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Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine

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Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine

OMAR JABARY SALAMANCA, MEZNA QATO, KAREEM RABIE, SOBHI SAMOUR

This special issue of *settler colonial studies* emerges out of a March 2011 conference on settler colonialism in Palestine organised by the Palestine Society and the London Middle East Institute at the School of Oriental and African Studies. It is our hope that this issue will catalyse creative, collaborative work that puts the settler colonial framework firmly on the agenda of Palestine studies. The need for such engagement arises from our recognition that while Zionism and the Palestinians are gradually being included in the growing body of scholarly works on comparative settler colonialism, the analytical framework that comparative settler colonialism offers has yet to enter the field of Palestine studies.¹

From the earliest Palestinian accounts to the vast majority of contemporary research, the crimes committed against Palestinian society by the Zionist movement and the state it built have been well recorded. Zionism is an ideology and a political movement that subjects Palestine and Palestinians to structural and violent forms of dispossession, land appropriation, and erasure in the pursuit of a new Jewish state and society. As for other settler colonial movements, for Zionism, the control of land is a zero-sum contest fought against the indigenous population. The drive to control the maximum amount of land is at its centre. The continued existence of Palestinians, therefore, poses severe problems for the completion of the Zionist project, and, consequently, informs Israeli state policies against Palestinians inside Israel, in the Occupied Territories, and in exile. Consequently, transfer – a Zionist euphemism for the coordinated, at times randomly applied, plethora of legal, military, and economic tactics to expel Palestinians – has been part of Israeli
policy and public discourse since the creation of the state. As Israeli historian and neoconservative Benny Morris remarked, ‘had [David Ben Gurion] carried out full expulsion – rather than partial – he would have stabilized the State of Israel for generations’. Yet, plagued by ‘instability’, the settler colonial structure undergirding Israeli practices takes on a painful array of manifestations: aerial and maritime bombardment, massacre and invasion, home demolitions, land theft, identity card confiscation, racist laws and loyalty tests, the wall, the siege on Gaza, cultural appropriation, dependence on willing (or unwilling) native collaboration regarding security arrangements, all with the continued support and backing of imperial powers.

In the absence of a cohesive framework, scholarship often appears to catalogue Zionist practices and offences against Palestinians as a series of distinct – yet related – events. The Palestinian nation is pushed from one catastrophe to another as the Zionist project accelerates. However, viewed through the lens of settler colonialism, the Nakba in 1948 is not simply a precondition for the creation of Israel or the outcome of early Zionist ambitions; the Nakba is not a singular event but is manifested today in the continuing subjection of Palestinians by Israelis. In order to move forward and create a transformative, liberatory research agenda, it is necessary to analyse Zionism’s structural continuities and the ideology that informs Israeli policies and practices in Israel and toward Palestinians everywhere. In other words, while Israel’s tactics have often been described as settler colonial, the settler colonial structure underpinning them must be a central object of analysis. By bringing together scholars of both comparative settler colonialism and Palestine studies, this special issue intends to further a nascent conversation, and hopes to provide a spark for future cross-disciplinary research that contributes to both fields.

Despite the endurance of Israeli settler colonialism, settler colonial analysis has largely fallen into disuse in Palestine studies. As a framework, settler colonialism once served as a primary ideological and political touchstone for the Palestinian national movement, and informed the intellectual work of many committed activists and revolutionary scholars, whether Palestinians, Israelis, or allies. Today, research tends to focus on Palestine as an exceptional case,
Editors’ Introduction

constituted in local contexts, in particular the West Bank. But these problems are far from simply the result of shifts in academic knowledge and practice: the Palestinian liberation movement has seen a series of ruptures and changes in emphasis, and in many ways scholarly production accurately mirrors the dynamics of incoherent contemporary Palestinian politics. Recent Palestinian political history has been a long march away from a liberation agenda and towards a piecemeal approach to the establishment of some kind of sovereignty under the structure of the Israeli settler colonial regime. In this environment, it is not surprising that even scholarship written in solidarity with Palestinians tends to shy away from structural questions. Much of the contemporary literature tends to take on micro-political issues or Israeli administrative practices within a given context and prodigiously overwork them. But when did Palestinians ever find themselves in a ‘post-colonial’ condition? When did the ongoing struggle over land and for return become a ‘post-conflict’ situation? When did Israel become a ‘post-Zionist’ society? When did indigenous Palestinians in the Galilee (for example) become an ‘ethnic minority’? And when did the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and the consequent fortification of Palestinian reserves become ‘state-building’?

Moreover, the trend towards studying the occupation often internalises it as an ontological category distinct from the larger structures of Israeli settler colonialism. The occupation imposes boundaries on space and time; and categories, discourses, and materialities that are embedded in colonial power relations are operationalised in this literature. The Green Line, the border between Israel and the Palestinian reserves, is one example of this phenomenon: it has become a powerful symbolic and material signifier that enforces, and takes for granted, the fragmentation of the Palestinian polity. With few exceptions, it is a line that is rarely crossed in scholarly accounts of Palestine – in either direction. Different Palestinian populations have come to be represented as isolated, analytically separate, pieces of an impossible puzzle. In addition, the focus on the second stage of colonisation, the 1967 occupation, emphasises settlement by Israelis in the West Bank and absolves previous generations of Zionists and Israel itself of settler colonialism.
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‘For natives’, as Patrick Wolfe puts it, ‘the issue is that, at the hands of the settlers, they face [physical and symbolic] elimination’. Given such a threat, the central question for committed scholarship and liberatory movements should be how to develop a praxis that brings back decolonisation and liberation as the imperative goal. The advantage of advancing settler colonialism as a relevant interpretative framework for the study of Zionism is not only that it can offer conceptual and political possibilities for how we read Palestine today, but that it also dismantles deep-seeded analyses and assumptions sustaining claims of exceptionalism. It brings Israel into comparison with cases such as South Africa, Rhodesia and French-Algeria, and earlier settler colonial formations such as the United States, Canada or Australia, rather than the contemporary European democracies to which Israel seeks comparison. For Palestine, it means the reiteration of the fact that Palestinians are an indigenous people, and an alignment of Palestine scholarship with indigenous and native studies.

In this context, John Collins notes, the challenge is to bring all the relevant tools of critically engaged scholarship [...] in order to pursue two related objectives: to understand the complex set of structures and processes [...] that have combined to produce the intolerable reality evident today; and to think creatively about how this understanding might enable individuals to transform that reality.

Otherwise, settler colonialism remains a descriptive category that does not move beyond sentiment and into strategy. While activists, both in Palestine and outside it, continue to push back against Zionist encroachment, intensify the demand for equal rights, and build a boycott, divestment and sanctions movement aimed at shaming and delegitimising Israel internationally, the creative offerings of the settler colonial studies paradigm remain underutilised. This lack of rigorous engagement has consequences for movement building. The historic response to settler colonialism has been the struggle for decolonisation; in the absence of a settler colonial analysis, Palestinian strategies have tended to target or
accommodate settler colonial outcomes rather than aiming to decolonise the structure itself.

Equally important, the analysis enabled by the settler colonial paradigm offers a powerful political tool to reorient and recreate genuine bi-directional solidarity alliances and political fraternity. As attested by the cover of this issue, a declaration of solidarity for Palestinians in their struggle against Zionist aggression by the Organization of Solidarity for the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAAL), this convergence is not new. The settler colonial perspective offers the possibility of a new in-gathering of movements, harnessing each other’s strengths for an active, mutual, and principled Palestinian alignment with the Arab struggle for self-determination, and indigenous struggles in North America, Latin America, Oceania, and elsewhere. Such an alignment would expand the tools available to Palestinians and their solidarity movement, and reconnect the struggle to its own history of anti-colonial internationalism. At its core, this internationalist approach asserts that the Palestinian struggle against Zionist settler colonialism can only be won when it is embedded within, and empowered by, broader struggles – all anti-imperial, all anti-racist, and all struggling to make another world possible.

The issue opens with Zachary Lockman’s critical and constructive engagement with Gershon Shafir’s landmark study on the formative period of the Zionist labour movement and its colonisation strategy (Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882-1914). Lockman presents an alternative historical narrative of the evolution of the Zionist labour movement, and highlights the coercive power employed by the British colonial state in Palestine against Palestinian Arabs. Ilan Pappé’s article meditates on the complications of applying the framework of comparative settler colonialism – which is largely based on historical case studies – to the specific case of Israeli settler colonialism, a project that is still expanding its frontiers. David Lloyd’s paper engages with the work of Giorgio Agamben on the state of exception and deals with the following question: to what extent can the Palestinian situation be understood as unique?

These pieces are followed by two case studies from Palestine, one by Mansour Nasasra highlighting the case of the Zionist
expulsions and village destructions in the Naqab, the other by Magid Shihade on the practices employed by the state in fragmenting and dissolving Palestinian social identities. Shir Hever’s article discusses Israel’s approaches towards indigenous labour and the indigenous economy. In comparing the Zionist colonisation of Palestine with the cases of Australia and the United States, Patrick Wolfe points to the historical and material conditions that underpin this project. Wolfe argues that, contrary to common assumptions, Zionism constitutes an intensification of, rather than a departure from, settler colonialism. The last feature article is by indigenous scholar and activist Waziyatawi, who recently visited Palestine as part of a delegation of feminist women of colour. Here she discusses some of the lessons Palestine afforded her regarding indigenous resistance and struggles for sovereignty.

We also offer excerpts from two historical documents outlining the long struggle for Palestinian liberation. They highlight some of the ways in which settler colonialism as a paradigm has historically been used in work on Palestine. An excerpt taken from Palestinian trade unionist George Mansour’s The Arab worker under the Palestine mandate (1937) opens the section. Mansour provides a clear picture of the dire socio-economic consequences that Zionist colonisation, and British support for it, had on Palestinian indigenous workers and Palestinian society as a whole. Along these lines, he exposes the Histadrut’s ‘conquest of labour’ strategy and refutes British claims about the positive impact Britain’s support for a national Jewish home had on indigenous Palestinian society. This is followed by an excerpt taken from Palestinian intellectual and political activist Fayez A. Sayegh’s Zionist colonialism in Palestine (1965). Sayegh’s description of the structural features underpinning Zionist colonisation – and the consequences for the Palestinian nation – is arguably one of the clearest and most potent analyses of its generation. Finally, hoping to expand the conversation on settler colonialism within Palestine studies, we offer the Arabic translation of Patrick Wolfe’s seminal essay, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’. This is a foundational text for comparative settler colonial studies, and we hope that it will speak to Arab scholars and activists alike.
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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Omar Jabary Salamanca is completing a PhD in political and human geography at the Middle East and North Africa Research Group, Ghent University. His research examines spatial modalities of settler colonialism and uneven development in Palestine, with a particular focus on the socio-economic and political histories of infrastructure networks. Mezna Qato is completing a DPhil in history at the University of Oxford. Her thesis is a social history of the formation and development of educational regimes for Palestinians. Kareem Rabie is completing his PhD in the Department of Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center. His dissertation research examines the present push towards privatisation in the housing market, and the contemporary state-building project in the West Bank. His research interests include state theory, political economy and uneven development, and the formation of political ideology. Sobhi Samour is completing his PhD in the department of economics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. His thesis is on settler-colonial responses to the forces and relations of production in indigenous societies, with particular reference to the Palestinian economy.

NOTES

3 Interview with Benny Morris, ‘Survival of the Fittest’, Haaretz, 09/01/04.
4 Some of the notable exceptions include, N. Abdo, Women in Israel: Race, Gender and Citizenship (London: Zed Books, 2011); N. Abdo, and N. Yuval-Davis, ‘Palestine, Israel and the Zionist Settler Project’, in D. Stasiulis, and N. Yuval-Davis (eds), Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class
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5 Much of the literature published by the Research Center of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in the 60s and 70s explicitly framed the conflict as a settler colonial one. Founded in 1965, its publications intended to educate cadres, forge strategic relationships with other anticolonial movements and disseminate its narrative to the outside world. For one such publication, see Fayez Sayegh’s essay published in the document section. In this context, the Socialist Organization in Israel (Matzpen, founded in 1962) must also be mentioned. Matzpen offered a robust analysis of the settler colonial nature of Israeli society and unpacked the regional context of the conflict. See A. Orr, H. Hanegbi and M. Machover, ‘The Class Nature of Israeli Society’, New Left Review, January-February (1971), pp. 3-26, and for a recent contribution by its co-founder, Moshé Machover: ‘Israelis and Palestinians: Conflict and Resolution’. Available at: http://www.amielandmelburn.org.uk/articles/moshe%20machover%202006lecture_b.pdf Accessed: 15/03/12.


7 J Collins, Global Palestine, p. 10.
Land, Labor and the Logic of Zionism: A Critical Engagement with Gershon Shafir

ZACHARY LOCKMAN

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From roughly the 1930s into the 1970s, labor-Zionist ideology, parties and institutions played a central role in the Zionist movement in Palestine, and then from 1948 in the State of Israel, manifesting one crucial way in which the Zionist project differed from other comparable settler colonial enterprises. Gershon Shafir’s 1989 book Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882-1914 argued forcefully that it was labor Zionism’s encounter with the land and labor markets in late-Ottoman Palestine, rather than abstract ideology, that led it to adopt a strategy based on the exclusion of indigenous Arab labor and economic separatism. This trajectory, he argued, also ultimately conduced to most Zionists’ acceptance of territorial compromise in 1948. Shafir thereby offered a powerful alternative to idealist and romanticised approaches to early Zionism in Palestine. However, using as a foil a comparison that a leading labor-Zionist thinker drew in the late 1920s between the Jews of Palestine and the white minority in South Africa, it is possible to see what Shafir’s prioritisation of labor Zionists’ adaptation to local conditions in Palestine and his depiction of the pre-1914 period as crucially formative for Zionist/Israeli history elides, particularly the central role of coercion and state violence (by the Zionist movement and Israel but also by the British colonial state and, later, the United States) in making possible the attainment and perpetuation of a Jewish state that now dominates all of Palestine and continues to subordinates the indigenous population. From this perspective, the period of labor-Zionist ‘moderation’ can be seen not as the norm from which post-1967 Israel has regrettably departed, but as one phase in a longer history frequently characterised by a logic of dispossession, expansion and domination.

While the Zionist project in Palestine has had significant features in common with other settler-colonial enterprises of the modern era, it has also had specific characteristics that set it apart.¹ One of Zionism’s distinctive features is that for nearly half a century – from the early 1930s until the later 1970s – the leadership and many key
Lockman, ‘Land, Labor and the Logic of Zionism’

institutions of the Jewish community in Palestine (known in Hebrew as the Yishuv), and from 1948 of Israel, the state that Zionism brought into being, were dominated by a sociopolitical movement that defined itself as not merely Zionist but also as, in some sense, socialist. This diverse and often internally-conflicted movement, to which I will refer here as ‘labor Zionist’, regarded the Jewish working class and labor movement in Palestine as the vanguard of the Zionist project of immigration, settlement and state-building, and at the zenith of its power it exercised hegemony through a dense web of political, economic, social and cultural institutions that powerfully shaped many domains of Jewish life in pre-state Palestine and then in Israel. Labor Zionism’s dominance began to erode in the 1970s, and in the decades that followed the 1977 electoral victory of the Zionist right the bases of its once-vaunted power gradually disintegrated or were dismantled. As a consequence Israel’s Labor Party, and the other parties of the Zionist left and their affiliated institutions, have in recent years become increasingly marginal in Israeli-Jewish political, social and cultural life.

The central role played by the labor-Zionist movement for such a lengthy historical period has understandably received a great deal of scholarly attention. Here I engage critically with what I regard as the most innovative and interesting scholarly analysis of the role of labor Zionism in shaping the Zionist project at its inception, using as a foil an essay – largely ignored by scholars – published in the late 1920s by a leading labor-Zionist thinker and leader in which he explored the lessons that the ‘color bar’ in South Africa might offer for labor Zionism in Palestine. My purpose in so doing is to highlight more fully some of the factors and dynamics that helped give the Zionist project its specific character and distinguish it from similar enterprises elsewhere, but also to better understand what it has in common with them, particularly with respect to the ways in which, in Palestine as elsewhere, coercion, violence and state action governed the relationship between the settler or dominant-minority population on the one hand and the indigenous population on the other.

