settlements, they have fragmented the Palestinian territories and limited both urban and rural development (BøTselem 2004, p. 6ó7; Handel 2009a, p. 204ó7).

The security cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians gradually resumed after the death of Arafat in 2004. On the West Bank this only became a reality in 2007 when, under the leadership of the Americans, and particularly General Dayton, the Israeli government agreed to the redeployment of Palestinian forces in the major towns of the West Bank (Legrain 2010). The authorization of this redeployment was also due to the Israeli desire to counter Hamas, which took power in the Gaza Strip in 2007. Besides, once redeployed, the forces of Fatah played a determining role in disbanding the armed groups, and Hamas in the West Bank.

The new systems of control introduced in the West Bank were envisaged as long-term, the Israeli authorities making every effort to reduce their political and financial cost (Havkin and Latte Abdallah, in this volume). The building of õcrossing pointsö (Hebrew: *maøavarim*) along the Separation Wall, which were presented as õborder terminals,ö and the use of private companies to

---

[14] See Foundation for Middle East Peace (2007), õSettler Population Growth East and West of the Barrier, 2000ó2009,ö and Nadav Shragaï (2007), õMost Settlements Lie East of Fence, Most Settlers Westö. Available at: http://www.fmep.org/settlement_info/settlement-info-and-tables/stats-data/population-growth-east-and-west-of-the-barrier, accessed December 30, 2010.

manage the crossing points were all part of this strategy. The architecture, location, facilities, and operation as well as the terminology used to describe these new checkpoints confer a less obviously violent appearance to control. The use of private security companies to ensure the operation of the crossings and perform security checks depoliticized the control (Havkin 2008, in this volume). Some military experts responsible for planning in the Palestinian zones have even used the concept of õinvisible occupationö (Weizman 2009).

The adoption of the Gaza disengagement project (*hitnatkut*) by Ariel Sharon fulfilled the same strategy (Signoles 2005). Moreover, Sharon saw in it a way to escape from the framework laid down by the Quartet[15] and the Road Map: drawn up in 2003, the Road Map set out the plan that the conflict should end in the creation of a Palestinian State by 2005 (Grinberg 2010). Ariel Sharonøs advisor Dov Weiglass explained that the aim of the operation was to divert the attention of the international community and the Palestinian population while the West Bank was being settled (Signoles 2005, p. 120).

This withdrawal kept the Palestinians under a different type of occupation. While it certainly resulted in the departure of 8,000 settlers and the military bases protecting them, Israel introduced new systems of remote control. The army maintained its control over air and sea space and forbade the movement of residents in a kilometer wide corridor along the demarcation line. Lastly, the Israeli authorities kept their control over the crossing points for people and goods, thereby controlling the flow of imports and exports as well as the movement of Palestinians trying to enter or leave the Gaza Strip. By tightening its grip on the coastal strip, the army set up a veritable siege around Gaza; using very few resources it was able to control or halt supplies of goods, electricity and fuel oil. The blockade imposed since 2005 has kept the population on the brink of a humanitarian disaster (Ophir, Givoni, and Hanafi 2009, p. 19). This siege, together with Israeliøs increasingly bloody offensives on

---

[15] The Quartet is an international diplomatic body founded in 2002 to act as a mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. It is made up of the United States, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations.

Gaza in June to July 2006, December 2008 to January 2009,[16] November 2012 and July to August 2014[15] have nevertheless damaged the image of Israel diplomatically.

Reappraising the Conflict's Trajectories and the Occupation Regime

By strengthening the interconnectedness of the Israeli and Palestinian zones, ensuring the long-term character of the occupation whilst offloading some of its cost onto the Palestinians and the international community, these changes suggest that the trajectories of the conflict and the functioning of the separation regime should be seen in a new light.

The Trajectories of the Conflict

Observers and researchers working on the region often appear to be blind to certain aspects of the present situation (Ophir, Givoni, and Hanafi 2009, p. 16). The period we are now living through is often seen as a period of transition between a time of confrontation and a political solution in the form of two states. Every event and process tends to be analyzed in the light of the hypothetical future envisaged by some people in the 1990s after the signing of the Declaration of Principles (1993): that of the establishment of a Palestinian State at Israel's side. The failure of the Oslo Accords, the start of the Second Intifada and the continuing deterioration of the situation did not really affect this transitory view of the conflict. Only a few social scientists have lately started to adopt a more critical analysis towards the negotiations (Turner 2014). Some contest the definition of the situation as a conflict preferring the concept of settler colonialism to describe the reality on the ground (Collins 2011).

