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**Popular media and the misconstruction of a narrative:
"Common sense" as it affects the struggle for Palestinian self-determination**

by Maha Zimmo, B.A. (Hons.)

**A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Arts

**Department of Law
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario**

09-16-01

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**Popular media and the misconstruction of a narrative:
“Common sense” as it affects the struggle for Palestinian self-determination**

Submitted by

Maha Zimmo, B. A. Hons.

**in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts**

Thesis Supervisor

Chair, Department of Law

**Carleton University
December 2001**

Abstract

This thesis presents an analysis of the technique of coverage employed by America's leading news agency, the Cable News Network (CNN). The framework of this analysis is an examination of the intersection of discourses shaped by Orientalism and furthered by Zionism. An application of the notion of interpellation will serve as the beginning in my attempt to comprehend the detrimental effects of CNN's coverage. The analysis focuses upon the current conflict within the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and works toward an understanding of how the claim of self determination, made by the Palestinian people, is being misrepresented within mainstream coverage. Overall, the argument made is that if American audiences are presented with a more complete narrative, one which addresses the civilian Palestinian "voice", the international laws specific to the Israeli occupation, and the historical cost at which the State of Israel was born, they would be afforded the opportunity to better comprehend the reasons for the Palestinian Uprising, thus more likely to support the Palestinian claim of self determination.

Acknowledgements

There are too many people to whom I must extend my gratitude. The last year has been harrowing on so many levels, but the last week even more so than any I have experienced in my 26 years. This thesis discusses Orientalism at length and tries to make sense of the West's misunderstanding of the East. Unfortunately, all efforts of the past Century feel as though they have come to a sudden halt, for 3 days ago, the World Trade Centre in New York City was attacked, as was the Pentagon in Washington. All fingers are pointed at the East. Orientalism has reached an all-time "low" and experts on the Islamic and Arab mind have come out of the wood work. For this reason alone, I want to extend my gratitude first and foremost to all those who are fighting the new wave of Orientalism, and who will continue to fight it in the coming Century.

Obiora Okafor, my gratitude to you can not be expressed in words, you saved me from a drowning ship and you have taught me how to channel my passion into the world of academia. Trevor Purvis, you have taught this brat some level of patience and you were capable of teaching me - if not by words, then by the red marker - to bite my tongue...although the time for biting my tongue is now over, I hope.

Andrew Squires and Diana Majury, thank you for putting up with me - forgive me for I may be forced to send you emails at regular intervals so that I am not left dealing with post-Thesis depression.

On a more personal note, I have to thank Aalya Ahmad for her wonderful words of encouragement and her impeccable editorial skills. More so, I have to thank her for

putting up with my fits in Mike's Place as I lashed out at the "invisible" world of Oppression and Injustice (thank you for the rough tissue and glasses of water you handed me calmly as I asked: "why doesn't anyone care?!").

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To my family overseas, Khalo Mohamad, Khalto Nuha, Khalo Monzer and your families, to my family in the Gaza Strip, Khalo Nasser, Khalto Amal, Khalo Osama, Seedo and to the memory of my Taita, my grandmother. Your strength and resolve have helped me believe in myself when I did not think there was anything worth believing in.

Sumeya Abushaban, my mama, you amaze me on a daily basis for you are the embodiment of "against all odds." You have a spirit which travels with me wherever I go (and knows when I come home too late). With your guidance and your help, I have been able to dismantle every wall life has placed before me. You have taught me strength, humility and humanity, and for that I thank you with tears in my eyes.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since September 28th, 2000, much of the news-coverage has been centered around the actions and reactions within both the State of Israel and by the Palestinian civilians residing under its military occupation. This work focuses on the technique of coverage employed by the leading American news agency, the Cable News Network (CNN), in an effort to bring forth the means by which the average audience member is made subject to, and subject of the discourse circling the Palestinian Uprising.

The main focus of this work is an examination of the different discourses intersecting within CNN and the way by which individuals recognize themselves within them. Concentrating primarily on the first week of coverage and the "lynching" of the two Israeli soldiers on October 12th, 2000, the argument in this Thesis is that the incomplete narrative presented by CNN delegitimizes the Palestinian claim of self-determination and functions in a way which both veils and justifies the oppressive relations of power between the State of Israel and the Palestinian civilians residing under Israeli military rule.

I. Prologue

On September 28th, 2000, Ariel Sharon visited what most Israeli Jews regard as the *Temple Mount*, and most Muslims name *Al-Aqsa Mosque*. This action has set off what is currently being called the "Second" Palestinian *Intifadah*.¹ The "First" *Intifadah* had lasted between December of 1987 and June of 1991.²

In mainstream discourse, this *Second Uprising* is almost always attributed to no more than the depoliticised visit of Ariel Sharon, the current Prime Minister of Israel, to the Temple Mount. The act itself is not considered one worthy of blame, but not so the response of Palestinians; Sharon's visit is labeled normal whereas the Palestinian response disproportionate. Hardly is Palestinian reaction attributed to the untold suffering and immiseration that has been visited upon the Palestinian nation before and in-between the two Uprisings. This Second Uprising has been characterized by extraordinary developments relating to the conflict within Occupied Palestine and to

¹ Translated directly from the Arabic language, the term *Intifadah* means to awaken, to jump out of a slumber. Since 1987, the term has become incorporated into the English language as representation of the Palestinian struggle.

² Giving the impression that since 1989, the year of the "First" Palestinian Uprising there has been relative calm, when in fact oppressive living conditions and circumstances have dictated that Palestinians are constantly *rising up* against their military occupier, though without the same degree of resistance. This is of semantic relevance, for if one takes this "neutral" historical term on its own merits, there appears to be no cause for concern. Coupled with CNN's lack of reference to the fact that Israel is a military occupying power, the classification of "First" and "Second" reinforce the illusion that there is no illegal and foreign occupying military presence.

Palestinian aspirations for self-determination. To date, the conflict has reached unprecedented proportions. As at 30th August, 2001, 624 Palestinians had been killed, and an approximate 15, 433 others had suffered injuries.³ Despite these shocking statistics, the mainstream news coverage has too often left the viewer/reader with the distressing impression that the Palestinians are somehow entirely "responsible" for the sustenance of the violence. Very little coverage is devoted to the intolerable conditions that generate such violence. Given CNN's prominence among media bodies who report the conflict, their problematic reporting and commentary on the conflict have been the most distressing of all.

Another cause of distress with the coverage of the conflict by CNN is the shallow depths of their reporting. CNN is the leading American media body. Hundreds of thousands of Americans receive the "news" through its television and Internet programming. Yet that media outlet has almost always reinterpreted and reevaluated

³ Palestine Red Crescent Society "Table of Figures: Total number of deaths and injuries - West Bank & Gaza" <http://www.palestinercs.org/Crisis%20Tables/table_of_figures.htm> (accessed 3 September 2001).

The PRCS is an observer member in the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; they provide a wide range of humanitarian, health and social services to Palestinians residing throughout the Middle East. Their web-site offers a comprehensive day by day update of the crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

⁴ While I am not denying that news-media offers one, and perhaps several, specific story-lines within a much broader universe of intersecting, and sometimes conflicting narratives, contemporary news-media have achieved a remarkably popular legitimacy as the only touchstone of reference needed if a reader-consumer is to consider themselves "informed." It is not my intention to define *informed*, therefore it suffices to suggest that I believe one can never simply "be informed"; that being informed is a fluid activity. Being *informed* is a process of constantly attaining knowledge, the fluidity of which continues when new facts or narratives are presented. This definition will tie into my critique of CNN's "you-are-there" technique of coverage which I will discuss in detail in Chapter Three.

the narrative of the Palestinian Uprising in a manner that ultimately served to call into question the legitimacy of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. Since the behavior of an individual is in part influenced by her "understanding" of an issue, this problematic kind of media coverage is even more distressing. As will be discussed later, individual beliefs influence one's behavior, and this behavior affects the environment; misunderstanding the Palestinian struggle and vilifying the Palestinian Arab will affect the political environment available to all Palestinians hoping to realize meaningful self-determination.

II. Chapter Outlines

In this Chapter, I offer a brief historical outline regarding (1) formation of the Israeli State, and the consequent displacement of the Palestinian people, (2) the "fruits" of the cosmetic Oslo Agreement,⁵ (3) Ariel Sharon's past record of catalysing the conflicts that have arisen out of these histories, and (4) my concerns regarding CNN's historical coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

In Chapter Two, I explore the numerous discourses which circulate and intersect within the news-media, creating one kind of dominant discourse (which I shall term the

⁵ Edward W. Said, Introduction, The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969 - 1994, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) xxxi.

"discourse of CNN"). Furthermore, I outline how the intersection of these discourses will work to engender so-called common sense notions surrounding the Palestinian-Arab subject.

Of significance to my work are three theoretical intersections: an Orientalist misunderstanding of the Arab Subject; Zionism; and the "white" supremacy underlying the discourse of the West and the Rest. It is the intensification of the ideological effects of each of these by the other, working together to maintain the specific and constantly recurring relations of domination that I wish to expose, for it is these popular notions regarding the claim to Palestinian self-determination that I believe to be partially responsible for the continued failure of Palestinians to attain their objective of self-determination.

In Chapter Three, I concentrate on different areas of CNN coverage; outlining the means by which they construct an abstract and incomplete depiction of the Palestinian fight against Israeli Military Occupation. I look to CNN's aporias, and how their presence misrepresents the Palestinian struggle for self-determination as one that is unjustified. Furthermore, I discuss how the intersection of discourses legitimizes, for the American audience, the consistently oppressive conditions in which Palestinians residing in the Occupied Palestinian Territories currently live.

The effect of CNN's aporias is to make it *appear* as though the *Intifadah* must be

met forcibly and controlled by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) since the Palestinian Authority itself is judged to be incapable of controlling its own people.⁶ Such misrepresentations give rise to the following dilemma: if the Palestinian Authority is made to appear incapable of controlling its own people from acting violently and *without provocation*, and if the Palestinian Authority is viewed as requiring the aid of the Israeli Defense Forces in order to ensure that those viewed as Palestinian "terrorists" remain under control, how then can the American audience be expected to readily recognize and support the claim to self determination put forth by these same, seemingly uncontrollable and untrustworthy folk?⁷ Thus constructed, it would appear, that allowing

⁶ This is mirrored in CNN quotes such as: "Palestinian security forces were unable to control the crowds." "Palestinians, Israelis exchange gunfire at Ramallah; Egypt invites principals to summit at Red Sea resort," CNN <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/mideast.violence.04/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

What is most interesting is the contradictory claim that although it is Arafat and the Palestinian Authority who orchestrated the *Intifadah*, they are incapable of controlling it. Missing from the discourse of CNN is the reality that the "controlling" factor is the unadulterated hopelessness felt by the Palestinian people rooted in the Israeli occupation and furthered by the injustice, prejudice and one-sidedness of the Oslo agreement – a treaty certain to cheat Palestinians of a capital in East Jerusalem, a return of refugees and an end to massive Jewish settlements on occupied land (although some would contend that Israel itself is *all* occupied Palestinian land).

⁷ As for the 'authority' deposited within the term Palestinian Authority, it is sufficient to say that, for many, if not most Palestinians, no 'authority' remains insofar as the Palestinian Authority is concerned. For the most part, the PA have been accused of being a corrupt group of individuals who appear to covet nothing more than individual gain and will place this want of self-gratification above the alleviation of deprivations suffered by the Palestinian population. As described at page 6 of a June 2001 article titled "From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?", one of the architects of the "peace process", Dr. Ron Pundak discusses the

deep disappointment felt by Palestinians due to the failing governing style of the PA, the discovery of corruption among politicians, the administrative arm, and the security and police apparatuses...The Palestinians came to hate the political elite, which had been imported from Tunis, as well as the local leadership, which rapidly conformed to the corrupt standards of 'Tunisians.' The tension between the 'street' and the senior officials continued to grow.

self-determination to such an "uncivilized" group can only result in harm and threaten *all* democratic, peace-loving anti-terrorist allies of the Western world.

In my final chapter, I will draw upon Stuart Hall's suggestion that descriptions can be *made* "true" in the sense that people act on them believing that they are true. In this way will such descriptions have real consequences. As such, discourse has real effects in practice: the description of the object therefore becomes the "true" *essence* of the object.⁸ I will argue that in order for the news-media to present a more complete narrative, the likes of CNN must "fill" the following aporias by incorporating the following: all relevant international laws; the historical and current consequences faced by Palestinians residing in the Occupied Territories; and, the documented human rights abuses perpetrated by Israel against its Palestinian population. Finally, I will discuss the value of such inclusions as they extend to all groups whose struggles for self-determination are continuously misrepresented by the "you-are-there" means of coverage employed by CNN.

III. Historical Backdrop: Composition of a tinderbox

It is impossible here to point out each and every act of terrorism - defined as any

⁸ Stuart Hall, "The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power," *Modernity*, ed. Stuart Hall, D. Held, D. Hubert & K. Thompson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996) 203.

physically violent act done in an effort to instill fear and change the opinions of those who oppose the political stands of the group committing the act - committed by adherents of Zionism⁹ in their efforts to fulfill their vision of *Eretz Yisrael*.¹⁰ For this reason, I have chosen to allot the first section of this part of the Chapter to a discussion of the events leading up to the birth of the State of Israel, with a mere reference to the wars of 1967 and 1973. In the second section of the first part of this Chapter, I will concentrate primarily on the aftermath of the "First" *Intifadah*. For although Sharon was the catalyst of the current *Intifadah* it is the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, intensified by the "fruits" of the Oslo Agreement, which have proven to be the cause of the current Uprising.¹¹

⁹ Stemming from *Zionism*, a modern Jewish nationalist movement which seeks to establish a state for the Jewish population, completely ignoring the Palestinian-Arab individuals living in the country. Envisioned is a homogeneous national State without non-Jews, or with as few non-Jews as possible. The force of Zionism is far from exhausted and continues to fuel illegal Israeli occupation of, and expansion and settlement into Palestinian Territories. Gush Shalom "Zionism" <<http://www.gush-shalom.org>> (accessed 11 November 2000). Gush Shalom is a non-partisan and extra-parliamentary grassroots movement composed of Jews, Arabs and Independents; their web-site is composed of articles and action alerts pertaining to the Palestinian fight against Israeli occupation.

¹⁰ Hebrew for "Land of Israel," it is the tenet of both Judaism and Zionism, and geographically encompasses all of Palestine and parts of Jordan. *Eretz Israel* is believed to be where "God wished the Jew to create a unique, total, pure and complete Jewish life, society and state." Rabbi Meir Kahane, "The Arabs in Eretz Israel," *Kahane.Org*, <<http://www.kahane.org/meir/arabs.html>> (accessed 19 December 2000). This web-site offers the Zionist perspective on the *Intifadah*, and on the Israeli occupation of Palestinian Territories.

¹¹ It has been suggested that Oslo has amounted to nothing more than a cosmetic make-over to the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian Territory. Oslo does not afford Palestinians any means to attain *meaningful* sovereignty, nor does it address the greatest concerns of Palestinians: the right of return for Palestinian refugees, the illegal construction of Israeli settlements on confiscated Palestinian lands and, Palestinian sovereignty over Arab East Jerusalem. The failure of Oslo, insofar as the claims to Palestinian self-determination are concerned, will be discussed in greater detail in this Chapter and
(continued...)

I have chosen to concentrate on certain aspects - not to belittle others, but in order to keep this work as concise as possible. The intentions of this work are not to diagram, but at a very modest level, the "Historical Backdrop" of the current Palestinian Uprising, for before you is an examination of CNN and its misrepresentation of the Palestinian claim for self-determination. I have chosen to concentrate on "filling" the *immediate* aporias I examine and which are born out of the technique of CNN's coverage: Ariel Sharon's past, the dispossession of the Palestinian natives and the documentation of both past and present human rights abuses perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian population. What follows is not an exhaustive or near complete historical contextualization of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land nor of the dispossession of the Palestinian natives, but rather a very brief outline of an exceptionally complex narrative.

It has been argued that there is no "truth," and that there are *histories* rather than *a history*; that there are many narratives which surround any tale to be told. Some may judge the following with scepticism and dismiss it as merely a Palestinian narrative of history; not a truth, but rather another side of the story, perhaps even a biased one. For this reason, I would like to draw attention to the notion of history as it has been written by he who possesses power. As was the case with the aboriginal communities

¹¹(...continued)
Chapter Three.

and the Afro American slaves of America, and with the African men and women who endured the oppressive regime of apartheid in South Africa, there was always indeed *a history*, one which went unchallenged for decades. The leading history was always that of the oppressor, the coloniser; the tale told was the tale of the powerful, not of the weak. Once the history of the oppressor was challenged, the world came to know a very different reality and history; it has been this form of challenge which has afforded a voice to the oppressed. In all three cases mentioned above (as with most of history as it is written by the agent maintaining power), there are no longer *histories*, but *a history* of oppression, racism, humiliation and colonization, one of pain, and ultimately of terror. The following is one such case for it challenges the leading and dominant *history* as it has been told by "historians" such as Leonard J. Davis and Moshe Decter. The dominant discourse surrounding the *history* of the Occupied Palestinian Territories has been narrated by the State of Israel, and the following offers the *alternative* narrative, which is that of the Palestinian native residing under foreign military occupation.

A 1. The pre-1948 Terrorization of the Palestinian-Arab and the Creation of the State of Israel

The current state of affairs in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories is the result of at least 53 years of Israeli presence in Historical Palestine, of which the last 33

years have consisted of illegal Israeli military occupation.¹² It is a situation which has created a long-term tinderbox; one most recently ignited by Ariel Sharon's visit to *Al-Aqsa Mosque*, the *Temple Mount*.¹³

What would befall the Palestinian people in 1948 began in 1896 when Theodore Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement, advocated that a Jewish state be created in either Argentina or Palestine. A final decision to create the Jewish homeland in Palestine was taken in 1906 by the Zionist congress, and reinforced in 1917 by what is now known as the Balfour Declaration.¹⁴ At the time of this Declaration, the population of Palestine was about 700,000, of which 574,000 were Muslims, 74,000 were Christian, and 56,000 were Jewish.¹⁵ As quoted by Edward W. Said, the following memorandum written by Lord Balfour embodies the essence of the Orientalism and

¹² Historical Palestine is the Territory defined as Palestine prior to the creation of the Israeli State in 1948.

¹³ "The Farthest Mosque" (*Masjid Al-Aqsa*) because it was the place of worship farthest West known to the Arabs in the time of the Prophet Muhammad; it was the "first direction of prayer" (*qibla*), and represents the site of the Prophet's Night Journey (*Al-Israa*). This whole area is believed to refer to the site of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem on the hill of Moriah, at or near which stands the Dome of the Rock. The Mosque remains as is and was completed by the Amir Abd-ul-Malik in A.H. 68. The Temple was finished by Solomon about B.C. 1004, destroyed by the Babylonians about 586 B.C., rebuilt at about 515 B.C. and then completely razed to the ground by Emperor Titus in A.D. 70. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, The Holy Quran: Text, translation and Commentary, (Qatar: Publications of Presidency of Islamic Courts and Affairs, 1946) Sura XVII. 1.

¹⁴ A letter sent by Lord Arthur J. Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, to Zionist leader Lord Rothschild.

¹⁵ Esam Shashaa, "Palestine Timeline 1900+," Palestine: Home of History, <<http://www.palestinehistory.com/time1900.htm>> (accessed 14 March 2001). This site offers a comprehensive outline of the major dates and respective documents which helped shape the history of Palestine and the creation of the Israeli State.

Zionism that has been much characterized by the arrogant and unabashed disregard and dehumanization of the entire Arab population:

For in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country, though the American Commission has been going through the forms of asking what they are. The four great powers are committed to Zionism, and Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long tradition, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land.¹⁶

In 1916, the Sykes-Picot Agreement was signed between Britain and France, dividing the Arab region into zones of influence, allocating Palestine as a land to be internationalised. It was not until the 1920 San Remo Conference that Britain was granted a mandate over Palestine, and it was in 1922 that Palestine was placed effectively under British administration. It was also at this time that the League of Nations issued a Mandate for Palestine in favour of the establishment for the Jewish national homeland in Palestine.¹⁷

In 1936, the Palestinians held a six-month General Strike in protest at the confiscation of land by Jewish immigrants. The British Government then published a new White Paper restricting Jewish immigration and offering independence for Palestine within ten years:

¹⁶ Edward W. Said, "The Prospects for Peace in the Middle East," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969 - 1994, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 166.

