

Identity, Territoriality, and Power

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ABSTRACT: *Identity, identity politics, and the relation of identity to territory, are all highly charged questions today, both in Israel and the United States. The issues are examined in this paper at the urban level, with the suggestion that they are also applicable at the national level. It is argued that the relationship to territory is but one of many factors shaping identity, and even where the relationship is strong, it need not be linked to territoriality, that is, to the formal or physical control of particular territory.*

The rising importance of identity politics is a standing topic of current political discussion today. This paper explores a limited aspect of that discussion: the relationship between identity and territory: specifically, the conception that identity is necessarily tied to territoriality (or to political sovereignty, to statehood at the national level, political control of a defined territorial jurisdiction at the local level). While most of the discussion around this issue has looked at territoriality as the spatial correlative of national identity, I want to explore the relationship between identity and territoriality at the urban level. That is, I want to examine the relationship between urban territoriality - in the United States in this context often simply called turf claims - and identity. In the urban context, I want to argue that identity neither is nor should be linked to territoriality, to control of particular spatially defined and bounded places. While an inter-relationship exists between territoriality and identity, it runs in the direction:

identity→territoriality→identity

and not the other way around. Then I want to argue, more tentatively, that the results of this examination at the urban level also have implications at the national level. Finally, even more tentatively, I will suggest some implications for the present situation in Israel.

The heart of the analysis lies in the proposition that, at both the urban and the national level, the linkage is not between territoriality and identity but

between territoriality and power. In the exercise of power, the linking of identity to territoriality can in itself be a weapon, either of domination or resistance.

Both "territoriality" and "identity" require definition. By "territoriality" I mean the claim to the control of space, whether by political, social, or physical means. I do not mean the identification with a territory,¹ but the claim that that identification creates a set of rights to that territory, rights to control what occurs within it, and often rights to exclude from it. Thus to say I am a southerner in the United States, or a Basque in Spain, states a relationship I feel to a territory, a place, but does not (certainly not necessarily) mean that I claim a right to control of that territory or the right to determine how, or by whom, it will be used. My identification with a territory may indeed turn into territoriality, into a claim to control of that territory, if I am discriminated against because of my association with it, because of an ascription of negative characteristics linked to that identity, and thus produce a movement that at the national level we would call secession, then identification with territory indeed becomes territoriality. But the two are analytically distinct.

By "identity" I mean the result of the self-perceived image a person or group has of itself, the characteristic or set of characteristics that person or group considers important in self-identification. Thus I am not concerned with ascribed characteristics, but with the internal definition of what an important characteristic is (although that may quite possibly be the result of the internalization of ascribed characteristics). Thus being short or being tall is not an identity, as the term is used here, unless one is extremely tall or short and becomes self-conscious about the characteristic because others refer to one as "shorty" or "big guy."

The relationship between territoriality and identity is, in a sense, a subcategory of that which Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, for instance, use in speaking of the "politics of identity." (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). Identity becomes political when it is coupled with a claim to representation in the political arena, representation being the lowest political common denominator of control. All identities do not give rise to a politics of identities. In the same way, all territorial identities do not give rise to territoriality, which may be defined by analogy as a politics of territory.

¹ "Territory" is used here in the sense of specific bounded space. Thus the discussion of boundaries, in David Newman's "Territory, boundaries and the formation of National Identity," paper presented at the International Seminar, Ben Gurion University, January 12, 1999, parallels the argument made here. The concept is not without its own difficulties. Jane Jacobs, for instance, points out that requiring territory to be bounded, the process of map-making, is itself a social relationship to space that may be socially constructed; aboriginal claims to land in Australia, for instance, are distorted if reduced to bounded territory (Jacobs, 1993). John Agnew (1987: 26-28) further distinguishes (part of a long-lasting discussion in geography and sociology) between locale, location, and sense of place; territory as used here is location, and the question addressed in this paper is the path by which location leads to a sense of place that demands control for its realization.