This transitory reading and the illusion of an end to the crisis which underpins it have been encouraged by the lack of precision of the Declaration of Principles signed on 13 September 1993 by the Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres and Mahmud Abbas under the supervision of chairman of the PLO Yasser Arafat and the Israeli prime minister Itzhak Rabin. The postponement of negotiations

---

[16] Immediately after Israel unilaterally declared a ceasefire on January 17, 2009, casualty figures on the Palestinian side were more than 1,300 dead and over 5,000 injured as against 13 dead on the Israeli side.

[15] During the 2014 war, more than 2100 Gazans were killed and around 11000 were injured as against 72 dead on the Israeli side and approximately 700 wounded.

on the final status of the refugees, the borders, Jerusalem, and the settlements allowed everybody to imagine their own version of peace without having to take account of other people's versions (Grinberg 2007b).

The Oslo Accords actually ushered in a new period of misunderstanding and confrontation. On the one side, the Palestinians expected a process of decolonization: the withdrawal of troops and the repatriation of Israeli settlers to the other side of the Green Line ought to bring independence and the creation of their own state with East Jerusalem as its capital, this vision being shared by a large number of international actors. It was reinforced by the actions of the United Nations and the European Union as well as by financial investment by countries which supported the process. On the other side, the Israelis had no intention of discussing the status of all the territories occupied in 1967. Jerusalem should remain the unified capital of the State of Israel, the limits of which should include a large part of the settlements (Ben Ami 2006, p. 246‑7). No government, including those formed by the Labour Party, has wanted to dismantle the settlements. The Rabin government even encouraged settlers who wanted to return to Israel (the 'Returning Home' movement) to stay put in order to constitute a bargaining chip in the negotiations with the Palestinians (Grinberg 2010). Rabin and Peres hoped that the accords would lead to the creation of a confederation with Jordan rather than the founding of a Palestinian State (Smith 2007, p. 454). It was not until May 1997 that the Labour Party officially adopted the idea of a Palestinian State with a certain number of conditions (Ben Ami 2006, p. 246‑7). Although in a speech at Bar Ilan University in 2009 the Israeli prime minister Benyamin Netanyahu formally accepted the principle of the creation of a Palestinian State[16], he has never stipulated clearly the conditions under which he sees this taking place.

Since the period of the Oslo Accords, the political goal of a Palestinian State has constantly been reactivated by political and media discourse. But the positions of the various players on the details of how such a state can be brought into existence have constantly changed under the influence

---

[16] View the speech on YouTube at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NY6fGMC0VtQ, accessed May 2, 2014.

of the deteriorating relations between Israelis and Palestinians and failed initiatives to re-launch negotiations.[17]

The absence of progress in these negotiations set the background to Mahmoud Abbas making a unilateral application to the United Nations for Palestine to be recognized as a state On November 29, 2012, the UN General Assembly upgraded Palestine to a non-member observer state: 138 states voted in favor, 41 abstained, and 9 voted against. In the West Bank, the news lead to scenes of jubilation; even in the Gaza Strip a mass turnout on the streets greeted the news with expressions of joy.

While the UN General Assembly vote provided a political victory for the Palestinian president, this vote did not change the reality on the ground: Palestine is today a UN member state deprived of any territorial continuity, and devoid of economic and political control. Finally, on the diplomatic level it did not change the balance of power (Parizot 2012). The recent decision made by Mahmoud Abbas and his government to adhere to most UN agencies and institutions, including the International Court of Justice[17], coupled with the expansion of the boycott, divestment, and sanctions campaign (BDS) and joint International, Israeli, and Palestinian civil society mobilizations mark a clear shift towards a complete internationalization of the conflict that might have some effect on Israeli policies in the long run (Latte Abdallah 2014b, 2014c).

The transitory approach to the conflict encourages mistaken readings of the political reality and its challenges. There are three reasons for this; firstly by positioning the two parties on an equal footing, this approach gives a distorted perception of the power relations between them. While the conflict was seen during the First Intifada (1987ó1993) as a confrontation between an army of occupation and a population trying to resist with derisory weapons such as boycotts and rocks, from

---

[17] The Taba negotiations in 2001; the Arab Peace Initiative in 2002 promoted by king Abdullah of Saudi Arabia proposing the recognition of the State of Israel by all the Arab countries in exchange for the creation of a Palestinian State inside the 1967 borders; the Geneva Initiative in 2003; the Road Map in 2003, the Annapolis initiative in 2007; and the recent failed attempts by the US state secretary John Kerry to restart the negotiations. While certain plans, such as those of Taba and Geneva, have tried to give clear proposals on the final status of refugees, settlements, borders, and Jerusalem, none of them have been agreed by both sides. All the other plans have postponed discussions on some of these issues.