¹⁷ Supra note 15.

the White Paper provided that 'Palestine was not to be reconstituted as 'the' Jewish national home but rather that the Balfour Declaration envisaged only the establishment 'in' Palestine of 'a' home for the Jewish people'.¹⁸

In the years to follow, the Zionist organisation would react by committing the following acts of violence in order to effect political change: in 1944, Lord Moyne, a British resident minister was assassinated in Cairo by members of the Stern gang (two of whom would later become Israeli Prime Ministers, Yitzhak Shamir and Menachim Begin); 1947 saw the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, killing 91 and injuring more than 200 British soldiers; bomb attacks in Hafia were carried out against the Palestinian population in 1947; and, also in 1947 the "Letter bombs" were first carried out by the Zionists against British cabinet ministers in order to force British military withdrawal from Palestine.¹⁹

In 1947 the United Nations (UN) approved Resolution 181, outlining a plan for the partition of Palestine under which the Palestinian Arabs, accounting for 70% of the population and owning 92% of the land, were allocated 47% of what would become known as Historical Palestine. April 9th, 1948 saw one of the most gruesome acts in the history of the creation of the Israeli state: the Stern Gang entered *Deir Yassin* and

¹⁸ Yoav Tadmor, "The Palestinian Refugees of 1948: The Right to Compensation and Return," Temple International and Comparative Law Journal 8 (1994): 405.

¹⁹ Arjan Al Fassed, "Twelve Major Tactics of Modern Terrorism," Media Monitors Network, <<http://mediamonitors.net/arjan17.htm>> (accessed 23 February 2001).

Media Monitors Network is a self-described non-political platform which mainly helps to facilitate answers to any disputed, controversial topic in the world media. They seek a *more complete truth* in the most critical "hot topics" which can be manipulated by world media.

murdered 354 Palestinian men, women and children. A year later, *Deir Yassin* became *Givat Shaul Beth* and continues to house religious Jewish settlers. Many of its streets

were named after units of the Igrun which perpetrated the massacre, and of Palmach, the kibbutz-based strike force of Haganah, which took part in the operation but not the massacre. These units were to be 'immortalized on the site,' in the words of the Israeli press. More recently, most of the Deir Yassin cemetery was bulldozed to prepare the ground for a highway to a new Jewish settlement.²⁰

By May of 1948, before the British withdrawal and the Zionist's proclamation of the State of Israel, about 300,000 Palestinian Arabs had fled due to the terror inflicted by the *Deir Yassin* massacre. Shortly after the declaration of the State of Israel in May of 1948, 700,000 more Palestinians fled or were expelled.²¹ A cable dated October 31st, 1948, signed by Major General Carmel and addressed to all divisions and district commanders points to tactics of "ethnic cleansing"²² and demanded that the Israeli

²⁰ Noam Chomsky, Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel & The Palestinians, Updated Edition, (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1999) 166.

²¹ Ibid. at 96.

There are varying estimates regarding the number of Palestinian refugees which were displaced from within what became the borders of Israel in 1948. In 1949, the U. N. Conciliation Commission estimated that approximately 726,000 Palestinians had been displaced; the newly -established U. N. Relief and Works Agency subsequently put the number at 957,000 in 1950. The Israeli government has suggested numbers as low as 520,000, while Palestinian researchers have suggested up to 850,000. Interuniversity Consortium for Middle Eastern Studies, "Palestine Development Info: Palestinian Refugees: An Overview" <<http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/provoverview.html>> (accessed 18 October 2001). This web-site is a joint effort between McGill University and the Université de Montréal, attempting to promote and facilitate research on the contemporary Arab world (and the broader Middle East region).

²² Recently, the Yugoslav Army used similar ethnic cleansing tactics which were met with international outrage. The United States Department issued a file outlining how "Serbian forces appear to have driven the vast majority of Kosovars from their homes, trapping many within Kosovo, while pushing even larger numbers over Kosovo's borders." United States of America, Department Report, Erasing History: Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo May 1999 <<http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/eur/balkans/kosovo/hrreport/Kosovo.pdf>> (accessed 3 June 2001).

forces "do all [they] can do to immediately and quickly purge the conquered territories of all hostile elements [Palestinian Arabs]...the residents should be *helped* to leave the areas that have been conquered."²³

In the Six Day War of 1967, Israel seized the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai peninsula. At this point, an extra several hundred thousand Palestinians were forced out of their homes and into refugee camps in neighbouring Arab countries and in the newly occupied Palestinian Territories.

In October of 1973 still more Palestinians were forced to leave their homes and land. Currently, there are approximately 5,000,000 Palestinian refugees "living" in camps all over the Middle East. The internationally recognized inalienable right of return possessed by Palestinian refugees is denied by the State of Israel and has proven to be one of the major points of contention in the "peace process."²⁴

²³ Gideon Levy, "Exposing Israel's original sins", Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper - English Internet Edition, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/eng/htmls/23_3.htm> (accessed 4 November 2000). This is the official English web-site of *Ha'aretz*, the leading Israeli Newspaper.

²⁴ United Nations Resolution 194, Paragraph 11 states that "[...]the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date...compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return." This is further clarified by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3236, Subsection 2, reaffirming "[...] the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and calls for their return."

All information pertaining to the Right of Return may be accessed at <http://www.al-awda.org/factsheet.htm>, a non-partisan and global grassroots movement which advocates the right of Palestinians to return to their homeland, and to full restitution for any property confiscated and/or destroyed.

All of these events led to the destruction of Palestinian society, the replacement of that society by another, and the eviction of those who were considered undesirable. The creation of the State of Israel brought with it the horrific destruction of over 500 Palestinian villages in the territories that came under both Israeli sovereignty and illegal occupation. All of these Palestinian villages were razed to the ground, and this newly "conquered" land then transferred to exclusive Jewish ownership for "settlement." "The Lion's share of responsibility definitely lies with the Jewish-Zionists."²⁵

A II. Post the "First" Intifada

With the end of the first Uprising came the birth of the Oslo Agreement: the "peace process" between Israelis and Palestinians. Noam Chomsky quotes Shlomo Ben-Ami and explains that although this Accord was meant to act as an articulation of good will between both parties, the Israeli goals of Oslo were "to impose a permanent neo-colonialist dependency in the West Bank and Gaza."²⁶ As described by Edward W. Said:

Oslo was designed to segregate the Palestinians in non-contiguous enclaves, surrounded by Israeli-controlled borders, with settlements

²⁵ Edward W. Said, "My Right of Return," Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper - English Internet Edition, <<http://www3.haaretz.co.il/eng/scripts/print.asp?id=89666>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

²⁶ Noam Chomsky, Lecture, "The Current Crisis in the Middle East: What can we do?" Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, 14 December 2000.

and settlement roads punctuating and essentially violating the territories' integrity, expropriations and house demolitions proceeding inexorably through the Rabin, Peres, Netanyahu and Barak administrations along with the expansion and multiplication of settlements (200,000 Israeli Jews added to Jerusalem, 200,000 more in Gaza and the West Bank), military occupation continuing and every tiny step taken toward Palestinian sovereignty - including agreements to withdraw in minuscule, agreed-upon phases - stymied, delayed, cancelled at Israel's will.²⁷

Whereas the basis for Oslo was to be United Nations Resolution 242 and 338, the tragic and embarrassing²⁸ renegotiation of the Resolutions proved to be detrimental only to the Palestinian natives.

The "fruits" of the renegotiations disallowed the formation of a Palestinian army,²⁹ afforded Israel full discretion to render void any Palestinian legislation,³⁰ and gave Israel the overall responsibility for protecting Israelis from the threat of "terrorism."

Furthermore, the make-up of the Palestinian 'Government' was dependent on communications with the Israeli Government, and the Territory of Palestine was not to

²⁷ Edward W. Said, "Double standards: The US celebrates Serb freedom, but the case of Palestinians is, apparently, different," Guardian Unlimited, <http://www.guardianunlimited.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,380885,00.html> (accessed 16 October 2000).

This serves as the official web-site of one of the United Kingdom's most popular newspapers.

²⁸ It is tragic that the U.S. and Israel would take the Palestinian people for such massive idiots, and embarrassing that the Palestinian Authority would disrespect itself so much and allow this comedic theater to be called a "peace process."

²⁹ Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, 4 May 1994, Article IX (2); and, The Interim Accord, 28 September 1995, Article XIV (3).

³⁰ Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, 4 May 1994, Article VII; and, The Interim Accord, 28 September 1995, Article XVIII (5) & (6).

have any diplomatic relations or foreign missions.³¹ Illegal massive Jewish settlements built on confiscated Palestinian lands would not be dismantled and would remain under the jurisdiction of Israel, who would have all powers to take the steps necessary to meet their responsibility of the overall *security* of Israelis and illegal Settlements.³² The Palestinian Council possessed no jurisdiction over Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, borders, or foreign relations.³³ And finally, Palestinians were to forego the right to resist, although Israel never had to discard its right to attack; no Palestinians, other than those authorized, were to bear arms.³⁴

The "peace process" showed the Palestinian people that their dreams of meaningful sovereignty would never be fulfilled, and the hopes of the dispossessed would not be met. The "final status" negotiations suggest that the oppression and occupation endured by the Palestinian natives would not be a thing of the past, but rather re-articulated, renegotiated, and masked as the New *Peace Order*.

³¹Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, 4 May 1994, Article IV (3) and Article VI (2a); and, The Interim Accord, 28 September 1995, Article XIII (2a). There is no mention of the means of protection Palestinians are allowed to use in such circumstances.

³²Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, 4 May 1994, Article V (1a); and, The Interim Accord, 28 September 1995, Article XII (2).

³³Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, 4 May 1994, Article V (3a); and, The Interim Accord, 28 September 1995, Article XVII (1a).

³⁴Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, 4 May 1994, Article IX (3); and, The Interim Accord, 28 September 1995, Article XIV (4). There was no mention of the weaponry held by the Jewish Settlers.

B. Ariel Sharon; A spark among tinder

The newly elected Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon³⁵ has become one of the most notorious figures on the landscape of Middle Eastern history in general, and the Palestinian narrative(s) in particular. Born in 1928, Mr. Sharon's career took its current turn in 1953 when he was given command of Unit 101, a number which still provokes fear among those residing in Occupied Palestine. In August of 1953, Sharon commanded the destruction of the El-Bureig refugee camp located to the South of Gaza: "bombs were thrown through the windows of huts in which the refugees were sleeping and, as they fled, they were attacked by small arms and automatic weapons."³⁶ Only 2 months later, in October of 1953 came the attack by Sharon's Unit 101 on the Jordanian village of Qibya, which left 69 civilians dead, two thirds of them women and children, forty-five houses reduced to rubble, and the village school and reservoir destroyed. As described by the UN observer on the scene, the

bullet-riddled bodies near the doorways and multiple bullet hits on the doors of the demolished houses indicated that the inhabitants had been forced to remain inside until their homes were blown up over them.³⁷

Ariel Sharon went on to head the Israeli Defense Forces' southern command,

³⁵ Elected on February 2nd, 2001.

³⁶ Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair, "Return of the terrorist: The crimes of Ariel Sharon," CounterPunch, <<http://www.counterpunch.org/sharon.htm> I> (accessed 10 February 2001).

³⁷ Supra note 20, at 383.

"charged with the task of 'pacifying' the recalcitrant Gaza Strip after the 1967 war."

During this time, Sharon destroyed thousands of Palestinian homes in the refugee camps in order to create so-called "security roads," uprooting some 16,000 Palestinians for the second time in their lives.³⁸

Finally, in the most notorious of his actions as Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon's path led him to the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla in Southern Lebanon. During a 62 hour rampage disguised as a raid, beginning at 6 p.m. on the evening of September 16th, and ending at 8 a.m. on the morning of September 18th, 1982, the Lebanese Phalange militia³⁹ slaughtered upwards of 2,700 Palestinian civilians by the flare-gun lights of a unit of the Israeli army led by Ariel Sharon. Men, women, children and elderly were slaughtered, most disemboweled, and in 1983, an Israeli state inquiry found Ariel Sharon guilty for

having disregarded the danger of acts of vengeance and bloodshed by the Phalangists against the population of the refugee camps, and having failed to take this danger into account when he decided to have the Phalangists enter the camps.⁴⁰

As he is described by the Israeli writer Amos Elon, Sharon is a man impossible to

³⁸ Supra note 36.

³⁹ The Lebanese Christian Phalangist Party was Israel's ally in its invasion of Lebanon, and a "professedly fascist group dedicated to Maronite Christian rule in a country whose demographic balance shifted dramatically in favor of the Muslim." Edward W. Said, "Our Lebanon," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969 - 1994, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 269.

⁴⁰ Supra note 36.

understand, one "who puts a snake into a child's bed and says: 'I'm sorry. I told the snake not to bite. I didn't know snakes were so dangerous.'"⁴¹

IV. A Personal Note

At the outset, I will say that it is not my chief purpose to apportion blame, although certain facts will undoubtedly hold one agent more responsible than the other. It is also not my purpose to "write the truth," but rather to present an alternative narrative. My chief concern lies with the sorely inadequate and highly problematic coverage of this current *Intifadah*, many of the events and realities of which have gone unaddressed within the coverage of CNN.

With regards to the individual CNN viewer, I do not wish to claim that s/he is

⁴¹ At pages 360 - 394 in Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel & The Palestinians, Noam Chomsky offers an excellent account of this massacre. Most recently, on Sunday June 17th, 2001, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) aired The Accused, a documentary made by Fergal Keane which examined Ariel Sharon's role in the *Sabra* and *Shatila* massacres. The programme contained comments from international legal expert and Professor of International Law at Princeton University Richard Falk, who suggested that Mr. Sharon could be indicted. In this same programme, Judge Richard Goldstone, chief prosecutor for the United Nations criminal tribunals for Rwanda and former Yugoslavia explained that if the person who gave the command knows, or should know of the danger to civilians, then they are responsible, if not *more* responsible than the people who carried out the orders. With regards to *Sabra* and *Shatila*, Judge Goldstone expressed his regret at the fact that no criminal prosecutions had been brought against Ariel Sharon. The transcript of The Accused may be found at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/audio_video/programmes/panorama/transcripts/transcript_17_06_01.txt> (accessed 4 September 2001).

incapable of resisting the misguided discourse of CNN,⁴² but it is necessary to keep in mind that people are more likely to involve themselves in a discourse which tells them what they already know, e.g. the leading narrative of history, the Israeli narrative. I do not purport to understand their psychological make-up nor their personal views on any given subject, let alone one as complex as this particular case.

The past nine months have given rise to much public debate over these issues, and I have found myself often embroiled in the most familiar disputes. Aside from a general frustration with CNN coverage, I was forced, as a Palestinian-Canadian woman, to deal on a private level with the distorted ways in which the types of characterizations of events prevalent within CNN discourse were mirrored in the "common sense" perceptions of events among many of my own friends and colleagues.⁴³

Generally, I was amazed to observe the following CNN-chronization: "Blame" is not placed where it should be in CNN's efforts to portray the balance of power as though it were equal between both peoples. Specifically, I was fascinated by the discursive means employed to transform one of the world's most formidable military

⁴² It is those who resist, and those who will eventually resist, who can change the face of the "peace process" and the role of their own American government.

⁴³ Does the language of the public shape CNN's discourse? Or does CNN's discourse shape public opinion? I suggest that these dichotomies are rather differing surfaces of the same coin – an "Orientalizing" perspective where CNN is a reflection of what we know, of what we think we know, and of what we want to know. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

powers⁴⁴ - funded and backed by the world's foremost military and economic superpower - from illegal occupier to threatened victim, while simultaneously transmuting the victimized peoples into a group of completely threatening perpetrators and barbarians; into *violent savages* in need of civilizing, taming and circumscription.

Above and beyond these vast generalizing concepts, my concerns also hinge upon the more specific details that allow for the above-mentioned fundamentally distorted transmutations to occur. There are several *aporias*⁴⁵ within the coverage, omissions that are not generally allowed to surface in the discourse, and if they do so, it is very vague and are almost always relegated to the status of a footnote, an afterthought to the "central story." This is illustrated through the following omissions: the personal history of Ariel Sharon; the cost to Palestinians at which the State of Israel was born; Israeli presence as an occupying army; international legal documents; and, documented Israeli human rights abuses.

By not mentioning any of the above, CNN avoids engaging in the alternative to the misrepresentations made by their own discourse. All of these factors coalesce to offer one pivotal discourse, informed by the unabashed demonisation and dehumanisation of an entire people. It is my belief that the afore mentioned absences

⁴⁴ Israel's military power is "now estimated to be surpassed only by the U.S., the U. S. S. R. and China." *Supra* note 20, at 6.

⁴⁵ An emptiness of sorts, a missing element, a lacking in the coverage.

from CNN discourse serve to obscure the truth of the plight of the Palestinian people so that their claim to self-determination is far less likely to be considered as legitimate or justified in the eyes of CNN's audience.

Naturally, the question arises: why would a writer who sets out to explore the complex representations of the *Intifadah* concern herself with American audiences if her concern is with Palestinian self-determination? The answer to this is two-fold: first, because the American Government is the "peace broker" of the "peace process" between the Palestinians and the Israelis. And second, because America is a key, if not *the* key player in the international realm.⁴⁶ From a grassroots perspective, the opinions of American audiences can alter the policies of the American government.⁴⁷ It is quite possible that American audiences would demand that their government aide the Palestinians in their fight for self-determination if offered a more complete narrative.

⁴⁶ One example attesting to this fact is in December of 1987, when the United Nations General Assembly considered and passed a resolution which would condemn terrorism. The resolution was passed 153 to 2, the two being Israel and the United States (hence a veto). Why would the United States veto such a resolution? "Because it contained one paragraph which said that nothing in this resolution prejudices the right of people to struggle against racist and colonialist regimes and foreign military occupation and to gain the support of others for their struggle for freedom under these conditions." *Supra* note 26.

⁴⁷ As was witnessed during Clinton's administration and the affects of African American grassroots organizations on U.S. policy with regards to President Aristides of the Haitian Republic. For a comprehensive look at the possible affects of grassroots activism on international policy and international affairs, see Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

Outlined in this Chapter is a brief history of both this current *Intifadah*, and the present situation of the Palestinian population. I will constantly draw on the facts presented in order to "fill in the blanks" which CNN creates daily. In the following Chapter and before entering into a direct analysis of CNN coverage, I will first outline the theoretical framework and different discourses which intersect to create CNN's dominant discourse. I will then examine how it is that this dominant discourse works to justify existing relations of power between Israelis and Palestinians, and why it is that many of CNN's audience accept, as *common sense* the reality as it is mis-constructed and mis-presented by CNN.

CHAPTER 2

NATURE AND EFFECTS OF THE DOMINANT DISCOURSES CONCERNING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN QUESTION

What follows is an examination of *which* specific discourses intersect and *how* they allow CNN's coverage to justify the current relations of domination between Israelis and Palestinians. As part of this critical analysis, a concomitant discussion of culture and the creation of the Other is necessary in order to illustrate how the ruling ideology of difference comes to be woven into CNN discourse. Apart from the process of Zionization, a reading of the discourse(s) surrounding the policing of anti-Semitism becomes necessary in order to illuminate the inter- weaving of these dominant ideologies and discourses, and their roles in the eventual representation and containment of the Arab Other. Eventually this consideration of the discourses will lead me to a thorough examination of how these framing perspectives have allowed CNN's coverage to be fatally detrimental to the Palestinian claim to self-determination.

In my study of the language adopted by CNN, the stereotypes⁴⁸ manifest in the prescribed "identity"⁴⁹ of both the Israeli and the Palestinian population which incorporate, above all, the unnecessary and harmful juxtaposition between the *good*,

⁴⁸ I am using Stuart Hall's definition of "stereotyping", explained as "a one-sided description which results from the collapsing of complex differences into a simple 'cardboard cut-out.' Different characteristics are run together or condensed into one...Its characteristics become the signs, the 'evidence,' by which the subject is known. They define its being, its *essence*." *Supra* note 8, at 197.

⁴⁹ The definition of identity is crucial to my work, for identity lies at the heart of the CNN discourse as a fixed quantity, thereby interpellating the audience into an identification with one (Israeli) or the Other (Palestinian).

which is represented by Us, and the *evil*, which is represented by the Other, appeared throughout the extent of CNN's coverage. Before analyzing the ways in which such discursive "activities serve to sustain social relations which are asymmetrical with regard to the organization of power",⁵⁰ I will first provide the conceptual framework for my analysis. The following concepts are central to this discussion: discourse, ideology, ideological effects, interpellation, discourse of the West and the Rest, creation of the Other and ideology of difference, Orientalism, and Zionization.

It is necessary to state as a preface that an analysis of *all* dimensions to these concepts in the situation which I propose to examine is neither possible (given the scope of this thesis) nor is it here intended. For this reason I have chosen to concentrate on the following specific constants missing from CNN discourse:

- ◆ historical reference to Ariel Sharon's criminal past;
- ◆ the "fruits" of the Oslo "peace process" without concomitant mention of those United Nations Resolutions which already deal with the contentious aspects of the Process;
- ◆ Palestinian dispossession as the cost of the creation of the State of Israel; and,
- ◆ documented Israeli violations of basic and internationally recognized human rights.