Individuals, of course, have multiple identities, and usually these are not inconsistent: I am a Jew, an American, a left-winger, born a German, a professor, a planner, a husband and father, the son of a philosopher, a gardener. I do not need to choose among these; they are all part of my identity, even though some may occasionally be in tension with others.² I want to separate out a number of different aspects of the definition of identity, without getting too entangled in the maze of issues involved in a comprehensive definition. Specifically, I see those identities that are relevant to a politics of identity, and thus to the issue of territoriality, as usually based, among other things,³ on nine different factors:

- ethnicity
- religion
- gender
- culture
- class
- social status
- geography
- power
- citizenship⁴

The question then is, to what extent is each of these bases of identity linked to territoriality.

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Let me initially examine the question empirically at the urban level, using New York City as a case study.

Ethnic identity. in New York City, is often linked to territoriality, but certainly not determined by it (ethnic identity linked to past territoriality, i.e. country of origin, is taken up separately as an aspect of identity by citizenship). There are Jewish, Irish, Italian, German, Dominican, Puerto Rican sections of the city; today one often reads of Russian and of Korean, Vietnamese, and Thai communities as well. The main clusters of each can easily be defined on a map, and plotted using census statistics. Many of these clusters are of relatively long

2 Amos Oz (1983: 139) says it this way: "I see myself as one of the legitimate heirs [of Jewish civilization]...it follows that I am free to decide what I will choose from this great inheritance...My identity has already become a combination of the Jewish and humanist elements."

3 I leave aside trivial issues of identity, such as identification as fans of a ball club, aficionados of a hobby, or holders of particular physical characteristics, none of which generally have any association with territory. I also leave aside loaded symbolic statements such as that by Wim Duisenberg, President of the European Central Bank "A currency is part of the identity of a people. It reflects what they have in common, now and in the future," quoted by the Associated Press, dateline Brussels, January 2, 1999. One might hope that such a monetary definition of identity would have limited circulation.

4 The complex relationship between citizenship, ancestry by blood and ancestry by place of birth is not taken up here.

duration, in some cases going back 100 years or more;⁵ others have only been a decade or two in formation. In either case, however, one finds a very substantial dispersion of the members of the ethnic group to locations in the city outside the cluster (I use the somewhat awkward term "cluster" as a neutral term, encompassing both voluntary and involuntary spatial concentrations; I will come to the distinction between enclaves and ghettos in a moment). Ethnicity is not defined by residence (or work) within the cluster, that is, territorially; rather ethnic identity comes first, and leads to more or less durable territorial clustering. Ethnicity may or may not be strengthened by continued residence within an ethnically defined territory; sometimes those who move out establish lesser clusters elsewhere, sometimes they do not. Formalizing clustering through legal institutional means, such as in the extreme case in the United States through incorporation as a separate municipality, may strengthen an identity through the overlay of territorial control, but it does not cause it.

The location of the cluster is hardly relevant; the location on the Lower East Side that was originally the center of the immigrant eastern European Jewish community later became the location of a cluster of Chinese, then of Italian, then of Hispanics. Inversely, while the Lower East Side was the original landing space for countless Jewish immigrants, few had any hesitations to leave when better opportunities presented themselves; thus the Grand Concourse in the Bronx was at least as desirable a location for New York Jews in the 1920's as was their earlier home. The defense of turf did not become a battle-cry till the 1950's, when involuntary displacement for higher-income residents in the name of slum clearance was taken as a territorial exercise of power, and fiercely resisted.

The expectation in early studies had been that the pattern that African-Americans in the United States would follow would be parallel to that of other immigrant ethnic groups. Indeed, even among African-Americans, that was the expectation, by and large, until after World War II.⁶ However, in fact, this is not what happened. Whilst the clustered spaces of other immigrant groups may be appropriately called enclaves, those of African-Americans were ghettos (see: Marcuse, 1997). The reasons for the differences in the spatial patterns of black African-Americans and those of other immigrant groups are complex, but at least one very clear point is important here: while other ethnic groups came to the United States willingly, as immigrants, believing that the move would be an improvement over their prior position, this was not historically true of African-Americans, who were brought here as slaves. For Caribbean-Americans, who

⁵ John Logan has recently completed a detailed statistical study of the pattern, using the Taueber Index of dissimilarity as the criterion for territorial separation; the findings show a remarkable stability for most groups.