[17] Which should be effective in March 2015.

the middle of the 1990s it was seen as two opposing parties on an equal footing: a state versus a quasi-state. Secondly, by focusing on the prospect of the creation of a Palestinian State it stops us thinking about the present and therefore about what needs to be done to bring it about. While the recognition of a Palestinian State is of political, legalô particularly in terms of the ultimate recourse possible under international lawô and symbolic importance, the profound changes of position on the ground over the last 20 years raise serious doubts about its viability and sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza. And thirdly, focusing on the notion that we are in a short transitional period that is preparatory to the construction of a Palestinian State will not stand the test of time: it is now 21 years since the Oslo Accords were signed. This õtransitional periodö has now lasted longer than that with which it is often compared, namely the period between the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by Israel in 1967 and the start of the First Intifada in 1987.

It is by taking into account the territorial and institutional changes and the difficulty of separating two territorial, political, and economic entities that Palestinian and foreign scholars have cast doubt on the possibility of ever witnessing the political prospect of two states (Khalidi 2006; Hilal 2007; Clot 2010). For example, in the early years of the twenty-first century there was a revival of other projects formulated well before the Oslo Accords period: Palestinians suggesting the establishment of a single two-nation state (Abunimah 2006) while certain Israelis proposed a confederation with Jordan (Morris 2009). Others considered much more complex solutions capable of meeting the political, administrative, and territorial obstacles currently present on the ground (Grinberg 2010).

Rather than seeing this period as transitional, the present work suggests we analyze the functioning and changes in the occupation regime over the last 21 years. It is by taking account of these readjustments that we might come to a better understanding of the types of territoriality and government to which they have given rise; it is also on this basis that we may come to a better understanding of their consequences for the future of the conflict, the new challenges it hides and the ways it might be resolved.

A Contemporary, Post-Modern Occupation Regime

A number of works have tried to model how the Israeli occupation regime operated between the 1990s and 2000s. They provide rich documentation on the legal measures defining the status and rights of the populations and their unequal access to resources and mobility (Zureik 2001; Kelly 2006; Gordon 2008, 2009a; Azulay and Ophir 2008; Ophir, Givoni, and Hanafi 2009; Grinberg 2010). They also question how the lack of rights and limited types of sovereignty imposed on the Palestinians affect the operation and nature of the Israeli political regime itself (Yiftachel 2009; Azulay and Ophir 2008; Gordon 2008; Ophir, Givoni, and Hanafi 2009; Grinberg 2010). Other research from a more strictly geographical and architectural perspective has explored the complex ways in which the area between the Mediterranean and the River Jordan has been restructured (Efrat 2006; Weizman 2007; Petti 2008; Handel 2009a).

These researchers rightly stress that the lack of clearly defined territorial borders has had the corollary, not to say objective, of effacing a whole set of other distinctions, particularly between occupation and non-occupation, annexation and non-annexation, temporary and permanent, as well as the exception and the rule (Ben Naftali, Michaeli, and Gross 2009), which has meant that the zone behind the Green Line is indeterminate in terms of both time and legality. This indeterminate character deprives the Palestinians of the protection granted by international law to occupied populations and substituted a system of government using a series of regulations, decrees and procedures.

It was in the perspective of modeling and conceptualizing the situation that in the 1990s some researchers started comparing the Israeli political regime with the apartheid regime in South Africa, seeing the imposition of restrictions on movement imposed on Palestinian labor and the creation of autonomous enclaves administered by the Palestinian Authority as reproducing the system of bantustans (Farsakh 2002, 2006; Legrain 1996, 1997; Abu Zahra 2007; Hanieh 2006). Comparisons with apartheid increased from 2000 onwards, stimulated particularly by the construction of the Wall embodying discrimination and separation (Bishara 2002; Peteet 2009; Yiftachel 2009; Olmsted 2009; Dayan 2009; Bôle-Richard 2013; Lebrun and Salingue 2013). These researchersø objective was not simply academic but also political since they were denouncing and mobilizing against an unjust regime (Toensing 2009).