Since these constants will be explored in far greater detail later, I will refer to certain specific instances in CNN's coverage throughout this Chapter in order to illustrate the importance of each concept.

1. Discourse and Ideology

⁵⁰ John B. Thompson, "Language and Ideology : A framework for analysis," Sociological Review 35 Issue 3 (1987): 523-524.

Ideology and discourse are intimately related and for this reason, I will be using the definitions of ideology and discourse that Purvis and Hunt, Thompson and Hall have offered. I have chosen these particular definitions because they illuminate the intrinsic need for two concepts to benefit from each other. Discourse's key characteristic is that of "putting in place a *system* of linked signs", referring to "the individual social networks of communication through the medium of language or non-verbal sign-systems."⁵¹

Discourse is the internal aspect of ideology, and it is through the intricacies of discourse that the external ideological effects may be revealed.⁵² By John B. Thompson's definition, discourse is "actually occurring instances of expression which appear in the flow of conversation, text or similar form."⁵³ The system of any given discourse provides a basic means of communication shaping the way in which we receive our information and make our choices. Newspapers, movies, news-media, radio, sign language, and imagery all function discursively: discourse is both the spoken and unspoken, it is the signs we receive which allow us to form opinions and ideas.

Most importantly, Stuart Hall suggests that discourse can be understood as: "sets of ready-made and preconstituted 'experiencings' displayed and arranged through language."⁵⁴ I will use this aspect of discourse in the search for meaning and by this I hope to show how CNN discourse affects many members of its American audience. Essentially, what all of these scholars are expressing is that within discourse there is

⁵¹ Trevor Purvis and Alan Hunt, "Discourse, ideology ...," The British Journal of Sociology 44 Issue 3 (September 1993): 485.

⁵² Ibid. at 476

⁵³ Supra note 50, at 520.

⁵⁴ Supra note 51, at 485.

always already a system of identifiers, a system of ideas which allow individuals to "go beyond" the temporal or contextual *definition* of words and find the *meanings* which constitute the discourse.⁵⁵

Turning now to ideology, for it is ideology which makes up the internal mechanism of discourse, Trevor Purvis and Alan Hunt have illustrated that the theory of ideology supplements discourse theory.⁵⁶ Further characterized by Thompson as "a sort of 'social cement', a normative glue which binds members of a society together by providing them with collectively shared values"⁵⁷, ideology serves as the relation through which humans live the relation to their world.⁵⁸ It often takes the form of misconceptions and mis-perceptions which are usually rooted in our fear of the unknown and are answered by the ready-made "knowledge" that ideology provides. Such knowledge can not be disinterested. Ideology, then, is "a set of statements or beliefs which produce knowledge that serves the interests of a particular group or class."⁵⁹

Thus, drawing on the work of John B. Thompson, Stuart Hall and that of Purvis and Hunt, I am most interested in the effects produced when different discourses intersect. What I seek are not the shared values of the American audience receiving its information from CNN, but rather the "complex ways in which meaning is mobilized for

⁵⁵ The difference between "definition" and "meaning" will be addressed in section II of this Chapter.

⁵⁶ Supra note 51, at 473.

⁵⁷ Supra note 50, at 522.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid. at 194.

the maintenance of relations of domination", for it is my belief that at the heart of CNN's discourse, the intersection of different discourses, ranging from Orientalism to Zionism can be located. For this reason, I find it necessary and most helpful to draw on the aforementioned authors' understanding of discourse and ideology, for it offers the most useful definitions of both ideology and discourse. Ultimately, such definitions will allow me to better explain how the discourse of CNN obscures the oppressive relations of power between the Israelis and Palestinians; how it is necessary for reproducing these relations that Palestinian claims of self-determination can not be portrayed as just.

John B. Thompson, like Purvis and Hunt, advances a critical concept of ideology. His formulation is particularly pertinent to my analysis because it offers a proper framework through which a critical discourse analysis can proceed in an effort to outline and understand how ideological effects work to reinforce and justify existing relations of domination circulating within prevailing social relations. Further to the critical concept with which Thompson works, he suggests there are three aspects to the maintenance of power relations: Domination, Meaning, and the Modalities of Operation. It is the third of these aspects I will use to examine CNN's coverage; the Modalities being Legitimation, Reification, Dissimulation and Fragmentation.⁶⁰

II. Ideological Effects

Central to my work is the critical conception of ideology which is best articulated through the term *ideological effects*. Since it is my contention that the ideological effects of

⁶⁰ In Chapter Three I will define each Modality and explain its pertinence to my work.

CNN's discourse are ultimately detrimental to the Palestinian claim for self-determination, it is necessary that I explain how ideological effects come about, what they are, and why they are most damaging in this particular case. The critical concept of ideology put forth by the above authors explains that we receive knowledge through interpretations of verbal and non-verbal signs. Keeping this in mind, we can turn to the work of Antonio Gramsci, who was particularly concerned with the way in which only certain pieces of information tend to gain legitimacy and popularity. Apart from Gramsci's concern with the political structure of the State, which is not relevant here, he attempts to understand how it is that certain points of reflection are taken for granted by the individual; how it is that these fragments of information can gain enough authority to become *common sense*.

Within Gramsci's understanding of common sense, a definition of ideological effects ensues, for ideological effects are, in fact, constitutes of common sense and, as he explains, *not necessarily good sense*.⁶¹ It is from discourse and the interpretation of discourse that the individual receives information. Within this reception exist specific points of reference which aid the individual in his/her overall process of understanding. Here, we must address the difference between "definition" and "meaning", for ideological effects almost always find their niche in meanings richly embedded within discourses. Ideological effects are the flash-points of understanding which we take for granted; they are the notions which people, for the most part, do not criticize or analyze

⁶¹ Tony Bennett, Graham Martin, Colin Mercer and Janet Woollacott, ed., "Antonio Gramsci," Culture, Ideology and Social Process: A Reader (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd in association with The Open University Press, 1981) 202-203.

critically.

As explained by Gramsci, "every philosophical current leaves behind a sedimentation of 'common sense': this is the document of its historical effectiveness."⁶² When this is brought to bear upon the philosophical currents, or discourses of Orientalism, Zionism, and the West's understanding of itself versus the Rest, it becomes apparent that the ideological effects maintain the "common sense" which misunderstands the Palestinian Arabs "only as...negative functions, as the embodiment of violent anti-Semitic passions."⁶³ How, then, can a discourse replete with these effects support the cry for self-determination from any such peoples?

Before moving to a discussion of interpellation, the concept of greatest significance for my work, it must be said that ideological effects are not necessarily always harmful, although I will argue that in this instance (in the case of the Israeli versus the Palestinian-Arab) ideological effects have *always* taken on rather harmful implications with regards to the Palestinian struggle. Nothing, including ideology, is static for "fluidity" is an integral part of the attempt to understand anything. Ideology is, by definition, conservative and semi-fixed, in the sense that it takes a significant amount of time to alter the mis-perceptions maintained by ideological effects. For purposes of this paper, the ideological effects which are of greatest concern are those which afford the CNN subject room to *believe* they are right in thinking that Arabs in general, and

⁶² Ibid. at 203.

⁶³ Edward W. Said, "American Zionism — the real problem (1)," Al-Ahram Weekly On-line <<http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2000/500/o>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

Palestinians in particular are, in fact, a lesser "breed"; a group of people who are unworthy of and incapable of managing a State of their own.

III. An Introduction to Althusser's Notion of Interpellation

The overall effect of ideology as defined here is to further entrench the already dominant ideology of moral supremacy⁶⁴ and cannot be fully discussed without a consideration of the way in which they take affect, that is, through the "hailing" or the interpellation of subjects. For my purposes, it is necessary to examine the way in which American audiences internalize CNN's discourse, reinforcing the harmful common sense misunderstandings of the Palestinian subject.⁶⁵ It is therefore important to turn to the work of Louis Althusser, who was primarily concerned with the reproduction of the means of production.⁶⁶

Before addressing Althusser's notion of interpellation, an elaboration of Althusser's main concerns is necessary. Although Althusser's work was concerned primarily with the State apparatus, it can be easily reconciled with other theorists who discuss ideological effects and how they translate into everyday language, how they become common sense. Althusser offers his readers a Marxist account of the capitalist relations that are reproduced by the State in order to secure the conditions required for

⁶⁴ Colin Hay, "Mobilization through Interpellation: James Bulger, Juvenile Crime and the Construction of a Moral Panic," Social and Legal Studies 4 (1995): 207.

⁶⁵ It is in this meaning of "common sense" where the following stereotypes are manifest: "Arabs are driven by irrational motivation and passionate emotion"; "by nature, Arabs only understand the language of force, Muslims more-so than the rest"; "Palestinians teach their children to hate the Israelis"; and, naturally, "Israel is the victim."

⁶⁶ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970).

expanded capital accumulation. Setting aside Althusser's Marxist interpretation of power and the way in which it circulates within the State, I will focus solely on his notion of interpellation because, as many authors have emphasized, relations of domination exist beyond, and can not be reduced to, class domination.⁶⁷

Althusser distinguishes between Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA's) and the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA), for they are the two means by which ideology circulates and the reproduction of the conditions of production is ensured. Althusser explains that the ISA's function "by ideology", whereas the RSA functions "by violence."⁶⁸ For my purposes, the latter is of no great concern, since I am concentrating on the discourse of one American media faction, rather than any violent physical tactics employed by the American government in the efforts to maintain the misrepresentation of facts insofar as the Palestinian/Israeli situation is concerned.⁶⁹

"The category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects."⁷⁰ This constitution is precisely how all ideology hails or interpellates an individual as concrete subject, how subjects "have the inevitable and natural reaction of crying out (aloud or in the 'still, small voice of conscience'): 'That's obvious! That's

⁶⁷ John B. Thompson, Studies in the Theory of Ideology, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984) 130.

⁶⁸ Supra note 66, at 145.

⁶⁹ One could argue, however, that since ideology does translate into "real world" action, the misrepresentation by the American Government - with or without the media dimension - is indeed a violent act.

⁷⁰ Supra note 66, at 171.

right! That's true!"⁷¹ Interpellation, then, is the hailing of individual as Subject: occurring once the audience of any discourse recognizes themselves (or aspects of themselves) within the discourse and subjects themselves, becomes subject to, Subject of, that very discourse.

According to Althusser, ISA's function by way of ideology and, among these ISA's is the "media machine." Although there are many ISA's that maintain a given dominant hegemony, I will only concern myself here with the ways in which the media can be seen as an ISA. Apart from the news-media, two other crucial examples of American ISA's are the school curriculum and popular culture.

It is imperative that all American children be repeatedly taught about only one Holocaust: that against the Jewish community. Furthermore, there is a constant 'celebration' of the State of Israel within popular culture, always at the expense of the Palestinian-Arab voice.⁷² These are examples illustrating the intersection of discourses. The discourse of the teaching regarding the Jewish Holocaust creates a "foundation" of sympathy: children begin learning about the Holocaust at a very young age, and continue to learn throughout their school years. The horrors suffered by the Jewish community are etched into the minds of young Americans and repeatedly accessed by popular culture.⁷³

⁷¹ Ibid. at 172-173.

⁷² One such example was the highly publicized and televised "50th Anniversary Celebration of the State of Israel" hosted by one of Hollywood's heavies, Kevin Costner. This program managed to reference the Jewish holocaust, and the *consequent* birth of the State of Israel, but mentioned neither the displacement nor the continued oppression of the native Palestinian population.

⁷³ Movies such as *Schindler's List*, and countless documentaries - whose names can be found (continued...)

As illustrated by the likes of the "50th Anniversary Celebration of the State of Israel," the Jewish Holocaust has a Hollywood-style happy ending: *without consequence*, the Jews were given their own land. There is mention of neither the dispossession nor the continued suffering of the Palestinian people. The continued references to the holocaust perpetuate American sympathy insofar as the Jewish "disposition" is concerned, but so too does it justify the lack of voice offered the Palestinian people. The concentration then is upon the Jewish holocaust and the birth of the State of Israel: the *in between* narrative of the Palestinian victim is of no real concern. Since there is no mention of the horrors suffered by the Palestinian native, there is no foundation of sympathy which can be accessed. In fact, as will be outlined in this Chapter, the only foundation available is a skewed and severely problematic "figure" representing the Arab Other. Even before a discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is presented, there exists a noxious imbalance of power.

All aspects of an ideology functioning as an ISA are ultimately unified as the ideology of the ruling class,⁷⁴ and so it becomes necessary to understand, through a careful reading, how the ruling ideology among the American audience becomes one that denigrates the Palestinian struggle. Simply put, the process of the individual subject's *interpellation* into discourses such as those to be found within Orientalism

(...continued)

on an annual basis at The Academy Awards.

In "A new kind of thriller," Edward W. Said discusses the representation of Palestinian Arabs in such genres. Edward W. Said, "A new kind of thriller," Dawn - The Internet Edition <<http://www.dawn.com/2000/05/24/op.htm#3>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

⁷⁴ It is important to note that I am not talking about the *ruling class* per se, rather a discourse called Orientalism which interpellates subjects along the lines of the West and the Rest.

and the mis-construction of the Other, Zionism, and discourse surrounding the West and the Rest, in maintaining a certain ideological "front" makes it impossible, or nearly impossible, to see the "Other's" side.

In Colin Hay's use of the Althusserian notion of interpellation, he explains that:

we inject our own subjectivities into the empty scenarios constructed within a mediated discourse. We recognize ourselves as we position ourselves within the narrative structures constructed within such reported events. It is in this moment of identification, empathy and recognition (*connaissance*) that the point of resonance is secured, as we recognize our 'hailing' and become subjects *through* it, and thus subject *to* it.⁷⁵

It follows that the next question is: Why is the Western Subject's interpellation into such discourses detrimental to the Palestinian claim for self-determination? In order to properly respond to this question, the ideological effects of the following discourses must be taken into consideration.

How are audiences "made" subjects within a given discourse? Why do audiences *see themselves* and, *recognize themselves* within a given discourse? In this particular case, the audience of CNN is presented with the Middle East's "Siamese Twins." The framing discourses I have alluded to are of particular importance because they afford the room for ideological effects to maintain the negative stereotyping of Palestinian Arabs; they help CNN maintain and justify the existing oppressive relations of power between Palestinians and Zionists. From the effects of the following discourses arise many false common sense claims, which will be outlined and discussed in Chapter Three, using direct examples from CNN.

⁷⁵ Supra note 64, at 208.

IV. The West and the Rest

According to Antonio Gramsci, "the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as "domination" and as "intellectual and moral leadership."⁷⁶ Both of these aspects can be found in the discursive argument of "the West and the Rest", resonating within the discourse of CNN, for acceptance of the latter frequently leads to the implementation of the former. Within CNN discourse, we can identify the assumption of a supposed intellectual and moral supremacy of the Western world which translates into the subordination of all that is non-Western - in this case - the Palestinian Arab.⁷⁷

Interpretation is always done within the confines of another individual's interpretation, it is always a re-interpretation of an interpretation. These interpretations are always incomplete and therefore the individual's knowledge is always incomplete. Since these interpretations are skewed due to the influence of ideological effects, the more incomplete and less informed an interpretation is, the more distorted the end result will be.⁷⁸ More importantly, "the tradition of hermeneutics also reminds us that the

⁷⁶ Supra note 61, at 197.

⁷⁷ One such example is the disbelief and awe with which CNN discusses the killing of two Israeli soldiers on October 12th, 2000. With respect to the actual killings, CNN incorporated terminology such as "shocking images", and "stunned by images." Furthermore, they chose sound-bites such as: "hunt down the killers", "those people", "our counterparts...in all their murderous ugliness", "sons of Satan", and "don't stoop to *their* level" when referring to Palestinians. "Picture of Palestinians celebrating soldiers' murders jolts Israelis," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/sraeli.reax.ap/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

Although I will discuss this in much greater detail in Chapter Three, it must be noted that such language completely demonizes and dehumanizes the Palestinians ignoring and belittling their well-founded fury, misrepresenting them as morally inferior and reprehensible beings, for implicit in CNN's message is: We are shocked and stunned, jolted and chilled by actions we can not fathom, let alone *commit*.

⁷⁸ Supra note 51.

discourse which forms the object of investigation is the discourse of a *subject*,⁷⁹ and in this particular instance, that Subject is the West.⁸⁰

Stuart Hall offers a definition of "the West and the Rest" discourse where he states that it is a "particular way of *representing* 'the West,' 'the Rest,' and the relations between them."⁸¹ He goes on to explain that, in this discourse, the West views the diversity of everything outside of itself as a homogenous entity. The "Rest, though different among themselves, are represented as the same in the sense that *they are all different from the West*."⁸² It is this binary distinction between the West and the Rest which allows CNN to employ a term such as "Arab" in place of the more specific "Palestinian."⁸³

To be found within the parameters of the discourse of the "West and the Rest" is CNN's propensity for deflecting the complexity of Arabs. Although it is true that Palestinians are Arabs, here we see the Zionization of CNN discourse for we hear resonance of the Zionist claim that Historical Palestine is "A land without a people for a people without a land," allowing the ignorant observer to ask 'why don't the *Arabs* just go to another *Arabic* country, and leave the Jews alone?' Often times, neither "Arab"

⁷⁹ Supra note 50, at 524.

⁸⁰ There is a distinction to be made between individual-as-Subject, and West-as-subject. When writing of the individual-as-Subject, I am discussing interpellation and recognition of the individual 'self' within discourse. A discussion of the West-as-subject intersects with discourses such as Orientalism, and inherent in these concepts is the supremacy of the Western world. This distinction intersects if the individual-as-Subject is hailed into the discourse of West-as-subject.

⁸¹ Supra note 8, at 201.

⁸² Ibid. at 189.

⁸³ The same reductionism continues to be imposed upon all communities which do not "belong" to the internal intended/implied community; terms such as "Indian" and "Black" are constantly used to refer to two exceptionally heterogeneous peoples whose respective people come from different places in the world, speaking different languages and bearing different cultures and religions.

nor "Palestinian" is mentioned, creating a vacuum of sorts and disallowing the narrative of Palestinian Nationalism to take place within the discourse of CNN. The "Fact File" of CNN, to which the following ten sections belong, best articulates this vacuum of Palestinian identity: Issues, Key Players, Maps, Timeline, Quiz, Key Documents, Landscapes, People of Israel, Refugees and Overview.⁸⁴ Noticeably, the two words missing from these sections are "Palestinian" and "Historical Palestine."⁸⁵ Even more astonishing is that in the 16 images presented within the section titled "People of Israel"⁸⁶, there was not one "Palestinian" shown. According to this particular section, the "people" of Israel consist of Arabs, Muslims, Jews, and Israelis, but *not* Palestinians. Not only does this approach negate the specificity of the Palestinian claim, and consequentially, their *right* to demand self-determination, but it also denies the historical reality that there was a land, *Palestine*, prior to Israel.

This system of mapping the world is simplistic and reduces the very real differences present among individuals. This is not to say that understanding the world solely based on the differences present among peoples is better, for that, too, may lead to much discrimination. However, a reductionist perspective can, and in this case, does, give rise to a faulty sense of the moral superiority of some over others. Even more central to this thesis is the paranoia of the West described by Hall, for it is in this that we find the foundations of the external threat of the Other justified by the cohesion

⁸⁴ "In-depth Specials; Mideast Struggle for Peace," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/mideast/> (accessed 14 April 2000).

⁸⁵ I would not expect to see "Palestine" for there is no such State at the moment. The disregard of "Historical Palestine" is yet another example of Reification.

⁸⁶ A section which offers CNN audiences a pictorial landscape of the "people" of Israel.

of the internal Western countries, of whom Israel is a member.⁸⁷ Further intensified by the growing sense of superiority the Eurocentric view of the world becomes the West and, ultimately, the "Rest becomes defined as everything that the West is not - its mirror image. It is represented as absolutely, essentially, different, *other*: the Other."⁸⁸

V. Ideology of Difference; The Other

Althusser asserts that "the interpellation of individuals as subjects presupposes the 'existence' of a Unique and central Other subject, in whose Name the...ideology interpellates all individuals as subjects."⁸⁹ This assertion is complemented by Said's work for it explains that if interpellation is to occur, it is necessary to have a specific Other within the discourse that makes a subject of the audience. In this particular case, the interpellation of a Western audience presupposes the "existence" of the Other, the Arab. In mis-recognizing the Arab Subject, the Western Subject recognizes him/herself and others "like" him/herself, such as the Israeli Subject. More important than the individual recognition of the American audience with the Israeli subject, is their recognition of the American State with the Israeli State. For much of the American audience, the State is the legitimate voice of external political expression for the individual, and it is this State-centered perspective which is carried over into CNN and allows them to focus on the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government, ultimately

⁸⁷ Supra note 8, at 197.