⁶ The classic text with this prediction was the first edition of Glazer and Moynihan (1963). By the time of the publishing of their second edition, in 1970, they acknowledged that their prediction was wrong. I have traced the evolution of the black ghetto in Marcuse (1998).

came to the United States as willing immigrants, the status of "black" is often ascriptive, and places them with African-Americans in terms of segregated status.

The difference in the territorial patterns of other immigrant groups and African-Americans in the United States is important for the central point I wish to make. In both cases, ethnic identity is not dependent on territorial location, but precedes it. But the relation of territoriality to identity is quite different for the two groups. For immigrant groups, it is an often transitional and essentially voluntary linkage. This is not so for African-Americans. For them, the confinement in the ghetto is an expression of relations of power, more precisely, powerlessness. Ghettoization is involuntary; it reflects social and economic status, a position at the bottom end of a hierarchical ordering of groups. Confinement in the ghetto is used to control and dominate, indeed to facilitate exploitation, much as was confinement in the ghetto for Jews throughout much of history. Indeed, it is this relationship to power that defines a ghetto and separates it from other forms of clustering, of enclaves.

Such an existing pattern of ghettoization, of clustering, territorial concentration, can be used defensively, and it can become a source of solidarity and resistance. In this sense a ghetto may take on some of the characteristics of an enclave. The call to identify with each other for mutual protection then becomes, paradoxically, a way of turning oppression into strength, of using the territoriality that was used against them as a basis for strengthening an identity that can buttress resistance. The process is a complex one, and there is no consensus on what its proportions are, but the general statement that African-Americans are a group with a significant ethnic identity, who, because of ascriptions to color are then segregated for purposes of control and domination, with the result of promoting further ethnic identification, is a pattern generally recognized.

Ancestry by place of birth is sometimes held to define ethnic identity, e.g. an Italian-American is an ethnic Italian if he or she (or their parents or ancestors) were born in Italy. Indeed, even the village of ancestry is often an identifier — there is a Pontolandolfo club in Waterbury, Connecticut, in which more descendants of people born in Pontolandolfo, Italy live than in that village in Italy. But it would be hard to make that linkage on anything but a symbolic basis for most.

Ownership of land is sometimes taken as the basis for identity. One would have to go outside of urban boundaries to understand how such a link could be justified, to a country with an extensive rural economy, and even there it is unlikely. In some such cases, however, the connection between land ownership/use and identity can be strong; I think, for instance, of South Africa. In pre-colonial South Africa, tribes, often each with its own language and customs, occupied different territories. Each tribe's identity was not based on the territory it controlled; indeed, depending on the economic organization of the

tribe, some were nomadic, others moved from location to location according to the seasons. With the imposition of apartheid rule, however, land ownership in particular locations was used as a direct and forceful instrument of control. Bantustans were established, within which, and only within which, Africans were allowed to own land. Through the imposition of military and police force, African territories were created, and identity cards were issued in which territorial location became an ascribed identity for the holder. Pockets of African residence in the major cities, Sophiatown in Johannesburg and District Six in Capetown, were cleared with a violent display of power. The control and lack of control of territory was a clear display of power, and in direct contradiction to such identity that may have been established from its ownership/use. In a rural setting, particularly a pre-capitalist one, connection to the land may, in fact, be essential to survival of long tradition, and in this sense a component of identity; in most settings, however, the issues involved in control of land have more to do with property rights, exploitation, and accumulation than they do with identity: where and which piece of property, what territory, is not so much involved as property ownership per se.