While such comparisons are helping to understand the Israeli occupation regime, they also tendto oversimplify the situation: comparing the Israeli regime in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with frontier situations, or even ghettos or apartheid tended to make the regime look like an anachronistic colonial system.But research into the systems of territorial control used by Israel over the last 20 years stresses the very contemporary character of the occupation mechanisms. Indeed, the separation policy simultaneously mobilizes a territorial imagination appropriate to the modern state and to systems of control that are characteristic of the neoliberal globalization period.

The promotion by the Israeli authorities of metaphors based on territorial separationô of walls and bordersô is aimed at meeting the expectations of the Israeli public and international stakeholders who conceive territorial control in the framework of the modern nation state, i.e. a homogenous and clearly delimited territory over which prevails the state *exclusive* sovereignty. But as we have already stressed, in practice, Israeli systems of control challenge any clear delineation of territory. The successive reorganizations of the occupation regime have been in total contradiction with border logic (Shamir 2009). Implemented unilaterally by Israel, the separation policy implies no principle of symmetry between two states. Nor is it envisaged as a way of separating the Israeli population from another population that is perceived as statutorily equivalent: its objective is to contain the Palestinian õotherö who is seen as highly dangerous.

The Israeli policy of separation operates more as a mechanism for managing risk in a context where the two populations live in close proximity with one another and where their living spaces increasingly interpenetrate one another (Shamir 2005). It operates as a system for excluding a Palestinian population located inside an area that has remained under Israeli control (Ophir, Givoni, and Hanafi 2009). In order to manage the close proximity and interpenetration of the living spaces of the Israeli and Palestinian populations as well as to ensure the security of the Israelis, the control techniques attempt to dissociate the trajectories of the two populations. They keep the Palestinians at armøs length in order to facilitate the smooth flow of the Israelis in a fluid, uninterrupted space. The Palestinians are confined in fragmented areas that are riddled with obstacles and in which movement is hampered and/or in which routes cannot be planned due to the frequent changes made to the obstacles (Weizman 2007). In this configuration the Israeli settlements and Israel itself constitute an

õarchipelagoö of perfectly linked islands while the Palestinian õenclavesö are isolated from one another (Petti 2008).

In this context the relations between the two populations and their experience of time and space have become increasingly asymmetric (Collins 2008; Peteet 2008; Handel 2009; Petti 2008). The IsraelióPalestinian conflict should not therefore be seen solely as a territorial conflict but also as a conflict about the use of space (Handel 2009a). This inequality in the experience of space has major political implications since it gives rise to perceptions of the conflict that are increasingly disparate between the various actors (Parizot 2009c, 2010). The Israelis have, since the end of the Second Intifada (2004), experienced a normalization of their movements and everyday life; some even imagine that the conflict has been moved õto the other side of the wall.ö Forbidden entry by the Israeli Army to Palestinian enclaves (A zones), they are unaware of the degree to which the Palestinians spaces are fragmented and the current impossibility of separating two territories without one remaining fragmented and without territorial cohesion. In contrast, the Palestinians are constantly confined and controlled and experience the continual reinforcement of the occupation and its violence.

The Actors of the Occupation Regime

Any study of the Israeli occupation regime has to be dynamic. Neve Gordon (2008) suggests that the transformations of the occupation regime should be studied as the product of the interactions, the excesses and the contradictions created by the various modes of control deployed by Israel. Using an approach derived from Foucault, he considers modes of control not only as the infrastructures, techniques and policies of coercion deployed by Israel, but takes into account all the institutions, legal measures, bureaucratic apparatus, social practices and material infrastructures that act both on the individuals and the population in order to produce new behaviors, new habits, interests, tastes, and aspirations. Working along similar lines, Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni, and Sari Hanafi (2009) have published a collection of articles in which the authors attempt to analyze the occupation regime as an unstable assemblage of state and non-state apparatus and institutions, of ways of thinking and of a series of political technologies (Ophir et al. 2009, p. 15ó17).

But while these researchers stress the role of the many actors and elements involved in the functioning of the regime, they have limited their analysis to the operation of the Israeli systems of control and the way it transforms the behavior of actors who are subjected to them. They do not envisage how such actors, whether they be Palestinian, Israeli, or international, can react to, subvert, or take over these systems of constraints and thus contribute to their readjustments.