⁸⁸ Ibid. at 216.

⁸⁹ Supra note 66, at 178-179.

misrepresenting the conflict as one between States, rather than an uprising of a people residing under illegal military occupation of a formidable army.⁹⁰

Coupled with the notion that ideology is material, in that it may result in material actions,⁹¹ the Western Subject must act according to the discourse into which he/she are hailed. It is necessary to note also that there is always room for resistance, for any ideology carries within it its own "seeds of destruction."⁹²

To explain better the creation of these divergent identities we turn to Edward W. Said's discussion of Palestinian poetry, which is not allowed to form any part of curriculum in Israeli schools.⁹³ He writes:

'We are pure and they are disturbers of our purity,' is the way one can put this astonishingly profound feeling of revulsion and fear towards the Other. Polls taken subsequently to the Knesset debate revealed that a majority of Israelis absolutely reject the idea of accepting any Palestinian literature, or any formal awareness of the Palestinian as a human being with a history and a narrative, within the narrow enclosure of the official Zionist mentality sanctioned by education.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ A prime example of this can be found at the bottom of each CNN article, in the Related Links section, where among the links are the Israeli Government's web-site and the Palestinian Authority's web-site. No truly alternate web-site addresses are offered the audience - web-sites describing the concerns of the Palestinian people rather than the Palestinian Authority.

⁹¹ Supra note 66, at 169.

⁹² As mentioned earlier, there are many viewers of CNN who do not take the coverage at "face value", constantly seeking a more complete narrative. The skewed landscape of CNN does not create a *fixed reality*, for much of the audience recognizes that there is information lacking, and from this there are severe aporias within the information presented and so they search for a more complete picture: *this is resistance*.

⁹³ Israeli poetry is also not taught in Palestinian schools. There is, I believe, a psychological aspect which must be addressed in this instance; the difference between oppressor and oppressed. With this in mind the reason for, and end result of both occlusions differ: the Israelis disregard the Palestinian figure in order to fashion a unique Jewish identity, while the Palestinians ignore the Israeli individual in order to legitimate their distaste for their occupier (a Palestinian refugee may not care to hear a Jewish poet's lament for their "promised land").

⁹⁴ Edward W. Said, "A truly fragile identity," Al-Ahram Weekly On-line, <<http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2000/474/op2.htm>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

This illustrates how the Israeli identity appears to be created, or has attempted to create itself apart from the Other, as if the terms of its being were not related to *any* identity. The Israeli identity is fashioned as though it were in fact standing on its own, requiring no reference to anything outside of its self. As such, it is necessarily threatened by the mere existence of anything beyond its own definition. It is from this notion of the Jewish "Self" that Zionists create an enemy out of the Palestinian. The Israeli identity is perceived to exist alone; it does not depend on or even acknowledge the Palestinian identity. *But*, admitting to the existence of Palestinian identity threatens the very existence of Israeli identity. The argument being employed by Zionists is a tautological argument which can not maintain logical ground, for if the Israeli identity truly stands alone, then the existence of other identities simply can *not* threaten it, for it is not dependent on anything other than itself. This is what Said refers to as the "schizophrenic ideological formation within Israel and doctrinal Zionism that decrees the Palestinians to be present-absentees."⁹⁵ This erasure of Palestinian identity affords a clean slate for those who wish to reconstruct that identity in a fashion which is most beneficial to themselves.

An interesting point to make, and one which is worthy of further discussion elsewhere, pertains to the *necessity* of the Other. This is illustrated in "Waiting for the Barbarians" as quoted by Edward W. Said:

*Why are the streets and squares emptying so rapidly,
everyone going home lost in thought?
Because night has fallen and the barbarians haven't come.
And some of our men just in from the border say*

⁹⁵ Ibid.

*There are no barbarians any longer.
Now what's going to happen to us without barbarians?
They were, those people, a kind of solution.⁹⁶*

Such a construction reveals that the identity of Us and the Other, is indeed dialectical and necessary for a society to maintain its identity as a sort of mythological barrier against barbarism; against all that is embodied by the Other.⁹⁷

VI. Orientalism⁹⁸

Prior to the formation of the Israeli State, and escalating since then, the Arab has been viewed through the lens of "the West and the Rest" as the embodiment of that which stands in opposition to, and ultimately is threatening to, the West. Israel is regarded as Western, allied, democratic, peace-loving, and anti-terrorist.⁹⁹ On the other side of the dichotomy stands the Palestinian Arab, aligned therefore with all that which it is *not* (e.g. not allied, not democratic, and not peace loving). Perhaps this was best articulated by Edward W. Said when he noted that, in American public discourse, "Israel

⁹⁶ Edward W. Said, "How Long Can Waiting Work?," Al-Ahram Weekly On-line <<http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2000/466/op2.htm>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ziauddin Sardar, Concepts in the Social Sciences: Orientalism, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999) 54 - 76. Sardar outlines the criticisms which have been made of Edward W. Said's Orientalism, critiques which do not remove from the worth and the weight of Said's contribution to present a way through which we may better understand the dominant look of the West toward the East.

⁹⁹ Edward W. Said, "The Essential Terrorist," Blaming the Victims: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestinian Question, ed. Edward W. Said and Christopher Hitchens, (London: Verso, 1988) 157.

is not only 'our staunch ally'; it is also a 'bastion of democracy,' and a state beleaguered by terrorism, Communism, and anti-Americanism."¹⁰⁰

Since the scope of this paper precludes an exhaustive analysis here of how and where the circumstances became such that the Arab was seen as the Other, I have chosen to begin with Lord Evelyn Baring Cromer's words, as underlying the current state of affairs respecting the situation of the Arab as non-Westerner.¹⁰¹ Cromer was the British Commissioner of Egypt between 1883 and 1907, and therefore considered an "authority" on the Oriental subject. He described the Oriental mind as one that abhors accuracy, and is untruthful, it is "wanting in symmetry", its reasoning is "slipshod...deficient in the logical faculty...incapable of drawing the most obvious conclusions", generally prone to "lengthy" explanations which are "wanting in lucidity" and probably contradictory and of course, the Oriental mind will "often break down under the mildest process of cross-examination", since as previously established, Orientals are prone to harboring the inaccurate, the non-truth.¹⁰² His paternalistic and condescending tone is a mainstay of the historical discourse of Orientalism: the West must lead the savage Arab away from his¹⁰³ instinctively violent and undemocratic "origins" towards a "civilization" of control, Western rationale and democracy.¹⁰⁴ The argument for recognizing the Other, the Oriental, was clear:

there are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the

¹⁰⁰ Supra note 5, at 44.

¹⁰¹ Edward W. Said, Orientalism, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) 38.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ There was and continues to be a different tone for the Arab woman.

¹⁰⁴ Supra note 101, at 34 - 35.

latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, and their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power.¹⁰⁵

In order to understand fully the effects of the interpellation of members of CNN's audience, some light must be shed on the roots of the perception of *Arab as savage*. Why, historically, do Western audiences tend to understand themselves by way of misunderstanding the Arab identity as one specific and rigid construction?

The creation of the "savage Arab" is rooted in the arrogant and condescending stereotyping of all that differs from the Western Self. As Said elaborates in his theory of Orientalism, ideologies of Difference become our primary reference in understanding how the audience of CNN become, through interpellation, positioned and identified, not with the Arab, the Other, but rather the Israeli, the Same.

Headlines such as "Wrong turn by soldiers led to brutal killings, Israel retaliation,"¹⁰⁶ "Ramallah lynching leaves peace in pieces,"¹⁰⁷ and "Israeli soldiers' deaths spark powerful Israeli response"¹⁰⁸ portray the *Intifadah* as initiated by violent Palestinians, and met by the Israeli Army (the "led," "retaliation," "leaves," and "response" in the titles ensure that the reader understand Israel did not fire first). They mis-construct the actions of the Israeli army as ones necessary for the confinement and

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* at 36.

¹⁰⁶ "Wrong turn by soldiers led to brutal killings, Israeli retaliation," CNN <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/12/israeli.soldiers.ap>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

¹⁰⁷ "Ramallah lynching leaves peace in pieces," CNN <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/12/israeli.tm/>> (accessed 12 April 2001); and, "Ramallah lynching leaves peace in pieces," CNN <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/14/israeli.tm.tm/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

¹⁰⁸ "Israeli soldiers' deaths spark powerful Israeli responses; Diplomatic efforts made uncertain by airstrikes, angry words," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/12/mideast.violence.05/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

control of the Palestinian Arabs. The overwhelming image presented is that of a people who act to provoke, and do so without mercy. Such a discourse, replete with these effects can not possibly support a cry for self-determination from the supposedly unruly rock-throwing and merciless Palestinian population.

Orientalism is a grossly essentialist "white"-washing of all who are perceived as Oriental; "that ludicrously inept academic and jargon-ridden school for which such ideological fictions as 'Islamic (or Arab) rage' or 'the Arab mind' are the stock-in-trade."¹⁰⁹ In the teaching of this school, a "Platonic essence"¹¹⁰ which was supposed to typify all Orientals was discerned, and continues to be read as simply as a mathematical equation. Orientals were/are seen as mechanical in that the "Orientalist" finds them easy to define and to predict. If $2 + 2$ equals 4, it is also "knowledge" that the Oriental is savage, illogical, untruthful and untrustworthy. The Oriental is seen as s/he who acts in a "manner exactly opposite to the European."¹¹¹

The misconception of Palestinian-"Arab identity" is rooted in Orientalism, an ideology of difference, an ideology of the Other.¹¹² Briefly stated,

Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the strange (the Orient, the East, 'them'). This vision in a sense created

¹⁰⁹ Supra note 5, at 382.

¹¹⁰ Supra note 101, at 38.

¹¹¹ Ibid. at 39.

¹¹² The ideology of the Other goes beyond recognizing and accepting the beauty of difference, since Jew and Palestinian are not the same, and creates a hierarchy where one identity is unique, hence superior to, and master of the Other. Edward W. Said, "An Ideology of Difference," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969 - 1994, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

and then served the two worlds thus conceived. Orientals lived in their world, 'we' lived in ours.¹¹³

Understanding the prevalence of Orientalist patterns of thinking reveals the complicity of the "we" used in such discourse and shows further the relegation of the *Other* to the status of sub-human. Coupling this with Althusser's notion of *méconnaissance*, the process of interpellation becomes easy to understand, for *méconnaissance* allows the audience to recognize themselves by recognizing the mis-representation of the *Other*.

As stated earlier, individuals become subjects within discourse by recognizing themselves in, or responding to being *hailed by* the discourse. This can best be illustrated by using Althusser's example of Christian religious ideology, but substituting the media for the Church in this instance. The news-media says: "I address myself to you, a human individual in order to tell you that the greater powers of the God of Democratic Western Thought addresses himself to you through my voice." The news-media says: "*this is who you are*. This is your origin. This is your place in the world!"¹¹⁴

Although it is a relatively simple task, through Orientalism, to identify how much of the Western audience might view itself and its place in the world, it is more relevant to identify what the audience members *do not* define as characteristic of the "American psyche": that *Other* which is the Palestinian Arab mind-set. It is this *méconnaissance* which allows one target audience to identify with the Israeli State rather than with the Stateless Palestinian, for "Americans tend to identify with foreign societies or cultures

¹¹³ Supra note 101, at 43.

¹¹⁴ Supra note 66, at 177.

projecting a pioneering spirit (e.g., Israel), with those who are wresting the land from ill-use or from savages."¹¹⁵ Specifically, the American audience *does not* see itself as a non-democratic State. Neither does it see itself as a "terrorist" State or one tolerant of "terrorist" activity, nor does it tend to view its actions as irrationally motivated or emotionally driven. All of these characteristics exist on the fringes of the civilized American identity, therefore belonging to the fearsome Other, in this case, the Palestinian Arab.

Ultimately, this is the discourse which engenders the ideological effects surrounding and maintaining the Western understanding of the Other. The wording chosen by CNN is steeped in Orientalism; an already damaging and discriminatory ideology which becomes intensified when it intersects with Zionism. It is CNN's maintenance of the existing ideology of the Other which facilitates the interpellation of subjects. In this case, it is the recognition of savage vs. civilized; dictator vs. democrat; enemy vs. allied; war-instigator vs. peace-lover; and, terrorist vs. anti-terrorist. The American subject can be seen to possess a pre-established spectrum within which certain nodal points respecting his/her own identity exist. Of all the binary oppositions just mentioned, the American audiences' nodal points are the positively connoted latter of each pair. In the US media, the latter set continues to define the Israeli identity.¹¹⁶

From this interpellated misunderstanding of the Other, the Arab, the

¹¹⁵ *Supra* note 5, at 57.

¹¹⁶ Best articulated by CNN's choice sound-bite: "that there shouldn't be any question of U. S. resolve for Israel – our longtime friend and partner in democracy." Senior GOP leadership aide as quoted "White House: Mideast summit now likely Monday," *CNN*, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/ALLPOLITICS/stories/10/13/us.mideast/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

internalization of "taking sides" follows. Since it is safe to assume that the majority of the American audience can not be "self-hating," the majority must ally themselves with the "positive set" of binaries, by default allying themselves against the Palestinian people, and ultimately against the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.¹¹⁷

VII. Zionism and Zionization Defined¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Although the discussion centres around the identity of difference insofar as Palestinians are concerned, it is necessary to identify that this Other extends beyond the Palestinian Arab and permeates throughout the world.

¹¹⁸ This section offers the authority of Palestinian voices in respect of anti-Zionist writings. This is not meant to diminish or belittle the work of anti-Zionist Jews which has, and continues to be done worldwide, but to recognize that CNN also occludes such works. Of the multitude of Jewish Organizations espousing anti-Zionist sentiments are The Central Rabbinical Congress of the USA and Canada, Neturei Karta International, Gush Shalom, and B'Tselem, and individual Jewish academics and journalists such as Uri Avnery [*Israel without Zionists*, (London: Macmillan, 1968)], Simcha Flapan [*The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1997)], Norman Finkelstein [*Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*, (London and New York: Verso, 1995)], and Amira Hass [*Drinking the Sea at Gaza: Days and Nights in a Land Under Siege*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996)]. Zionism has come under much scrutiny by the two parties it affects most: the Palestinians, and those of the Jewish faith. Both parties are not totally juxtaposed to one another for many individuals within the Jewish Community are vehemently opposed to the worldview espoused by Zionism.

The dissenting voice within the Jewish Community may be broken down into the following two subsections: Ethical-Humanitarianism and Orthodox Religious. The Ethical Humanitarian concedes that all Jewish immigration to and settlement of the land must only be done in brotherly conciliation with the Palestinian people. Anything they would regard as an immoral imposition should not be attempted. To the present this perspective has opposed the Israeli government's approach to the Palestinians. Organizations located within Historical Palestine such as Peace Now, and political Parties such as Mapam are among those who believe in the necessity of a Jewish homeland, but one which does not come at the cost of dispossession and oppression of the native Palestinian population.

Alliances between Israeli and Palestinian women have created arable grounds for social justice efforts from within the State of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Authors and activists such as Simona Sharoni, [*Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Women's Resistance*, (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995)] and Nira Yuval-Davis ["Zionism, Anti-Zionism and the Construction of Contemporary 'Jewishness'", *Review of Middle East Studies* 5 (1992): 84-109] are among the Jewish women directly involved in such political movements.

Before embarking on an analysis of CNN's first week of coverage, it is necessary that I outline exactly what the process of *Zionization* entails. This is essential if we are to make sense of how all of the above-mentioned concepts complement one another to the detriment of the Palestinian claim. Without entering into a lengthy discussion about the world view presented in Zionism, I will only outline where the exclusionary, non-secular and discriminatory roots of this belief system lie.

At the core of Zionism rests the idea of *conquest*.¹¹⁹ According to Said, "Zionism divided reality into a superior 'us' and an inferior, degenerate 'them'."¹²⁰ Manifest in this belief is the necessary dehumanization of the Palestinian people, as the supreme Zionist example of "them"; this is echoed in the Zionist Law of Return discussed below. In order that conquest may be facilitated, the Jewish subject *must* view the Palestinian subject as less than him/her self, inferior in any and all senses, for even with the recognition of some equality, one's actions may be based on a perceived "moral" supremacy.¹²¹

Zionism is a political project which seeks to eliminate the very existence of the native non-Jewish Peoples who reside on the land of Historical Palestine. This politics never considers

¹¹⁹ Edward W. Said, "Making History: Constructing Reality," The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000) 245.

¹²⁰ Edward W. Said, "Palestinians," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self Determination, 1969 - 1994, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 31.

¹²¹ Zionism's denial of Palestinian existence yet obsession with Palestinian ex termination will be discussed in more detail below once the formulation of Zionist identity is taken up.

the existence of Palestinian Arabs on land designated as Eretz Israel as anything more than a collection of miscellaneous people possessing no intrinsic historical or political nationalistic dynamic of their own.¹²²

Herein lies one of the key problems of CNN, for it, too, constructs the Palestinian as a subject void of history and national aspirations. The obsession of Zionism is to "rid Palestine of its original Arab Palestinian inhabitants by expulsion, repression, colonization, and a kind of willful blindness toward them as human beings;"¹²³ CNN rids Palestine of its original Arab Palestinian inhabitants through a willful blindness to both their historical narrative and current narrative depicting both the human rights abuses and oppression which they suffer.

It follows that the normal *process of Zionization* is a process whereby the discourse in question, Zionism, is translated onto the object of investigation, which is in this case CNN's technique of coverage. Essentially, *Zionization* takes place when CNN embodies Zionism's exclusionary, discriminatory and ultimately damaging view of the Palestinian Arab. The total occlusion of the Palestinian Arab voice, the denial of both a Palestinian People and a Palestinian Nationality, and the disregard for Palestinian history are characteristic of Zionism and due to the process of *Zionization*, have also become characteristic of CNN's technique of coverage. Ultimately, *Zionization* of CNN coverage justifies the relations of power that are inherent to the Zionist ideology.

For Zionism, the Palestinian people are not an "entity" with which they need to concern themselves for they view Palestine as "a land without people" for a people

¹²² *Supra* note 112, at 97.

¹²³ Edward W. Said, "The Debate Continues," *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000) 169.

without a land.¹²⁴ Edward W. Said quotes Israel Shahak's articulation of Zionism and suggests that the Zionist singleness of purpose

is unmatched by any other contemporary movement. So powerful have been the motivations of its leaders and adherents, so deep is their certainty in the rightness of their course and cause, that violations of morality, law, and human decency have repeatedly been accepted as unfortunate but unavoidable consequences of the fulfillment of their destiny.¹²⁵

The argument made is that the Palestinian people have been (and continue to be) no more than an inconvenience; an unfortunate obstacle to the ultimate return of *Eretz Israel* to its rightful owners, God's Chosen People. The only justification for the horrific treatment endured by Palestinians at the hands of Zionists, is self justification: it is/was a *necessity*.

Undeniably, the Palestinians are still treated as inconveniences in Israeli law and discriminated against consistently. Examples can be found in Amnesty International's Annual Report:

Torture and ill-treatment continued to be officially permitted and systematically used by the General Security Service (GSS) to interrogate security detainees...Hundreds of Palestinians were arrested and tried in military courts for offences such as membership of illegal organizations and stone-throwing. Many were detained incommunicado for days without being brought before a court. Confessions extracted under torture frequently formed the main evidence against them. In August the military government lowered the age at which Palestinian children could be tried in military courts and imprisoned, from 14 to 12 years. The courts increased the tariff sentence for stone-throwing by children from four weeks' to four months' imprisonment...In an oral statement to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in March, Amnesty International reiterated

¹²⁴ Michael J. Shapiro, "Narrating the Nation, Unwelcoming the Stranger: Anti-Immigration Policy in Contemporary 'America'," *Alternatives* 22 (1997):12.

¹²⁵ *Supra* note 122, at 168.

its concerns that Israel had violated international human rights treaties in the name of 'security'.¹²⁶

What will be shown in the analysis of CNN's coverage is that CNN embodies the ideological effects of the discriminatory Zionist beliefs. By misrepresenting the reality lived by Palestinians in Occupied Palestine, CNN renders void the claim of Palestinian self-determination.

A notable example of the discriminatory foundations on which the State of Israel depends is provided by the Right of Return laws governing Jewish and non-Jewish people. Coupled with the Nationality Law, Israeli policy dictates "that any (but only a) Jew anywhere is entitled to immigrate to Israel and to acquire Israeli citizenship or nationality."¹²⁷ The consequences of this are devastating to both the Palestinians residing within the Occupied Territories and the refugees living in the diaspora. Such boundless allowance of Jewish immigration into Historical Palestine brings with it a constant construction of Israeli settlements, attempted fragmentation and destruction of Palestinian culture, and denial of the internationally recognized Right of Return possessed by the Palestinian refugees. The Zionist creation of such a "Jewish Right" geographically, politically and "legally" (within the laws of the State of Israel) reinforces the supremacy of *any* Jewish individual over *all* Palestinian natives.