Religious groups in New York City reveal some extent of clustering, but (with two major exceptions) much less than ethnic groups, if religion and ethnicity are separated from each other. German Catholics and German Protestants, for instance, do not reveal any significant differences in spatial patterns, nor indeed to secular and religious members of any other group. The two generally recognized exceptions are Orthodox and certainly ultra-orthodox Jews and Muslim Arabs. In both cases, it is out of respect for a religious prescript that the clustering is tighter than for other religious groups: in the one case, the necessity to be able to walk to services on the Sabbath, in the other to be within earshot of the call to prayer. There is not in either case, however, any claim to exclusivity: Catholic Hispanics and Hassidic Jews live in close proximity to each other, interspersed in many places, and Muslims are a minority in the areas near the minarets. There may indeed be tensions involved, but not in claims to power over others, or for the intervention of the state; the tensions rather are felt through competition in the market for residential space.

Cultural identity (I use culture broadly and simplistically, to mean the overt patterns of behavior in every-day life, from child-rearing patterns to musical preferences, to forms of celebration, life-styles, etc.) is only tangentially connected to territoriality. Middle-class parents with small children may indeed prefer to live in a middle class suburb and raise their children according to middle class standards, but their identity is not tied to their location; suburbs are essentially interchangeable. Indeed, before the children come, and after they are gone, suburban territory may become an anathema; part of the pattern of gentrification in New York City is explained by moves back to the city of individuals raised in the suburbs. Tastes in music, how loud it is played, where and when it is played, may cause conflicts among neighbors, and possibly even

move-ins and move-outs, but such tensions are viewed as a normal part of big city life, and cultural identity is hardly dependent on their territorial resolution.

Gender is an essential component of identity. It relates to territoriality in concrete ways: discrimination against single women in housing purchase, concentrations of women who are single parents in low-income and social housing, temporal segregation of middle-class women in suburban areas, some clustering of lesbians and gays spatially.⁷ But identity in these cases clearly precedes and is independent of territory; imposition of territorial boundaries on the possible locations for women is not constitutive of their identities, but a power-established restriction on their possibilities. In a few cases, spatial clustering together may help strengthen one's identity as a woman, for example, in housing specifically designed for single mothers and/or working women, but it is the proximity to and interaction with others that contributes to identity, and they can do so wherever located. It does not matter whether there is a claim to one specific territory rather than another for the process that reinforces identity to occur.

Sexual orientation is a dominant aspect of identity for many. For gays and lesbians, minority status has sometimes led to a clustering in neighborhoods in which they feel at ease and often predominate; Greenwich Village in New York City is often taken as such. Their identity, even if they live in the Village, is not that of "a Villager," though the term may sometimes be used as short-hand to denote someone who is gay or lesbian. The identity is based on the sexual orientation, not the territory; the territory may be a defense for it, but is not its cause, its substance.

Geography, or physical morphology has a significant impact on identity, but not in the sense of territory, that is, bounded space. People indeed identify with places, but very rarely with their boundaries. The connection may be to skyscrapers, to high-density residences, to neon lights or subways, or noise or particular architectural forms. The forms to which identity relates may be clustered, or they may be scattered, as are apartment houses in New York City; they may follow transportation routes, as do subways, or be concentrated in particular parts of a territory, as are skyscrapers in the lower half of Manhattan. Occasionally, at the urban level, morphology may relate to jurisdictional boundaries, as when a city characterized by a flat landscape has boundaries running along the line of foothills, but it is the flatness, rather than the location of the boundary, rather than territory, that relates to identity.

Class, status, and power are the final, and related, issues to be dealt with. The complex of these three has much to do with both identity and territoriality. The issue is one that troubles many, for territorialization reinforces relations of inequality that, even absent their reflection in space, are considered undesirable in a democratic and just society. The pattern is clear, and becoming even more

7 Ann Forsyth has done pioneering work in this area.

stark than it has been historically; the processes of globalization have much to do with its sharpening (See Marcuse, 1997; Priemus, Musterd and Van Kempen, 1998). It is one thing for the market to allocate housing according to ability to pay, or for those of similar status to choose residences in proximity to each other. It is quite another thing when these choices result from the exercise of political power over others, and are used to reinforce that power. The experience in the United States has to do with issues such as exclusionary zoning, discriminatory investment of public funds in education, differential provision of public infrastructure, privatization of police and security services and the private construction of socially effective walls and divisive boundaries between neighborhoods and communities. The creation of what William Wilson first called "underclass communities", but now more properly labels "areas of the ghetto poor" is simply the other side of the establishment of exclusive citadels⁸ of the upper class, with class distinctions more and more sharply drawn in the society (see Wilson, 1991, 1996).