French research, with only a few exceptions (Legrain 1997; Débié and Fouet 2001) has not focused on the Israeli occupation regime since the period of the Oslo Accords. Scholars studying Palestinian society have concentrated more on the social, economic and political changes it has undergone, sometimes in relation to their diaspora. In this way they have offered a series of very rich studies (Botiveau and Signoles 2004; Al-Husseini and Signoles 2011; Picaudou 2006; Picaudou and Rivoal 2006). Some have also insisted on the need to distance themselves from the conflict and its overt effect in order to offer a more nuanced, in-depth approach to Palestinian society (Botiveau, Conte and Signoles 2005). Others have also upheld this argument in their approach to the changes in Israeli society over the past 20 years (Dieckhoff 2009).

Starting from the point of view of social actors and setting it alongside the institutional perspective, this book offers an alternative view of how the occupation regime operates. We will examine both the power deployed by these control mechanisms and the (re)actions of certain groups or individuals. We approach power beyond its solely conflictual dimension in order to focus also on its productive capacity. Hence, we will analyze how not only the contestations but also the adaptations and reappropriations made by these mundane actors when faced with the Israeli modes of control contribute in turn to changing the way the mechanisms operate. In a word, we will consider these actors as historical subjects.

Mobility and Interactions in the Israeli-Palestinian Space

In order to highlight the role of these actors in the transformations of the occupation regime we have decided to focus on changes in mobility and interactions between Israelis, Palestinians, and international actors over the past 20 years. These various actors (individuals, groups, and institutions) experience this fragmented territory and its regulations daily and also contribute to constructing and

changing them. Observing the transformations of their interactions enables us, beyond the hypothetical political goal defined during the period of the Oslo Accords, to understand the current territorial and social reality of the conflict and its concrete challenges. We focus our analysis not solely on the Palestinian or Israeli side, but on the two at once, and particularly on their interfaces. This approach therefore decompartmentalizes research on Palestine and Israel.

Changing Israeli-Palestinian Interactions

Analyzing mobility confronts researchers with the limits encountered by mundane actors and with the more or less coherence of their functioning. It highlights the social, economic, and political adaptations these people develop in their daily lives to adapt to the new systems constraints imposed by the separation and the degradation of the situation.

By reorganizing their everyday life, they rework their spaces of social, economic, and political interactions at their own level. Before the First Intifada (1987), Israelis and Palestinians met almost every day as they moved within the same territories. During the 1990s, the deterioration of the situation and the enforcement of the first movement restrictions considerably reduced such interactions. But while Israelis stopped visiting Palestinian areas, Palestinians remained very present in the Israeli landscape. Palestinian-registered taxis and private cars continued to use Israeli highways and Palestinian workers could still be seen. The situation changed again at the end of 2000 onwards when the Second Intifada broke out. The two populations no longer met apart from in limited and specific places: working sites (in Israel and the settlements), checkpoints, West Bank bypass roads, demonstrations, and new commercial places built in C Areas.

Joint Palestinian and Israeli political activism was also affected by the restrictions of movement and the radicalization of the two sides (Pouzol, in this volume). In order to pursue their cooperation some activists have developed virtual forms of political actions and networking as well as renewed uses of law (data sharing, concerted legal action) (Latte Abdallah 2009, 2010a, 2011). Newly created groups focusing on land grab issues and organizing joint events associating Israelis, Palestinians, and Internationals activists (Anarchists Against the Wall, Taøayush, Fighters for Peace),

have invented new practices and habitus that sharply contrast with those of their predecessors in the 1980s and 1990s (Lamarche, in this volume).

Finally, some actors have grasped the opportunities generated by this system of constraints. The restrictions on movement introduced since the 1990s have forced Palestinian workers employed in Israel to turn towards networks of smugglers to help them cross into Israel. These networks became increasingly organized and were able to develop very lucrative economic activities (Parizot 2014). The Israeli police and intelligence services have allowed this to develop in order to infiltrate these groups of traffickers and expand their intelligence networks. By being de facto integrated into the system of mobility control, these smugglers have directly contributed to its functioning and its readjustments.

The Locations of Power

The chapters of this volume play on different scales. While some adopt a macrosocial approach to examine the influence of economic interests in political decision-making and changes in the peace process in Israel (Grinberg), others develop microsocial perspectives by studying civil volunteers in the police (Manor) or post-2000 activistsø trajectories (Lamarche). Others take an intermediary stance by tracing both changes in the political relations between Palestinians of Israel and Palestinians of the West Bank (Marteu) or LGBTQ movements on both sides of the Green Line (Pouzol). While some writers concentrate on the actors, others are more interested in describing new types of governmentality. Latte Abdallah and Havkin focus on the influence of new institutional and economic practices at precise key points in the systems of control, respectively on managing prisons and on the outsourcing of checkpoints.