Although the creation of the Oriental Other, and Arab in particular, did not originate in Zionism, it was undeniably intensified and worsened by the birth of Israel,

¹²⁶ Amnesty International, *Annual Report 2000: Israel and the Occupied Territories*, <<http://www.web.amnesty.org/web/ar2000web.nsf/f5ea2b18926bc708802568f500619c95/84837f03555284fd802568f200552934!OpenDocument>> (accessed 9 February 2001).

¹²⁷ *Supra* note 95, at 40.

which was rooted in the Zionist ideology. The Zionization of CNN discourse is, in effect, an Orientalist practice and, just as Zionism is cast in a complex set of intersecting narratives about the Oriental Other, so too is CNN discourse, for it draws upon, supplements and reproduces these same discourses and their effects.

As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three, the constant reminder of the Jewish holocaust mobilizes the American audience's sympathy in favor of the Jewish subject; American audiences are regularly reminded of the persecution of the Jewish Nation, but never told of the violent actions of the Zionists against the Palestinian subject. Tapping into such sympathy allows for the intensification of Jew as the "threatened," thereby constructing the Palestinian Arab subject as the "threat."¹²⁸

In order that CNN may justifiably dismiss the atrocities which befall any people, it must take the moral stand that the people being hurt are *bad* people worthy of the punishment, for in the end this punishment can only work toward creating a better individual who is no longer worthy of such punishment, or if necessary, excluding the individual from the land, the community, or life itself if there is no hope for his/her betterment. Many times it has been told in the West that the Western mind is logical and would never allow any harm to come to the good; in this case, therefore, the Palestinian *must* be bad if CNN can consciously disregard their suffering as it is a product of their continued oppression. Ultimately, this demonization and dehumanization is a means to pacify a guilty Western conscience, for

¹²⁸ As described by Edward W. Said, Israel has continued aggressive policies of colonization and annexation that have earned it opprobrium everywhere – "except in the U.S. media where its ethnic cleansing and systematic discrimination against non-Jews are either overlooked or justified cynically by exploiting Holocaust memories." Edward W. Said, "The landscape of opposition," *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, <<http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2000/485/op2.htm>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

many Western supporters of Israel believed that in taking Israel's side in its dispute with what were always referred to very generally as "the Arabs," they were compensating for what their societies had historically done to the Jews.¹²⁹

For many of the Zionist supporters of Israel, "Arabs are not real beings, but fantasies of nearly everything that can be demonized and despised, terrorism and anti-Semitism most specially."¹³⁰ Although Zionism and American Zionism are not the same, it is their interrelation that is of crucial importance, for, as Said suggests, the staggering unanimity of opinion in all sectors of the American media is an achievement of *American Zionism*: "everyone toes the official Israeli line, which has also become the official American line."¹³¹

As Said goes on to explain, American Zionism, in particular is "driven by an ideology that regards Arabs not only as negative functions, [but also] as the embodiment of violent anti-Semitic violent passions."¹³² This "totalitarian Zionism requires that any criticism of what Israel does is simply intolerable and the rankest anti-Semitism."¹³³ The narrative of Israel's treatment of the Palestinian is not allowed to appear or else it is considered anti-Semitic coverage of events. It is this unabashed arrogance in the Zionist ideology which dictates that any attack on Israeli State policy is

¹²⁹ Edward W. Said, "Reparations: Power and Conscience?," The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000) 184.

¹³⁰ Supra note 63.

¹³¹ Edward W. Said, "More on American Zionism (2)" Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line, <<http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2000/488/op2.htm>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

¹³² Supra note 63.

¹³³ Edward W. Said, "For US Media, Israel is the victim," Miftah: The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, <<http://www.miftah.org/Articles/AmericanZionism.htm>> (accessed 11 June 2000).

to be immediately re-fabricated as an attack on the Jewish self and to be labelled anti-Semitism. Only through such a convoluted understanding of the Jewish self are Zionists capable of translating an attack on their policies as an attack on their *being*. Unfortunately for the Palestinians, the use of "anti-Semitism" has created a sort of paralysis within the mainstream news-media when coverage of events is concerned, for fear of such a label has constricted the means and the coverage of events. If an attack on Israeli State policy does appear at all, it is a "generous" gesture in the face of Arab extremism. There is a complete network present inside America's borders which moves on several fronts if ever Israel is criticized for its behavior and disregard for the human rights of all who are Palestinians. The American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) which has publicists and agents prepared to attack

all critics of Israel, labeling them as anti-Semitic, pro-terrorist, and Soviet stooges. Once propounded, this framework is used in the various books and hit lists published by the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee, both as a device for discouraging any criticism of Israel and as a means of actively punishing it. The goal is to assure continued and unqualified congressional, financial, and military support for Israel so that no even vaguely 'anti-Israeli' sounds will issue from official Washington.¹³⁴

What is most interesting in this quote is that it illustrates one of the ways in which anti-Zionist discourse gets policed. Crucial to our discussion on Zionization of CNN discourse, and bearing in mind the events of the Jewish holocaust, it is plain to see why no individual would want to be labeled an anti-Semite.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Supra note 95, at 53.

¹³⁵ "The degree of abuse and outright threats now being directed at any one - academic, analyst, reporter - who dares to criticise Israel (or dares to tell the truth about the Palestinian Uprising) is fast reaching McCarthyite proportions." Robert Fisk, "I am being vilified for telling the truth about

(continued...)

In Israel, the Arab amounts to nothing more than the non-Jew. Since in Israeli Law it is the *norm* to be Jewish, then it follows that the non-Jewish is relegated to being the *abnormal*. From this, we can make the following deduction: since, for the most part, those residing in Israel are either Jews or non-Jews, and since all Palestinian Arabs residing in Israel are non-Jews, then their characterization is that of the *abnormal*. It is within this *abnormal* construction of the Palestinian identity that one finds the facilitation of creating individuals as savage, non-democratic, terrorist, and irrational violent.¹³⁶ Even within the geographical make-up of Occupied Palestine, this creation of identity can be found. In the illegal Jewish settlements built on Palestinian land, the Jew is sequestered as much as the Palestinian - but the Palestinian is confined to the outside, to the periphery. The illegal Israeli settlements are one example of how it is that ideology translates into material things. This is in fact the perfect metaphor for

(...continued)

Palestinians," *Independent News*, <<http://www.independent.co.uk/story.jsp?story=40783>> (accessed 13 December 2000).

For a more comprehensive reading on the power wielded by Zionist organizations, and their influence on Washington, former U.S. Congressman Paul Findley wrote an excellent book titled: *They Dare to Speak Out*. (*Supra* note 130.)

¹³⁶ *Supra* note 95, at 43.

Use of the term "abnormal" in this context relies on the level of tolerance afforded the Arab Israelis and their treatment both *within* the law and their treatment *through* the law, within society. There exist four main degrees of "democratic" tolerance afforded Israeli Citizens. The core of Israeli democratic society is made up of and concentrates primarily on individual members of the Zionist Establishment who are afforded full democratic privileges. Existing within this "core", but not afforded full democratic privileges are Jews who exist outside of the Establishment such as new immigrants and Israeli non-Jews (other than Arabs) who are often economically exploited and socially ostracized (such as the Ashkenazi Jew); Israeli Jews who challenge the social and political reality of the Zionist Establishment and who are occasionally imprisoned, framed and beaten, some of which have even been assassinated, e.g. Uri Avenry; and finally, the Arab "Citizens" who are condemned to staying outside of the pale. On a minor level, they are taken care of economically, but are controlled and frustrated in matters of independent thought, political organization and freedom of physical movement. Although they exist within the legal structure, they are pushed outside of the core establishment (the "norm") and hence represent what the core does not, the "abnormal." This is yet another manifestation of the ways by which the Other becomes a part of our own identity.

Otherness, for the illegal settlements are a geo-political actuality of marginalization created by the ideology of Zionism.

This Chapter has examined Orientalism, Zionism and ideological effects of the discourse of Otherness as they give rise to misconceptions of the West and the Rest. I examined how oppressive relations of domination and power are legitimated and maintained, how "common sense" becomes mislabeled as "good sense", and how and why the intersection of all of the above facilitates the interpellation of CNN's audience members. In the following Chapter I will illustrate how the intersection of these discourses produces the dominant discourse of CNN which delegitimizes the Palestinian claim to self-determination . Ultimately, the following Chapter serves to draw on the theory and conceptual framework presented in this Chapter in order to clarify how CNN's dominant discourse works to justify and thereby reproduce existing relations of power between the occupying Israeli army and the Palestinian civilians residing under that occupation.

CHAPTER 3

THE MODALITIES OF THE OPERATIONAL PRODUCTION OF THE DOMINANT DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

This Chapter addresses the specifics of CNN's coverage of the current Palestinian Uprising. It concentrates primarily on the first week of events and on the discourse surrounding the death of two Israeli soldiers on October 12th, 2000.¹³⁷ The purpose of this Chapter is to illustrate how the discourses discussed in Chapter Two intersect. Furthermore, this Chapter illuminates the ways in which CNN's "you-are-there" means of coverage lacks the necessary criterion to offer the audience a more complete narrative surrounding the current conflict. Finally, I will discuss why the

¹³⁷ CNN on-line (<http://www.cnn.com>) receives over 303,000 hits *per minute* from different P.C.'s within the United States' borders, making it the primary news network for American audiences (See email from CNN staff, on file with this author). The site is broken down into a multitude of sections, one titled "World", of which a subsection is "Israel." The set-up of "Israel", as is the case with any other segment in CNN's site, is quite simple and appears easy to access. The on-line material and the accessibility to the user of the different interfaces in each section are quite simple and initially offer visual rather than audio sound-bites, unless otherwise chosen by the audience; many of the sections have an Image Gallery where usually one if not both galleries and stream lined video are made available. Each Article consists of the *Title* followed by the heading *In this story*, where links are provided for different segments of the Article. Alongside the text, several images are presented, and depending on the length of the Article itself, some video is offered and some audio coverage as well. Usually, if there is an image of a politician or an expert discussing a matter, one can link to the audio recording of the complete speech. At the end of each Article there are two final sections: *Related Stories*, which offer the audience an index of all Articles "relevant"; and, links to *Related Sites* which are neither affiliated with, nor "endorsed by CNN." The sites referenced are as follows and referenced in this order: (1) "Live Western Wall Camera at Aish," offering a hard-line Zionist perspective; (2) "About the West Bank," a link which discusses the Palestinian concerns and international law; (3) the Official Palestinian National Authority Web Site; and, (4) the Israeli Government's Official Web Site.

The term commonly used to describe how easily accessible material is on any given website is "user friendliness." The most important characteristics defining a "user friendly" site are simplicity and accessibility. By common standards, the CNN website is indeed "user friendly". This presentation can be as misleading as the actual content of CNN, for it offers the illusion that information itself is equally easy to access and simple to understand. The impression is that news, like the website, is an effortless read. News, then, becomes a commodity which is neither complicated to understand, nor difficult to access, giving the false impression that all an audience needs in order to be "informed" is at their fingertips.

"hailing" of CNN's audience members can only prove detrimental to the Palestinian claim of self-determination.

I. "You-are-there" Coverage

It is necessary for me to first discuss the specific narrative technique employed by CNN journalists, what Edward Said has referred to as "you-are-there" coverage.¹³⁸ This is because the "you-are-there" technique both gives rise to and maintains the aporias within CNN coverage; it affords CNN journalists the discretion to disregard *crucial facts* which would better explain the circumstances surrounding the story they are reporting. This "you-are-there" kind of news-coverage allows the journalist to deny the pertinence of historical context and circumstance which gave rise to the events being reported. Ultimately, this offers the audience an incomplete narrative, depicting the events as stemming out of nothing more than "today."

Although no narrative is ever entirely complete, there are some narrative techniques that offer a more comprehensive story than is possible when the existing "you-are-there" method is employed. By discussing the historical complexity of the situation and the international resolutions referencing the specific case, the journalist can offer a much *more complete* narrative. By contrast, "you-are-there" coverage ultimately facilitates the legitimization of the existing power relations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This manner of approaching any situation which is deemed

¹³⁸ Supra note 133.

newsworthy is impoverished; it creates a vacuum, condemning the viewer "to relive the experience without learning anything new or understanding anything better."¹³⁹

A typical example of such coverage was that which followed the "lynching"¹⁴⁰ of two Israeli soldiers on October 12th, 2000. It was presented as the violent act of a uncontrollable barbaric "Palestinian mob" who found and killed two "lost" and "unprotected" soldiers.¹⁴¹ Unlike other news-media outfits such as the BBC, CNN chose to ignore the following critical pieces of information: the Palestinian actions apparently stemmed from rumours circulating through the mob that the captives belonged to the feared and hated undercover units of the Israeli army which dress as Palestinians and strike in the heart of Palestinian towns.¹⁴² Having personally walked the very streets where these two men had - by CNN definition - *lost their way*, I know it is a very small area, with clearly defined Jewish quarters and Palestinian quarters. In laymen's terms, you know where you belong and you simply *do not* cross into the other side. Furthermore, CNN never reported that one of the soldiers was photographed *before* his death wrapped in a black-and-white Palestinian head-dress, which could serve as justification for the rumours, for one does not normally enter any "turf war" sporting the

¹³⁹ Supra note 73.

¹⁴⁰ This word was repeatedly used by CNN to describe the scene; it was in fact an Israeli soldier who described it as such. "Barak offers Sharon a role in Israeli government; Clinton, Mubarak and Arafat discuss possible 4-way summit," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/mideast.violence.01/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

¹⁴¹ Although CNN did not explicitly use the term "barbaric", their coverage implicitly drew on such existing stereotypes which pre-define what the essence of a Palestinian Arab is. Supra note 77.

¹⁴² Martin Asser, "Lynch mob's brutal attack," British Broadcasting Corporation News, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/world/middle_east/newsid_969000/969778.stm> (accessed 17 October 2000).

colours of the other side.¹⁴³ Hanan Ashrawi best articulated the impossibility of a "wrong turn" when she wrote:

While no one would condone the killing of the soldiers, it is important however, to deal with the real facts and the context. Ramallah, a city under total Israeli military siege, was closed off to all movement in or out of the city. Only one entrance was open, entirely under the control of multiple Israeli military checkpoints. Thus, to 'stray' into Ramallah would require deliberate and repeated attempts requiring tenacity, persistence, and even guile. The two Israeli agents were clearly infiltrated and planted into the midst of a protest march in the heart of the city.¹⁴⁴

Instead of presenting a more complete narrative, CNN chose to sensationalise the scene and present it as no more and no less than the unprovoked "brutal killings"¹⁴⁵ of two innocent soldiers. The term "innocent" is an implication made by CNN's coverage. Whether or not there can ever exist an "innocent soldier" is of no concern here, rather the depiction of a helpless, unassuming and lost individual, *innocent because they can not be found guilty of anything more than simply being "lost."*

The "you-are-there" style of coverage creates an aura which facilitates a problematic reconstruction of events. If one understands that ideas circulate by both what *is* said and by what is *not* said then it becomes clearer how this kind of coverage functions in this problematic way. If one depicts a situation without "filling in the blanks", then the individuals ingesting such information can be more easily led to believe that there was neither reason, nor provocation, hence no justification for the actions under

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Hanan Ashrawi, "Anatomy of Racism," Miftah: The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, <http://www.miftah.org/KeyIssues/english/Anatomy_Racism.htm> (accessed 20 October 2000).

¹⁴⁵ *Supra* note 106.

investigation. In the case of the "lynching", Palestinians were mis-portrayed as a blood-thirsty mob, hell-bent on the destruction of all that represents the State of Israel (i.e. the soldiers). They were also mis-portrayed as, in effect, threatening to continue acting in such a manner until the *lynching* of Israel is itself realized.¹⁴⁶

II. Framework for Analysis of the CNN style of coverage

As previously stated in Chapter Two, I will use John B. Thompson's framework for my analysis. He suggests that there are three aspects to the maintenance of power relations: Domination, Meaning, and the Modalities of Operation. Although I have chosen to concentrate primarily on the "Modalities of Operation," I will offer a brief outline of his concepts of "Domination" and "Meaning", for they are related to and aid in the comprehension of how it is that ideological effects help to maintain and legitimate relations of power.

II i. Domination

The first aspect inherent in the formula of ideology as it is linked to the process of sustaining relations of power is the concept of domination in which existing relations of power are established at the institutional level and recur as *is*.¹⁴⁷ These relations of

¹⁴⁶ In Chapter Two I discussed the policing of anti-Israeli discourse as it becomes misrepresented as anti-Semitic discourse. Although the Palestinians were destroying what represented the State of Israel, their actions became blurred in CNN's coverage. Rather than addressing the reasons for the hatred which Palestinians possess for the State of Israel and its Zionist foundations, the portrayal of the actions became a portrayal of Palestinian hatred for Jewish people and became an issue of violent *anti-Semitism*.

¹⁴⁷ *Supra* note 50, at 518.

power create of one group or agent a dominant figure, while ensuring that this rank remains significantly inaccessible to the other groups or agents within the relevant community.¹⁴⁸ This is what Thompson refers to as "systematically asymmetrical power relations", where the relations of power systematically recur almost always to the detriment of the same particular agent or group.

In the particular case of CNN discourse, this idea of domination resonates in the power structures created at the institutional level *in* the Western world, *by* the Western world, and *for* the Western world. This can be found most poignantly in the Orientalist practice of creating the Other, where, by default the Western world is endowed with power and the Eastern world is maintained at an ideological disadvantage. As quoted by Edward W. Said, we find resonance in the words employed by Cromer in his description of and discussion surrounding the Arab savage in need of a proper leader willing to guide them on to the appropriate and righteous path; characteristic of the Oriental mind is that it abhors accuracy, and is untruthful, it is "wanting in symmetry", its reasoning is "slipshod...deficient in the logical faculty...incapable of drawing the most obvious conclusions", generally prone to "lengthy" explanations which are "wanting in lucidity" and probably contradictory, and, of course, the Oriental mind will "often break down under the mildest process of cross-examination", since as previously established, Orientals are prone to harboring the inaccurate, the non-truth.¹⁴⁹

Within the systematically asymmetrical relations of power between the West and the East, it is the Western world which dominates, and the Eastern world which is

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Supra note 101, at 193.

constantly left struggling to reach and share the power held and wielded by the West. To the extent that I have suggested in Chapter One that Israel is the Western ally in the Middle East, then, they too become the power brokers within this particular discourse.¹⁵⁰ The Palestinian Other is then in constant struggle to break the existing relations of power which are systematically asymmetrical, the latter always giving rise to detrimental ideological effects harming their struggle for self-determination.

II ii. Meaning

The second facet in the formula of ideology as it is linked to the process of sustaining relations of power can be found in "meaning" and the way it is mobilized and utilized. As explained by Thompson, his focus is on meaning as it is "conveyed by linguistic expressions" using the term "'discourse' to describe these expressions, whereby 'discourse' means actually occurring instances of expression which appear in the flow of conversation, text or similar form."¹⁵¹

Thompson is concerned with all forms of text through which we may receive our knowledge. It is here that one hears echoes of the earlier examples advanced by Purvis and Hunt's examination of *how* it is that we receive our knowledge. Discourses, in any shape and form, mold our perceptions, and these perceptions then offer us a means by which we may understand and come to *know* the world and our surroundings.

¹⁵⁰ Israel was described as "our longtim e friend and partner in a dem ocracy", while the Palestinian Authority was condemned. Supra note 155.

¹⁵¹ Supra note 50, at 520.

Before moving any further, it is necessary to revisit how it is that *meaning* extends beyond the "definition" of a word. Whereas *meaning* is articulated by the relations of power within which it is used to relay information, *definition* is to be found in dictionaries articulating how words *have been used*. Meaning, then, extends beyond mere definition and addresses the discourses surrounding a particular word; definition is one-dimensional and rather simple, whereas meaning is multi-faceted and quite complex, encompassing many different aspects which make one understand the same word differently in different contexts, different discourses. An excellent example of this and one pertinent to this case is the term "security," which has been *defined* as the description of "the quality or state of being secure."¹⁵² When one looks to the *meaning* of security with regards to the State of Israel, security becomes articulated in so many different discourses and comes to represent the factors which challenge any political and ideological stands of Israel. Furthermore, and most detrimental is that the term is used to describe Israeli aggression: CNN often refers to the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) as the Israeli "*security forces*."¹⁵³ CNN's willingness to employ the term "security"

¹⁵² Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1971) 780.

