I would like in this final lecture to tie up some of the issues I raised in the previous lectures, and also to expand a little bit further on my proposal to begin looking for other ways to move forward towards peace. I very much hope in any case that the one main thread running through the lectures has been clear, namely, the need for all of us to think of entirely new paradigms, and not to stay stuck with ideas from the past that have not worked, or that have not helped us move forward, whether in the Arab world at large, or in the case of the Palestinian struggle for freedom.

To begin, then, my general argument in the first two lectures has been that, in response to the West's 're-engagement' with the Arab World after the Napoleonic campaign and what came later, the Arab intellectual scene came to be dominated by two overall intellectual 'rationalist' reactions, one associated with Afghani, calling for the embracing of rationalism as the means for a renaissance, and the other associated with Abdo, calling for the embracing of a rationalism that is still founded upon the Islamic religious heritage. Rationalist schools of thought in the Arab world –Urwi, Jabiri, Arkoun, Zakariyya, Mahfouz, Hanafi, and others - have even since been divided between those two

major strands. Among the schools of thought that proposed breaking free with tradition entirely there have also been various strands, such as the Marxist strand, represented by such people like Mahdi el-'Amil, and the liberalist strand, such as that of Fuad Zakariya. In addition, of course, the Arab World has also witnessed the development of what might be described as an *Islamicist* reaction, or a movement that, not only takes its cue from the religious heritage, but seeks to be totally guided by it. All of these movements or intellectual schools of thought came into being not simply as scholarly projects but as practical philosophies, or as proposed means for the Arab World to analyze and understand the root cause of its backwardness and to therefore bring about a renaissance or change.

My argument has been that all these traditions or schools of thought have been at fault for seeking a 'single-truth' answer. The question, 'rationalists' for example posited for themselves was, Do we break free from tradition altogether for answers to our problems, or do we predicate our rationalism on the basis of that tradition? The debate between them, to my mind, has been sterile. Even the distinction made by some of them between what would be good to draw upon (Averroes, Ibn Khaldun, etc.), and what would not be useful (e.g. Avicenna, etc.) is to my mind both futile and contrived. New paradigms need to be created. The

revolutions we are witnessing today in the Arab World reflect, not only the impotence of existing schools of thought, but also the immense potential that exists for new ideas and new approaches. People seeking freedom must also be allowed themselves to create their own new paradigms. This means that pre-existing theories about the world have to be replaced by new ones. The Arab World, I submitted, especially through its education system, would do well in this regard by focusing on the development of the mental skills (philosophy) that will allow all citizens to become capable of engaging their peers in reasoned public discourses over matters that collectively concern them, as and when these matters come up, thus allowing them to share in the formation of public opinion, and in the determining of their lives. This is the kind of philosophy that is needed, I said, rather than the ossified philosophies or 'theories' the Arab World has been laboring under. It is the kind of philosophy that equips the search for freedom with the necessary conceptual tools. Under such conditions, each person, and each community of persons, would themselves then be equipped to produce the relevant answers to the pressing problems, social or political or intellectual, that confront them. My approach thus suggests replacing the mute 'idols' of sterile theory by engaged, flesh and blood, thinking citizens. In this model, politics and philosophy (or Absal and

Salaman) become united as a Janus in the person of each rational citizen, making him or her a philosopher king, instead of being mere subjects *to* a single theory or political system.

In societies made up of such citizens, answers the society needs and that are relevant for its well-being and development will be created by the citizens themselves, through public discourse, rather than be thought to exist 'out there' in the form of a theory or a philosophy to be discovered by one genius. Such societies will be properly democratic, or 'multi-colored' as opposed to 'monochromatic'. Their citizens will be deeply committed to the public state of affairs, and constantly engaged in trying to address their collective problems. We can describe such societies as 'rational' in the sense that reason will be viewed, not as reigning in the form of one theory or one person or group, but in the sense of its being embodied in each member of the community (that was my 'philosopher-king for all' paradigm being replaced by the 'philosopher-king of each'). This way, the course of society will constantly be steered by its citizens, and unexpected and dramatic convulsions are therefore much less likely to happen, and more likely to be avoided.