The arguments, in a developed urban setting, extend beyond the extremes. It is not only the creation of citadels at one end and excluded ghettos at the other that is happening and undesirable, but a more divisive quartering of the city: into luxury quarters, gentrified areas, suburban neighborhoods, tenement quarters, and abandoned communities (see Marcuse, 1989). To a limited extent, the divisions thus created are the result of free choice in each of the quarters, but more importantly the choices at the top limit the choices at the bottom, and are implemented through the exercise of power, both economic and political, i.e. through state action. Territoriality is used, not to establish or protect an identity, but to extend and increase power. The rich are enabled to shut out and ignore the poor by defining the territories they control. Identification with such territories, such locations, is then a mechanism, a tool, for increasing the position of power which produced the territorial claims. The same is true at the opposite end of the scale: claims linking identity to control of territory, the claim of turf rights, can be used to defend a group from exploitation and displacement: thus low-income tenants on the Lower East Side may hang banners across their streets saying "This is Our Community; It is Not for Sale" in defense against gentrification, even though, under other circumstances, they would be quite willing to leave it for better housing.

"The struggle for identity is a struggle for power and always takes place within a hegemonic system of social relations," say Jan Penrose and Peter Jackson (1993: 207). To the extent that, analytically examined, territoriality is used to extend an identity based on the possession of power, it seems to me to be normatively undesirable in a democratic society with a claim to just treatment. By the same token, the struggle for identity, and with it for territoriality, can be a

⁸ Following Friedmann and Wolff (1982), "citadel" is used in a very specific sense; see also Marcuse (1997).

struggle against the possessors of power. The normative position is not symmetrical. But in both cases, the link between identity and territoriality must be recognized as instrumental, and not constitutive.

Citizenship provides quite a different relationship between identity⁹ and territory. It is almost universally accepted that citizenship depends on a specific formal relationship to a nation-state, defined territorially. While, under various laws and constitutions, those outside the borders of that nation-state may have claims on citizenship, those claims require some form of action to be exercised, generally involving residence within the borders of the territory of the state. In other cases, residence within those borders, or even birth within them, does not necessarily confer citizenship; those cases are, however, a small minority of individuals, and are, by and large, rejected as inappropriate in a democratic and open society, although within reasonable limits may be accepted in the process of naturalization.

The identity connected with citizenship is, however, a narrow legal one, with little connection to those forms of identity constitutive of an individual or group. Those identifying themselves as Dominican in New York City may live largely in clusters, but among them the distinction between citizen and non-citizen, or even between legal and illegal immigrant, is not a matter of a separate identity, but of different circumstances affecting a common identity. And the distinction between citizen and non-citizen is not reflected in space. It may be that citizenship (or non-citizenship) may influence the range of possible locations of residence, this, however, is because of legal considerations, not differences of identity. The identity "Dominican-American" is more cultural than legal; it is not the formality of citizenship, but rather the intention to remain and the identification with the prevalent local culture (which, of course, in turn increases the likelihood of application for citizenship), that leads to use of the hyphenated phrase. Citizenship establishes a portion of identity, but whether it is an abstract legal one (with or without legal limitations), or whether it is a matter of personal identity, can vary widely. In New York City, citizenship status may more likely define a negative identity than a positive one: citizens of the Dominican Republic and Guatemala who are non-citizens of the United States may have more in common because of their non-citizenship than because of their