DEMYTHOLOGISING EARLY ZIONISM IN PALESTINE

the longstanding assumption of mainstream (largely Zionist) scholars of early Zionism that the key social, economic and political features of the Yishuv, and then of Israel in its first two or three decades, could best be explained in terms of the ideas and values which many of the Jews who settled in Palestine in the ‘Second Aliya’ period (1904-1914) brought with them from Eastern Europe.\(^3\) For example, much of the conventional scholarly (and Israeli popular) literature posited that the creation of the kibbutz and other forms of collective or cooperative enterprise, the sociopolitical power of the labor-Zionist movement, and the welfare-state institutions and policies that characterised Israel in its early decades all stemmed from the socialist values that these (much mythologised) Second Aliya ‘pioneers’ (halutzim) acquired in Europe and then sought to realise in Palestine.\(^4\)

Instead, Shafir drew on the historical-sociology tradition exemplified by Barrington Moore and a typology of forms of European overseas settlement derived from the work of D.K. Fieldhouse and George Frederickson to produce a much more materialist analysis of the evolution of the early Zionist project.\(^5\) Shafir’s study foregrounded not the ideas and visions that these Second Aliya immigrants had in their heads when they got off the boat from Europe but the character and consequences of their interactions with conditions on the ground in Palestine itself. His central focus was the responses that they eventually worked out, through a protracted process of trial and error, to the adverse socioeconomic environment that they encountered there, especially the local markets for land and labor, after the vision of proletarianisation and class struggle that this cohort of Zionists arrived with proved unworkable in the context of Palestine.

Shafir offered an empirically rich, historically well-grounded and analytically sophisticated account of how by 1914 the early labor-Zionist movement in Palestine had developed viable solutions to the two key dilemmas faced by its members (and by the Zionist settlement project they sought to lead and shape). First, after the failure of efforts to secure viable employment for these newcomers as agricultural wage-workers on Jewish-owned farms, owing to the high wages they required and limited job opportunities, a new form of collective agricultural settlement (the kibbutz) was invented that
(with financial and technical support from the largely bourgeois-led Zionist Organization) could more cost-effectively absorb and maintain new immigrants and advance Jewish settlement on the land. Second, in this same period the nascent labor-Zionist movement abandoned (after much debate and dissension) key aspects of its initial ideology and embraced the twin doctrines of the ‘conquest of labor’ (kibbush ha’avoda) and ‘Hebrew labor’ (‘avoda ivrit). These doctrines envisioned not merely the transformation of (largely lower middle-class) Jewish immigrants to Palestine into proper (preferably agrarian) worker-pioneers through physical labor in the national cause, but also the creation of a secure Jewish working class in Palestine through the maximal exclusion of less-expensive indigenous Arab labor from employment in all segments of the Jewish sector of the local economy. This would create or preserve employment opportunities in Palestine for current and future Jewish immigrants, without which the Zionist settlement project was likely to founder.

By 1914 labor Zionism has thus adopted a strategy of socioeconomic development based on economic separatism and the exclusion of Arab labor whose long-term goal was the gradual development (massively subsidised by the international Zionist movement) of a separate, high-wage, exclusively Jewish economy in Palestine; this in turn would make possible the eventual creation of a viable Jewish state.6 Drawing on the Fieldhouse-Frederickson typology of forms of European settlement, Shafir characterised this model as the ‘separatist method of pure settlement’, in that it sought the creation of a homogenous, autonomous settler society that did not significantly depend on – indeed, that sought to exclude – indigenous labor.7 Shafir argued that the adoption of this path by 1914 had enormous consequences for the future trajectory of Zionism in Palestine: it decisively shaped crucial aspects of Jewish society in Palestine (and then of Israel in its first decades), laid the basis for labor Zionism’s eventual sociopolitical hegemony, and even underpinned that movement’s willingness in 1947-49 to accept a Jewish state in only part of Palestine – as opposed to the Zionist right, which rejected partition and demanded a Jewish state in all of Palestine.
Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is without doubt a landmark book, a pathbreaking work of historical-sociological analysis which effectively demolished much of the romanticisation and mythmaking that had long infused study of the Second Aliya period, especially (but by no means exclusively) among Israeli scholars. Beyond providing the most careful and detailed study yet produced of this period, it also offered a highly productive way of situating Zionism within a typology of settler-colonial projects; as such it constituted an enormous contribution to the scholarly literature on Zionism.

Notwithstanding its many virtues, however, there are aspects of Shafir’s argument with which one can usefully take issue. For example, I have elsewhere noted that while Shafir’s focus on the land and labor markets enabled him to very effectively undermine idealist, voluntarist and essentialist approaches to early Zionist history, the (perhaps overly economistic) mode of analysis that he deployed tends to treat ideology, culture and politics as marginal, which means that some very important things get left out of the story. It is also the case that labor-Zionist strategy and institutions continued to evolve through the 1920s and into the 1930s; for example, it was only in the 1920s that the kibbutz, whose prewar antecedents Shafir so masterfully reconstructed and which he (arguably) characterised as ‘the real nucleus of Israeli state formation’ (p. 184), really acquired the organisational form, and the political, economic and social significance, that it would retain over the following half-century or so. And it was only in the early 1930s that labor Zionism secured its preeminent position among the array of sociopolitical forces contending for leadership of the Yishuv and the Zionist movement. It therefore seems reasonable to ask whether these and other developments were as inevitable, or as foreordained by pre-1914 developments, as Shafir’s portrayal might suggest.

To put the issue more broadly: Shafir’s periodisation, his insistence that the basic contours of the Zionist settlement project were decisively formed in the 1904-1914 period as a result of its early adoption of the pure settlement model, can be taken to imply that all that followed was essentially the unfolding of a logic, or of a coherent set of dynamics or processes, produced by the constraints and choices of the pre-1914 period. This approach may hinder our
ability to see the historical development of the Yishuv as having been shaped by a broad (and often quite contingent) range of factors all along the way, right down to 1948. More critically, it may also obscure the roles which coercion, state intervention and violence played in facilitating the realisation of the labor-Zionist strategy that Shafir identified as central to the formation of Israeli state and society.

LABOR ZIONISM AND THE QUESTION OF ‘JOINT ORGANISATION’

To address these issues, I would like to begin by calling attention to a passage in the preface to the first edition of Shafir’s book in which he briefly alluded to how and why he thought Zionism’s historical trajectory had diverged from that of South Africa:

While starting out with the maximalist aim of Jewish territorial supremacy in Palestine, under the unauspicious [sic] circumstances for colonization in both land and labor markets in this part of the Ottoman Empire, the aims of the Zionist mainstream were transformed. Failing to attract the masses of the Jewish people and remaining dependent on massive outside financial subsidy, the Israeli labor movement perforce limited its ambition and condoned a course that potentially diverted it from the South African path: it sought a bifurcated model of economic development leading to territorial partition. This strategy, though it originated not in the appreciation of Palestinian national aspirations but in the inescapable facts of Palestinian demography, was expected by the labor movement to go a long way toward the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and subsequently became the legacy of its, and simultaneously the [Zionist Organization’s], mainstream. Consequently, the [post-1967] gradual abandonment of partition plans, with their accompanying vision of an Israeli and an Arab state side by side in Eretz Israel/Palestine, in favor of
returning to earlier dreams of Israeli territorial maximalism, with all its deplorable results, would signal the final superseding and/or the transformation of the labor movement.\(^9\)

Comparison of the Zionist project’s historical trajectory with that of twentieth-century South Africa has subjected many of those who have ventured it to politically-motivated abuse, but from a scholarly standpoint there can be no serious objection to such comparative analysis. Indeed, even Zionists sometimes found such comparisons useful, and here I will delve into one such instance: an essay by a prominent labor-Zionist leader published in the late 1920s in which he explicitly compared the situation of the Jews in Palestine with that of the white minority in South Africa. Discussion of this essay may help elucidate some of the limitations of Shafir’s approach and enable us to approach a fuller understanding of the specificities of Zionism.

The essay’s author was Hayyim Arlosoroff, born in 1899 to a middle-class family in the town of Romny, in Russian-ruled Ukraine; in 1905 his family fled to Germany to escape the wave of antisemitic pogroms fostered by the Tsarist regime to counter that year’s revolutionary upsurge.\(^10\) Arlosoroff studied economics at the University of Berlin, writing his doctoral thesis (a critical analysis of Marx’s concept of class struggle) under the direction of Werner Sombart. By that time he had become a Zionist, indeed one of the leaders in Germany of the *Hapo’el Hatza’ir* (Young Worker) labor-Zionist party, a social-democratic (but explicitly non-Marxist) tendency which insisted that Jews settling in Palestine should transform themselves into a (primarily agricultural) working class which would serve as the vanguard of the national redemption of the Jewish people.

Arlosoroff emigrated to Palestine in 1924. Something of a *wunderkind* and equipped with German university training in economics – a rarity among labor-Zionist leaders in Palestine, most of whom never got beyond small-town secondary schools in Tsarist Russia and were much better at polemics in the not always very subtle Russian social-democratic tradition than at quasi-academic analysis – rose quickly to become an important figure not only in his
own party but in the broader Zionist movement as well. He won particular attention for his analyses of Zionist economic and financial issues, which advanced powerful rationales for the policies that the labor-Zionist movement was urging on the international Zionist movement as a whole at a time when the latter was still dominated (especially outside Palestine) by non- or even anti-socialist ‘General Zionists’. In these years both General Zionists and labor Zionists also had to confront a challenge from the new ‘Revisionist’ faction within the international Zionist movement. The Revisionists were disdainful of the movement’s prioritisation of the slow work of immigration and settlement; they demanded that Zionism instead orient itself toward securing control of all of Palestine (including what is today Jordan) at the earliest possible moment by whatever means necessary, even if that meant clashing with not only the country’s Arab majority but also Britain, which had conquered Palestine during the First World War and had since the Balfour Declaration of 1917 been formally committed to protecting and fostering the Zionist project.\textsuperscript{11}

As the summer of 1927 approached, Hayyim Arlosoroff was busy in Tel Aviv – founded less than two decades earlier as the first exclusively Jewish city in Palestine – drafting an essay that would constitute the core of his intervention in what he saw as a crucial debate about the labor-Zionist movement’s policy regarding relations with Arab workers in Palestine. This issue was high on the agenda of the upcoming third congress of the General Organization of Hebrew Workers in the Land of Israel, better known as the Histadrut (Hebrew for ‘organisation’).\textsuperscript{12} Founded in 1920, the Histadrut sought to organise all the Jewish workers in Palestine and mobilise them to carry out the crucial Zionist tasks of immigration, settlement and economic development. With some 25,000 members and a growing network of economic enterprises and social and cultural institutions, the Histadrut had by the later 1920s become the chief vehicle through which the two main labor-Zionist parties – Arlosoroff’s Hapo’el Hatza’ir and the larger Ahdut Ha’avoda (Unity of Labor, led by Histadrut secretary David Ben-Gurion) – sought to build their political, social and economic base and bid for (and eventually win) hegemony in the Yishuv and the Zionist movement.

The Histadrut was firmly committed to the principles of Hebrew labor and the conquest of labor, which as I noted earlier had
been defined (or redefined) in the Second Aliya period to mean the achievement of exclusively Jewish employment in every Jewish-owned enterprise in Palestine, as well as maximal Jewish employment in the public sector. Most labor Zionists had come to believe that only these policies could ensure that enough jobs would be created or secured in Palestine for Jews used to a European standard of living but now in competition with an abundant supply of much cheaper (and almost entirely unorganised) Arab labor. They were also seen as an essential prerequisite for the creation of a Jewish economy in Palestine that would be as self-sufficient, and as disconnected from the Arab economy, as possible.

Notwithstanding the Histadrut’s firm embrace of the principle of Hebrew labor, which it sought to implement in the face of strong (and often successful) resistance by some Jewish employers (especially citrus plantation owners and building contractors) who insisted on employing much cheaper and less troublesome Arab workers, that organisation and the two labor-Zionist parties which dominated it had since the early 1920s been grappling with the question of their policy toward Palestine’s nascent Arab working class, elements of which were beginning to organise themselves. The issue confronting the Histadrut was often framed as the question of ‘joint organisation’: keeping in mind the priority of the struggle for Hebrew labor, in what organisational form or framework should Jews employed in ‘mixed’ (usually meaning government-owned) enterprises, especially the Palestine Railways, cooperate or even unite with Arab workers in pursuit of their common economic interests? And more broadly, how should the Histadrut, as the central institution of the labor-Zionist movement with both a ‘national’ (i.e. Zionist) and a (Jewish) working-class mission, relate to the few existing Palestinian Arab trade unions or to some future Arab labor movement?

In considering these questions, labor-Zionist leaders were of course keenly aware of widespread Palestinian Arab opposition to Zionism, though they vehemently rejected the legitimacy and authenticity of Palestinian Arab nationalism, denied that it had any popular or mass base, and insisted (in public, at least) that it was merely an instrument of a small elite of wealthy Arab landlords and Muslim religious fanatics who saw in the progress, development and
enlightenment which Zionism was bringing to Palestine a threat to their ability to dominate and exploit the Arab peasants and workers. In 1924 Ben-Gurion had gone so far as to argue that the fate of the Jewish worker in Palestine (and thus of the Zionist project) was inextricably linked to the fate of the Arab worker. He declared that while there was no basis for any compromise or agreement between the Zionist movement and the Palestinian Arab ruling class or nationalist leadership, there was a potential basis for understanding and cooperation between Arab and Jewish workers which would at the same time serve the long-term aims of Zionism, and particularly of labor Zionism. By representing the nascent Arab working class as Zionism’s potential ally, Ben-Gurion could overcome the apparent contradiction between his unwavering commitment to a Jewish majority and (ultimately) a Jewish state in Palestine, on the one hand, and, on the other, his formal commitment to democracy at a moment when the question of an elected legislative council for Palestine representing both Arabs and Jews was being hotly debated.13

In the debate that preceded the Histadrut’s third congress, which was to convene in July 1927, Ben-Gurion continued to argue for some form of alliance between Jewish and Arab workers as a way to overcome the problems which the Jewish working class faced in Palestine, especially competition from much cheaper Arab labor. He and his party comrades in Ahdut Ha’avoda insisted that the Histadrut must remain an exclusively Jewish and Zionist organisation and continue to fight for Hebrew labor; but they also hoped that, by helping to organise and win higher wages for Arab workers employed by fellow Arabs or by the government of Palestine, the Histadrut might ease the competitive pressure which abundant cheap Arab labor exerted on the jobs and wages of Jewish workers.

Meanwhile, a small but vocal faction on the left end of the labor-Zionist spectrum was demanding that the Histadrut’s explicitly Zionist functions be transferred to some other body and that the organisation admit Arab workers and transform itself into an instrument of Arab-Jewish class struggle. As they saw it, the inexorable process of capitalist development in Palestine, leading to the growth and organisation of the Arab working class and the Arab workers’ attainment of higher wages, would in the not too distant
future eliminate the threat which cheap, unorganised Arab labor posed to organised but expensive Jewish labor in Palestine. For its adherents this prognosis happily and neatly eliminated any contradiction between their avowed commitment to proletarian internationalism and the class struggle, on the one hand, and on the other their fervent Zionism.14

**ARLOSOROFF ON JEWISH AND ARAB LABOR**

Hayyim Arlosoroff attacked both of these positions in his 1927 essay *On the Question of Joint Organization*.15 Implicitly invoking his credentials as an academically trained economist and his reputation as a hard-headed and objective social analyst, he demanded that all the parties and currents of the Hebrew socialist movement in Eretz Yisra’el [the Land of Israel, the Hebrew term for Palestine] must see the facts as they are without forcing them into a procrustean bed of preconceived doctrines. Nor may that movement or its leaders refrain from drawing conclusions which bear on the essential tasks of the Hebrew worker in this country even if those conclusions clearly contradict accepted formulas.