On the Palestinian front, a similar process of 'mental liberation' from the 'single-truth' paradigm

needs to be engaged in. (It needs to be engaged in, by the way, also on the Israeli front, where the 'single-truth' or monochromatic disease is all too prevalent). It is well-worth considering Edward Said, Palestine's foremost 'moral-lawyer', as a paradigm of what is meant here in order to appreciate the far-reaching consequences of this proposition. Edward Said was, for many good reasons, fed up with the Arafat leadership. But this stood in the way, I believe, of making him appreciate the wider intellectual context (and reality) in which the formulation of ideas and policies was taking shape. He saw matters in black and white, assuming that everything that went on in the leadership was black, and that his was *the* correct analysis, or the best position to take. What I think he didn't quite appreciate was that his was after all just one point of view, and however valuable and unique it may have been, there were others with different opinions, and policies and decisions in the end had to be shaped through a process of internal negotiation. In the end, it is the rich variety of Palestinian intellectual discourse, and especially that whose radius kept it close to the center of (the necessarily murky) political engagement or activity, that eventually produced the answers, imperfect as they might have seemed to be, that were felt to be most needed for the Palestinian people. And the fact that the Palestinian struggle has still not been resolved does not mean

that perfect 'single-truth' answers would have solved them, or would have made life any better for the Palestinians under occupation or in the refugee camps. But my major concern more generally anyway is with judgments whose holders presume - as Benda portrayed them- to carry the one and only moral torch, as though others are either blind to it altogether, or are indifferent to it because of some moral deficiency. I really believe that Arafat himself, besides all the faults we normally associate with him, was open-minded, and always tried to synthesize the multiplicity of opinions and views he always was ready to listen to.

Of course I do not mean by what I have said that, contrary to what Said and many others think, there exist no moral torches to be guided by. It is of course true that, in the case of the question whether Israel's existence is a right or a violation of a right I suggested that here we seem to have a perfect case of a contradiction that seems to be soluble only by transcendence, in the sense that people on both sides would be willing to pay with their lives in defense of their opposite answers for it, and that finding a way to live would be better. However I also happen to believe we do have axioms or 'rules' of comparable standing for everything, including for logic, language, aesthetics and morality. So if in aesthetics the rule, for example, is that characterizing a person or an object as being

beautiful is characterizing that person or object in a positive fashion, or as something that arouses an aesthetic appeal in the viewer, in morality characterizing something as a (human) right is characterizing it as something that one believes human beings should have or enjoy. These are rules. But they don't tell us *what* object or person is beautiful, or *what* is right and what is not. This is what *we* have to negotiate or to agree upon, in the context in which we find ourselves. But what if we disagree? There are different levels of disagreement, ones that we can resolve in town-hall meetings (or literary discussions), and ones that we cannot, and where we might find ourselves drawn to battles which seem, not only costly, but interminable, like our case (of Palestinians and Israelis) seems to be. It is in this kind of context that I proposed transcendence, or favoring a joint future narrative to conflicting past ones. Why, assuming rationality, accept to be stuck on a disagreement that is, not only irresolvable, but bloody as well? And if in this kind of situation I subscribe more to going along morally with a collectively constructed viewpoint or transcendent solution than to a single application of a moral rule claiming supremacy or high moral ground, then that is because I believe rules are meant to serve human progress, and not the other way round. And also because, in the long run, this method at least allows those who are affected to constantly review

and adjust their judgments. I am not sure that Said would consider such a solution to be 'the right answer'. But it is right, in my view, both in the sense that it has jointly been reached, and in the sense that it seeks to provide practical answers to existential dilemmas.

Going one step further, and assuming that we have left the two-state solution behind us as a practical option, then if we are to apply the rule-instantiation distinction we discussed we must begin to think of new ways of resolving the conflict. The rule here is that it is best for the people on both sides if the conflict is solved quickly, thus minimizing both human pain and suffering, and that it be solved on the basis of parity. In this respect, we can view a two-state solution as one possible material application or instantiation of this rule, or as one possible solution. But we needn't feel held by the throat to it, as if it were our only possible salvation. For Palestinians, the aim should be to achieve a life with dignity. This means freedom, individual and collective self-realization, or 'fulsomeness', being sovereigns over their own destinies, and so on. If this could be achieved in a political context other than a national state then so much the better, or so be it. But if achieving it in the context of a two-state solution seems, not only to be one application of the rule, but a *best* solution, or a *better* than other solutions, including a one-state solution, in