9 "Democratic citizenship should be understood as one source of identity signifying membership within a political association. For any individual, this democratic political identity may co-exist with many other identities that define different aspects of their personhood. But democratic citizenship should provide those who share it with a common bond of political allegiance and a shared space for civic participation....There is a long history of using ascriptive characteristics such as ethnicity, race, or religion to [answer questions about who is to be admitted, who should participate in governance, and how national identity should be defined.} ... the answer they offer is more likely to divide than unite the heterogeneous populations of late twentieth century nation-states. A democratic conception of citizenship should base civic belonging on principles of consent and participation that allow diverse groups to find—and maintain—common ground." Klusmeyer (1996a: 97).

citizenship. Technically, citizenship, like ownership, is simply a bundle of rights, a set of claims and concomitant obligations that are legally enforceable by set procedures. Whether the overlap between citizenship and national identity is purely formal, or is substantive, may vary widely, but citizenship, at the urban level, is not a significant hallmark of personal identity or territorial location.¹⁰

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Going from the urban level to the national, what might one expect to find?

In general, the conclusions drawn regarding bases for identity in the urban setting are applicable at the national level as well. Two qualifiers should perhaps be added, of more significance at the national level than at the local. One is that geography, identification with a physical landscape, can be of real psychological importance, perhaps more so than at the urban level for most. The relation between nature and human happiness is strong, and has perhaps come into increasing focus as the distance between daily life and nature has increased. This aspect of identity, however, is not of relevance to the type of political reasoning that tries to link claims to territory to identity, for the link to nature does not require "ownership" or control or the exclusion of others; it can be shared, and does not of itself involve questions of power or sovereignty. It is thus both benign and non-political.

The second qualifier has to do with the dynamics of identity formation. Identity is not a static phenomenon; both individuals and groups can change their identities, or find them changed. And here territoriality can be used, and has, in fact, frequently been manipulated to be perceived as a part of identity. A vicious circle is created, in which the superimposition of territoriality on identity becomes a reinforcement of perceived identity, which in turn magnifies the importance of control of territory. The imagined community is felt to be a real community, and functions as such. This is, in the opinion of many, the process that has currently developed in the former Yugoslavia, and has played a large role throughout history. In the dynamics of identity formation, however, the relationship between territoriality and identity may move in the opposite direction: an identity originally closely linked to control of a territory may change even when that territory is no longer attached to those sharing the identity, as with many immigrants who physically cut their ties to their

¹⁰ In one case, there appears to be a strong relationship between urban territorial location and citizenship: the "extra-territorial" imperial enclaves in colonial countries, e.g. the British enclaves in Shanghai or Canton, in which only British citizens could live. But of course the citizenship comes first, and permits the territorial identification. The British were not British because they lived in the British enclave in Shanghai; they could live in the enclave because they were British. Recent times present other analogies.

country/territory of origin. People of a diaspora may have strengthened identities, even as their ties to territory weaken.

The relationship then is a complex one. We suggested, at the beginning of this paper, that the chain of cause and effect goes:

identity→territoriality→identity.

But here we enter a shadowy field in which ethnic and national identity need to be distinguished from each other. Without opening that Pandora's box (beyond the acknowledged distinction which views ethnicity as a matter of culture, language, and tradition, but national identity as a matter of politics and legal status, let me simply suggest that, at the national level, the chain goes:

ethnic identity→territoriality→national identity

with a reciprocal, secondary effect on ethnic identity. To say that territoriality influences identity is true, but identity is multi-faceted, as we have argued at the beginning, and it is not ethnic identity that territoriality establishes, but national identity.

At the national level, many in the Western political tradition expected the relevance to identity of territoriality (and nationality related to territory) to decline over time. This was so for two interrelated reasons: new sources of other cross-cutting identities, and new sources for the obliteration of older national/territorial identities; specifically, increasing class differentiation within national territorial boundaries, and increased global homogenization across such boundaries. Thus Karl Marx, for instance, saw the bourgeois political state as providing an abstraction of equality before the law while concealing the reality of ever-growing inequality in the economic and social, that is the material, sphere.¹¹ In our terms, the national state fosters a false common identity, while the differences between real and conflicting identities mount underneath. At the same time, globalization has produced, on the one hand, a global elite, in social terms a jet set, whose class identity is primary and whose citizenship is a matter of legal convenience: the Cayman Islands and the Isle of Man, for reasons having nothing to do with cultural identity, harbor many more citizens than residents. The tide of immigration and of refugees is witness, at the other end of the spectrum of power, to the declining significance of national territorial boundaries, and with it the malleability of national identities. The territorial boundaries within nation-states are, for some, as impenetrable as those among states; for others, boundaries among states are scarcely noticed. As graffiti on the remnants of the Berlin wall once said, "the walls run not between the nations, but between above and below." The identification of the state with a