For Arlosoroff, the question of relations between Jewish and Arab labor was among the most fundamental issues confronting the Zionist project. It had, as he saw it, two aspects. First, ‘the Hebrew worker with a European standard of needs encounters at every step his primitive competitor from the neighboring people whose needs are only slightly greater than zero’. The great difference in wages that each earned stemmed from the ‘vast cultural, economic and social difference which separates the two nations in Eretz Yisra’el from one another’. Second, the expensive Jewish worker was in Palestine not a native-born worker embedded in a normal national economy; he [sic, in Arlosoroff’s usage] was an immigrant but also a pioneer, whose struggle for employment was part of Zionism’s struggle for immigration and settlement. Hence it was all the more impossible to
avoid clashes stemming from competition between Arab and Jewish workers.

To resolve this dilemma, some were proposing that the Histadrut commit itself fully to joint organisation, from a conviction that joint Arab-Jewish trade union work could eliminate (or at least ameliorate) the problem of competition while also paving the way for maximal or exclusive Jewish employment in the Jewish sector of Palestine’s economy. Arlosoroff insisted that such a course might in fact undermine the economic and social basis of the Yishuv and exacerbate political tensions with the Arabs. Hence the need for an objective examination of whether joint organisation in whatever form could really eliminate ‘the conflicts stemming from competition between modern, expensive Hebrew labor and primitive, cheap Arab labor and create for the Hebrew workers more favorable conditions in which to wage their struggle for the conquest of labor and settlement’. This in turn required a dynamic analysis of economic and social relations between Jews and Arabs in Palestine that would investigate the impact of Jewish immigration and settlement on Arab society and economy in Palestine, but also the ways in which the Yishuv was affected by the Arab economy.

Arlosoroff noted that in discussing joint organisation Ben-Gurion and others had advanced the slogan ‘Arab labor in the Arab sector, Jewish labor in the Jewish sector, mixed labor in the mixed (government) sector’. Ben-Gurion insisted that when the Jewish workers excluded cheap Arab labor from employment in the Jewish sector they were not really discriminating against Arabs on a national basis; they were merely defending themselves as organised workers from the threat posed by unorganised cheap labor. Arlosoroff mocked Ben-Gurion’s approach and rhetoric:

The Arab worker who finds himself suddenly expelled from the boundaries of Hebrew settlement they console with this, that this treatment is not the result of his being an Arab but of his being an unorganised and cheap worker. And they also explain to him that ‘this struggle in its historical tendency is also a struggle to raise the material standard and social level of the Arab worker living in Eretz Yisra’el’...there is no question here of ‘basic national contradictions’.
Arab workers expelled from their jobs were, Arlosoroff suggested, unlikely to be convinced or consoled by such slogans.

But Arlosoroff found Ben-Gurion’s approach faulty and fanciful in other ways as well. For example: would Jews really refuse employment in the Arab sector if the opportunity arose? In fact, Jewish workers had already moved into the Arab sector and displaced Arabs, for example the transport of citrus from the groves to the port of Jaffa, which had for decades been a monopoly of Arab camel drivers and which work Jews now performed using trucks. More broadly, the Jewish and Arab economies in Palestine were not hermetically sealed off from one another; indeed, the boundaries between them were porous. Manufactured goods produced in Jewish enterprises by Hebrew labor were sold in the Arab market, while Arab products and produce entered the Jewish economy, illustrating how the two were interlinked.

But for Arlosoroff the real issue was cheap Arab labor, which posed a constant threat to expensive Jewish labor. There was a virtually unlimited supply of cheap Arab labor, from within Palestine but also from neighboring countries, and this reality meant unceasing pressure on Jewish jobs and wages. All this rendered Ben-Gurion’s insistence that there was no fundamental national contradiction between Arab and Jewish workers absurd, as was any approach to the question of joint organisation that did not take this elementary economic fact into account. Those on the left who believed that joint organisation could bring about the equalisation of wages between Arab and Jewish workers were simply ignoring the fact that Palestine was a poor, low-wage country situated in a poor, backward, low-wage region. Joint organisation would more likely result in the displacement of Jewish workers by Arabs, leading the former to leave Palestine and bringing about the collapse of the Zionist enterprise. What actually kept the Jewish settlement economy afloat and Jewish wages high, Arlosoroff argued, was capital imports, i.e. the capital invested in Palestine by Jewish immigrants and investors but even more importantly the ‘national capital’ raised by the institutions of the Zionist Organization and channeled to Palestine for Jewish settlement and economic development.
COMPARING PALESTINE AND SOUTH AFRICA

To bolster his arguments against the visions of joint organisation advanced both by Ben-Gurion and by his opponents on the far left end of the Zionist spectrum, and to illustrate the challenge facing by the labor-Zionist movement in Palestine, Arlosoroff turned to comparison: what other country, he asked, presented circumstances similar to those faced by the Jewish workers in Palestine? It was not easy to find analogous cases, however:

There is almost no example of an effort by a people engaged in settlement (‘am mityashev) with a European standard of needs to transform a country with a low wage level that is made even lower by the immigration of cheap labor into a site for mass immigration and mass settlement without using coercive means.

The United States offered no useful comparison, for various reasons, nor did Australia and New Zealand, because they had largely excluded nonwhite immigrants. In the end, after reviewing various possibilities, he concluded that ‘the territory of the state of South Africa, and the labor question there, is almost the only instance with sufficient similarity in objective conditions and problems to allow us to compare’. As he saw it, the conclusions to be drawn from this comparison had clear implications for labor-Zionist policy in Palestine, notwithstanding the differences between the two cases.

Arlosoroff began by noting that in 1922 there were some 1.5 million people of European origin in South Africa and some 5.5 million non-Europeans, of whom 97% were African or of mixed race. In agriculture, manufacturing and gold mining, native workers vastly outnumbered workers of European origin, though the latter dominated or monopolised the skilled trades, semi-skilled jobs and supervisory positions, and therefore received much higher wages. To maintain the privileged position of white workers, South Africa had barred further immigration from Asia and then, beginning with the 1911 Mines and Works Act (popularly referred to as the ‘Color Bar
Act’), reserved broad categories of jobs for white workers. The new National-Labor coalition government that came to power in 1924 in the aftermath of (and in reaction to) the bloody suppression of the ‘Rand Rebellion’ – a massive general strike and uprising by white mine workers – went even further: it adopted what came to be known as the ‘civilised labor policy’, designed to protect the jobs, high wages and privileged status of white workers by excluding Africans and other nonwhites from broad segments of the labor market. This policy was manifested in a series of laws and regulations that granted (white) trade unions formal recognition and collective bargaining rights, protected white workers from nonwhite competition in the labor market by establishing minimum wages and working conditions at a ‘European’ standard, and strengthened the effectiveness of the color bar in the mines and many other industries across the country. Together with laws that sought to confine Africans to ‘native reserves’ and control their movement, the basis was thus laid for what would after 1948 be expanded, strengthened and systematised into the full-blown apartheid system.  

For Arlosoroff the morality of these measures was not the issue:

It does not matter whether we reject this policy [...] or justify it. The entire political dimension of the question does not bear comparison [with Palestine] and does not come into consideration for us [Jews in Palestine]. What is important here is to highlight the economic factors and social relations which brought about, correctly or mistakenly, the color bar laws.

Arlosoroff argued that the Jewish workers in Palestine, confronted as they were with a market dominated by cheap and abundant Arab labor, faced the same basic situation as white workers in South Africa. Of course, he insisted, given the political situation in Palestine they could not pursue the course which the organised white workers in South Africa had followed, of excluding non-Jews from high-wage jobs through legislation and state regulation. Nor, given the linkages between the Arab and Jewish economies in Palestine, could joint
organisation serve any useful purpose: it could not possibly counteract labor market forces and so would only increase downward pressure on Jewish wages, eventually leading most Jewish workers to abandon Palestine. Efforts at joint organisation might also exacerbate political tensions between Arabs and Jews.

‘As long as two wage levels exist in Eretz Yisra’el’, Arlosoroff concluded,

as long as the local [Arab] economy and the [Jewish] settlement economy are not a single unit and as a result the community of workers has not crystallized into a single body, the development of the two peoples’ workers’ movements must proceed autonomously in two separate spheres.

In short, despite the slogans and assertions advanced by both Ben-Gurion and the left-Zionist opposition, the conflict between Jewish and Arab workers in Palestine had both real economic roots and a strong national dimension, and it could not be wished away or solved easily or quickly. For decades to come, Arlosoroff predicted, Palestine would contain both a modern, high-wage Jewish economy whose expansion would be fueled by imported capital and a low-wage Arab economy, with the latter gradually adapting to the former. The only economically sound response to the situation of the Jewish workers in Palestine was thus for the Jewish workers’ movement to forget about joint organisation and similar pipedreams and instead (with the support of the broader Zionist movement) strive to raise the real wages and living standards of the Jewish workers through investment in infrastructure and services, while at the same time raising the productivity of the Jewish sector through investment in job training and technology. Getting the government of Palestine to close the country’s borders to migrant workers from neighboring countries might also help; but in the long run, Arlosoroff insisted, the only way out for the Jewish workers in Palestine was the Hebrew labor policy of exclusion coupled with the fastest possible separate development of the Jewish economy.

When the third congress of the Histadrut actually convened in July 1927, the issue of joint organisation was hotly debated. In the
end, however, while the resolution on Arab-Jewish workers’ cooperation that was finally adopted echoed some of Ben-Gurion’s slogans, its content manifested Arlosoroff’s approach. The resolution acknowledged the need for ‘cooperation between Jewish and Arab workers in the vital matters common to them’, but immediately qualified this by stating that ‘the basis for common action is recognition of the essential value and rights of Jewish immigration to Palestine’. And while it proclaimed the establishment of an ‘international alliance of the workers of Palestine’, encompassing both Jews and Arabs, it reaffirmed that the Histadrut would remain independent and fully committed to its Zionist mission. In the years that followed Arab workers ceased to occupy a key place in mainstream labor-Zionist discourse and practice, though as I discuss elsewhere Arab workers in politically and economically strategic workplaces were from time to time to be the target of organising efforts by the Histadrut, and at various points right up to 1948 the question of relations with Arab workers and (in the 1940s) with an increasingly vigorous (and often communist-led) Arab labor movement forced its way onto the Histadrut’s agenda.

Instead, until the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 the labor-Zionist movement focused on implementing the strategy that had been taking shape since the prewar period and to whose formulation Arlosoroff contributed in the late 1920s. As Michael Shalev so neatly put it, this strategy was based on a ‘marriage of convenience’ between a workers’ movement without work and a settlement movement without settlers. The labor-Zionist parties, from the early years of the twentieth century down to the early 1930s, mobilised a substantial number of highly motivated Jews to emigrate to and settle in Palestine, ready to undertake whatever tasks were necessary in order to lay the foundations of the future Jewish state, while the largely bourgeois-led and -funded Zionist Organization raised the money needed to acquire land for settlement, create infrastructure and jobs, and provide services so that the workers would have a livelihood and be able to serve as the vanguard and shock troops of the settlement project in Palestine itself. The Zionist leadership also worked to maintain good relations with Britain, which ruled Palestine and whose support for Zionism was therefore essential to its success. As I noted earlier, this strategy also helped the labor-Zionist movement become the leading sociopolitical
force first within the Yishuv and then within the international Zionist movement. It would also dominate Israel, politically but also culturally and socially, from that state’s foundation in 1948 into the 1970s, when its grip on power was finally broken by the ideological descendents of Revisionist Zionism.

Arlosoroff’s own career trajectory reflected the ascendancy of labor Zionism, though he would not live to see its triumph. In 1930 he played a leading role in bringing about the merger of his own party with Ben-Gurion’s Ahдут Ha’avoda, producing MAPAI (acronym for Workers’ Party of the Land of Israel), one of whose top leaders he became and which in various incarnations would dominate Yishuv and Israeli politics until 1977. A year later Arlosoroff was elected to the executive of the Zionist Organization as a representative of MAPAI and appointed to the key position of director of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency. His ascension to these positions, like Ben-Gurion’s elevation to membership of the Jewish Agency executive and a few years later to its chairmanship, signaled MAPAI’s growing political power (and that of the labor-Zionist movement it led) within the broader Zionist movement.

In June 1933, however, Arlosoroff was shot and killed while strolling with his wife on the beach in Tel Aviv. This crime was never definitively solved, but at the time (and for decades afterward) labor Zionists blamed the murder on right-wing Zionists angry at (among other things) Arlosoroff’s leading role in the early stages of negotiations between the Zionist movement and the virulently antisemitic National Socialist regime which had just come to power in Germany. In these talks Arlosoroff helped lay the groundwork for the ‘Transfer Agreement’, concluded a few months after his murder, whereby proceeds from the sale of German goods by agencies of the Zionist movement would go partly to German Jews allowed to leave Germany, in compensation for their property seized by the German state, and partly for Zionist state-building purposes in Palestine, including land purchases and industrial development. The Transfer Agreement was extremely controversial, since it sabotaged the international economic boycott which Jewish and other antifascist groups had launched against the still shaky Nazi regime, and it further exacerbated tensions between MAPAI and the Revisionists. But however one assesses that agreement, politically and morally, it
certainly made sense in terms of Arlosoroff’s insistence on the crucial importance of developing the Jewish economy in Palestine through the investment of ‘national capital’ as a way of overcoming labor market conditions disadvantageous to Jewish workers.

**COERCION, VIOLENCE, DISPLACEMENT**

Arlosoroff’s analysis offers a way to more fully understand the limitations of Shafir’s focus on the pre-1914 period and on labor Zionism’s accommodations to socioeconomic conditions in late-Ottoman Palestine as crucially formative. As we have seen, in his 1927 essay Arlosoroff asserted that there was ‘almost no example [i.e., other than Zionism] of an effort by a people engaged in settlement with a European standard of needs to transform a country with a low wage level [...] into a site for mass immigration and mass settlement without using coercive means’. I highlight these four words in order to call attention to something crucial that is missing from, or elided in, Arlosoroff’s essay but also Shafir’s account.

It is certainly true, as Arlosoroff noted, that in the 1920s the Zionist movement lacked the political clout which the organised white workers of South Africa were able to exercise after 1924 and which they used to strengthen and extend the color bar. The Zionist movement did not control the British colonial state in Palestine: while the British authorities were committed to fostering the establishment in Palestine of a ‘national home’ for the Jewish people, they also sought to avoid completely alienating Palestine’s Arab majority and the wider Arab world, and of course they had to take broader imperial interests into account. The Zionist leadership in Palestine and in Britain did, it is true, devote a great deal of time and energy to lobbying the British for preferential treatment, including the allocation of as many government jobs as possible to Jews rather than Arabs. But this was of course not the same as being able to use the apparatus of the state to reserve a broad array of occupational categories for a privileged minority, as was the case in contemporary South Africa.

Nonetheless, during the British colonial period (1918-1948) – i.e., well after the period Shafir deems formative – the labor-Zionist
movement certainly used coercive means to further its Hebrew labor strategy, including boycotts, social pressure, and mass (and sometimes violent) picketing against Jewish employers who refused to employ only Jews. However, the decades-long struggle for Hebrew labor was never entirely successful; indeed, it could not have been successful in the absence of state intervention in the labor market. For example, despite sustained efforts the Histadrut never succeeded (except for a brief period during the 1936-1939 Palestinian Arab revolt) in displacing Arab workers employed on the Jewish citrus plantations, nor could they be entirely kept out of other sectors of the Jewish economy, nor could Jewish workers effectively secure the growing proportion of jobs in the government sector which they sought at the expense of Arab employment.