Alternating between these different scales, contributors reconsider the many locations of power inside and beyond the Israeli-Palestinian spaces. They highlight the roles of a large number of actors in tandem with the state in the working of and the changes to Israeli systems of control: formal institutions such as international agencies like USAID (Garb), private companies (Havkin) or civil guards (Manor). The actors may also be informal such as the smugglers trafficking consumer goods between Israel and the West Bank (Natsheh and Parizot) or between Egypt and the Gaza Strip (Pelham). Studying how people work around Israeli mechanisms of control or use them for their own

ends highlights the fact that even marginal groups contribute to the working of and readjustments in such systems. Finally, we scrutinize the construction of discourses and representations on the separation and the conflict through the practices and experience of NGOs and institutions (Handel), mundane actors, Israelis (Manor), Palestinians (Marteu and Nashif), as well as internationals activists (Hecker)..

Book Structure

This book is organized around four parts. Part I considers the transformations of the geography of the occupation. Chapter 1 and 2 focus on the practices and devices by which Israel controls mobility and confines Palestinians: the checkpoints infrastructure (Havkin) and the prison system (Latte Abdallah). They show how these transformations are strongly shaped by neoliberal thought and to what extent they normalize or make invisible the occupation. For, they contribute to redraw the limits between spaces and time, contradicting the declared objectives of the separation policy. They blur the limits between the military and the civil, the inside and the outside, between past, present and future. They also readjust hierarchies and status between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as between Palestinians themselves. Chapter 3 deals with the juridical dimensions of the geography of occupation. Emilio Dabed shows that in the context of the absence of Palestinian territorial and political sovereignty, the drafting of the Palestinian constitution was strongly influenced by the asymmetrical power relations between the PA and Israel as well as between international actors and experts and the PA. Chapter 4 concludes this part by providing a counter intuitive approach in which Ariel Handel deconstructs the narratives by which occupation is usually analyzed and criticized. He demonstrates how the built-in utilitarian biases of these languages actually create misunderstanding of the space Palestinians use and the specific relations and emotional links they develop towards it.

Part II scrutinizes the economic and commercial exchanges between Israeli and Palestinian territories during the post-Second Intifada. Chapter 5 studies the crossings handling the formal transit of goods between the south of the West Bank and Israel (Garb); chapter 6 analyzes the smuggling from Israel to the West Bank (Natsheh and Parizot) and chapter 7 provides an analysis of the tunnel economy between the Gaza strip and Egypt (Pelham). The authors highlight the complex

configurations of power emerging along Israeli-Palestinian "borders." The new mechanisms of regulations and models of territoriality they highlight challenge the imaginary of the modern nation state. In order to better situate these forms of economic and territorial control in an historical perspective, chapter 8 analyzes the changes in Israeli economic policies towards the Palestinian Territories since 1967. Lev Grinberg shows how patterns of the military-economic domination regime were shaped by the interests, power relations and compromises between the military, the dominant economic groups and the ruling party.

Part III decenters the gaze to the margins of Palestinian and Israeli society by considering how the separation has been experienced among different groups: the volunteers of a peripheral town in the Israeli police (chapter 9); Palestinians of Israel (chapter 10); and among Israeli and Palestinian LGBTQ activists (chapter 11). Israeli Palestinians cross the separation lines more than other Israeli Jewish citizens and more than Palestinians of the OPT, thus carving a specific place in both national arenas. Similarly, police volunteers, *mizrahim* ("oriental") Israelis from a development town, play a special role in building the separation by reconstructing the stereotyped image of the Arab enemy, i.e., of the "terrorist." Lastly, Israeli LGBTQ mobilizations show how sexual minorities and sexual identities are embedded in national considerations, and in "homonationalism." In this context, Palestinian LGBTQ organizations (mostly formed by Palestinians from Israel or Jerusalem) have defended at the sexual rights and Palestinian political rights at the same time. Being part of the most influential Palestinian popular resistance movement they are drawing new political boundaries where marginal sexualities are no longer associated with political deviance.