that it is both achievable more quickly and with less pain and suffering on both sides, then clearly that should be the 'right answer', if people on both sides will it –even though it might *seem* to be less perfect than a single-state solution. Looked at from the Israeli side, if we had a rule which said that any group of people have the right to establish that sovereign institution for themselves which would provide them with a safe haven from the outside world, then the existence of a Jewish State for the Jewish people may be regarded as *one material application* of this rule. But it should not be regarded as a *unique* application or a best option –it is conceivable, in other words, that *merging* the Jewish nation with other nations *may be safer*. And if a Jewish State weren't a best or unique option, then a *two*-state solution would not necessarily be a unique, or a best solution for the Jewish people either, although it may be one such solution. In sum, we shouldn't allow ourselves to be bound by what very often end up being mere slogans. We have to apply our minds to the problem in order to see what answer or answers we may best come up with.

So we have to ask ourselves the question, what other options, or paths before us, do we have, if any? One suggestion I made *–extrapolating from existing conditions-* was to redraw the map, or to envision a new 'end game' as well as a new road

map. The end game I have in mind here and which I suggested is a federal arrangement between two Governments, Israeli and Palestinian. Essentially, the whole country could eventually be re-divided into primarily Jewish, and primarily Arab cantons, in addition to certain shared 'public spaces', such as some cities and regions. A first step towards the attainment of this overall end would be for Israel to begin by offering civil rights to Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, or to extend 'residence rights' to them. This would immediately ameliorate their present conditions, by allowing them job and other opportunities as well as free movement and access to more and better services. It would also 're-acquaint' the two populations with each other. My proposal to extend residence rights to Palestinians under Israeli rule as an immediate but interim measure is meant to find an answer to the following question: Given the disappearance of the two-state paradigm as a solution, and given an extension of the present *status-quo* into the foreseeable future, What can be done, first to minimize the causes of suffering and therefore also of discontent and eventual instability, and second to prepare for an eventual peace agreement that might evolve from the ever-new realities that will inevitably be created on the ground? Note that I included the extension of the present *status-quo* as an assumption. It could be argued of course that the extension of the *status-quo* is not inevitable:

Israel's Army could suddenly decide to walk out of the West Bank (or of most of it), and lift the siege on Gaza's international borders. This, or anything of this kind, including a sudden two-state agreement (whether provisional or permanent) being imposed by the international community, would then create a total paradigm shift. That is very clear. But assuming that nothing of that sort happens, and we are left with the existing situation –growing Israeli presence in East Jerusalem and beyond, continued overall state of no- or cold-peace with the neighbors, dysfunctional Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and an increasingly suffocating and scattered autonomy in a diminishing area of the West Bank: then, the question is, what is to be done? It is in this context that I proposed extending residence rights to all Palestinians living under Israel's rule, as a measure that would be in the interest of both sides, and that I suggest Israel itself could even do unilaterally. This would at least ameliorate a *status quo* that will otherwise only lead to a major catastrophe. So, my suggestion is not to ask that Palestinians accept apartheid, but that they be offered better conditions under an already existing discriminatory system, as a means of preparing the grounds for a proper solution in due course.

In making this proposal, I also pointed out some of the possible objections to it. One possible (Israeli)

response to my proposal would be to say that such a situation would lead directly to apartheid, and to an inevitable struggle for a single democratic state. Surely, if the idea were to ameliorate the living conditions of Palestinians, it could be said, then Israel could do much better by any number of ways, including, for example, to implement the border industrial zones idea, which would keep the two people physically separated from each other, but would at the same time offer better economic and work opportunities for the Palestinian population.

This response has the guise of being 'progressive', that is, one which views apartheid as unacceptable. However, it is obvious that this approach (keeping Palestinians restricted to their own zones, keeping them physically separate and apart from the Jewish population) is surely what real apartheid *is*, especially when the industrial zones being discussed will be meeting grounds for Israeli investors and comparatively cheap Arab labor for the production of goods earmarked for Israel's export markets. Surely, *these* are the kind of arrangements that would make Israel out as an apartheid state: Bussing them to these working zones from their Bantustans in the morning, and dumping them back in their holes after dark. This way, some Israelis may calculate, they do not smear Israeli society. But these Israelis should

remember that, even if 'Arabs are not let in' it is still largely in their neighborhood Israel will be seeking to live. And so long as they will feel they are being exploited, both by being short-changed politically as well as by thus being treated as less than equal, this arrangement will neither ameliorate their conditions nor prepare the grounds for a proper solution to be embraced by all.