In reality, it was only after the establishment of Israel in 1948 (and a radical transformation of the demographic context) that the struggle for Hebrew labor and the reservation of much of the Israeli labor market for Jews could be won – and (unsurprisingly) this required large-scale state intervention. As Michael Shalev has shown, in the 1950s massive Jewish immigration (mainly from predominantly Arab and Muslim countries) and high unemployment among Jews led the state (working closely with the Histadrut) to try to reserve jobs in the Israeli-Jewish private and public sectors for Jews by barring those Palestinian Arabs still living in (and now formally citizens of) Israel from employment therein. It was only when labor shortages began to develop in the second decade of the state’s existence that this policy was relaxed and efforts were made to tap this pool of cheap labor for the benefit of the Jewish-dominated Israeli economy, among other things by finally allowing Palestinian citizens of Israel to join the Histadrut and utilise the labor exchanges it operated.

With this in mind we can see that not only does Shafir’s approach leave little room for developments after what he sees as the formative 1904-1914 period, it also fails to grapple with the fact that in and of itself the labor-Zionist strategy of economic separatism and national exclusion did not – could not – have played the decisive role in paving the way for the triumph of the Zionist project which Shafir attributes to it. Ultimately, that strategy could succeed only because it unfolded within a context shaped by other dynamics, most
importantly for our purposes, state action, various forms of coercion, and violent conflict.

Before 1948 and even after, a significant proportion of that coercion and violence was not deployed directly by the Zionist movement or by Israel; rather, it was effected or enabled by others. From its inception the Zionist project required, and vigorously sought, support and protection from an outside power in order to overcome its demographic and other disadvantages on the ground, within Palestine and in the wider region, not to mention growing indigenous resistance. Theodor Herzl, who founded the Zionist Organization in 1897, devoted much of his time and energy over the years that followed to an effort (unsuccessful in his lifetime) to secure for Zionism the backing of one or another of the great powers of Europe, out of an entirely correct assessment that without such backing Zionism would likely end up as just another of the many utopian schemes floating around Europe in that period. The Zionist effort to secure big-power support was finally crowned with success in 1917, when Britain endorsed this project and for the next quarter-century facilitated the implantation of a viable Jewish society in Palestine, though not without hesitations and conflicts.

As a result, until the end of the Second World War, most of the state action and coercion required to facilitate the success of Zionism in the face of increasingly vociferous Palestinian Arab opposition to a Jewish majority and a Jewish state in Palestine was exercised not by the Zionist movement itself but by the British colonial state. Indeed, without British support and protection the Zionist project in Palestine would simply not have gotten very far. It is, for example, highly doubtful that, even after almost two decades of large-scale immigration, settlement and development under British protection, the Yishuv on its own could have withstood the 1936-1939 Palestinian Arab revolt against British colonial rule and Zionism; nor would it have been able to develop demographically, militarily, politically, economically and socially to the point at which it could challenge British control of Palestine in 1945-47 and then go on to defeat its Palestinian and Arab enemies and seize control of three-quarters of the country.

But other outside powers also played critical roles in Zionism’s successes. Israel’s victory in 1948-49 was greatly facilitated by a
unique international conjuncture which enabled it to win political support from both the United States and the USSR, and much of the weaponry crucial to Israel’s early military successes was provided by Czechoslovakia, where the communists seized full control in February 1948. From the early 1950s into the early 1960s Israel developed a close military and political alliance with France, based on a common hostility to the rising tide of Arab nationalism, which sustained both the Palestinian cause and the Algerian struggle for independence. Then, beginning in the mid-1960s but much more vigorously and massively after Israel’s victory in the June 1967 war, the United States became Israel’s main external funder, provider of arms, and political backer. In other words, widening the frame of analysis to include not just Palestine but also the relevant colonial and international contexts can help us see the forms of coercion and violence which always crucially underpinned the Zionist project and were necessary to its success.

In addition to taking external support fully into account, any explanation of the success of labor Zionism’s strategy and of the broader Zionist project of creating a Jewish state in an overwhelmingly Arab land must attend to the violence bound up with the form of partition actually implemented in 1947-49, and to the consequences of that violence. In the passage quoted earlier Shafir asserted that labor Zionism’s strategy of economic separatism, the basis of its eventual acceptance of partition, originated in ‘the inescapable facts of Palestinian demography’. But those demographic facts were in reality quite escapable, by means of the massive displacement, through wartime flight and expulsion, of the great majority of the Arabs who lived in the part of Palestine that became Israel in 1947-49 – a process in which officials and army officers drawn from the labor-Zionist movement played the leading role.\(^{24}\) It is also worth recalling that Ben-Gurion and his colleagues refrained from trying to conquer the remainder of mandate Palestine in 1948-49 not because they preferred a smaller but more demographically Jewish state, and much less because of any principled commitment to sharing the land with its Arab inhabitants. Rather, they understood that attempting to conquer all of Palestine would have embroiled the new State of Israel in conflict with Transjordan (its partner in dividing up Palestine), with Britain, and probably with the United States and the Soviet Union as well.\(^{25}\)
One might therefore reformulate Shafir’s argument about the linkage between economic separatism and partition and instead assert that, in the long run, the full realisation of labor Zionism’s strategy of economic separatism required the use of coercion and violence in order to physically displace most or all of the Palestinians living within the boundaries of the Jewish state. That is, the precondition for achieving the (metaphorical) conquest of labor was the (military) conquest of the land and the displacement of most of its Palestinian inhabitants.

Hayyim Arlosoroff came to understand this toward the very end of his relatively short life. In his 1927 essay he had insisted that ‘the entire political dimension of the question [of legally establishing the color bar and white supremacy in South Africa] does not bear comparison [with Palestine] and does not come into consideration for us [Jews in Palestine]’. But within a few years he seems to have concluded that the achievement of the goals of Zionism would ultimately require more than the patient, long-term work of immigration, land purchase, settlement and the development of an exclusively Jewish, high-wage economy in Palestine; the use of force would ultimately be inescapable if Zionism were to succeed. In a June 1932 letter to Hayyim Weizmann, president of the Zionist Organization, that was not made public until 1949, Arlosoroff outlined what he saw as the stark choices facing their movement. Growing Arab opposition to Zionism and pressure for the termination of the British mandate might lead to independence for Palestine while Jews were still a minority. Avoiding the destruction of the Zionist project might in those circumstances require

a transitional period of the organized revolutionary rule of the Jewish minority […] a nationalist minority government which would usurp the state machinery, the administration and the military power in order to forestall the danger of our being swamped by numbers and endangered by a rising. During this period of transition a systematic policy of development, immigration and settlement would be carried out.26
This is, of course, similar to what happened in Rhodesia in 1965, when the white minority government declared independence from Britain in order to prevent majority rule. It also bears some resemblance to the events of 1947-49 in Palestine, when (with the endorsement of much of the international community) the Jewish minority (still less than one-third of the country’s population as of May 1948) defeated its enemies and carved out a state in most of Palestine, developments accompanied and facilitated by the displacement of more than half of the country’s indigenous Arab population.

THE ‘POST-1967 MISTAKE’?

However we view those events, it is clear that coercion, violence and state intervention played central roles in shaping the history of Palestine after 1914, including the realisation of the Zionist project and the molding of Israel’s character and trajectory. In this light we may want to consider a remark that Shafir made in the original preface to his book, concerning what he termed the ‘post-1967 mistake’. This was

the view [of many Israelis] that the process of Israeli territorial accumulation did not end in 1948 but should continue through the \textit{de facto or de jure} annexation of the occupied territories and their population to Israel, thus eliminating the possibility of a Palestine side by side with Israel.

Going down this path, Shafir asserted, ‘would entail the repudiation of the painfully learned historical lesson that in Eretz Israel/Palestine there is no realistic alternative to sovereignty expressed through and limited by territorial partition’.27

This framing is consistent with Shafir’s tracing of the roots of territorial compromise to the early historical experience and strategy of labor Zionism, particularly its embrace of a variant of the pure settlement model. In many ways that model, whose origins Shafir so masterfully excavated and reconstructed, and the mind-set that
accompanied it, do in fact remain dominant in Israel. Polls and voting preferences suggest that the great majority of Israeli Jews continue today to favor an Israel that is as demographically Jewish as possible; and even much (though not all) of the Zionist right now claims to be willing to relinquish control of some territory in the West Bank (and of course of Gaza) in order to ensure that Israel proper retains a large Jewish majority.

Yet if we look back over the 130 years or so of Zionist activity in Palestine and broaden our understanding of what it actually took to get from the exigencies of early Zionist settlement in late-Ottoman Palestine to a Jewish state that now dominates all of Palestine, we may question whether the disposition toward territorial compromise that Shafir argued was embedded in the pure settlement model can plausibly be regarded as the essence of the Zionist project, its originary and authentic nature, from which Israel’s post-1967 trajectory has been a deviation, a ‘mistake’ as Shafir called it. It is not at all obvious that, historically or in the present, the pure settlement model has actually conduced to partition, in the sense of Zionism’s (and Israel’s) serious acceptance of the Palestinians’ right to self-determination and statehood in some part of their homeland. Indeed, rather than understanding the half-century of labor-Zionist preeminence (and its avowed acceptance of territorial compromise) as Zionism’s normal or natural state, from which post-1967 developments have been an abnormal deviation, we might understand labor Zionism’s interest in partition as bound up with one particular stage in the history of the Zionist project, a stage whose conditions of possibility were delimited by demographic realities in Palestine and by Zionism’s lack of state power (before 1948), and then by Israel’s control of only part of Palestine (before 1967).

As we have seen, the economic and, by extension, political separatism which Shafir posited as central to labor-Zionist logic could not have sufficed to realise Zionism’s goals. The establishment of a Jewish state in any significant part of Palestine also required displacement of as much of the indigenous population as possible and the subordination of the remainder, and that could only have been realised through the large-scale use of coercion and violence. Once Israel was established in 1948 as a state that defined itself as representing not its citizens but rather the Jewish people everywhere,
it was able to deploy state power systematically and effectively to further the Zionist settlement project. This was effected through, as we have seen, the initial exclusion of non-Jews from much of the labor market, but also, and more critically, by means of the massive expropriation for exclusive Jewish use of land owned by Palestinians, including those who were displaced in 1947-49 but also many of those who were now formally citizens of Israel. And after the conquest of the remainder of Palestine in 1967 the apparently inexorable logic of Jewish land acquisition and settlement was extended to the West Bank and Gaza, for the most part with the support or at least acquiescence of the avowed heirs of labor Zionism.

Since 1967, but especially since the beginning of the ‘Oslo period’ in the early 1990s when Israeli-Palestinian negotiations were in progress, the system of Israeli control over the Palestinians has seemed to move toward something more closely resembling the apartheid South Africa model of racial/national/ethnic separation, minority rule and herrenvolk democracy, though (significantly) without the massive dependence on indigenous labor that characterised South Africa. In a sense, then, what we have is the continuation of the pure settlement model (an insistence on maintaining a predominantly Jewish state in as much of Palestine as possible) coupled with that state’s forcible domination of the remainder of Palestine and the coercive and often violent subordination of its non-Jewish population (much of it now contained behind various physical barriers). There are certainly many in Israel who (like Shafir) regard what has happened since 1967 as a terrible mistake and believe that to remain a Jewish (and democratic) state Israel must withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967. But a powerful Zionist logic of settlement, expansion and displacement works against such an outcome.

As a result, a state which rules in the name of its five and a half million Israeli Jewish citizens (and claims to speak for all Jews everywhere) today dominates, directly or indirectly, all of what was once Palestine, ruling over a million and a quarter Palestinians who are second-class citizens and another four and a quarter million Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem who are at the receiving end of an oppressive and often brutal Israeli apparatus
of control. An additional four or five million or so Palestinians, mostly
descendants of those displaced in 1948, live outside of historic
Palestine, in the Middle East and beyond. Thus, an enfranchised,
privileged group – today perhaps still a very slight majority of the
land’s total population but within a few years almost certain to
become a minority within historic Palestine – rules by force over a
subordinated and largely disenfranchised soon-to-be majority.

Accounting fully for these developments is beyond the scope of
this essay, but one critical factor may be highlighted by noting the
dramatic contrast between the growing political, economic and moral
isolation in which apartheid South Africa found itself by the late
1980s, on the one hand, and on the other the massive and virtually
unwavering political, economic and military support which the United
States has extended to Israel since the mid-1960s. It is this support
– not something which Shafir’s approach could take into account –
which in very large measure has enabled Israel to maintain a brutal
military occupation, seize land and other resources from the
Palestinian population in the territories occupied in 1967, implant a
massive array of Jewish settlements there, launch repeated military
assaults on Palestinians and others (e.g., the Lebanese), and defy a
nearly universal consensus on a reasonable resolution of its conflict
with the Palestinians.

Today, as for most if not all of the past century, then, for all
the importance one must attribute to local specificities, interactions
and dynamics, there is no making sense of this particular settler-
colonial project and the ongoing bloody conflicts it continues to
generate without taking into account the ways in which it has
consistently been protected, sustained and enabled by one or
another external great power patron – again highlighting the
centrality of state power (local and global), coercion and violence to
this as to other similar projects.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE


NOTES

3 Zionist historiography deploys a periodisation built around a series of distinct waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine, known as aliya (singular: aliya). By this reckoning the First Aliya – the first substantial influx of Jewish immigrants motivated by a vision of national revival – began in 1881 and ended in 1903. It was followed by the Second Aliya of 1904-1914 and so on, down to 1948 and the establishment of the State of Israel.
6 For a fuller discussion of these and related issues see Zachary Lockman, Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906-1948 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
10 For a brief (and rather uncritical) introduction to Arlosoroff’s life and thought, see Shlomo Avineri, Arlosoroff (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989). See also Miriam
Lockman, ‘Land, Labor and the Logic of Zionism’


12 Early Labor Zionists often referred to themselves and their organisations as ‘Hebrew’ (‘ivri) rather than ‘Jewish’ (yehudi) to express their denigration and rejection of Diaspora Judaism and to instead identify themselves with the ancient Hebrews who had lived as a sovereign people in their own homeland – as modern Zionists aspired to do. This identification also helped these Jewish immigrants newly arrived from Europe envision themselves as having a deep historical connection to Palestine, thereby giving them a claim to possess it stronger than that of its indigenous Arab inhabitants.


15 Hayyim Arlosoroff (rendered in Hebrew as Arlozorov), Leshe’eilet ha’irgun hameshutaf (On the Question of Joint Organisation) (Tel Aviv: Hapo’el Hatza’ir, 1927). All translations from the Hebrew are mine. Gabriel Piterberg’s The Returns of Zionism includes a very interesting discussion of this same essay, though from a different angle than mine and a somewhat different argument.


17 Histadrut archives, Tel Aviv, minutes of the Third Congress of the Histadrut.

18 See Lockman, Comrades and Enemies.


22 See Shalev, Labour and the Political Economy in Israel.


26 Quoted in Avineri, Arlosoroff, p. 95. Characteristically, Avineri works hard to explain away this unseemly passage.

See for example Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). From 1967 until the early 1990s, large numbers of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza were employed within Israel. Since the early Oslo years, however, Palestinian workers have been largely barred from entering Israel, while large number of migrant workers from other countries have been imported to replace them in the lowest strata of the Israeli labor force.
Shtetl Colonialism: 
First and Last Impressions of Indigeneity by Colonised Colonisers

ILAN PAPPE
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We passed by an old barefoot Arab, leading a loaded camel. His ancestors for ages must have driven loaded camels and shepherded sheep, erected tents and at nights ignited fire baked pitta bred and set around the fire, smoking and telling fables into the quiet night. And I – I just arrived, hardly slept one night in Eretz Israel, hardly drank a glass of water, hardly walked a mile, and yet I saw this Arab as an alien. I was the inhabitant and he was the nomad. My sense of integrity and justice felt shame, my blood cried: this is my homeland (second Aliya poet Shlomo Blumegarten, 1915)

This article argues that although the paradigms of settler colonialism and apartheid are adequate analytical tools for understanding Israel and Zionism in the past and in the present, they leave few of the phenomena in that part of the world unexplained and in need of further elaboration. Through an examination of the steadfastness of the racist perception of what is ‘Arab’ in Jewish Palestine and Israel since the late 19th century and until today, this article wants to attract attention to two such phenomena. The first is the rapid transformation of the Jews of Europe from the ultimate victims of that continent and that civilisation to the chief victimisers in Palestine. Secondly, this article draws attention to the total immunity the Zionist movement and, later, the Jewish state received as a result of this transformation.