Part IV continues this reflection on the experiences and effects of crossings taking place within specific political actions: the travels of organized tours of French pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli activists (Hecker); the clandestine crossings of Anarchists against the Wall within Palestinians enclaves; and those of Palestinian suicide bombers (Nashif).[18] While these crossings and actions are radically different from one another, they all contribute, in their ways and at their different scales, to adjust and construct the boundaries of the Israeli-Palestinian spaces. These practices do not really

---

[18] Called "martyrdom operations" by the actors.

challenge the separation regime and are rather shaped by the very frames imposed by Israel. Yet, they do contribute to the definition and the reproduction of these groupsø collective identities.

The Politics of Research

Like political and media discourses, researchersø narratives are also significant for the parties in conflict. In this highly polarized verbal minefield, researchers have to be cautious and show greater courage than in other research fields. The role of research is not to produce arguments backing one party or both, but to create explanatory models capable of making sense of the reality of a conflict that has changed greatly over the last 20 years. But it is not an easy task as both the definition the research objects and scientific collaborations developed in this context have political dimensions.

Working on the interaction and interconnectedness between Israeli-Palestinian spaces necessarily highlights the current obstacles to the creation of a viable Palestinian State in the near future. It also means questioning the current representations/definition of a State of Israel. Deprived of borders with Palestinians, Israel cannot be conceived as a democracy just like other democracies and neither as a state whose majority is Jewish. Though, it breaks away from the political horizon defined by the Oslo process. We are conscious that this scientific position clearly comes into conflict with national perceptions that have been forged and perpetuated by ideologies and collective imaginings, but we need to analyze the social, political and territorial reality prevailing today on the ground. As researchers, our perspective is not of course to take a stand in the discussion about one or two statesô this is clearly for the Palestinians and the Israelis to decideô but rather to consider the concrete impact of the redeployments of the occupation over the last 20 years on such political projects

Working on this conflict also raises issues of scientific partnership. Our work has been undertaken within the framework of two research programs õAppraising the Israeli Palestinian Conflict through Cross Border Mobilityö and õMobility and Borders in the Israeli Palestinian Spaces.ö Initially conceived by Cédric Parizot as an extension of his research in the mid-1990s on mobility in the south of the Israeli-Palestinian spaces (West Bank, Israel, Gaza), these projects where coordinated jointly with Stéphanie Latte Abdallah between 2007 and 2011. They brought together French, Palestinian, Swiss, Italian, and Israeli researchers working on both sides of the Israeli and Palestinian

divide, or between the two, in the interspace. We stress the fact that we are talking about researchers working on both sides and not about researchers coming from the two sides. Our aim was not to bring Israelis into discussion with Palestinians but rather to acquire the means for a better understanding of the mechanisms of the Israeli occupation since the Oslo Accords.

Each researcher took part in the program individually. We decided to avoid any institutional cooperation with Israeli or Palestinian universities or research centers. This was firstly to avoid any political obstacles or orientations that our scientific approach might have aroused; secondly, because we refuse any attempt to promote dialogue or the normalization of relations between Israelis and Palestinians which cannot be among the objectives of a scientific program. In institutional terms, the projects were financed out of European funds, as part of the Ramses² European Excellence Network, and French funds. They benefited from the partnership of French laboratories[18] and a Swiss research institute.[19]

We should point out that despite our very clear position on institutional scientific cooperation, it remains very difficult to work in this interspace due to scientific compartmentalization, political obstacles, and the unequal capacity of mobility of the project members.

Firstly, the strict compartmentalization of French research into Palestinian studies and Israeli studies contributes to these difficulties. On the one hand, French students and researchers work on one side or the other and are only rarely in the same institutions. On the other, the historical processes in which Israelis and Palestinians have been involved have created different research agendas within each society. This trend has been accentuated because academics have approached their histories as exceptional trajectories, inviting few comparisons with other contexts (Tamari 1997, p. 20). Moreover,

---

[18] Institute for Research and Studies of the Arab and Muslim Worlds (Institut de Recherches sur les Mondes arabes et musulmanô IREMAM), Institute for Mediterranean European and Comparative Studies (løInstitut døEtudes Méditerranéennes Européennes et Comparativesô IDEMEC), Mediterranean Institute for Humanities (Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de løHomme) in Aix-en-Provence (USR 3125), French Research Centre, Jerusalem (Centre de Recherche Français à Jérusalemô CRFJ), and the French Institute for International Research (Institut Français de Recherches Internationalesô IFRI).