11 See the excellent discussion in Klusmeyer (1996b).

national territory, and certainly with permanent boundaries is, after all, historically a very new phenomenon (see Agnew, 1998).

Place connection is quite a different concept from territoriality. In discussions of globalization, the point is frequently made that the spread of a homogeneous global culture, in fact, has an equal and opposite effect, an increased importance attached to locality, to the specifics of place. Global anonymity is escaped by stressing the unique particularities of place; the resurgence of national identities is one result; so is religious fundamentalism, local civic pride, many social movements (see Anderson, 1991; Castells, 1997; Smith, 1995). Recognizing this pattern is quite different from seeing a heightened importance of territory. In fact, territorial boundaries have little to do with it; it will generally be some social or cultural or morphological characteristic of a place (where place is at all relevant, e.g. not in fundamentalism) that will be important for identity, not who controls it. There may even be an exclusion from control, as for an exile, which does not reduce the attachment to the characteristics of the place or its people.

Can one conclude that in fact the expectations of political analysts regarding the lessened importance of territorially-based national differences and identities have been met? At the level of law, of the formal role of national states, the answer depends on whether one is looking at the formal or the potential power of states. While today globalization has, in fact, seemed to reduce the role of nation-states, that is in a sense true only with their concurrence, by their own voluntary acts; that the power exists to control globalization, and to control it on the basis of conventional formal powers of nation-states, acting separately or in concert, is hard to dispute (Panitch, 1998). And in part the answer depends on one's analysis of the source of rising and bifurcating national identifications, in places such as the former Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union, the former Czechoslovakia, or Spain, Canada, and indeed in the United States, where the rise of "identity politics" has become a subject of extensive popular and scholarly discussion (Young, 1986). And this moves in the direction of directly confronting issues under debate in Israel.

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Here I broach the Israeli case only gingerly, because it is complex and the nuances often are not apparent to a non-resident. Let me, nevertheless, hazard a few remarks.

I referred earlier to the circular process by which, in a city like New York, segregation results from racism based on an ascriptive definition of race, leading in turn to the reinforcement of a desired "racial" identity. The process is perhaps a minor example of a more general one. Michael Löwy,¹² the French sociologist,

¹² See *Globalization and Internationalism*, in *Monthly Review*, November 1998, vol. 50, no. 6, p. 19, citing Daniel Bensaid (1997).

speaks of “panic-ridden identity politics and... tribalistic nationalisms.” “The false universalism of the world market unleashes particularism and hardens xenophobia: the commercial cosmopolitanism of capital and the aggressive group-identity drives are mutually reinforcing.” Certainly the interplay between discrimination, segregation, and ghettoization in Jewish history, and most recently the Holocaust, has had a relationship to the preservation of Jewish cultural traditions and Jewish identity, and had a great deal to do with the emergence of Zionism and the state of Israel. Panic, in the Jewish past, was often justified. Yet the defensive aspect of the identity thus produced merits continual reexamination. And its presence must also be acknowledged in other communities within Israel. Thus Oren Yiftachel writes, “...steps to cement Jewish control over Palestinian lives and localities... has caused Israeli-Arabs¹³ to develop an ‘ethno-regional’ identity, whereby they have gradually refocused their struggle on the development of specific ethnic enclaves, and the building of autonomous institutions and political organizations.” (Yiftachel, 1997: 519).