In recent years two progressive paradigms emerged in the scholarly/activist attempt to depict the phenomena of Zionism and Israel as accurately and as ethically as possible. They are the colonialist and the apartheid paradigms. Both prisms challenge effectively the official and mainstream scholarly Israeli paradigm, which insists on seeing Zionism exclusively as a national liberation movement and Israel as a liberal democracy.
And yet despite their usefulness, both paradigms are unsatisfactory. They apply historical case studies with a known closure to an ongoing reality. In the conventional study of colonialism, settler colonialist states are states whose colonialist history is behind them. This article is written within this relatively new paradigm, of which this journal is one of its leading representatives. The comparative settler colonialist framework applies to the contemporary as well as the past structures of settler colonialism, and thus, for instance, I argue that the Australian and North American societies still face issues today that result from their settler colonialist existence. I will argue here that the continuity of colonialist patterns in Israel is far more unique in its intensity and presence. Likewise, although Apartheid is not a framework distinct from settler colonialism, in recent years it has been used as a generic independent paradigm.¹ But generic Apartheid has two historical examples which are over and which can be appreciated because they were toppled and have come to an end. Despite the relevance of both paradigms to Zionism and Israel, the ideological movement and the state it created are a current affair for which one cannot have a full historical perspective.

This article is thus inspired by both paradigms, but wishes to add to them. It recognises their valuable contribution for comprehending the early Zionist history as a colonialist project and for evaluating the present legal and political reality in some parts of Israel and the Occupied Territories as apartheid. However, several chapters in the history of the state are not easily explained from within the colonialist, or settler colonialist, paradigm, nor does this paradigm offer any particular wisdom about complex realities such as the one prevailing at the moment in the Gaza Strip. Similarly, the apartheid model misses some crucial aspects of being a Palestinian citizen in Israel. In short, these challenging paradigms, as well as the Zionist one, insisting on a national perspective, apply well only to a certain period or a certain aspect of the phenomenon in question.

I will give one example here that will explain the missing dimension: the steadfastness of ethnic ‘purity’ ideas as a cornerstone of Zionist policy from the day of its inception has turned the means, the ethnic cleansing, into an ideology and a vision. Unlike the contemporary cases of Australia and North America, the present
settler colonialist reality in Israel does not represent an adaptation of the paradigm to the new reality (there are no longer explicitly racist laws, segregation or genocidal practices). In Israel, these means have not been transformed, or adapted, to the present time; They are there, bare and exposed for everyone to see. Importantly, in Israel the reaction to this explicit continuation of settler colonialist practices enjoys a global immunity.

As I can not offer at this point, nor I think can anyone else, a better paradigmatic perspective than the one offered by comparative settler colonialist studies, I feel it is prudent and right to begin the fine-tuning of it by focusing on the ethical and moral aspects of what I defined above as bare realities and global immunity. The whole debate on the issue in any case cannot be presented as purely theoretical or methodological. Its very existence stems from competing ethical perspectives as much as it does from conflicting theoretical or methodological questions. For that reason this article focuses on the one feature of the Zionist project that did not change since the first settlers arrived in Palestine one hundred and fifty years ago. I argue here that a recognition of the crucial and constant role this feature plays can explain the uniqueness of our case study within the history of both settler colonialism and apartheid. Rather than deduce from the theoretical framework or compare the case study to others, I would like to examine historically and ethically the evolution of Zionist and Israeli Jewish engagement with the question of indigeneity in Palestine. This engagement, unlike the political structures, economic realities, balances of power and many other dynamic factors that kept changing, remains steadfast and dominant at every given historical and current moment since the early 20th century. It was born in a certain historical reality and is still unchanged in a very different one more than a century later.

This particular engagement or attitude can be summed up as exclusionary and racist. Its basic assumption is that the native population is comprised of aliens who usurped a home country and, as long as they are there, they are inevitably involved in an attempt to prevent a Jewish presence in Palestine. This perception led to the 1948 ethnic cleansing operation and the imposition of military rule on the remaining Palestinians, who were regarded as a ‘fifth column’ within the state between 1948 and 1967. The incorporation of a
large Palestinian population in the state after 1967 strengthened this attitude and led to an oppressive occupation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and to discriminatory policies towards the Palestinian citizens in Israel. It is an approach that has the potential of turning Israel into a pariah state, even if it has not so far prevented the Jewish State from remaining part of ‘the civilised and developed’ world.

Its basic features, as noted, are well within the settler colonialist paradigm: its attitudes in the past towards the native population, its territorial expansionism, its establishment of an ethnocratic regime. Gabriel Piterberg has shown that it also fits well when its hegemonic narrative is analysed as a typical settler colonialist one, which has three main factors: an emphasis on the exceptionality of each settler nation, the exclusiveness of the settlers’ subjectivity, and the refusal to recognise the presence of colonised people. Methodologically, his work opened the way for concretising these general themes by identifying their unique manifestations in the case of Zionism: the alleged uniqueness of the Jewish nation in its relentless search for sovereignty in the biblically endowed homeland, and the privileging of the consciousness of Zionist settlers at the expense of the colonised, together with a focus on settler intentions rather than on the outcome of their actions. Piterberg sees the Zionist denial of the presence of the Palestinian Arabs on the land destined for colonisation as the single most significant factor in determining the shape taken by the settlers’ nation.

This article offers a diachronic rather than theoretical or deconstructive view on the development of this Zionist formula, as it was formed in the early twentieth century and as it appears today. It treats this engagement as the principal signifier of the state and a constant variable in the history of Zionism. The permanency of this attitude, despite the dramatic change in the world and in the region (including the transition from colonialism to postcolonialism), may help explain why Israel is depicted both as a colonial and as a postcolonial phenomenon. The inclusion of Israel within a certain postcolonial framework is therefore essential to my mind. I am aware of convincing critiques of Israel’s purported postcoloniality, in particular that proposed by Ellah Shohat, but I offer here a
connection to a less well known and in my eyes more relevant genre: postcolonial Jewish studies.\(^4\)

Shohat’s main critique is directed against what she terms as the ahistorical and universalising nature of the term, which lead to it de-politicisation. She claims that, first of all, there was no linguistic necessity for its usage – neo-colonialism was good enough in many cases to describe the phenomena coming under the description of the ‘postcolonial’. She also criticises the implication inherent in the term that colonialism is over, and the lumping together of too many distinct and diverse phenomena, which leaves one with a strong sense of ambiguity. More importantly, it does not leave one with political agency (as does postmodernism in the eyes of many of its critics). I fully accept this critical approach. I will, however, strive to show that in the case of the transformation of the Jews from victims to victimisers, the analysis of the processes that took place in Palestine can benefit from the perspective of ‘postcolonial Jewish studies’. Bearing in mind this criticism, I think that postcolonial Jewish studies can offer a better historical perspective on the dilemma of where to locate Israel today and, more importantly, explain why Israel is immune from any depiction as a settler colonialist or Apartheid state in the Western mainstream media and academia.

This Zionist and Israeli engagement with indigeneity gels in that humble and impoverished Jewish existence in Eastern Europe and on the shores of Palestine. They are conveyed to us from the past through the first impressions of the people who constituted the core group from which sprang the past Zionist and present Israeli Jewish leadership. These were the people of the Second Aliya, and their impressions stayed on and led to the construction of the Zionist presence in Palestine as a gated and self-excluded community trying to fend off the strangeness of the country and its people. They came from secluded townships in Eastern Europe, the Shtetl, and created a new kind of seclusion in Palestine. The Shtetls, small towns in Yiddish, were inhabited mostly by Jews and formed the nucleus for the Pale, the restricted area in which Jews were allowed to live within Tsarist Russia between 1791 to 1914 (much of it was previously within the territory of historical Poland). With the wave of pogroms and harassment, quite a few of them were deserted for the sake of
urban life, immigration to the new world and Zionism. They symbolised rich Jewish life in poor socio-economic conditions and in an excluded and secluded existence; popularised as heaven upon earth in *Fiddler on the Roof* and gone forever with the Holocaust.

The *Shtetl* was traded by the settlers for a new kind of exclusion: the Zionist colonies in the midst of an indigenous people that was regarded as stranger to Jewish life, as the gentiles of Europe, but, unlike the ‘Goyim’, blamed for being foreign to the land. I do not intend here to enter the debate about the origins and the nature of Jewish exclusivity. I think it suffices to go back to Israel Shahak’s notion that Zionism extracted and magnified the existing historical and theological drive towards separation in Judaism. What is important for our case here is that Zionism claimed to free the Jews from that drive and existence, but actually drove back into separateness willingly and knowingly.5

Even worse, indigenous peoples were understood as the principal obstacle for the final liberation from the exilic existence symbolised by the *Shtetl*. Hence their removal by every possible means was contemplated early on as the best solution for the problem.6 These early and diffuse ideas became a strategy in the 1930s and an ethnic cleansing policy was eventually executed in 1948. The incomplete ethnic cleansing operations and the continued presence of Palestinians in Israel and in post-Mandatory Palestine transformed the ethnic cleansing into a vision and an ideological infrastructure for the newly founded state.7

This trajectory is more than anything else a metamorphosis of the exilic oppressed Jews into colonialist victimisers within a very short period of time. I suggest analyzing this transformation and evaluating it ethically within the postcolonial Jewish studies framework. Within this genre, the Jews of Eastern Europe are understood as victims of internal colonialism, and by accepting this notion I offer to follow their subsequent and rapid transformation into colonialist victimisers in the second part of this article. To stress the point: it is not the transformation itself, this happened to the Puritans and Huguenots in north America as well, but it is the historical period in which it happened, and the change of pace, in particular after the Holocaust, which is accepted as a *sui generis*
historical event. Namely, you are the victims of the worst modern atrocity and you are becoming in no time a victimiser.

The view of the early and most recent Zionist and Israelis, that Palestinians are an obstacle for the success and survival of the Zionist project, has not undermined Israel’s global standing. I suggest that a focus on the transition can explain better the reasons for this international blindness and immunity. In 2012 the Western mainstream media and academia treats Israel as a unique case and this claim for uniqueness is supported academically by Zionist and pro-Zionist scholarship. The Holocaust memory and its manipulation play a crucial role in this ongoing Israeli impunity, but Zionism was globally legitimised long before the terrible events in Europe occurred. The oblivious denial of the transformation of victims into victimisers is a very crucial part in Israel’s success in remaining part of the ‘civilised world’. It provides the state immunity for Apartheid and colonialist practices. This shield cannot be explained by sheer power of lobbies, strategy, and cynical economic considerations alone. Dwelling on the ethical dimension of Zionism as a settler colonial movement in a postcolonial world may prove to be a crucial aspect in the search for peace and reconciliation in the land.

THE LASTING POWER OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Psychologists, in particular those interested in personality studies, were intrigued from early on by the question of first impression. Their inquiry included the investigation of the stability of first impressions and what affects them. Ethnic labelling, for example, produced perceptions and images that did not change easily with time.\(^8\) Psychological research seems to agree that first impressions of events influence how we interpret later impressions and fresh information. As for the question of what can transform first impressions, the main hypothesis seems still to be the one evolving around accountability. Sometimes the need to justify one’s action transforms first impressions, but quite often even that impulse does not easily erode them. Even when a person is exposed to fresh information and effective self and external criticism, it seems that when first impressions pertain to questions of ‘ethnicity’ or ‘race’, they remain steadfast.\(^9\) When this is accompanied by a harsh conflict
and violent reality, of course, the chances of re-evaluating first impressions are even slimmer.

Settler colonialist societies which got rid of the indigenous population – in the Americas and in the Pacific – have retained their basic impressions of the natives, although by engineering and coaching from above, many of these perceptions have been delegitimised, sometimes by laws, and at least an appearance of a reformed image has been conveyed domestically and for international consumption. In the very few cases where the indigenous population was neither exterminated nor the colonisers driven out, there is a strong sense that defeating first impressions was part of the process of reconciliation, whether by force in the case Zimbabwe, or through reconciliation and struggle in the case of South Africa. Israel in this respect constitutes now the unique example of a settler colonialist project that has the indigenous population as integral part of the state it created, which leads to all those intriguing questions of paradigmatic applicability discussed in the opening paragraph of this article.

In both the psychology of personality and the history of settler colonialism one can see room for change even in the most steadfast of cases. And yet, despite the dramatic life and politics of Israel and Palestine, Jewish first impressions moved very little, if at all. The first impressions of the core group of the Zionist project are there, dominating present day Israeli discourse about the very same native population they have encountered for the first time at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Official Israel, as well as large segments of society, holds on to these first impressions. Official and public statements have not as yet appeared in the scholarly literature, but it is obvious that the 2011 Zionist consensus is to maintain a state with a stable Jewish majority within an allegedly democratic state. The scientific advisor to the Israeli Ministry of immigration is a known researcher of the Russian Jewish community. As an official academic par excellence, Zeev Hanin published comprehensive research that could be summarised in the following way: the vast majority of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union subscribe to the dominant view among Jews in Israel about the need to exclude the Palestinian citizens of Israel from the common public good.\textsuperscript{10} The connecting
thread between the first and last settlers (both coming from the same part of the world) is indeed the wish to establish an exclusive Jewish state over much of Palestine. What is Jewish, what is Palestine and what are the best means to achieve this vision are concepts and issues which changed with time, but not the impulse for exclusivity. Almost from the very start, exclusivity meant demographic ‘purity’ at best and demographic majority at worst. Extreme means were sought by messianic Zionists to achieve the first option; more pragmatic ones were employed by the dominant labour movement for attaining the second one.

The leading and most active members of the early colonisation project came from gated Jewish communities, mostly living in townships, the *Shtetl* (which were enforced, and sometime self imposed, Jewish exclusive enclaves). Absurdly, as so many good critical studies have shown, this pre-Zionist existence was detested by the Zionist movement wishing to create a new Jew as an antithesis to what they called the exilic condition. And yet, when arriving in Palestine, they built once more gated communities, introduced the foreign idea of fenced human settlement to a rural area that never had them before, and tried to create an exclusive Jewish presence in the urban space, first by dominating the labour market, then by building separate neighbourhoods and towns, and finally by urbicide in 1948 (which was not just about expulsions or the destruction of buildings, but also about annihilating the political, social, cultural and economic centres of the indigenous society).

The formidable and fierce *shtetl* state in the making was the historical answer to the weak and poor *shtetl* of Eastern Europe. The cognitive atmosphere that accompanied the building of the gated community and existence – some of it very impressive socialist and even communist communities – explain the uniqueness of the settler strategy against the old Jewish colonies so ably described by Gershon Shafir. These early settlers were described by the Second *Aliya* as ‘colonists’; an important development by itself as the self depiction of Zionism as colonialism ended after the second *Aliya* (anyone who preferred ‘Arab’ workers was a despicable colonist wrote one of them; so indeed they were something different).

This core group numbered between 20,000 and 40,000 people and came mainly from Russia (constituting only 4% of those who left
Russia at the time). It was not at the time a success story, as the vast majority of them (90%) left mainly to the US. So this core group was only a few thousand strong. They were nonetheless great achievers: expelling the Palestinian workforce from the old Jewish colonies – *Kibbush Ha-Avoda* (Conquest of the Labour Market), they called it – as well as laying the foundations for the future state.

They more or less went through similar trajectories that brought them into contact with Palestinians. It began on the Jaffa shore, then labouring alongside Palestinians in the more veteran Zionist colonies, or meeting them as neighbours in the towns. Self-exclusion produced the first pure settlements; finally, paramilitary forces began to guard the enclaves. Congregating in exclusive enclaves was both a response to the impulse of exclusivity and to the material necessity of ‘conquering’ the labour market in order to secure jobs and immigration. The British Mandatory authorities, recognised this separateness early on and legalised it.\(^{15}\)

These settlers were compulsory diarists and letter writers – they did not miss one mosquito bite and in a truly *Shtetl* style did not stop complaining. The first anti-Arab entries were written when they were still hosted by the Palestinians on the way to the old colonies, or in the towns of Palestine. Complaints stemmed from the formative experiences of these settlers, which was the search for labour and subsistence. This predicament seemed to affect universally all of them: whether they went to the old colonies or whether they tried their luck in the towns. Wherever they were, in order to survive they needed to work shoulder to shoulder with Palestinian farmers or workers. By such intimate contact even the most ignorant and defiant settlers realised that Palestine was totally an Arab county in its human landscape. This first impression constitutes therefore a process of recognition of an ‘unpleasant reality’ intertwined with early thought of how to change it.