Another possible Israeli objection may have to do with the threat an 'open-door' policy may pose to Israeli security: that opening up the borders to the Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza would mean exposing Israel to the threat of terrorist acts. Such acts, besides their horrible effects, would bury the prospects for peace between the two peoples forever

Since my proposal is based on the premise that any solution be embraced by the two sides it is important for me here to state that I take this particular response very seriously. But here it is well for all of us to recall Rabin who famously said that peace must be diligently pursued as if there were no terrorism, and that terrorism must be pursued as if there were no peace. So, assuming that the suggested arrangements *seem otherwise to be optimal*, the remaining question security experts will need to answer here (and I am fairly confident that they could come up with one if they believed

in the optimality of the arrangement) is how such a formula can be best applied in this kind of situation. But if having the two populations intermingling peacefully does work –like it has done in the past- then the chances for the two sides at a later phase to embrace a mutually acceptable permanent solution will greatly increase. Indeed, this kind of spontaneous, need-based intermingling at the level of ordinary people (workers, merchants, businessmen, etc.) would be far more effective as a peace-building mechanism than the artificial so-called people-to-people and civil society initiatives that were financed by the foreign community after the signing of Oslo. It is well to remind oneself in this context that having kept the two populations separate for the past decade has had deleterious effects on how they have grown to perceive each other.

Yet another response, perhaps informed more by the psychological need we all have to not stray very far from known territory, would be to suggest that it is surely still possible to find other interim arrangements – for example having the two sides agree on such matters as borders and settlements, while keeping other matters, such as refugees or Jerusalem, until a later point in time. There are rumors that the U.S. is presently taking this approach seriously, given its failure so far to have the two sides come to an agreement on the terms of

negotiation. This way, it might be thought, the two-state solution could still be saved for implementation at a later date.

Whether this turn out to be just another pipe-dream is for us all to find out. But I would consider such an agreement, if it were to come about, as one that would change the parameters of a continued *status quo*. In that eventuality, we would all have to look at the drawing board anew. But I would still maintain that, rather than cling now to finding ways and means of executing a model that might have been objectively suitable a decade or two or three ago, but is proving to be a harder nut to crack by the day, one might be better advised to begin thinking of other models that may be more suitable for now or for the future. I realize that important and sensitive issues –such as defense, foreign policy, the legal system, the monetary system &c.-will have to be ironed out for a vibrant system of a federation or confederation of separate cantons to succeed. But let us first agree on this, that if neither a two-state nor a one-state solution is tenable then we need to find something in-between. We will assume that we are now past a two-state solution, which is why this is not tenable; and that a one-state solution is not favored by the majority of Israelis, which is why this is not tenable. We will once again assume a continuation of the *status-quo,* but we shall add to it the adjustment that in the

meantime, on the Palestinian front, Palestinian institution-building has continued in the PA areas, and Palestinians from those areas have also been able to make use of a wider range of services and opportunities afforded by having been accorded one level or another of rights/privileges accruing to residents in the country. I will assume, likewise, that the size of the Israeli population in the West Bank has kept increasing, either through the beefing up of existing settlements or the building of new ones, that work on infrastructure in this areas has not stopped, and that Israel continued to control Palestinian space, with whatever early warning and other military installations being physically manned along the Jordan Valley. Essentially, I am positing an extension of the past into the future, with minor adjustments. From a bird's-eye view, in other words, one country containing two populations that are on the whole clustered separately in different geographic regions, with otherwise free movement between them, in areas east and west of the '67 green line, is being 'run' by a government essentially controlled by one of them. Under such circumstances it is only a simple step for that government to begin devolving its authority over the regions inhabited by the second population, and in so doing essentially to oversee the emergence from the PA of a second, *partner government* that begins to assume responsibility over the regions in the country that are populated

by its own people. A coordination mechanism will clearly need to be established on the basis of which the best mutual concerns of the two parties could be met. Some areas will stay separately handled, while others could be decided jointly. A parity principle related to the use of the country's resources should be applied, in effect replacing in a fair manner what might otherwise be a distributive division of rights among individuals. But if an ultimate vision of an integrated network between the two Governments is what is used to inform the road map defining the steps that need to be taken, then quite soon a federation-type situation like that in Switzerland, or a an open space like that holding the European Union together, can easily be developed. Needless to say, the evolution of such a political system need not exclude the possibility of other partners joining in, or of the system itself becoming attached to an already existing network, in the Arab World or abroad.