¹⁵³ "Death toll mounts in Palestinian-Israeli clashes," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/01/mideast.violence.03/> (accessed 14 March 2001); "U. S. moves to end Mideast violence with meeting of Barak, Arafat, Albright," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/02/israel.violence.05/> (accessed 14 March 2001); "Paris talks called to stop Mideast violence," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/02/israel.violence.06/> (accessed 14 March 2001); "Albright to meet Barak and Arafat as violence continues in Middle East," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/02/israel.violence.04/> (accessed 14 March 2001); "Israeli-Palestinian clashes intensify; Palestinian toddler, Israeli civilian among latest victims," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/02/israel.violence.03/> (accessed 14 March 2001); "Not Now, Madeleine; We're Still Fighting," CNN, http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/03/mideast10_3.a.tm/ (accessed 14 March 2001); "Cease-fire reached 'in principle' to stop fighting in Middle East," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/03/mideast.violence/> (accessed 14 March 2001);

in this fashion skews the representation of the harmful relations of power maintained by Israel with regards to both the Palestinian territory they occupy illegally and the Palestinian people they continue to oppress.¹⁵⁴

Returning to my main concern, ultimately, the goal is to understand *how it is that meaning can serve to maintain relations of domination*. This is where Thompson's four modalities of the operation of ideology come in, for it is their incorporation into text which allows for the justification, and hence the maintenance of systematic asymmetrical relations of domination. Once this is understood, then we can turn to the ways in which this harms the Palestinian claim of self-determination.

Thompson's conception of the Modalities of Operation will be applied to the following: (1) the first week of the current Uprising beginning on September 28th and ending on October 4th, 2000; (2) the Historical Timeline which is intended to offer CNN's

"Paris talks will seek to defuse worsening Mideast violence; Annan, Albright to meet with Barak, Arafat," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/03/mideast.violence.04/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Afternoon violence dashes hopes that Mideast cease-fire will hold," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/03/mideast.violence.02/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Violence worsens in West Bank, Gaza" CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/03/mideast.violence.03/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Paris talks called to stop Mideast violence; World reacts with concern, condemnation," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/03/israel.violence/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Meetings on Mideast violence begin in Paris; Anna, Albright to meet with Barak, Arafat, Chirac," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/04/mideast.violence/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Barak, Arafat, Albright in talks as Mideast violence claims more lives; At least 2 Palestinians killed in Wednesday clashes," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/04/mideast.violence.02/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"In a matter of weeks, rage replaced romance in Gaza," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/04/gaza.scene/>> (accessed 14 March 2001).

¹⁵⁴ When the 12 year old Palestinian child Mohammad Al-Durra was shot and killed, or when 2 year old Palestinian baby Sarah was shot and killed, or when hundreds of acres of Palestinian land bulldozed, killing the livelihood of hundreds of Palestinian families, it is not seen as Israeli aggression, rather actions in the name of Israeli security.

As Barry Buzan suggests, "Security is a weakly conceptualized but politically powerful concept...whose ideolog[y] takes us to the heart of politics." Barry Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era, (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1991) 60.

audience a historical backdrop to the current Uprising, and; (3) coverage regarding the deaths of two Israeli soldiers on October 12th, 2000. I have chosen these three specific areas, for in each one is to be found the ideological effects shaping the deficient and problematic discourses presented to CNN's audiences.

II iii. The Modalities of Operation

Since my chief ambition here is to illustrate the ways in which ideological effects affecting their coverage allow CNN to ignore the concerns of Palestinians, I will investigate how it is that CNN's language (what is present and absent) carries within it, and allows for the proliferation of the kind of discourses outlined in Chapter Two. By translating a State-centered perspective¹⁵⁵ onto their deficient coverage, I will suggest that CNN reinforces and justifies the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, the end result being the de-legitimation of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

Fragmentation is the first of Thompson's Modalities, and possibly the most difficult to explicate. It allows relations of domination to be sustained "by the mobilization of meaning in a way which fragments groups, and places individuals and factions in opposition to one another."¹⁵⁶ This modality permeates all aspects of CNN coverage and allows for the binary distinctions of good and evil, right and wrong, legitimate and illegitimate. In fragmentation we find resonance in Edward Said's work

¹⁵⁵ Of the many dynamics at play in the news-reporting, most damaging is the influence of the State-centered approach to international affairs adopted by CNN. This approach advocates that State sovereignty is paramount, and its translation onto CNN discourse facilitates the misrepresentation of the Palestinian *Intifadah*. The effects of this perspective on CNN will be discussed alongside the appropriate ideological effect.

¹⁵⁶ Supra note 50, at 521.

on the Orientalist practice of creating "Us" and "Them," with many Israelis and many of CNN's audience believing that, unlike the Palestinian Arab, they subscribe to the same tenets of democracy and all that is Western and civilized. As will be illustrated, "fragmentation" is the consummation of "meaning" as it is diffused into discourse by all other Modalities; ultimately lubricating the "hailing" of many CNN audience members. Dissenting opinion is rarely presented in CNN coverage for that would weaken the differences between the binary roles, ultimately shifting the lines so staunchly maintained by a Modality such as fragmentation.

As we will see, the effects of fragmentation allow CNN to simplify the struggle and mis-construct it as one between two equally powerful parties, one of which is closer to the image of the American "self."¹⁵⁷ Concentrating primarily on the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government, CNN disregards the concerns of Palestinian civilians who are fighting the Israeli army on the streets of occupied Palestine. In misrepresenting the agents as CNN does, it is able to construct the Israeli party as the more legitimate party; this fragmentation, then, acts as the ultimate means to "hail" the individual audience members into the discourse surrounding the supposedly more legitimate Israeli claims, rather than the supposedly illegitimate Palestinian acts of "terrorism."

The second modality is that of *legitimation*, whereby a system is constructed as one which is morally more worthy of support.¹⁵⁸ The audience views the conflict and recognizes that there are two agents (or more) before them, one of whom is seen to

¹⁵⁷ Although they may be equally powerful, they are not morally equal.

¹⁵⁸ Supra note 50, at 521.

have a morally defensible claim, while the other does not. The agent who is viewed as the former is the one represented as worthy of support, the one whose claims are *more* legitimate than the latter.¹⁵⁹ As will be illustrated, the aporias within CNN discourse facilitate recognition of the party that is "more right" by constructing both the Israeli State and Israeli cause as a legitimate one. This in turn and by default represents the Palestinian struggle as the illegitimate one.¹⁶⁰

As mentioned earlier, and apart from the intersection of the different discourses, there are the effects of the State-centered approach adopted by CNN. This approach is constituted of a triad of angles. First is this approach's propensity to concentrate on Government officials as sources of information, thereby nullifying the civilian voice ; second, it portrays the actors as sovereign States, ultimately propagating the misconception that those within the conflict possess complete governments, infrastructures and armies; and finally, the message that State sovereignty is *more legitimate* than any dissenting voice.

Such a perspective is highly problematic for the Palestinian case in particular because there is only one "actual" State, the State of Israel. This approach allows CNN to almost entirely disregard the concerns of the party which does not constitute a "State", in this case, the Palestinians. Furthermore, this State-centered notion does not truly allow CNN to question the acts of any State (with the consistent exception of Iraq); we are left with coverage which simply recounts what sound-bites governmental officials

¹⁵⁹ I do not want to write of absolutes, hence my preference to address the agents as being "more right," rather than strictly being "right."

¹⁶⁰ Disregarding, to mention only one, that Israel is in fact a colonizing presence subjecting the Palestinian people to a system of apartheid.

have prepared, once again not offering room for a dissenting voice. In this type of coverage, and important to any groups fighting State oppression, the message presented to the audience is that the *legitimate* player is in fact the *State player*: in this case, Israel.

The representation of Israel as the *more* morally defensible party stems from the following three aporias within CNN coverage: historical, international, and civil, all of which come together to articulate the effects of Thompson's 3rd modality, that of *dissimulation*, in which:

relations of domination may be concealed, denied or obscured in various ways, for example by describing social processes or events in terms which highlight some features at the expense of others, or by representing or interpreting such processes in a way which effectively veils the social relations of which they are part.¹⁶¹

As discussed earlier, it is the "you-are-there" kind of coverage that allows for these aporias to exist. For a central feature of that brand of coverage is that news-worthy stories are reported as though they are devoid of context and time.

It is the ideological effect of Thompson's final modality, *reification*, which allows for techniques such as the "you-are-there" kind of coverage to occur. Reification itself occurs when one represents "a transitory, historical state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural, outside of time."¹⁶² This is one of the most important of the modalities, for the lack of historical reference presented by CNN typically removes the "actual story" from the context in which it exists. Furthermore, it illustrates the influence

¹⁶¹ *Supra* note 50, at 521.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

of Orientalism and Zionism, for their intersection produces a mainstream discourse that dictates that the Palestinian history of dispossession, a narrative full of pain, humiliation and suffering, is neither of significant import nor of appreciable influence.

III. Historical Aporia: Tracing Roots; Oppression the breeder of violent reaction

The recreation of events as existing on a permanent level outside of history has a two-fold dimension. First and foremost, it is done with regards to Ariel Sharon's current intentions and past actions. On September 27th, 2000, CNN quoted Likud spokesman Ofir Akounis as saying: "We are visiting the Temple Mount to show that under a Likud government it will remain under Israeli sovereignty."¹⁶³ This particular quote was *never* mentioned again in CNN coverage. The relevance of this is quite crucial for it helps us to understand how it is that CNN justifiably represents the existing relations of oppression between the Israeli and Palestinian people.

What was clearly intended to be a political manoeuvre on Sharon's part would later be de-politicized by CNN. If CNN had maintained that the actions of Sharon were as they had been described by Akounis, then it would have been plausible to suggest that Sharon's visit did in fact set off the current violence in the Occupied Territories; one of the most contentious issues is control over Arab East Jerusalem, the locale of *Al-Aqsa Mosque* and the *Temple Mount*. Admitted by his own Likud Party, Sharon's intentions were to send the following message: *all of East Jerusalem shall remain under Israeli control.*

¹⁶³ "Palestinians say opposition tour of holy site could cause bloodshed," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/27/israel.palestinians.ap/>> (accessed 14 March 2001).

To further de-politicize Sharon's actions, CNN never referred to the 1,000 plus "security" agents who accompanied Ariel Sharon at the time he went to *Al-Aqsa Mosque*. Furthermore, they did not mention that Israeli snipers were surrounding the *Al-Aqsa Mosque* prior to, during and after Sharon's visit. Even more telling is that for the first couple of days, CNN did not directly reference Ariel Sharon's visit, opting, instead, to explain either that "violence erupted after Muslim noon prayers at the holy site," or that the Palestinian *Intifadah* had begun on Wednesday September 27th when an Israeli border guard was killed.¹⁶⁴ CNN's choice of words cleanse Sharon of catalyzing the current conflict, and draw on Orientalist beliefs which dictate that Muslims are irrational individuals, instinctually prone to behaving in violent fashion.

As I have already outlined the role that Ariel Sharon has played in the make-up of Palestinian history, it is only necessary to say that Unit 101 was *never* mentioned in CNN coverage and, that *Sabra* and *Shatila* were only mentioned once, as the second last sentence of an article which concluded that "In 1983 an Israeli inquiry found Sharon

¹⁶⁴ The Israeli border guard was mentioned in all 4 articles of September 29th and in the first two of the four articles of September 30th. Ariel Sharon's visit was also mentioned, but blame was never apportioned to his "visit."

"Israeli police, Palestinians clash again at Jerusalem holy site; Israeli border guard killed in West Bank," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/29/west.bank.shooting/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Fresh violence leaves 3 Palestinians dead at Jerusalem holy site; Dozens hurt in clashes; Israeli border guard killed," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/29/israel.violence.01/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Palestinians declare day of mourning after clashes at holy sites," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/29/israel.violence.03/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"At least 5 die in fresh Mideast violence," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/29/israel.violence.02/>> (accessed 14 March 2001);

"Thousands of Palestinians clash with Israeli troops," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/30/israel.violence.02/>> (accessed 14 March 2001); and,

"Annan urges Israelis, Palestinians to 'restore security'," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/30/israel.violence/>> (accessed 14 March 2001).

indirectly responsible for the killing of hundreds of Palestinian refugees in *Sabra* and *Shatila* refugee camps in Beirut."¹⁶⁵

What is most necessary for CNN's reconstruction of Israel as the legitimate agent is a justifiable excuse for the excessive¹⁶⁶ force used by the IDF. During the first few days of its coverage of the events there was a constant reference by CNN to an Israeli boarder guard who was killed *before* Palestinians left Friday noon prayers: "Earlier Friday, an Israeli boarder guard was killed, and another wounded where a gunman opened fire on a road near the West Bank city of Kalkilya."¹⁶⁷ This was the extent of the information presented; neither circumstance nor reason were offered. Bringing the effects of Orientalism as it intersects with the discourse of the "West and the Rest" to bear on this particular presentation of events, it then becomes easy for American audience members to relate to the Israeli army's fear of Palestinians. Since there is no mention of documented threats to Palestinian lives, it appears as though the only threat present in that region is the Palestinian threat to Israeli existence; after all, Ariel Sharon is merely one Jewish individual visiting a Jewish Holy Site, and the Israeli border guard was defending Israeli Territory against *hostile elements*. The death of the Israeli boarder guard offers the audience two things: a reason to fear the Palestinians

¹⁶⁵ "Israeli-Palestinian fighting worst in 4 years," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/30/mideast.violence/> (accessed 14 March 2001).

¹⁶⁶ Unfortunately, this word presupposes the existence of a *legitimate* objective for the use of such force; demonstrations against the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory is not a legitimate excuse for any use of force, let alone an "excessive" use of force.

¹⁶⁷ "Israeli police, Palestinians clash again at Jerusalem holy site; Israeli border guard killed in West Bank," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/09/29/west.bank.shooting/> (accessed 14 March 2001).

who appear to kill without provocation, and therefore a legitimization of Israeli actions, regardless of the resultant number of Palestinian casualties.

This initial set-up of Palestinian as initiator, and Israeli as respondent remains a constant in CNN's coverage, and continues to infect their presentations. Thus Israel's actions are always portrayed as mere *reactions*. In the first week of coverage and in the reporting done with regards to the two Israeli soldiers killed on October 12th, 2000, there was *never* mention of Israeli aggression without the following two words:

"response", or "retaliation." In fact, the following instance was the only time CNN did not use either term: "...Palestinians were angry and frustrated at Barak's actions."¹⁶⁸

When the paragraph carrying this sentence was later repeated, it was changed to:

"...Palestinians were angry and frustrated at Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's *response to the violence*."¹⁶⁹ Finally, CNN went so far as to declare that Palestinians had "reignited"¹⁷⁰ and "sparked"¹⁷¹ *more violence* when they killed the two Israeli soldiers; that it was the Palestinian actions that had left the "peace in pieces,"¹⁷² and that it brought about "the most serious intensification of violence in 15 days of

¹⁶⁸ "Palestinians in standoff with Israelis at check point near Ramallah; Egypt invites principals to summit at Red Sea resort," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/mideast.violence.03/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

¹⁶⁹ "Palestinians, Israelis exchange gunfire at Ramallah; Egypt invites principals to summit at Red Sea resort," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/mideast.violence.04/>> (accessed 12 April 2001); and, "Hopes rise for emergency Mideast summit," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/mideast.violence.05/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

¹⁷⁰ Supra note 106.

¹⁷¹ Supra note 108.

¹⁷² Supra note 107.

Palestinian-Israeli clashes."¹⁷³ What was labeled a "reigniting" for the American audience was really nothing more than a continuation for the Palestinian civilians, for up until the deaths of those two Israeli soldiers, 84 Palestinian civilians had been killed by the IDF, and 3,527 Palestinians injured.¹⁷⁴ Perhaps there had been a "lull" for the State of Israel, but there was no such "lull" for the Palestinian civilians, therefore the "reigniting" of violence was the perspective of Israel, not Palestinians.

The second dynamic at play regarding the missing historical content is the creation of the Israeli State and the aftermath of Palestinian dispossession and oppression. What is never referenced within CNN is the ongoing displacement of the Palestinians which was the cost at which the State of Israel was born. Misrepresenting the current state of affairs as though they have always been fixed and always "as is" disallows the entry of the historical Palestinian narrative. The only time CNN addresses this displacement is when mention of the "Refugee problem" is made.¹⁷⁵ This can be found in the "Fact File" which is part of the Historical Time-line CNN offers its readers. Even though the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians is mentioned, CNN chooses to purify Zionists of their guilty actions, opting instead to disregard the documented evidence that Israel's intentions were to rid Historical Palestine of Palestinians. According to CNN, the mass exodus of 1948 came about because of "a

¹⁷³ Supra note 106.

¹⁷⁴ Supra note 3, <http://www.palestinercs.org/Crisis%20Tables/oct_2000_table.htm> (accessed 3 September 2001)

¹⁷⁵ Initially removing the identity of the Refugees, the title of this segment in the Historical Time Line does not specify whether the Refugees are Palestinian or Israeli. Upon linking to the web-page, the Nationality is specified to be Palestinian.

war that forced hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes in what was to be Israel."¹⁷⁶ This statement misrepresents the events of 1948, making it appear as though "war" was *the cause of* Palestinian dispossession, not Zionist actions in their aspirations to expel Palestinian Arabs in order to take their place.¹⁷⁷ This "airbrushing" of events disregards what Israeli Historian Simha Flapan describes in the following manner:

For the entire day of April 9, 1948, Irgun and LEHI soldiers carried out the slaughter in a cold and premeditated fashion...The attackers lined men, women and children up against the walls and shot them...The ruthlessness of the attacks drove fear and panic into the Arab population, and led to the flight of unarmed civilians from their homes all over the country.¹⁷⁸

Disregarding both Sharon's past and the roots of Palestinian dispossession helps to maintain stereotypes constructed about the Arab subject by Orientalism and furthered by Zionism. The influence here is that of Zionism; denying that there is a Palestinian people which was forced to leave in 1948, saying that no conquest took place, alleging that there were no Palestinians with a life in Palestine before 1948.¹⁷⁹ By offering such a grossly incomplete narrative, CNN creates a space within which its audience interprets and "comes to know" the situation on a very shallow level. Once

¹⁷⁶ Supra note 84, "Palestinians refugees and the 'right of return'," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/mideast/story/refugees/>> (accessed 17 February 2001).

¹⁷⁷ As described by Edward W. Said, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion referred to the Palestinians as "Red Indians" and top leaders of the Zionist movement "made it very clear to their subordinated that the Arabs should be made to leave," that they were to be *expelled* from their homes. Edward W. Said, "How Much and for How Long," and "Intellectuals and the Crisis," The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000) 9 and 119.

¹⁷⁸ "The Origin of the Palestine-Israeli Conflict," Jews for Justice in the Middle East, <<http://www.mediareviewnet.com/JewsForJustice.htm>> 2000 (accessed 23 December 2000).

¹⁷⁹ Supra note 63.

again, the Palestinian Uprising appears irrational and unmotivated; the Palestinian fury which has come to the surface appears unintelligible. What Orientalism misrepresents as the *essence* of the Arab, CNN continues to reinforce and maintain. Furthermore, CNN toes the Zionist line which depicts the Palestinian people as individuals without a history of dispossession, and periodic nuisances "for whom force, and neither understanding nor full accommodation, is the only possible response."¹⁸⁰

IV. International Aporia: Concern and reaction to Israel's record of human rights violations and disregard for international law

It is in this section that the previously mentioned State-centered approach takes most effect. Fearing the international realm, the American government tends to remove itself from the international agenda, adopting instead a realist approach and upholding sovereignty as *the* tantamount characteristic of a State.¹⁸¹ This translates onto CNN coverage and manifests itself as a lack of reference to international laws governing any conflict.¹⁸² This is pertinent to my analysis because CNN discourse has resonance for the American audience; if their own government belittles international law, then it is not so bizarre that their leading American news body should also disregard that same

¹⁸⁰ Supra note 133.

¹⁸¹ Unless the U.S.A. dictates otherwise.

¹⁸² One of the exceptions to this rule is Iraq, for CNN constantly references the international Resolutions broken by Iraq. This too is a reflection of American governmental policy for they too constantly reference the Resolutions which are ignored by Saddam.

dimension. It should come as no surprise that an American news agency would not uphold the importance of international law when its own Government routinely mocks it and uses it only as a means to further its own economically driven political agendas.¹⁸³

With regards to this particular case, CNN makes no mention of the United Nations Resolutions I previously outlined in the Introduction. Furthermore, CNN does not discuss the 1977 Geneva Protocol II as it addresses the conduct of an occupying army, and finally, CNN disregards the documented human rights abuses perpetrated by Israel. All of these work together to veil the relations attesting to the relations of domination between the State of Israel and Palestinians, ultimately misrepresenting the conflict as one between two *equal* powers, one of whom is without blame.