When David Ben-Gurion, then one of the leading activists of the Second *Aliya*, described Palestinian workers and farmers as *Beit Mihush* (‘an infested hotbed of pain’) he would also immediately, by resorting to medical metaphors, conjure up exclusive Jewish labour as a panacea. In his and other settlers’ letters, Hebrew workers appear as the healthy blood that would immunise the nation from rottenness and death. He added that employing ‘Arabs’ reminded
him of the old Jewish story of a stupid man who resuscitated a dead lion that devoured him.\textsuperscript{16} The problem was the very presence of the Palestinians: distancing them, or distancing yourself from them, was always a solution that could be very brutal in the first instance and alluringly peaceful in the second.

Some of the recollections I have read were written in the early 1940s and were already driven by a wish to justify the racist attitudes towards the native population. For many among the settlers, socialism was still a meaningful dogma, and exclusion somehow did not fit easily with it. In fact many of them were socialists and at times even communists before coming to Palestine. Socialism was deeply rooted in the cognition of settlers and their leaders and thus a certain righteousness was employed to justify the ethnic purity paradigm by bizarre argumentation. Employing Arabs was ‘exploitation’ – hence they should not be employed and not be part of the Jewish state. As Zeev Sternhall has shown, once Zionism territorialised Palestine as the coveted land of social freedom and equality socialism became secondary to the national project.\textsuperscript{17}

Turning socialism into national socialism was explained as the fault of the Palestinians themselves. Neta Harpaz, a leading member of \textit{Hapoel Hazair} (the main outfit of the socialist Zionist movement in the second Aliya), who was born in a part of the Russian Empire that today is in Poland and came to Palestine in 1909, learned Arabic, a move that always appears as a unique gesture towards the locals and not as a necessity. He did it in order to organise a joint industrial action, but the Palestinians were ‘traitors’ who in the last moment told the Jewish farmer of the intention to strike and asked for a raise. As he wondered if this one case indicated a more serious problem for the chance of socialism in Palestine he consulted one of the leaders of the movement, Yizhak Ben Zvi (later, the second president of Israel), who explained to him that international revolution meant in Palestine Jewish and Western revolution alone.\textsuperscript{18} As Zachary Lockman has shown, these manipulations became more sophisticated beginning from the late 1920s; but first impressions depicted the locals as ‘shifty’ characters, as an obstacle not just to Zionism but to socialism as well.\textsuperscript{19}

Showing solidarity with Palestinian workers through their exclusion was only one of the paradoxes produced by a desire for
demographic purity. The most enduring paradox was that of the ‘alienated’ homeland. It became a strange place wherever ‘Arabs’ were. Nature seemed weird and unfriendly, but much worse was the alien human landscape. Zionists were confident they could master the land; they were less confident of what to do with the humans in it (a very intriguing new research on eco-feminism traces this drive also to the misogynist and chauvinist perception of the land as a woman to be conquered). So it was simultaneously ‘home’ and a foreign land. This is not unique – settlers in other settler colonialist locales faced similar ambiguities – it is, however, unique as a persistent feeling and emotion in our times.

The settlers talked about Palestine as Nechar, a foreign land, or even worse as Yam Nechar, a sea of foreignness and alienation. And this was always described in the diaries or letters in an angry complaining tone as this ‘sea’ covered the coveted homeland. A synonym for ‘alien’ was wilderness, Shemama. Wherever there were Palestinians, there was a sense of bareness that caused some settlers to rethink the whole venture and contemplating a return from, as one of them put it, a ‘land of nothingness’. The empty land was full of strangers; ‘[p]eople who were more strange to us than the Russian or Polish peasant’. He wrote in 1929: ‘We have nothing in common with the majority of the people living here’.

Realistically, it was foreign if you came from Europe, but ideologically it looked foreign because the foreigners were living in it and gave the place its alien character. They were not just ‘aliens’, they were aggressive aliens. The aggression was meted at the Jews, according to this narrative, from the first encounter. Like all foreigners, the Jewish settlers sailed first to Alexandria, took a ferry to Jaffa and there they were taken by small boats ashore. This disembarkment appears in the settler view as aggressive and alien treatment. ‘Aravim Hetikifu Ottanu’ – ‘the Arabs assaulted us’ is the phrase used to describe Palestinian boys helping settlers to small boats on the way to Jaffa. They shouted because the waves were high and they asked for Baksheesh (tipping) because this was their way of living. But in the settlers’ narrative they were assaulters. Noise, which must have been a normal feature of life in the Shtetl, becomes menacing when it is made by women on the shore wailing the traditional welcome salute for the returning fishermen or sailors.
They did it ‘with the fiery eyes and a strange garrotted language’. Whether it is their language, their dress, or their camels they were all reported back to Europe as unpleasant realities.

Alienation and unpleasantness arising from the presence of ‘Arabs’ in Palestine was accompanied by surprise in particular at the way the old colonies of the First Aliya were structured. Yona Hurewitz was disgusted to find out that in Hadera part of the houses was occupied by ‘Arabs’. In the jewel of the Zionist crown, Rishon Lezion, Natan Hofshi (whose family name was re-invented on arrival and meant ‘a liberated person’) reported back home to Poland how disgusted he was to see many ‘Arab’ men, women and children crossing through Rishon Lezion. ‘Nehradeti’ (‘I was flabbergasted’), he noted, and asked: ‘maybe it was a terrible mistake to come here and maybe this was a foreign country?’ Writing later, he noted that once ‘the Arabs were not allowed to pass [through] it became home’.

The presence of Palestinians in Jewish colonies or near them is referred to often as Kalon (Shame), which is accentuated by the La’ag (contempt) and Buz (scorn) shown by the ‘Arabs’, who for some reason, according to this depiction, understood how pathetic the situation was. ‘Masakin’ (the pathetic poor ones), ‘they called us’, recalled the settlers. That Palestinians were allowed to guard the property of the early settlers was seen as most eminently absurd.

The solution for Kalon was Kavod (honour), and this at a time when the early Zionist Orientalists explained how to manipulate the centrality of honour in ‘Arab culture’ for the success of the Zionist project. Zionist settlers acted again and again as people who were insulted. They sometime objectively were, when they were physically attacked, but more often than not it was due to the very presence of Palestinians in Palestine. One interesting aspect of this search for honour was the constant reported competition with Palestinian workers on production, and especially brutal retaliation for what the Zionist settlers deemed as theft of their newly acquired land. What they referred to was an old rural habit of cultivating part of the public, or even private land that was sanctioned by the Ottoman Empire as legal and accepted; for instance picking fruits from orchards on the sideways. All this, including common use of water wells, became an act of robbery only once Zionism purchased the
land. Robber, Shoded, and Assassin, Rozeach, were alternated with ease when these acts were described.\textsuperscript{28}

But even the most violent encounter with, and even more violent discourse about, the locals could not be easily reconciled with the need to learn how to shepherd and cultivate; how to dress and survive. Very soon the ‘Arab way of cultivating and dressing and behaving’ was depicted as a necessary initial evil that had to be abandoned as soon as possible. This became one of the principal declared missions of the second \textit{Aliya} (together with the need to create a ‘pure’ Jewish defence force).\textsuperscript{29}

Appropriating local habits in order to get rid of locals was regarded as a necessary and temporary evil. Sometimes that evil was prolonged to help the Zionist project. Such was the idea conceived by Arthur Rupin to build a \textit{Madafa}, the traditional guest tent, hall or room, for settling with local notables the final transition of land from absentee landlords to Zionist hands (the notables represented the tenants of the land, together with the landlord’s agent, and had to be convinced to expel the tenants so as to allow the actual Zionist settlement of the land purchased).\textsuperscript{30} Cleansing the farmers and tenants was done at first through meeting in the Zionist \textit{Madafa}, then by force of eviction in Mandatory times. The good Palestinians were those who came to the \textit{Madafa} and evicted peasants; those who refused were robbers and murderers. Even those with whom settlers shared the ownership of horses, or long hours guarding property, were transformed into villains once they refused to evict.\textsuperscript{31}

Urban Palestine triggered another kind of impression. Towns had a large number of Christians, reported Ben-Gurion. His colleague Nathan Shifris lamented that they were educated, nationalists and more or less grasped what Zionism was all about. They were ‘impertinent and too assertive’.\textsuperscript{32} Israel Kadishman believed that ‘our wits’ and not only power will be needed to combat these ‘Arabs’.\textsuperscript{33} Jaffa in particular symbolised everything the Second \textit{Aliya} dreaded and detested. In 2012 the town of Nazareth occupies in the Zionist imagination a similar image of a hub of self assertive national Palestinian sentiment and activity.

The urban and the rural Palestinians disappointed twice. First of all by being there, and secondly by been ungrateful. In a bizarre way, there was very little the Second \textit{Aliya} did for the Palestinians
Pappé, ‘Shtetl Colonialism’

(whereas at least one could say the first wave of immigrants offered employment, be it in an exploitative terms), and yet the sense was that the Palestinians were ungrateful to the blessings bestowed upon them by the Zionist movement, a point made today by Israeli historian Ephraim Karsh in *Palestine Betrayed*.\(^{34}\)

Betrayal and disappointment were interwoven, since the ‘good Arabs’, exemplified by Rashid Bey in Theodore Herzl’s *Altneuland*, who was beyond himself with joy when Zionism arrived, were not to be found. Mishmash between what is an Oriental, an Arab, and a Muslim, and a gentile frequently appears in Second *Aliya* recollections. In 1945, the ideologue of this group, Berl Katznelson, reported that despite his benign proclivities, as he reported them, ‘I was more extreme than Brit Shalom and a philosemit and my longing for the *Yishmaelite* were immense’. He already knew, however, that this was hopeless when he met for the first time ‘unfriendly’ Turks back home in Russia.\(^{35}\)

Faint hearted humanist views were not allowed. When one leading activist, Yosef Rabinowitch, allowed himself such an indulgence in what he called ‘a moment of weakness’, and was charmed momentarily by the beauty of an Arab village and the sound of the shepherd’s flute, he had to remind himself that ‘these were foreigners on the homeland’.\(^{36}\) To sum up: the need to exclude the Palestinians in order to turn Palestine into a safe haven for Jews is the strongest and most common message coming from the second *Aliya* voices. Yosef Rabinowitch was one of the most zealot fighters against the employment of Palestinians, which he defined ‘the evil’ (*Hara’ Hazeh*). ‘We are only few and if they upraise against us this is our end’, he noted. Even when he says here and there ‘I met a decent farmer’ he then notes that they were potentially ‘*Raa Hola*’ (a ‘malignant evil’).\(^{37}\)

‘*Raa Hola*’ was used as a phrase often in official discussions to describe the Palestinian minority in Israel during the years of the Military Rule [1948-1966]. The panacea for this was the same as before, looking for ways of getting rid of them. Expelling that minority was seriously discussed as an alternative to the regime imposed on them in accordance with the British Mandatory emergency regulations that robbed them of most of the basic human and civil rights up to 1967.\(^{38}\) These same characterisations appeared in
official discourse once more in 1976, when the infamous Koenig Report delineated what senior officials thought of Palestinians in the Jewish state. ‘Cancer in the heart of the nation’ was a phrase related to the author of an official report that recommended severe measures against the Palestinians in order to Judaise the areas where they were still present. Although he was not the one who said it, his report nonetheless represented Palestinians as a virus threatening to kill a healthy body.39

Alienation became more institutionalised after 1967 through discriminatory legislation, governmental policies and official conduct. The literature on this is overwhelming and there is no need to refer to it here; I have followed this particular development myself in a recent book.40 The most updated indexes of racism and discrimination, those provided annually by Palestinian NGOs in Israel (Musawwa and Adalah, for example), and the more conservative census carried out by university research institutes drive home forcefully the message that for most Jews in Israel, and according to the present legislative efforts, policies and strategies, Palestinians in Israel are deemed as immigrants, aliens and hostile.41

These were indeed powerful first impressions. They have not changed. One could argue that these first impressions were reinforced, or made necessary, by the actual material experience of the settlers in the second Aliya: they needed to exclude themselves in order to survive and secure further immigration (interestingly, this point is made both by Zionist and by anti-Zionist historians). But this is a distorted picture of the reality in Palestine. There was no need to be exclusive in order to survive, or even to secure immigration. There was a need to secure exclusiveness only if one wanted to get rid of the local population. This is similar to the debate about the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948. Some Zionist and anti-Zionist historians assumed that the war of 1948 caused the ethnic cleansing of Palestine. On the contrary, as I have argued in The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine, the war was the means, not the cause, for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

Change is connected to a different moral evaluation of the Zionist project in general. As Nira Yuval-Davis has commented:
Ignoring or marginalizing the construction of Israel as a settler society, with its own specific characteristics, prevents most Israelis, both emotionally and analytically, from understanding some epistemological and ontological aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. [...] Such an understanding is vital for any possible transversal dialogue between the conflicting sides that goes beyond the manipulative simulation games of conflict resolution models that have occupied such a central place in the Oslo negotiations in a most ‘post-modernist’ manner. More specifically, what has to be understood from within and without is the transition of the East European Jews from victims to victimisers, and the recurrence of this transition at any given moment whenever new settlers arrive from imagined or really oppressed communities. Today, most of the Israeli Jews are not victims of any oppression, and yet the self-perception of victimhood is dominant in society. But the early group that initially moulded that self-image was originally victimised, and its transformation laid the basis for perceptions and attitudes that are still with us today.

These impressions were those of victims, and their transformation into victimisers occurred when they were still poor (hence postcolonialism is the best prism through which one can understand how subaltern oppressed groups become so quickly and absolutely oppressive). It is their genuine victimhood that protects their ideological and biological descendents today. And yet its victimhood was not unique and its transformation was also quite common. Perhaps this too should be part of the required change suggested by Yuval Davis.

CONCLUSIONS

I have tried to show that the early perception of the native as an ‘alien’ in the ‘homeland’, an alien that had to ‘spirited away’ (in Herzl’s suggestion), in any possible way has remained the dominant perception in Israel today. Yet it has not undermined the legitimacy
of the state nor its place in the ‘civilised world’. Israel’s immunity stems from its success in negating any description of Zionism and Israel as a settler colonial project and an Apartheid state.

The focus on the formative moment, the moment when a particular perception of indigeneity was born, and the analysis of first impressions as part of the transformation of victims of colonialism and oppression into oppressive colonisers may help question this immunity. Disproving Western and Israeli claims regarding Israel’s *sui generis* status, and critical research on Zionism that ignores the origins of the settlers – not in the sense of who they are, but in the timeless sense of who they themselves and their supporters perceived them to be – may also help exposing Zionism for what it was and is.

At the end of the day, the lack of moral and ethical discussion of Zionism is the result of either an oiled public relations machine that does not include it in colonialism or apartheid studies, or the result of genuine apprehension or submission to fear in the case of Europeans who have not yet had closure on the Holocaust.