So, looking ahead into the future one can try to imagine what this new reality might look like, and to follow this up with some backward engineering, as I believe it is called. So, let us imagine a country consisting of different cantons of predominantly Jewish and Arab populations, ruled on each side by their respective governments, and where these governments have instituted coordination mechanisms between them. Citizens belonging to

one Government (e.g. Israel) could have residence status in the other (Palestine), and *vice versa*; and borders are completely open (as they have become since instituting the extension of residency rights to the Palestinians under occupation). Coordination mechanisms would cover all activities resulting from such an open system, from speeding tickets to the management of water resources. Certain constraints on this binary political model will probably need to be taken into account such as Israel's overriding security factor, embodied in its Army. But once a vision of what such a future might look like, then clearly a lot of preparation needs to be done in order to make the model a working success, such as bringing the Palestinian economy and institutions and services up to par. In this context, the efforts being spent today by the present Fayyad Government can be reinforced, with special emphasis on substituting a donor-fed economy by one relying on developing indigenous resources and skills.

Let me now assume that this end-game vision might seem or sound appealing. Even so, a number of what one might call 'residual questions' may be raised. The first natural question to come to mind is whether such an end-game cannot be gotten better at through first bringing about a two-state solution. This way, it might be thought, we would have gone through the natural phases of history naturally,

from national liberation or independence first to an inter-dependent political system afterwards.

The response to this question is that it is certainly true that moving from a two-state situation to a confederal or federal arrangement would be far easier. But this requires that a two-state situation already exist in the first place. However, not only have we not been able to bring such a situation about: it looks very much like the people on both sides cannot digest what compromises need to be made in order to set it up. So, rather than try to push those compromises down peoples' throats as a first step, why not begin by taking steps which do not involve any 'compromises' from anyone? If Israel were to take the unilateral step of extending civil rights to Palestinians (even in a measured and gradual way), and were to declare it is doing this partly in order to provide Palestinians with a better life and partly in order to create better conditions for the reaching of an eventual peace agreement, the process from there on would then become smoother. I believe Plato would have described such a step as being an instance of *the principle of least action*, and of therefore being the best to take us forward to what may approximate to an ideal solution in the circumstances.[1]

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[1] In his *Republic* Plato searches for that minimum action that would produce the best (the just) political system, and makes his proposal of having the philosopher be ruler. Needless to say, I am here only borrowing the principle, but not the 'single-truth'

Another 'residual question' that may be raised has to do with whether Israelis and Palestinians would 'bite' such a proposal. Clearly, for such a step to be a practical proposal it has to be one that can easily be accepted, and carried out. And here I would claim that it is far easier for the Israeli Government to muster a majority behind it in the Knesset for taking such a step than it would be for it to freeze settlements or to withdraw from East Jerusalem-both requirements for a two-state solution. Each political faction can look upon such a step from its own perspective, and see – besides concerns- also possible advantages.

The view from the Palestinian side would not look bleak either: If Israel were to declare that it will be beginning to extend civil rights for those Palestinians who would might want them as an interim measure in order to make their lives better, I believe people will very quickly see the quotidian advantages and will take them. Of course, the process would be even smoother still if this was done as a confidence-building measure agreed upon by the PA. And here I do not see the PA as needing to take a negative position. But clearly, for the solution to come about it has to be embraced by the two peoples.

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answer Plato proposes! The minimum action I am suggesting is the extensio of civil rights.

I will finally mention the two hottest two issues in the standoff between the two sides, Jerusalem and refugees: As for Jerusalem, this can be the federal capital. Actually, it would be far easier to envision it as a shared capital for the two peoples under a federal scheme than in any other scenario. As for refugees, a whole package has to be thought of, starting of course with compensations and having other countries provide them with full citizenship rights. But over and above this, for those wishing to return, an imaginative solution can be found where they could return to the Palestinian 'cantons', on whichever side of the Green Line these happened to lie- which, for some of them, could be their '48 actual homes. In a sense, this scheme would make the implementation of the 'right of return' seem – within certain restrictions, of course- symbolically feasible, and might therefore be viewed as an added advantage to the overall proposal.

I believe Israel is now in a position where its self-created inability to help bring about a two-state solution makes it well-placed to bring about parity in the context of a federal arrangement. And it can start by extending civil/residence rights to all Palestinians under its rule.