Missing from CNN's discourse are the following terms: Israel as the "occupying Power",¹⁸⁴ "Illegal Israeli Settlements",¹⁸⁵ Israel's full withdrawal from the "Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem",¹⁸⁶ and the "inalienable right to return"¹⁸⁷ for all

¹⁸³ "In February the U.N. General Assembly requested the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to hold a conference to discuss enforcement measures against Israel for failure to implement the Convention in the Occupied Territories. The conference took place in July. Israel and the U.S.A. did not attend. The conference was adjourned with no date set for its resumption." Supra note 126.

¹⁸⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Council; Commission on Human Rights, The Right of Peoples to Self-Determination and its Application to Peoples Under Colonial or Alien Domination or Foreign Occupation, fifty fifth Session, E/CN.4/1999/10.

¹⁸⁵ United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories, Resolution 2001/8, E/CN.4/RES/2001/8 .

¹⁸⁶ United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Question of the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine, Resolution 2001/7, E/CN.4/RES/2001/7.

¹⁸⁷ Supra note 24.

Palestinian refugees. All of these phrases are stated in the respective United Nations Resolutions which address the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Unlike CNN descriptions, international law dictates that there are no *competing* claims to Jerusalem, and there is no dispute insofar as the right of return is concerned. Furthermore, there are not simply Israeli settlements built in the Occupied Territories, but rather *illegal* Israeli settlements. And finally, the international realm acknowledges that Israel is a foreign military occupier, therefore recognizing that there exists a severely harmful relation of domination between the Palestinians and the Israelis. If one's land is occupied, then they must possess less power than the occupier, illustrating a clear imbalance of power. The *military occupation* of Palestinian Territories by Israel is *never* mentioned, but rather, it is referred to as land to which "Israel retained control." The only section which actually addresses the issue of military occupation is that of the Golan Heights, which is a conflict not between Israeli and Palestinian, rather between Syrian and Israeli.¹⁸⁸

Turning first to the issue of illegal Israeli settlements, we find that CNN never mentions that those built within the borders of Occupied Palestine are illegal under international law:

The continuing Israeli settlement activities, including the expansion of the settlements, the installation of settlers in the occupied territories, the expropriation of land, the demolition of houses, the confiscation of property, the expulsion of Palestinians and the construction of bypass roads, which change the physical character and demographic composition of the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, since all these actions are *illegal*, constitute a violation of the Geneva Convention relative

¹⁸⁸ Supra note 84.

to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and are a major obstacle to peace.¹⁸⁹

The obfuscation of this fact creates a false equality between the settlers' fight to maintain their settlements, and the Palestinian fight to repossess their own land.¹⁹⁰ CNN manages to misrepresent the Palestinian struggle to have their confiscated land returned to them as though they were encroaching upon the "right" Israeli settlers have to implant themselves among the Palestinians by force of arms. A prime example of this particularly skewed representation by CNN is the discussion which surrounds the settlement of Netzarim.

Netzarim¹⁹¹ is built on Palestinian Territory which has remained under Israeli military occupation since the 1967 war. It was once full of Palestinian homes, and a decision was made in the Knesset whereby the Palestinians residing on what is now known as Netzarim, would have to leave and forego the right to their homes and land. Netzarim is located among neighboring Palestinian villages and is protected by a heavy artillery of a large

¹⁸⁹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories, Resolution 2001/8, E/CN.4/RES/2001/8.

¹⁹⁰ "According to a report by Amnesty International, thousands of acres in the Occupied Palestinian Territories have been confiscated from their Palestinian owners so that Israeli settlements may be built. This is in direct contravention to Article 49 of the 4th Geneva Protocol which states that the "Occupying Power shall not transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." Supra note 24.

¹⁹¹ In a lecture given on December 14th, 2000, Noam Chomsky describes Netzarim as "an excuse to split the Gaza Strip in two. There's a small settlement south of Gaza, the only purpose of which is to require a big military outpost to protect it, and the military outpost then requires a road, which cuts the Gaza Strip in two, so that separates Gaza City, the main population concentration, from the Southern part of the strip, and Egypt, and ensures that in any outcome, Gaza will be imprisoned inside Israel in effect." Supra note 26.

contingent of Israeli Soldiers.¹⁹² Among the 60 Articles posted by CNN during the first week of coverage, there is mention of Netzarim Settlement in 21 Articles. CNN never references the fact that Netzarim is situated on what was once Palestinian land.

Furthermore, CNN's discussion of Netzarim never takes into account that the expulsion of Palestinians and the total destruction of their homes was the condition precedent for the construction of this and other illegal "settlements." Even in the Issues section of the Fact File, CNN never references the international legality that all Israeli settlements built on occupied Palestinian territory are illegal and must be removed. Undeniably, it would not be possible for CNN to address illegal Israeli settlements, for treatment of such an issue would give rise to a discussion of the Israeli power necessary to confiscate such land and the lack of Palestinian power inherent in the incapacity to counter such aggression. Once more, relations of power are veiled and rights of Palestinians ignored.

The second issue of major concern to the Palestinians is that of Arab East Jerusalem. Once again, CNN ignores that as recently as April 18th, 2001, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights called for:

Israel to withdraw from the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the Commission on Human Rights, as a basic condition for achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the

¹⁹² Acts of aggression such as this are indeed acts of terrorism, for their intended purpose is to instill fear among the Palestinian population in order for political ends to be met. Netzarim represents the Zionist vision of Israel - the complete and total occupation of Historical Palestine, irrespective of its native population. Naturally, this settlement comes under constant attack, not merely for its location, but also for what it represents to the Palestinian native.

Middle East.¹⁹³

What Israel continues to consider under their jurisdiction does, in the opinion of the international community, belong under the jurisdiction of Palestinians. Israel's continued defiance of UN Resolutions 242¹⁹⁴ and 338¹⁹⁵ are entirely ignored by CNN, except for one instance where CNN makes a point of explaining that "Israel agreed to the resolutions, along with Egypt and Jordan, but the Palestinians refused until November 15, 1988."¹⁹⁶ It is true that the Palestinian authorities had refused the Resolutions, but there was no mention of *why* they refused, reinforcing the stereotype that due to their inherent irrationality, Palestinian Arabs have always been dedicated to rejectionism, whereas the State of Israel remains dedicated to peace.

Although CNN clearly states that Palestinians refused UN Resolution 242 until 1988, they make no mention of the fact that since 1988 it is Israel who has refused the Resolution. Once again, Israel is vindicated of any blame and Palestinians are demonized. Without proper explanation of what these Resolutions represented to the

¹⁹³ Supra note 186.

¹⁹⁴ This Resolution emphasizes "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security", demanding the "withdrawal of Israel's armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 242(1967) of 22 November 1967, S/RES/242 (1967).

¹⁹⁵ This Resolution emphasizes the "implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 in all its parts." United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 338(1973) of 22 October 1973, S/RES/338 (1973).

¹⁹⁶ Supra note 84.

Palestinian people,¹⁹⁷ then the "rational" mind can not understand why Palestinians kept rejecting a Resolution which afforded them a State.¹⁹⁸ Within this mis-depiction resonate the sentiments of Balfour; that the opinions of native Palestinians are of no real consequence, and all that is important are Zionist aspirations and traditions.

The final point to be made with respect to U. N. Resolutions is what the international community has recognized as the "inalienable" right of the Palestinian refugees expelled from their homes to return to these places.¹⁹⁹ Although the fate of Palestinian refugees was completely ignored by the Oslo Agreements, and is one of the main reasons fueling the current *Intifadah*, CNN refused to discuss the matter in the first week of coverage, opting instead to reference it slightly in the Issues section of the Fact File. It states that "a UN Resolution of that year (1948) recognizes their right to return to their homes" and goes on to explain that "the displacement of Palestinians was integral to the creation of a Jewish State",²⁰⁰ but that "Israel has refused to countenance that possibility for fear that this would mortally challenge Israel's majority Jewish character."²⁰¹ While Israel enjoys the right of return for every Jew in the world - not by virtue of International Law as this Right is afforded the Palestinian refugees, but rather one which the Israelis invented after the birth of their State - no Palestinian

¹⁹⁷ There remain Palestinians who do not want any Israeli presence in Historical Palestine. It was not until 1988 that the appropriate Palestinian authorities "officially" recognized Israel's right to exist.

¹⁹⁸ What does not appear is that Palestinian rejection of Resolution 242 was, in fact, a rejection of colonization.

¹⁹⁹ Supra note 24.

²⁰⁰ This was under the final section titled "Palestinian Reservations", so it appears as though it is a mere claim made by the Palestinians, rather than an actual testament to what befell the refugees.

²⁰¹ Supra note 176.

refugees are allowed to return to what is rightfully theirs. Edward Said explains that

Palestinians would have to be stones not to feel resentment and anger at why they must give up ancestral land to Russian Jews like Anatol Scharansky, who not only was born and brought up in Russia, but is now challenging Barak not to give up Abu Dis, an Arab town which as a Russian Jew he feels he can dispose of at will.²⁰²

Once again, we see that CNN upholds the Zionist disregard for Palestinian suffering, nationalism, and narrative; neatly devaluing any Palestinian rights and all Palestinian claims.

It must be made clear that Israel is in violation of several United Nations Resolutions. Since the media continuously disregards international law, it obstructs reality and does not afford the American population a *more* "full story", for according to a growing body of international law, Palestinians are entitled to all that they lay claim to: the Right of Return, the cessation and removal of all *illegal* Israeli settlements, and control over Arab East Jerusalem. Unfortunately, the "you-are-there" means of coverage situates the Palestinian claims in a vacuum, disallowing any legitimization of those claims through international law, or otherwise.

Finally, CNN chooses to dismiss the documented human rights violations of Israel and the excessive force that Israel has used to challenge the current Uprising. This action not only ignores international law, but it also discounts the excellent work that has been done in this area by Human Rights Organizations such as Amnesty International, BADIL, Gush Shalom, Physicians for Human Rights and B'Tselem.

²⁰² Edward W. Said, "Magic thought and wishful thinking," Al-Ahram Weekly On-line, <<http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2000/488/op2.htm>> (accessed 16 October 2000).

All States are bound on principle by the assumption that there are forms of humanitarian interaction which need to be defined on a universal level. With regards to this thesis specifically, it is a fundamental norm that civilians demonstrating against an occupying military presence are not to be met with the forms of military power that have been deployed by the Israeli occupation army e.g. stones are not to be met by anti-tank missiles, helicopter gun-ships, or helicopter launched missiles. Moreover, *any* such attack on *children* ought to be treated as a war crime.

As the BADIL resource center suggested in a Submission dated the 13th of October, 2000:

Israeli measures applied to repress the popular protests escalated from day to day, including measures which are clearly outlawed by international conventions (Fourth Geneva Convention/Protection of Civilians under Occupation; Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Convention on the Rights of the Child), such as the use of Live ammunition and dum-dum bullets against civilians, many of them children; the use of tanks, LAW missiles, and helicopter gun-ships against large crowds of protestors, Palestinian civilian homes and security targets; shooting at Palestinian medical staff and ambulances; collective punishment (military closures and curfews on Palestinian communities); attacks against civilians with the purpose of inducing panic and fear.²⁰³

Neither this nor any reports published by human rights organizations are afforded a voice in CNN's coverage. If they are afforded a voice, it is a mere footnote to the commentary presented by the "expert" Government officials. While internationally recognized laws of war such as the Geneva Protocols were neatly "airbrushed" from CNN coverage, Amnesty International was mentioned once, as follows:

²⁰³ BADIL Resource Center Situation in the 1967 Occupied Territories and Inside Israel to M.r. Giorgio Giacomelli the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights October 2000.

Amnesty International, meanwhile, accused Israel's security forces of using 'indiscriminate' and excessive force against Palestinian protestors. "We have been saying for years that Israel is killing civilians unlawfully by firing at them during demonstrations and riots," the group said.²⁰⁴

The fact of the matter is that almost *all* the information presented to CNN's audience is reliant wholly on information provided by a member of a government, be it an Israeli, American or Palestinian "official." Ironically, the only two occasions which afforded non-governmental opinions to enter the debate were when CNN had a direct chat with Journalists Ben Wedeman²⁰⁵ and Jerrold Kessel²⁰⁶. Speaking on behalf of the Palestinian people, the former made an excellent point when he explained that Palestinians hold the perception that "the U.S. has coddled Israel over the years and overlooked Palestinian interests - and when push comes to shove, the U.S. will always support Israel",²⁰⁷ while the latter explained that Palestinians say Arafat "cannot contain the 'spontaneous rage' of Palestinians on the streets even as Israel uses what Palestinians view as totally excessive force to counter demonstrations."²⁰⁸

In order for an individual to commit human rights abuses readily, one must have full discretion at their disposal, and a lack of accountability for their actions. These are

²⁰⁴ "U. S. moves to end Mideast violence with meeting of Barak, Arafat, Albright," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/02/israel.violence.05/>> (accessed 14 March 2001).

²⁰⁵ "On the scene with Ben Wedeman in Ramallah," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/14/wedemen.ganda/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

²⁰⁶ "CNN's Jerrold Kessel chats from Jerusalem," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/debrief.kessel/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

²⁰⁷ Supra note 205.

²⁰⁸ This is a critical point for it offers a divergent take on the situation as CNN has mis-presented it: an equal fight between a "controllable" Palestinian people and the *truly* controllable Israeli army. Supra note 206.

not characteristic of an agent who is lacking power, rather an agent who controls and manipulates power accordingly. For CNN to discuss the human rights violations endured by the Palestinian native, they would have to address the power relations as they are unevenly distributed among the two parties. This discussion would weaken the attempt to present the conflict as one between two equal powers, and it would surely discount the current representation of Israel as the party wholly devoid of blame. In showing such imbalance of power, CNN would be forced to address the overall oppressive living conditions of the Palestinian people.²⁰⁹ A discussion such as this would shift the relations of power as they are already represented in CNN discourse. In turn, this would contribute to the weakening of the ideological effects which allow for the portrayal of the Palestinian as one equal in power and aggression to the Israeli. It would also become more difficult for the Palestinian to be viewed as essentially savage and as the perpetrator.

V. Civilian Aporia: Cry freedom

The final and most damning aporia within CNN coverage is the lack of a voice offered the Palestinian civilian population fighting the Israeli occupation army. CNN's propensity for concentrating primarily on state players allows them to ignore the voices of Palestinian civilians, who are, in fact, the heart of the Palestinian struggle. What is essential to the removal of the Palestinian voice is the total dehumanization and

²⁰⁹ It was absolutely astonishing for me to read the coverage of CNN, for I realized that true to Thompson's dissimulation, the conflict was conveyed in a way which actually made the Palestinian child throwing a stone at her occupier equal in aggression and strength to the Israeli soldier shooting an anti-tank missile at the same child.

demonization of the Palestinian victims and "the elimination of their most basic rights and attributes as well as claims to protection."²¹⁰

If given the opportunity, the Palestinian narrative would incorporate the following three elements into its story: the history of its dispossession, the international concerns for its safety and viability, and

Israel's role, its daily, hourly, minute by minute persecution, in the maiming, bombing, dispossessing, humiliating of Palestinians from top to bottom, right across the board, from eviction, to wiping out of every possible trace of Palestinian life, to brazen denial of same, from the beginning to the end of last 53 years.²¹¹

In disregarding these, CNN constructs a story which tells a much different tale. There are three phases necessary to the dehumanization of the Palestinian native: Israeli aggression is always considered to be "retaliatory" and never proactive; Palestinians, whose deaths are portrayed as of no real concern, are not killed by Israelis, rather, they die in "clashes", "violence", and "cross fires", whereas Israelis are killed by Palestinians; and, finally, blaming Palestinians for their continued oppression.

Whereas Orientalism constructed the Arab as the Other, Zionism created of the Other a "four legged beast" and a "cancerous growth."²¹² Although the articulation of such dehumanization and demonization infects and inflects all of CNN coverage, it is best illustrated in the discrepancies between their 17 Articles which address the "mob lynching" of two Israeli soldiers and the one and only article which addressed the killing

²¹⁰ Supra note 144.

²¹¹ Supra note 73.

²¹² Edward W. Said, "Permission to Narrate," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination, 1969 - 1994, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 257.

of 12 year old Palestinian child Mohamad Al-Durra. In their representation of the former "brutal" and "chilling" act of Palestinian aggression, CNN's coverage dictates that the behavior of the Palestinian mob was beyond comprehension.²¹³ They were acts which "stunned" and "jolted" the Israeli people and left them "with their backs hunched and fists clenched."²¹⁴ They were acts of a savage nature which articulated the "murderous ugliness" of the Palestinian people and demanded "retribution."²¹⁵ They existed separate from time and space, from history and actuality, in a reality all their own; Palestinian actions, then, were regarded as irrational, unmotivated, incomprehensible and morally wanting. As Stuart Hall would suggest, these forms of rhetoric draw on the discourse of the Other, who is:

banished to the edge of the conceptual world and constructed as the absolute opposite, the negation of everything which the West stood for, reappeared at the very center of the discourse of civilization, refinement, modernity and development in the West. 'The Other' was the 'dark' side – forgotten, repressed, and denied; the reverse image of enlightenment and modernity.²¹⁶

As Thompson suggests, "the terms of a discourse carry out their ideological role by explicitly referring to one thing, and implicitly referring to another."²¹⁷ Whereas the "lynching" spoke explicitly about the deaths of two soldiers, it spoke implicitly about the very real *nature* and *essence* of violent Palestinian Arab behavior. In keeping with the

²¹³ Supra note 140.

²¹⁴ "Picture of Palestinians celebrating soldiers' murders jolts Israelis," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/sraeli.reax.ap/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Supra note 8, at 221.

²¹⁷ Supra note 67, at 138-139.

fundamental one-sidedness of CNN's discourse, the murder of Mohamad Al-Dura did not address the "nature" of the Israeli occupation army, rather only "came to symbolize the chaotic nature of the violent confrontations",²¹⁸ and implicitly referred to the stereotype that Palestinian parents must not care for their children since they place them in the line of fire. Finally, whereas the Israeli soldiers "got lost" and stumbled into the hands of the "brutal" Palestinian mob, Mohamad had "apparently been throwing stones at the Netzarim outpost" and was "apparently" shot by Israeli soldiers who can not "look around and be certain that there is no one in the line of fire."²¹⁹ So, not only was Mohamad Al-Durra demonized, CNN discourse managed to justify the deaths of all Palestinian children guilty of throwing stones at their military occupier.

The aporias in CNN's coverage serve as the backdrop to these two stories. Bearing this in mind, it is comprehensible how the portrayal of the "lynching" of the Israeli soldiers, as with the Palestinian *Intifadah*, appear to be without cause, and coming out of *nowhere*. Rather than mentioning the daily death toll of Palestinian civilians, CNN chose to concentrate on the two Israeli soldiers and the fact that the "lynching" was deemed to be the cause of the "most serious intensification of violence" seen in the current Uprising. As I discussed earlier, there was no "lull" for the Palestinian civilians, for they had already buried 84 of their own. This "intensification" and "renewal" of violence was one for the Israeli people, not the Palestinian people. Robert Fisk explains it as such:

²¹⁸ "Palestinian boy apparently killed by Israeli fire, army says," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/03/israel.boy.ap/>> (accessed 14 March 2001).

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

those most obsequious and deforming of information dispensers - were diverting our minds from the truth. They did not ask why the Palestinians should have lynched two Israeli undercover men. Instead, they asked why Palestinian police had not protected them...Always the 'who' or the 'what'; never the 'why'.²²⁰

And with regards to the killing of Mohamad, Hanaan Ashrawi suggests that while the American news-media was asking:

'What was he doing there?' The real question should have been 'what was the Israeli army doing there' in the heart of Palestinian Gaza shooting at civilians including a child and his father who had been caught red-handed attempting to indulge in the 'provocative' act of shopping together.²²¹

What furthers such distorted reporting is the wanting State-centered approach adopted by CNN. The soldiers are a representation of the State, and hence are presented as being more valuable than civilians. In CNN's three days of coverage, the reader learns that the soldiers were: Vadim Norjitz, a 33 year old Captain residing in Or Akiva and, Yosef Avraham, a 38 year old Sergeant First Class residing in Petah Tikva.²²² The audience is also graced with the information that Norjitz was a truck driver with a new bride (married on October 5th, 2000) named Irena who is pregnant.²²³ We are told of the hopes and dreams of both men, and finally, we are informed that Norjitz was buried on Friday, October 13th, 2000, while Avrahami's funeral was to be on

²²⁰ Robert Fisk, "Lies, hatred and the language of force: Arab view," Independent News <<http://www.independent.co.uk/story.jsp?story=19831>> (accessed 13 October 2000).