The unambiguous way Zionist settlers then, and Israeli Jews today, refer to the native as an ‘alien’ is the constant feature of past attitudes, present polices and probable future vision. Academically and politically, one would have to be able to explain the ideological centrality of this immoral assumption from the beginning of the movement until today. This is why ethnic cleansing began as an idea, turned into a strategy, was executed as policy, and remains a vision for the future. Perhaps not challenging the victimhood of Jews who came to Palestine but the morality of what they have done will help defining the nature of the project they have created and they sustain today – the uncompleted project of Judaising whatever is deemed geopolitically as Israel.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

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NOTES

1 This is discussed at length by Ran Greenstein in ‘Israel/Palestine and the Apartheid Analogy: Critics, Apologists and Strategic Lessons’, Monthly Review Zine, 22/08/10.
7 I have covered this in Ilan Pappé, The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006).
10 Haaretz, 07/07/11.
12 Pappé, The Ethnic Cleansing, pp. 91-103.
16 David Ben-Gurion, speech celebrating 25 years to the Second Aliya, The Book of the Second Aliya, p. 15.
20 Edna Gorny, Between Exploitation and Salvage (Haifa: Carmel, 2011 [Hebrew]).
21 Ben Gurion, speech celebrating 25 years to the Second Aliya, p. 17.
23 Mendel Zinger, ‘From Barodi (a Shtetl in the Ukraine) to Erez Israel’, The Book of the Second Aliya, p. 128.
26 Natan Hofshi, ‘A Pact with the Land’, p. 239.
27 Ben-Gurion, speech celebrating 25 years to the Second Aliya, p. 17.
Pappé, ‘Shtetl Colonialism’

33 Israel Kadishman, ‘Neither by Might, Nor by Force’, The Book of the Second Aliya, p. 293.
38 For these and other typical references, see Yair Baumel, Blue and White Shadow, the Israeli Establishment Policy and Action, the Formative Years, 1958-1968 (Haifa: Pardes, 2007 [Hebrew]).
40 Pappe, The Forgotten Palestinians.
Settler Colonialism and the State of Exception: The Example of Palestine/Israel

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Discourse on Israel, both propagandistic and analytical, has the peculiar tendency of representing it at one moment as normal – a normal democracy, a normal Western society, a normal state – and at others as exceptional: a democracy uniquely embattled among hostile neighbors, a secular state that historically fulfills the religious destiny of a people, a democracy that defines itself as a state for a single people and religion, the only democracy in the region, and so forth. At times, defenders of Israel lay claim to its normality as the reason to exempt it from the norms of human rights and international law, at others complain that Israel is being ‘singled out’ for criticism. This paper argues that these apparent contradictions, over and above their value to public relations opportunism, can best be explained by understanding Israel’s occupation of Palestine as an exemplary settler colonial project whose contradictions are embedded in the early framing of Zionism and whose unfolding follows a logic long ago analyzed by Albert Memmi and other theorists of settler colonialism.

I was trying to think Palestine, Palestine for itself, ‘itself alone’, as the Irish say. But instead, I found myself thinking, and writing, ‘Palestine/Israel’, as if Palestine cannot be thought of and by itself. This gesture is one that proponents of Zionism have succeeded in imposing as a condition for even thinking about Palestine: it cannot be thought, rather, may not be thought, as an autonomous sovereign entity, giving the law to itself. Palestinian nationality, Palestinian statehood, if they can be contemplated at all, can only be proposed by permission of Israel and its patrons. To think or speak of Palestine as one would of any other nation, on its own terms and without obligatory reference to another, is ruled out. By the same token, one can equally think of virtually any nation in relation to another without denying either’s sovereignty. Except in the case of Palestine. The nation, which may have an ideal or cultural existence
even without a state, achieves sovereignty only once it exists in the Weberian sense as a state that maintains the monopoly of legitimate violence within its given territory. Such a status is precisely what successive Israeli governments have unilaterally denied to Palestine, reserving it as a space that, while subject not only to law but even to a labyrinthine proliferation of laws, lacks either the capacity to give itself the law or the right to offer its subjects full citizenship. For the Palestinian, the correlative of the lack of sovereignty is to inhabit the shadowland of a lacking or partial citizenship. In Israel, those Palestinians who remain on sufferance are faced with the malicious shell-game of holding formal citizenship (ezrahut) while being denied the right to nationality (le’om), which is reserved for Jews only and which grants the most substantial rights, including that of return.

This denial to Palestine of a sovereign state of its citizens indirectly affirms the sovereignty of Israel over Palestine and its status as a member of what we might call the modern network of privileged Westphalian states, through which ‘sovereignty has been established as the central institution of the international system’.¹ The corollary of this relation between a Westphalian state with sovereignty and a nation without it is, as Dario Battistella notes, that a distinction is created that subjects the latter to conquest and occupation without recourse:

after the emergence of the Westphalian system in Europe, the non-European territories continued to be perceived as ‘land free to be occupied’, while in the European international society of the time war had become a ‘resort to arms among personae morales’, i.e. between entities recognizing each other’s right to exist independently as sovereign units.²

It is this dyadic structure that constitutes the oscillating relation between norm and exception that, as we shall see further, constitutes the paradoxes of the Israeli-Palestinian relation. It is also that structure that makes the Israeli claim to being a ‘normal’ or ‘civilised’ Western state inseparable from its status as a ‘settler colonial’ state, investing as it does ‘land free to be occupied’. Hence it is also impossible to think Palestine without thinking
simultaneously of that which negates it; it is impossible to think Palestine without thinking it in relation to that which covers it, displaces it, namely, Israel and Zionism. Whenever one thinks of Palestine, one is thus faced immediately with the paradox of the ‘present absentee’, of the one whose identity is shadowed by non-identity, in the peculiar after-life or afterglow of the disappeared.

These are not new perceptions or new issues. As Edward Said put it, over thirty years ago already: ‘All the constitutive energies of Zionism were premised on the excluded presence, that is, the functional absence of “native people” in Palestine’.\(^3\) What topologies emerge from that peculiar but essential – existential and legal – formulation ‘the present-absentee’, both an actual designation and a resonant metaphor for the perpetual predicament of the Palestinians, both in their homeland and on the world stage?\(^4\) This peculiar condition of being absent even when all too present, or of presence manifest in absence, of being outside even when all too much inside, however metaphysical it may appear, is one that both follows the spatial logic of ethnic cleansing and occupation as material phenomena and conforms to the logical space of the exception, that space where the constitutive force of law or state is manifested in its suspension.

Is this a singular condition, we may ask, making Palestine/Israel an exception to the rule of nations, or one that makes Palestine/Israel exemplary, exemplary of settler colonial states or even exemplary of states of exception? Does this nexus of settlement and displacement represent the lingering legacy of a past whose specific characteristics have been abolished or forgotten elsewhere? Or does it stand as the cusp of new formations whose features threaten to become the general mode of the future? The more pressure we place on these seemingly paradoxical or incompatible questions, the more we will see that they are in a peculiar sense determining of the question of Palestine, of its framing as of its concrete issues. For the contradictory claims to exemplarity and at the same time to exceptionality saturate the discourse on Israel, and therefore on Palestine, to what one is tempted to call an exceptional degree.

If the thinking of Israel/Palestine is already thus at once divided and indivisible, so too are the distinctions between the
exemplary and the exceptional. We may start by considering the ways in which, in a quite colloquial sense, Israel/Palestine can be framed as exemplary or unexceptional, and the ways in which such a self-presentation is crucial to Israel’s claims to normality and legitimacy. On the one hand, Israel presents itself as an exemplary and therefore ‘normal’ state predicated on the no less normal desire of a historical people for a homeland or a nation-state of their own – of which there were many examples in Europe in particular at the moment of Zionism’s foundations. Yet, at the same time, Israel is no less an exemplary settler colony, typical of numerous settler colonies of which, again, nineteenth-century Europe had spawned numerous instances. There was, as Said pointed out, nothing exceptional in this in the early days of the Zionist movement:

It is important to remember that in joining the general Western enthusiasm for overseas territorial acquisition, Zionism never spoke of itself unambiguously as a Jewish liberation movement, but rather as Jewish movement for colonial settlement in the Orient.5

There remained, therefore, a ‘deeply ingrained [...] anomalous imperialist perspective basic to Zionism’ even as it claimed – and still claims – to represent an emancipatory project akin to the desire for self-determination of other small, ethnic nations. Early Zionists, indeed, despite the claim to have located ‘a land without people for a people without land’, were far more willing to admit the colonial dimension of Zionism and correspondingly the legitimate existence of the Palestinians as a people than are Israel’s contemporary defenders. A Jewish state, populated by settlers predominantly from Europe, would, as Herzl put it, ‘form a portion of a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism’.6

The question then emerges as to whether we can then think of Israel/Palestine, as Israel’s supporters ask us to, as an instance of a conflict that is the effect of a normal nation state seeking to secure its sovereignty against an external threat. ‘Any civilised nation would have done the same’ is the appeal that is reiterated every time Israel assaults Gaza or invades Lebanon on the grounds of a defensive
counter-terrorist response. Such a claim requires the invocation of the ‘state of necessity’ that Denise da Silva has recently explored as founding the very reason of the emerging formations of the state, in a formulation that at once spells the present danger it faces and displaces the objects of its violence into the condition of a subjection to nature or impulse that absents them from the community of the civilised.\textsuperscript{7} It collapses, then, the claim to normality into a claim to domination predicated on the distinction, Westphalian in kind, between the civilised and those who are not understood as moral actors and whose lands are therefore expropriable. Should we, therefore, see the dynamics of the conflict as rather being typical of the unfolding of a settler colonial regime and of its efforts to reduce – in both senses – the indigenous population? If so, then one of the paradoxes of the Israeli case is that the more fervently it presses its exemplary status, the more evident becomes its anomalous condition as a permanent state of exception.

It is the former model, which presents Israel not merely as a ‘normal’ nation-state but specifically as belonging to the community of European-style or ‘Westphalian’ nations, that is generally invoked by Israel and its defenders. The claim is somewhat double-edged if one considers the ideological origins of Zionism and the state it eventually founded and profoundly marked. Zionism emerged among the largely assimilated, predominantly secular Jewish communities of Central Europe, of whom its founder Theodor Herzl was an entirely typical representative. Accordingly, the foundations of Zionism are imbued with the contradictory pulls of European nationalisms in general, between an inwardly directed demand for self-determination and an outwardly directed desire for expansion through the colonisation of others considered inferior to Europeans – those lands – and peoples – ‘free to be occupied’ of which Battistella speaks. Herzl’s own trajectory, insisting on the equivalence of the European Jews to other European nationalities and therefore on the right to self-determination while at the same time negotiating with the German Kaiser, British Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain, and the Ottoman sultan in turn for a land to colonise, embodies the terms that would come to shape Zionism through and through.\textsuperscript{8} Zionism’s conception of nationality lay in the ethnic but largely secular nationalisms of Europe. Like its nineteenth-century European forebears, Zionist nationalism was founded in the belief in the
historical destiny of a given people to self-determination and sovereignty. That belief, which, as Benedict Anderson most famously argued, was not only ‘imagined’ but also inseparable from the secularisation of the political sphere, was nonetheless accompanied by a quasi-religious belief in a deep, almost mystical link between people, land, and language, a belief that descended from the cultural politics of Herder through the more virulent Germanic nationalism of Fichte. Given that inheritance, European nationalisms have generally harbored a deep prejudice against racial mixing that belies the liberal, rights-based claims of the secular and democratic idea of the state that is their Enlightenment legacy. In these respects, Zionism and the Israeli state do indeed manifest the characteristics of a typical European nationalist formation.

But Zionism, unlike the secular nationalisms it was modelled on, was also imbued with traditions of messianism, a belief not only in the historical destiny of the Jews both to return from the diaspora to Zion but also in the association of that return with the return of the Messiah and the inauguration of the end of times. As Jacqueline Rose has shown, even a secularised version of such religious messianism could not escape its vocabulary and – in most cases – its connotations. Indeed, secular Zionism was always haunted by the traditions of messianic redemption, such that ‘we can fairly ask whether the affinity between Zionism and messianism is too intimate and powerful to have ever been anything other than partially – and finally unsuccessfully – repressed’. In ways extreme enough to distinguish its terms from the secular religiosity of all but the most extreme European nationalisms, ‘the language of secular Zionism bears the traces and scars of a messianic narrative that it barely seeks, or fails, to repress’. Even the common enough reference to the quite secular Herzl as a ‘Moses’ or Messiah of Zionism betrays the interfusion of secular and religious claims. The end result was inevitably an apocalyptic strain of divinely-sanctioned destructive violence whose counterpart is the over-wrought conviction that every conflict involves an existential threat that might spell not the end of times but the end of Israel. At the same time, the messianic strain in Zionism, which sanctions in the most unarguable terms the notion of a ‘Jewish state for a Jewish people’, no less justifies – in both its religious and its secularised versions – the ethnic cleansing of
Palestinians in order to make way for the ‘ingathering of Jews’ in preparation for the Messiah’s return.\textsuperscript{11}

The nice ambiguity of Rose’s phrase, ‘it barely seeks, or fails, to repress’, points up the ways in which the ‘intimacy’ of secular Zionism and religious messianism culminates in what is at first sight an irresolvable contradiction between Israel’s normalisation and its exceptionalism. As a state, Israel seeks on the one hand to be accepted as one among the community of advanced democracies; on the other, it demands to be excepted from the norms of international law and human rights conventions on the basis of its peculiar destiny as a state in which ethnic nationalism and religious prophecy are enshrined and which is called on to defend. It is important to note that this exceptional conjunction long predates the advent of the Holocaust, itself an embarrassment to Zionists like Ben Gurion until the 1960s and their recognition that the fate of European Jewry (who had by and large not seen their future let alone their salvation in emigration to Palestine) could be exploited to political effect. ‘A Jewish state for a Jewish people’ was not a slogan or a project that responded simply to the genocide of Europe’s Jews or was determined by the need for a sanctuary that would ensure that the Holocaust could happen ‘never again’. Its ethno-nationalist demand – one that would in other contexts be dismissed as ‘identity politics’ – was rooted in the contradictory formation of Zionism itself. It produces what is an entirely irresolvable contradiction within the normally accepted terms of the liberal, secular state. Individually, Israelis and their supporters who want to be seen as liberal, cosmopolitan, humane, nonetheless demand that we make an exception for the practices and for the ideology on which their exclusive privileges rest, and which are fundamental to the state itself. Ultimately, the institutions of Israeli secular democracy rest upon the most extreme claim to a divine or messianic exception no longer allowed to any other state in the world.\textsuperscript{12}

And yet the terms of this contradiction are, from another perspective, both familiar and explicable. That perspective is provided by the model of settler colonialism. This model, which Said sketched, has – as Uri Ram documents – been current not only among scholars critical of Israel, like Said, but even within the mainstream of Israeli sociology, however it may be discounted for
practical purposes in public discussions and representations of Israel.\textsuperscript{13} The settler colonial model has, indeed, peculiar explanatory force in accounting both for the phenomena and for the apparent contradictions of Palestine/Israel. In the first place, the predicament that confronted early Zionists, the anomaly of a nation-people who lacked a land that they had occupied continuously at any point in recent history, could only be resolved by colonisation. The identification of a land that could be occupied was of paramount importance though it was, in the first place, not of critical import to secular Zionists where that land would be located. Herzl, for example, initially considered locating the Jewish state in Argentina.\textsuperscript{14} From this fundamental requirement a series of conditions flow that make of Israel an exemplary settler colonial society. For what distinguishes a settler colony from an administrative or extractive one is in the first place the settlers’ focus on the permanent appropriation of land rather than the political and economic subordination of the indigenous population, the monopolisation of its resources, or the control of its markets.

The expropriation of indigenous land for the express purpose of settling a permanent colonial population demands, as Patrick Wolfe has argued, one of two possible relations to indigenous population: their exploitation as a subordinated labor force, as happened in much of Latin America, Algeria and South Africa, or their more or less rapid extermination, as occurred in Australia, North America and the Caribbean.\textsuperscript{15} Israel has clearly engaged in both tendencies, as its initial dependence on Palestinian labor, mitigated to varying degrees by the importation of Jewish labor from places like Yemen and North Africa, has given way to the systematic if gradual exclusion and displacement of Palestinian workers and residents from Israeli-settled areas and their replacement by immigrants from South and South East Asia who are denied rights of citizenship.\textsuperscript{16} Neve Gordon has similarly detailed the ways in which the post-1967 occupation has undergone a shift in the modality of its governmental strategies from a bio-political model which required the incorporation and management of a subordinated and laboring population to a model of sovereign power that aims at the enclosure and eventual displacement of the indigenous Palestinian population.\textsuperscript{17} That famous slogan, ‘A land without people for a people without land’, has proven to be a performative rather than a
descriptive statement, spelling the gradual ejection of a people whose persistent presence has been a perpetual obstacle to the completion of the Zionist project.