[19] Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales et du Développementô IHEID) in Geneva.

the rapid deterioration of the situation after the signing of the Oslo Accords first legitimized separate scientific approaches before placing additional political and material obstacles to dialogue between researchers and institutions working on Israel or Palestine. We are not denying the autonomy of the two research fields, but simply stressing the need to leave room for an approach to the interspace, the only one that is capable of making sense of the redeployments of the occupation since the Oslo Accords.

These political obstacles are all the more sensitive in a context of the radicalization of positions since the Second Intifada and the ongoing violence that has marked the post Intifada period. We are referring here to the summer 2006 IsraelóLebanon war and the military offensives in Gaza (summer 2006, December to January 2008ó2009, November 2012 and July to August 2014) which, with their declared dissuasive aim, involved the use of ever greater violence. The continuation of the occupation and these particularly destructive Israeli military offensives have reinforced not only in Palestine but elsewhere, the efforts to boycott Israeli institutions: the BDS (boycotts, divestment, and sanctions) movement has gradually mobilized groups and activists all over the world.

On the Israeli side, the situation has hardened considerably and many within the Israeli population now reject the idea of a new withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. As for those who criticize the occupation and the military operations, they have often prompted virulent reactions that have made activists groups who reject the national consensus forged from 2000 onward more and more marginalized (Marteu 2009a). Furthermore, a certain number of Israeli academics have faced considerable hostility and been subjected to pressure from within their institutions and some have even left the country.

Finally local and foreign researchers on the ground have encountered obstacles to their movements. Apart from the deterioration of the conflict and tensions between the two parties, restrictions on movement and security measures have naturally affected research in the field. While it is difficult, indeed dangerous, for Israeli researchers to carry out research on the Palestinian side, it is virtually impossible for Palestinian researchers from the Occupied Territories, unless they are natives of Jerusalem. Our team was also unable to carry out research in the Gaza Strip because of the blockade and ban on entry that the Israeli authorities impose on Israelis, West Bank Palestinians and foreigners,

the only exceptions being Nicolas Pelham. Thanks to his press card, he could enter the Strip and conduct a fine analysis of the Gaza Tunnels.

Confronted with the complex reality of the occupation each observer has to take responsibility for his or her own position. Depending on our contacts, our political environment and our scientific career, we can experience considerable political, personal or material difficulties in undertaking this type of fieldwork investigation. Incidentally, we could have laid more emphasis on these problems and thought jointly about our biographies, mobility, approaches and scientific tools that they have led us to adopt.

To the difficult nature of the research practices in this context we must add the equally complex question of the concepts and terms used by the different contributors. Defining and harmonizing the concepts used is a challenge the authors of any collective work have to deal with. In this case the problem is heightened. More than elsewhere, people and groups in the Israeli-Palestinian territories are identified by the words they use. The extreme polarization and the tidal wave of political and media arguments that this conflict has prompted identify them immediately, sometimes even in spite of their authors. It is now clear that moving from one space to another or taking up a position in the interspace makes it particularly difficult to choose the words and concepts needed to describe a reality scientifically without immediately being classified as a stranger or an enemy.

We agreed on the more frequent use of the term õWallö in preference to õBarrier.ö This choice was clearly not neutral as the term õWallö evokes more clearly the massive, violent nature of what is being built and its territorial impact (confiscation, expulsion, and annexation of Palestinian lands) as well as the project of separation and its multiple demographic and symbolic dimensions. The terms õBarrierö or õFence,ö on the other hand, seemed to us euphemisms for the structure. Despite certain editorial choices, we have to accept that the use of certain sometimes problematic terms has not been harmonized. In the last analysis each author is free and responsible for his or her text and the words and concepts used therein. The different terminologies relate to distinct frames of reference and existing areas of discussion, and sometimes to very different personal and political stances.

Lastly, we should stress that the terms may vary, not always because of a consciously adopted stance or policy, but most often according to what the terms signify for the different actors: this is the

case, for example, with the terms 'occupied territories' or 'Palestinian territories' and that of 'Palestinian enclaves.' If one is referring to the shape of these territories the term 'enclaves' appears more appropriate but when one is describing the perception of a political and symbolic experience or the internationally recognized legal reality, the term 'occupied Palestinian territories' is more relevant. While the absence of terminological uniformity may disturb, it is inherent to the very subject and approach of this book which tackles the Israeli–Palestinian conflict concretely from the points of view of its many actors and the representations of the conflict they communicate.