²²¹ Supra note 144.

²²² "Israel launches more airstrikes; Peres says Saturday summit in Egypt possible," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/mideast.violence.02/>> (accessed 12 April 2001).

²²³ Supra note 214.

Sunday, October 15th, 2000.²²⁴

There was no such discussion surrounding Mohamad Al-Durra nor any other Palestinian martyr. The audience learned nothing about his life, his family, or his dreams, we were not told whether he liked to draw or write stories, if he preferred to read or listen to music. We did not find out what his favorite cartoon was or how loved he was. Although we were informed that Norjitz's brother "spoke at the gravesite, his voice so choked with emotion that he repeatedly gasped for breath",²²⁵ we were not made witness to how Mohamad's mother grieved at her son's funeral.

None of the articles discussed the following four Palestinian civilians who died during the three days in which CNN chose to concentrate on the "lynching": Raed Ya'acub Hamuddah, 29 years old from Al Bireh; Mansour Tahah Sayied Ahmad, 20 years old from Dura; Shadi Muhammad Al-Wawi, 23 years old from Fawar; and, 12 year old Sami Fathi Abu Jazar from Rafah.²²⁶

Although there was some reference to the death toll of the Palestinians prior to the deaths of Akiva and Avraham, there was no mention of the names, ages, marital status or funeral dates of those killed. What is most interesting is that the blame for the killing of Israelis tends to be so explicitly apportioned, while blame for the killing of Palestinians is not. There is a variation on how the deaths of Palestinians are reported by CNN: "*clashes have killed* nearly 100 people – all but a few of them Palestinians or

²²⁴ "Widows of Israeli soldiers tell of last, desperate phone calls," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/13/israel.last.calls/> (accessed 12 April 2001).

²²⁵ Supra note 214.

²²⁶ B'Tselem; The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, <http://www.btselem.org/> (accessed 23 November 2000).

Israel-Arabs²²⁷; "more than a hundred people *have been killed* – most of them Palestinians and Israeli-Arabs²²⁸; "nearly 100 people – all but a few of them Palestinians and Israeli Arabs – *have died in the violence*"²²⁹; "*clashes that have claimed* approximately 100 lives – all but a handful of them Palestinians or Israeli Arabs."²³⁰ What is missing from all of these variations is blame: who killed whom? Individuals are not killed *by* clashes, they are killed *by* someone. The Palestinians appear to have died spontaneously,²³¹ while the Israelis were being murdered by Palestinians. Use of such language affords journalists the opportunity to remove blame and as Fisk suggests, "is little short of a scandal."²³²

As reported by CNN, and what serves as my final point of reflection is the State Caution issued by the United States Government due to the "possibility that there may

²²⁷ Supra note 108.

²²⁸ Supra note 116.

²²⁹ "Violence eases as Mideast leaders prepare for Monday summit," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/14/mideast.violence.03/>> (accessed 12 April 2001), and Supra note 195.

²³⁰ "Arafat agrees to attend sum mit with Israelis," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/14/mideast.violence.01/>> (accessed 12 April 2001), and "U. N. says Arafat, Barak agree to attend sum mit in Egypt," CNN, <<http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/10/14/mideast.violence.02/>> (accessed 12 April 2001). Considering the fact that the death toll and the perm anent injuries of the Palestinians far outreaches that of the Israelis, it becom es tasteless to compare the two "statistics."

²³¹ Whereas the facts dictate that "most [Palestinians] were shot in the head or the upper part of the body, mainly with high velocity bullets. The most common targets of rubber-coated steel bullets were the eyes of the children", indicating that "a shoot-to-k ill (or permanently impair) policy has been in force by the Israeli army." Supra note 143. This is confirmed by findings of Physicians for Human Rights, who on Nov ember 3rd, 2000, reported that the high proportion of head wounds, approx imately 50%, "suggests that giv en the broad rules of engagement, soldiers are specifically aiming at peoples' heads." Physicians for Human Rights, Evaluation of the Use of Force in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank: Medical and Forensic Investigation, <http://www.phrusa.org/research/forensics/israel/israel_force_2.htm> (accessed 3 November 2000).

²³² Robert Fisk, "The biased reporting that m akes killing acceptable," Independent News, <<http://www.independent.co.uk /story.isp?story=12610>> (accessed 15 November 2000).

be protests in support of Palestinians throughout the Gulf Region or *elsewhere*.²³³

Essentially, this caution translates into: those who support the Palestinian struggle (are anti-Israeli) are apt to being anti-American (anti-Israeli) and may harm you, so "avoid large crowds and gatherings."²³⁴

This is a perfect articulation of the discourse of Orientalism, the "West and the Rest", Us and Them, all who are Other. Not only does the State Department demonize the Palestinian native, but it also demonizes all who support the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. CNN chose to report the above-mentioned "caution", and in so doing, it implicitly reinforces the following stereotypes: Israeli acts of aggression are deemed as acts of necessity, whereas all acts of Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation are unjustified acts of terrorism; and, Israel as allied with the United States, while Palestinians and their supporters harbor anti-American sentiments. Ultimately, this reinforces the *common sense* claim that Israelis are facing an irrational and uncivilized Palestinian savage who is a threat of whom We should be cautious.

Though the Caution is quite complex, it sends one simple message: although the United States may not be taking a glaringly obvious pro-Israeli position, they are in fact taking an anti-Palestinian position, which in and of itself entails the embracing of pro-Israeli sentiments.²³⁵

²³³ "U. S. issues worldwide caution f or Americans," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2000/TRAVEL/NEWS/10/04/us.worldwidecaution/> (accessed 14 March 2001).

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ What is necessary to this discussion is engaging in an attempt to understand the unique relationship forged between the United States of America and Israel, for this allows us to understand CNN's tendency to legitimate anti-Palestinian ideology. Of the variables which factor into this discussion, the following is of paramount distinction, for it is the most pronounced: *Israel is viewed as*
(continued...)

VI. Interpellation: Becoming party to and part of the reproduction of oppressive power relations

Orientalism has produced, and continues to produce, "meaningful knowledge about the [Palestinian Arab] subject," which influences "social practices", and has "real consequences and effects."²³⁶ As outlined above, CNN draws on the discourse of Orientalism and misrepresents both the struggle and the people within the struggle.

While there are glaring biases within the coverage, more important are the subtle points of reference which reinforce existing notions of Us and Them (Them being the Palestinians). The interpellation of CNN audiences is lubricated by the fact that their language and "reality" is primarily influenced by Orientalism: it is much too easy to demonize and belittle any struggle for an audience when that same audience exists in a world whose dominant discourses constantly and incessantly reinforce damaging stereotypes of those within the struggle. As described by Edward Said:

For decades in America there has been a cultural war against the Arabs and Islam; the most appalling racist caricatures of Arabs and Muslims have conveyed that they are all either terrorists or shaikhs, and that the region is a large arid slum, fit only for profit or war. The very notion that there might be a history, a culture, a society - indeed many societies - to

(...continued)

both a strategic asset and a strategic ally, for its geographical closeness to the energy reserves in the Arabian peninsula and its service as a barrier against either radical Arab nationalist and/or Muslim movements. Essentially, Israel's location and "involvement" in the near East is seen as one which protects "U. S. interests in the Middle East region, which is to maintain control over its energy reserves and the flow of petrodollars." Although the complex relationship between Israel and the United States can not rest solely within this particular dimension, it is this perception of Israel which serves as the foundation for all other means of interaction between the two parties. For a more comprehensive discussion of the relationship between the United States and Israel, please see Supra note 20, at pp. 9 - 37.

²³⁶ Supra note 8, at 211.

be thought of as interlocutor or as partner has never held the stage for more than a moment or two.²³⁷

Although it would be impossible to address *all* detrimental aspects of this complex case, it is necessary to always remember that apart from the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the struggle itself, the people within the struggle have already been "prepackaged" - prior to the conflict - as savage, irrational and dangerous individuals who are *not like Us* (this includes Israel), *rather below Us, and threatening to Us*.

As it stands, and as was outlined in this Chapter, CNN's perspective has produced an astonishingly reductive view of reality. Israel is portrayed as the blameless victim, the one who is justified in fearing the Other, the Palestinian Arab. This is rooted in the ignorant misunderstanding of Arab civilization, and of the Orientalist fear of what is supposedly embodied by the Other. As discussed in Chapter Two, Arabs in general and Muslims in particular have been created as entities to be feared. They have been identified as objects which challenge the democratic West and threaten the very existence of the Western world. Israel's role as ally of the West quells Western fears for there is a strategic presence laid to "watch over" the potentially dangerous and harmful Arab savage. CNN's misrepresentation of reality is described by Edward Said as

truly staggering in its recklessness and were it not very much a practical, as well as actual distortion of reality one could quite easily be talking

²³⁷ Edward W. Said, "The Arab-American War: The Politics of Information," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinians, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 298.

about a form of private mental derangement.²³⁸

Although the mis-construction of such identity is often times implicit rather than explicit, it is necessary to understand that interpellation does not occur on a conscience level, rather a sub-conscience one. Once the individual is made a subject within the discourse, the affects of the ideological effects which facilitated their individual interpellation are then reinforced and legitimated. In this case, the ideological effects culminate into one pivotal stereotype: the Palestinian is the negative entity holding no legitimate claim.

Bearing all of the above in mind, it becomes easier to recognize why it may be that many, if not most, American individuals are more apt to recognize themselves within and align themselves alongside what CNN presents as the more legitimate struggle. Since interpellation can only occur at the level of self-recognition, and since CNN's legitimation lies within the Israeli claims rather than the Palestinian struggle, it is safe to assume that much of the American audience will sympathize with the *more legitimate* Israeli actions. Naturally, this does not account for American individuals who view the struggle at an ideologically different level, recognizing the inherently oppressive, discriminatory and exclusionary political underpinnings of colonial Zionist aspirations.

The analysis of CNN has proven that there appears to be a deliberate policy maintaining the reductionist views espoused by Orientalism and Zionism. There is a distance created between the cultures of the American West, the allied Israeli "bastion

²³⁸ Supra note 133.

of the West in the Middle East",²³⁹ and the Palestinian Arabs; a distance which plays upon and takes advantage of the misguided notions demonizing the Other, at the same time strengthening the fantasy of a pure "Western" identity.²⁴⁰ In the following and final Chapter, I will recommend ways in which CNN can present a more complete narrative and why such new-representation could aide the Palestinian people in their fight for self-determination.

²³⁹ Edward W. Said, "The Acre and the Goat," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinians, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 39.

²⁴⁰ Edward W. Said, "Embargoed Literature," The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinians, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 374.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

Within CNN coverage, there is a blatant disregard for both Palestinian lives and hopes. Relations of domination are masked by CNN's refusal to place blame where blame is necessary. Before any true form of peace may come to that region, Israel must take moral responsibility for their actions over the last 53 years.²⁴⁰²⁴¹ CNN's power to influence American opinion, which would in turn sway the American government in an effort to force Israel's hand in this matter is quite vast. The audience they reach has the power, at a grassroots level, to alter the policies of their own United States government. If offered a more complete narrative which legitimates Palestinian fury, then it is more likely that the American individual will stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people. This is why I am concerned with the leading American news-agency, for it is my belief that they have enough influence to alter the course of the current situation, *if* they chose to do so.

The problem with which I have dealt throughout this work is CNN's disinformation and misrepresentation of the Palestinian claim for self-determination. CNN's coverage skews reality by presenting an incomplete Palestinian narrative. As discussed in Chapter Three, the aporias within CNN coverage are historical reference to the

²⁴¹ Although a discussion attesting to what will constitute a "just" peace between Palestinians and Israelis is beyond the scope of this work, I will say that the first necessary step is that Israel take responsibility for the 53 years of Palestinian oppression and dispossession by saying: "We are sorry."

dispossession of the Palestinian population and Ariel Sharon's past; international law with respect to the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian Territory and international observation of Israeli human rights violations; and, the Palestinian cry for freedom.

CNN coverage draws upon Orientalist misconceptions of the Palestinian Arab population, ultimately fuelling the typically Western mis-understanding of the Oriental figure. This is intensified and furthered by the intersection of Zionism with Orientalism. Since such coverage falls short of presenting an acceptable narrative for the Palestinian people, and since it draws upon a false understanding of the Arab population, I recommend that the following be done if a *more complete* narrative is to be presented to CNN audiences; a narrative which will offer the Palestinian claim of self-determination a more valid and solid foundation, one which would hail individuals rather than repel them.

What must be dismantled is the media's successful reconstruction of the conflict as one where international law has no bearing, above human rights law, and between two equal powers (although one of these powers is threatened by the Other). Furthermore, it must be made clear that the current crisis is not "without history", nor are the Zionist aspirations for the State of Israel without blame. The picture painted by CNN is one in which Israeli action is almost always justified and *right*, thereby characterizing the reactions²⁴² of those Palestinians residing in Occupied Palestinian

²⁴² Although CNN never presents Palestinian actions as "reactions", but rather, as initiations which lead to Israeli reactions.

Territories as almost always unjustified and *wrong*. If one does not ask questions²⁴³ which reference the past, then the culpability of the Israeli State vis-a-vis both the suffering of the Palestinian native and the international law is removed, and ultimately a crude and severely incomplete narrative is presented.

By way of misrepresenting the complexity of the current situation and the unequal power relations separating the occupying military power of Israel and the militarily occupied Palestinian Territories, CNN discourse justifies existing relations of domination among Zionist supporters of Israel and those supporting the Palestinian fight against foreign occupation. What I am referring to here is not some higher *truth*, rather the broader historical context of the situation before us, counter-claims documented and recorded by leading Human Rights Organizations such as Amnesty International and the physical geopolitical reality of the "peace process", e.g. while Ehud Barak, then Prime Minister of Israel, was being *generous* in his offers, housing in settlements grew 52.49%, population of settlements grew by 52.96%, and that 61,273 new settlers moved into the Occupied Palestinian Territories.²⁴⁴

CNN-representation does not allow for blame to be placed where blame ought to be placed. If CNN were to reference historical facts, international legal resolutions, and civilian concerns, then it is more likely that American empathy would lie with the Palestinian fury maintaining the current *Intifadah*, rather than with the Israeli occupation

²⁴³ Such as: why is Ariel Sharon hated? What does the "peace process" really offer the Palestinians? How does this "peace process" fall short of the United Nations Resolutions respecting Israeli occupation of Palestinian Territories? What was being done by the Israeli Government to show that it was, in fact, serious about its want of peace?

²⁴⁴ Peace Now, Report, 4 December, 2000.

which ignited this conflict. If CNN were to incorporate all sections discussed in Chapter Three then the Palestinian claims of self-determination, and reactions to the Occupation would make “sense” to much more of the American audience.

In drawing on Gramsci's claim that

ideology is not just a question of explicit political beliefs, but that it is also a material force; it ‘organizes’ human masses, and ‘creates the terrain’; that it has an ‘internal’ psychological dimension and that it is the way in which consciousness itself is structured,²⁴⁵

One can speculate that the American population can, if afforded the opportunity, stand in solidarity with the Palestinian claims for meaningful sovereignty. America is the self proclaimed “peace broker” in this struggle, and if their populace demands a change to their approach respecting the Palestinian cause, then they would be left with no choice but to do so.²⁴⁶ As it stands currently, what joins the American population to their government is not “reality”, but rather “popular beliefs” which are maintained and proliferated by the likes of CNN. If these “popular beliefs” were deconstructed and then made to incorporate the narrative of the Palestinian native, then there would be a disjunction between the American government and its own people; within this disjunction would lie American support for meaningful Palestinian sovereignty.²⁴⁷

Unfortunately, the influence of discourses such as Orientalism, and Zionism do not facilitate the introduction of any narrative which challenges the existing relations of power, be it Palestinian or otherwise. In order for CNN to articulate the Israeli faults,

²⁴⁵ Supra note 61, at 209.

²⁴⁶ Supra note 47.

²⁴⁷ Supra note 61, at 199.

they would be removing legitimacy from the Israeli claims and placing justification within the parameters of the Palestinian struggle. This would translate into a challenge to Orientalism and the American misunderstanding and fear of the Other. With the current misrepresentations, the claim for sovereignty made by the Palestinian people is predominantly viewed as void, for how is one to support self-governance demands from such people who are portrayed as evidently savage, chaotic, illogical and clearly volatile? Before a reevaluation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is undertaken, the audience must first address their own misunderstanding of the Palestinian Arab subject.

Centred

In order for the CNN news-body to attempt presentation of a much more complete narrative, they must go beyond the "you-are-there" kind of coverage they employ regularly, and alter the State-centered approach through which they deliver the story. In order for CNN to shift their means away from such techniques, they must address the 53 years of punishment, dispossession and terror faced by the Palestinian native. In particular, a discussion of the Palestinian refugees is crucial, as is a discussion of Israel's military occupation of Palestinian lands and Ariel Sharon's past. In order for CNN's audience members to comprehend the severe Palestinian reaction to Ariel Sharon's visit, it is crucial that his past actions respecting the Arab people be outlined. Furthermore, it must be made clear that the reaction of the Palestinians on September 28th was a reaction to something which extended far beyond the physical aspect of Sharon's provocative visit. Although his visit to *Al-Aqsa Mosque* was considered a demeaning and odious act for *all* Arabs, and although his visit was the spark which

ignited the current *Intifadah*, the Palestinian Uprising came about from the oppressive, demeaning and humiliating living conditions in which the Palestinian natives have lived for 53 years. Without this information, it appears as though the Palestinian response is unfounded, unjustified, irrational and chaotic. "White"-washing the historical complexity of the current dispute leads the American audience to mis-read both the situation and the Palestinian outrage.

The second facet which must be altered if CNN is to present a more complete narrative, is their propensity for abject oversight where international law is concerned. One *must* look to the international legal dimension for two reasons: in order to understand that the reasons for current actions²⁴⁸ of the Palestinian population are justified, for Palestinians reside under military occupation; and, to comprehend that the "peace process" as it is formulated presently would amount to nothing more than a redistribution of Israeli power perpetuating the actuality of Palestinian Bantustans by way of both economic and physical suffocation. Neither State nor conflict is without international regulation – this *must* be made clear within CNN discourse.²⁴⁹

Furthermore, documented human rights violations which were committed by Israel must be included within and addressed by CNN discourse. This will unmask the relations of power and reach the attention of CNN's audience. As expressed earlier, within the discourse of CNN there is a non-accountability where human rights violations

²⁴⁸ Though not *all* of the actions can be explained in this manner.

²⁴⁹ Whether or not Americans will see the validity of international laws will most likely depend on a revamping of their own government's attitude toward the international legal dimension. This is yet another topic which is beyond the scope of my current work.

are committed; removing the veil behind which such atrocities take place demands that the aggressor take responsibility and be held accountable for their actions.

The final and most crucial aspect of CNN coverage which must be changed is their continuous disregard for civil-based concerns. Contrary to the misrepresentation by CNN, the struggle before us extends beyond the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority and encompasses the Palestinian civilians and the Jewish minorities who oppose all actions of the Israeli government. In dismissing such voices, CNN pushes them to the side, implicitly declaring that their voices are not worthy of mention. This particular affect of coverage reaches beyond the struggle of the Palestinian people and encompasses their very "being" as it is mis-portrayed to the American audience. It works to dehumanize the Palestinians and their struggle.

Ultimately, descriptions can be made true if people believe the descriptions to be true. With CNN's current coverage, the message is that We should be wary of the Palestinian Arab. This continues to be one of the obstacles faced by the Palestinians in their fight for self-determination. CNN shifts and masks the imbalance of power between the State of Israel and the Palestinian people, and reconstructs the conflict as one between two equally powerful parties. Due to the intersection of stereotypes discussed in Chapter Two, the Palestinian Arab already begins at a level of disadvantage. All of the above result in the condemnation of the Palestinian as guilty for their "terrorism," while condoning, even supporting and perpetuating the State of Israel's "reaction", and culminating in the ultimate way of silencing any victim: blaming them for the atrocities which have befallen them.

Although my focus has been on the Palestinian claim for self-determination, my argument against CNN's form of "you-are-there" coverage extends well beyond the misportrayal of this struggle, and touches the heart of every struggle against oppression. The technique employed by CNN is complacent in reinforcing the existing ideological system of oppression which affords certain governments the *justified* and largely *uncontested* luxury to commit human rights abuses against civilians. In order to challenge and shift any systematically asymmetrical relations of domination, the power relations themselves must be brought under investigation and the parties brought forth to account for their actions. The contribution of leading news-media bodies to struggles such as that of the Palestinians could prove to be exceptionally valuable in the struggle to end all forms of oppression.

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