In both the Jewish and the Arab past, questions of power have clearly influenced territorial considerations at least as much as questions of identity. In both cases, identity was firm and well established for centuries before the present. The creation of a state and the citizenship relations it made possible, provided critical protection for that identity for Jews, and perhaps is being sought for similar purposes by Palestinians. In each case, it is relations of power that seek to link, expand, contract, define, territoriality as a basis of nationhood and identity, not any inherent connection between territoriality and identity (Yiftachel, 1997).

And the situation is even more complicated in Israel because there are matters of identification involved even with the general category of “Jewish”—leaving aside as well the issue of a religious or secular definition of that term. Divisions within Israel, between Ashkenazi and Sephardic, are visible, and overlap with differences in class, occupation, and education. Differences among other immigrant groups, based on country of origin and/or ethnicity, also exist. In the latter case, the issue of integration has been explicitly addressed, often in pioneering fashion, in Israel, and the relationship to territoriality has been explicitly recognized in the attempt to avoid clustering or “ghettoization” of immigrants, even if not always successfully. The relationship to class, and the possibilities and dangers of the creation of what would have to be called ‘ethno-regional-class’ identity, has been the subject of some attention, among others by those associated with many discussions in Israel.¹⁴ For Arabs¹⁵ within Israel’s

13 Note: others might say Arab Israelis; see Oz (1983: 166)..

14 I include particularly the conference on *Challenging the Nation-State: Perspectives on Citizenship and Identity*, held at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, January 10-12, 1999, at which an earlier version of this paper was presented.

15 “Arab” is not a simple term to use here, for it is perhaps more accurate to say “Palestinian” as the “identity.” See discussion in Oz (1983: 159).

state borders, the situation is even more complicated, and here I see a similarity to other colonial situations, and a possible similarity to the situation as seen by many African-Americans in the United States. The question is of the voluntary or involuntary nature of the membership in the nation-state in which they find themselves. They are not there because of their identity, but in fact more likely against it; they are residents against their will in a state dominated by those of other identities.

The non-Jewish identity of Arabs within the territory of Israel has a partially symmetrical opposite in the Jewish identity of Jews not living in Israeli territory. Identities are complex and multiple: Jews who see themselves living in a diaspora still relate to the territory of Israel, but in a different manner from those living there. That relationship pre-dated historically the establishment of the State of Israel, and is not contingent on territorial control. Other Jews may consider being Jewish a significant part of their identities even though they feel no relationship to either roots or a future in Israel; their definition of Jewishness may be quite non-territorial. The State of Israel has had an important part to play in the survival of Jews all over the world, but over the centuries the identity of Jews has not been dependent on the existence of such a state; in more recent times, it has been the safety and security of non-Israeli Jews, and not their identity, that has been bound with territoriality.

In the Israeli case, one may interpret the chain:

ethnic identity→territoriality→national identity,

concretely as:

Jewish identity→territoriality→Israeli identity.

Living in controlled territory—territoriality—may then influence the nature of Jewish identity, or it may not, and it will do so in very different ways for different people, viz. the wide range of interpretations of Judaism in Israel. Jewish identity has not, in any event, depended on the control of any particular territory historically, even though it has always related to specific geographical locations.

Security concerns play a major role in Israel, however, they do not in the United States;¹⁶ the point here is only that the claim that Jewish identity (rather than Jewish security, or more generally Jewish power) is at stake in the control of a certain territory is, I believe, a misunderstanding of the meaning of identity. The relationship of Jewish sovereignty over all of some historically-defined

¹⁶ Perhaps the analogous situation in the United States would be the internment of Japanese-Americans living within the territory of the United States during the second World War, an event subject to increasing criticism with hindsight.

“Jewish lands” to the present identity of Jews seems to me a matter of ideology, not logic. Pride or satisfaction or even security are not the same as identity; one can be Jewish whether the boundaries of the state of Israel extend east of the green line or not.

Conclusion

Identity is not determined by territoriality, by claims to the control of territory, either at the urban or at the national/international level. It may influence identity, certainly national identity, often secondarily ethnic identity, but first and foremost claims to territory must be seen as issues in relationships of power, not as constitutive of or based on identity. That does not necessarily make them less important; it does permit them to be seen in their real context.

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