In the dynamics of Occupation, the indigenous Palestinian population is subject both to management and gradual elimination. As Albert Memmi’s pioneering work on settler colonialism suggested, both modes of subordinating the indigenous population require the assumption of a racial hierarchy: both the prestige and the legitimacy of the settlers depend on the conviction of their superiority to the indigenous, whether in terms of the higher development of their culture and moral values or in terms of material civilisation. ‘Racism sums up and symbolizes the fundamental relation which unites colonialist and colonized’; it is not ‘an incidental detail’, but ‘a consubstantial part of colonialism’, he noted. On the one hand, it justifies the removal or exploitation of the colonised whose cultural and moral inferiority is demonstrated by the inferiority of their material conditions; on the other, it legitimates the privileges of the coloniser and the ‘usurpation’, as Memmi puts it, of indigenous land and goods:

Colonial racism is built from three major ideological components: one, the gulf between the culture of the colonialist and the colonized; two, the exploitation of these differences for the benefit of the colonialist; three, the use of these supposed differences as standards of absolute fact.

These components, it may be added, work both in the form of a self-reinforcing loop and in a way that seems to intensify rather than diminish over time. Precisely as the coloniser becomes more established, the rigor of the divisions, the state of apartheid, between the settler and the colonised becomes deeper, to the extent, as we know, of the construction of walls and barriers, separate areas for residence and movement, and tightly controlled bantustans. The ‘iron wall’ that was for Ze’ev Vladimir Jabotinsky a metaphor becomes eventually realised in concrete form. Where he envisaged an unchallengeable military strength as a means to bring the Arab
population to despair of regaining their lost lands, the Occupation has literally erected a segregation wall that fragments the West Bank, encloses its population in fragmentary islets of territory, and with dire literalism, separates Israelis and Palestinians. At the same time, the sense of the superiority of the coloniser’s material culture within its own reserved zones is reinforced as that superiority is materially displayed and secured through discriminatory access to the social goods of the colony. Meanwhile the consequent and inevitable impoverishment of the indigenous becomes the sign of their innate backwardness.

And yet, for all they are immiserated by their ongoing dispossession, the indigenous population will not disappear. They present, therefore, an ‘existential threat’, a ‘demographic time-bomb’, in a post-holocaust world where the traditional forms of genocide directed at native peoples are no longer publicly acceptable. The superior proportion of settlers to the indigenous must be maintained by a combination of continuing Jewish immigration and forms of gradual ethnic cleansing or ‘silent transfer’ of Palestinians that demand the increasing expropriation of indigenous land and the displacement and confinement of the population into ever-dwindling spaces whose conditions of life become more and more insupportable. The daily abuse of human rights and international law, and the steady regime of state violence required to maintain it, produce a profound and insuperable contradiction between the aspiration to normality of the Israeli state and the actual practices that are essential to and constitutive of its existence rather than merely contingent responses to external threats.

Meanwhile, the constantly reiterated pretension of the superiority of the settler colony, both in its system of governance and in its social and moral values, to the population it has dispossessed and the states that surround it depends on an anxiously affirmed assertion of its own status as the representative of ‘civilised values’ in a ‘backward region’. What in Memmi’s terms was the constant reference back to the ‘mother country’ becomes in Israel’s case the reference to a more diffuse but no less potent ‘Western civilisation’ of which Zionism has believed itself representative since the earliest days of the colonisation of Palestine. And yet the very maintenance
of ‘a Jewish state for a Jewish people’ has demanded in practice the institution of laws and measures that are in principle eschewed by ‘civilised’ nations, from the very ethnic exclusivity of ‘a Jewish state for a Jewish people’ that must maintain a distinction between ‘citizenship’ and ‘nationality’ to the denial of fundamental rights of free movement and assembly, or of access to basic resources like water and agricultural land. In the end, it requires the state of perpetual siege in which the lives of the majority of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank are spent. This normalisation of low-level violence (quite apart from the regular unleashing of disproportionate violence on civilian populations that has become an accepted part of its strategic posture) finds its legitimation in an institutionalised racism that belies Israel’s faith in its legality, democracy, and civic virtues. Its very existence depends upon the denial of fundamental rights to the indigenous population of Palestine purely on account of their ethnic identity as non-Jews.

This contradiction, moreover, is not a static one, but has unfolded both materially and psychically over time. As Memmi recognised, settler colonialism initially seeks to legitimate its conquest by the invocation of civilising ideals and a commitment to development or improvement of the colonised and their lands. Thus Herzl ‘viewed the natives as primitive and backward looking’ but ‘hoped that economic benefits would reconcile the Arab population to the Zionist enterprise in Palestine’. But the fate of such ideals, sincere or opportunistic as the case may be, is finally determined by the hardening of the siege mentality that equally typifies settler colonial societies from the start. The settler remains perpetually on guard, poised for real and imaginary resistance behind an ‘iron wall’ whose institutionalisation preserves the attitude of an initial colonising minority within the very structures of the state. Rather than gaining confidence and therefore openness to the potential for change and accommodation as it gains power and security, the settler society undergoes a gradual hardening of its defensive psychic and institutional structures over time. Rather than expanding democratic freedoms and inclusivity, the more it appropriates in the name of security and development, the more deeply it becomes militarised, and the more it shapes draconian laws and restrictions on the rights of the colonised. ‘Every colonial nation carries the seeds of fascist temptation in its bosom’, Memmi noted. Or, as David
Grossman put it in 2004, even before the second invasion of Lebanon, even before Operation Cast Lead, and even before the laws against the commemoration of the Nakba or sanctioning those who advocate for boycott, divestment and sanctions: ‘it is impossible for a state to maintain true democracy while simultaneously upholding a regime of occupation and oppression’.  

To use Memmi’s terms, such contradictions produce in the ‘colonizer who accepts’ the reaction of ‘rage, a loathing, always ready to be loosed on the colonised, the innocent yet inevitable reason for his drama’. That rage manifests what Ilan Pappé has termed the ‘righteous fury’ that is ‘a constant phenomenon in the Israeli, and before that Zionist, dispossession of Palestine’. It is at once a means of legitimization of unconscionable violence, a shield from world opinion, and a measure of the ‘siege mentality’ that characterizes all settler colonies, even in the moment of their absolute ascendancy. The settler’s rage at the other is the antithesis of the internalised rage of the colonised that Fanon claimed affected the very bodily comportment of the native and which issued in acts of irrational violence against his own kind. Memmi’s emphasis is rather on the constant effect of ‘disproportion’ in the settler’s response to any affront or to the least assault. As Pappé implies, such disproportionate rage lay behind the unconscionable massacre of civilians in Gaza that resulted in one hundred times the numbers of Palestinian dead to those killed on the Israeli side. It lay behind the massacre of civilians in South Lebanon in 2006 and in the repeated use of illegal weapons like white phosphorus and DIME, or Dense Inert Metal Explosive, from Beirut in 1982 to Gaza in 2009. Disproportionate response is by now the IDF’s official military doctrine, designed to create the impression, as some generals have remarked, that Israel is ‘crazy’, capable of any excess in its own defense. But the uncritical acceptance of such a response in a society that claims to be a liberal democracy and by a military that claims to be the most moral in the world, derives, if we follow Memmi, from a psychic and material conflict within the settler’s predicament, one that requires the annihilation and not merely the regulation or containment of the indigenous. If Israelis’ ‘righteous rage’ finds ample and distinctive fuel in Zionist messianism, its actual patterns and manifestations are not alien to the settler
For Memmi’s ‘colonizer who refuses’, the psychic response is no less vexed, as ‘the leftist colonizer is part of the oppressing group and will be forced to share its destiny’. Accordingly, ‘even if he is in no way guilty as an individual’ he suspects that ‘he shares a collective responsibility by the fact of membership in a national oppressor group’. In this dilemma, s/he wants to be sympathetic, or at least ‘in dialogue’ (the interminable dialogue industry of the ‘peace process’), but remains unable to relinquish either the privileges granted by a colonial status or the overall project of the settler colonial state in whose supposedly civilised values s/he grounds the moral values that lead to the rejection of its excesses. The consequence is what Grossman, the very voice of a liberal and idealistic Zionism, describes as ‘the unease of a moral dilemma’ that arises when ‘somewhere deep inside, every person knows […] he is committing or colluding with an injustice’.29 Meanwhile, whether in rage or in guilty pathos, in vituperation or in extenuation, the Zionist settler faces an ‘impossible historical situation’, one in which ‘colonial relations […] like any institution, determine a priori his place and that of the colonized and, in the final analysis, their true relationship’.30 Willy-nilly, the historical contradictions of the settler colonial society grind steadily on in the gradual regression of that society into a less and less flexible state, both for the coloniser and for the colonised on whom those contradictions are played out. What was true for the French in Algeria, the Unionists in Northern Ireland, the Afrikaners and other whites in South Africa, is proving daily more true for Israel.

If Israel is a settler colony, it is indeed exemplary, normal and normative, in almost every respect. Yet we cannot overlook the fact that Israel’s exemplarity includes the fact that the ‘state of exception’ is an exemplary practice of settler colonies. For the characteristic siege mentality of the settler colony issues in the declaration of a ‘state of siege’ under a panoply of names, from the legalisms of Jim Crow to the declaration of martial law. The suspension of law in face of the legitimate, violent or non-violent resistance, or, indeed, even the very persistent presence, of the indigenous colonised people, is a given of every colonialism. But on account of the peculiar intimacy of
the interface between settler and native, it becomes a virtually constitutive element of the settler colonial society, inflecting all its relations much as a deep geological formation shapes the permanent features of a landscape. Thus, according to civil rights activist Michael Farrell, ‘In Ireland, from 1800-1921, the British Government brought in 105 Coercion Acts dealing with Ireland. That means that *Habeas Corpus* was as often suspended as in force in 19th-Century Ireland’. These Coercion Acts survived, along with various forms of legalised discrimination, in the form of the permanent Special Powers Act in Northern Ireland from 1922-1972, while Northern Ireland was still nominally integrated into the UK, thus affirming and institutionalising the settler colonial nature of the state despite its pretensions to democratic status. That Act was in turn the envy of South African Prime Minister and architect of Apartheid Hendrik Verwoerd, who would have swapped one clause of it for every anti-apartheid law. Israel similarly maintained in force the British Mandate’s indispensable ‘Emergency Regulations’ that have regularly and continuously been deployed for purposes of censorship, house demolitions or deportation of Palestinians.

Such continuities in colonial law highlight the peculiar topology of the settler colonial state of emergency that ultimately makes what appears as an exception actually a norm. We can, indeed, read from the siege mentality of the settler colonial state to the increasingly generalised ‘state of siege’ that governs Palestinian life, always in the name of Israel’s security, or of the security of its settlers who cultivate the sense of siege and existential threat. Yet it is the Palestinians who occupy within this imaginary of the siege the peculiar topological location of being the incorporated outside. Said remarks on the anomalous fate of Palestinians who remained in Israel after 1948 that ‘everything that did stay to challenge Israel was viewed not as something there but as a sign of something outside Israel and Zionism bent on its destruction – from the outside’. That anomalous condition has been extended to occupied Palestine as it has become more and more annexed within the undeclared borders of Israel. Insofar as the segmentation, occupation and siege of Palestine continues and seems destined to continue, Palestine is incorporated within Israel as a perpetually alien entity, as a proliferation of folds within its still undeclared borders. And yet these besieged territories are envisaged as themselves besieging. As
Naomi Klein eloquently describes it, ‘[a]n entire country has turned itself into a fortified gated community, surrounded by locked-out people living in permanently excluded red zones’.  

This effect of the excluded interior, graphically visible on every contemporary map of Occupied Palestine and the illegal Israeli settlements that segment it into an archipelago of disconnected compartments, conforms to the topology of the exception. As Giorgio Agamben has described the topological structure of the exception in what are by now classic formulations:

The state of exception represents the inclusion and capture of a space that is neither inside nor outside [...]  
*Being-outside and yet belonging*: this is the topological structure of the state of exception.

The state of exception appears as a kind of catastrophic cusp, that domain that disappears, folding underneath the topological map, and yet continues to have effect, to be the locus of change and instability. For Agamben, drawing here on Carl Schmitt’s writings on sovereignty and the ‘decision’ on the state of emergency with reference to European state and legal theory, this topology of the exception is principally theoretical and poses a set of questions regarding the constitutive role of the suspension of the law in the very foundation of the law itself. The state of exception is at once *in* the law, taken account of by the law, and yet *outside* the law. No judicial procedure governs, or can govern, the state of exception, since it is a suspension of the law. In this respect, the state of exception repeats the violence in which the state is constituted, a violence which founds the law but whose ongoing operation in and through the law the law prefers to forget. We might say then, with only a slight extension of Agamben’s argument, that the state of exception is the truth of the law, its unacknowledged absent but ever-present foundation.

As Agamben seeks to materialise what has been a discursive or theoretical topology of the exception, it is the ‘camps’ – the extermination centers of the Holocaust – that appear as its exemplary instance, sites where an internal zone of exclusion concentrates those who have been reduced to what he terms ‘bare
life’. As many have pointed out, in focusing on the Nazi destruction of European Jewry and on the specific instance of Auschwitz, Agamben ignores the long history of colonial genocide and domination in which the techniques and spaces of the Holocaust were first developed.\(^3^8\) Expressly dismissing the historians’ interest in the origins of the concentration camp and related sites in specifically settler colonial or plantation societies, and seeing them, rather, as occasional effects of a ‘state of exception linked to colonial war’ (my emphasis), Agamben ignores the absolute normality of the state of exception under colonial regimes. He continues therefore to argue for the singularity of the Nazi camp in relation to the state of exception:

*The camp is the space that opens up when the state of exception starts to become the rule.* In it, the state of exception, which was essentially a temporal suspension of the state of law, acquires a permanent spatial arrangement that, as such, remains constantly outside the normal state of law.\(^3^9\)

Agamben describes this material topological structure of the camp, though which it concretely instantiates the theoretical paradoxes of the state of exception on the ‘threshold’ of the law, as a territory that is ‘captured outside, that is, it is included by virtue of its very exclusion’.\(^4^0\) If this ‘zone of indistinction between the outside and the inside’ has become ‘the structure in which the state of exception is permanently realised’, it is important to recognise that both the state of exception and the excluded inside have been constitutive elements of colonialism, and in particular of settler colonial formations, from the Indian reservations to Bantustans and pass laws, from the regular use of concentration of the Philippine population by both Spain and the US to slave plantations and their precociously modern architectures. Colonial and plantation law had long furnished the means by which colonised and enslaved populations were ‘so completely deprived of their rights and prerogatives to the point that committing any act toward them would no longer appear as a crime’.\(^4^1\) While the Nazi camps may have represented a peculiarly malevolent concentration of such techniques, forged in colonial
laboratories even more than in modern disciplinary institutions, they were neither so singular as Agamben wants to claim, nor was the camp in his sense the only trajectory along which settler colonial regimes continued to evolve, or through which the state of exception could manifest itself as a permanent norm. As Achille Mbembe puts it, ‘the links between modernity and terror spring from multiple sources’, and we cannot afford to overlook the colonial genealogy of what we must see as a normalisation of the exception.

If, then, the declaration of emergency was the means by which the settler colonial regime could justify its invocation of a generalised and effectively permanent state of exception, the exception was governed less by the absence or sheer suspension of law than by innumerable legal and quasi-legal protocols instituted for its regulation. Certainly what is announced in the settler colony, in Israel/Palestine, is itself a state of exception, determined in large part by Israel’s urgent desire to normalise the exceptional status of its regime of occupation in accord with law. And in the absence of an actual declaration of emergency, what results is a proliferation rather than a suspension of law. The regime of permits, closures, controls, disposessions, demolitions, all proceed according to a labyrinthine web of civil law and military decree, the ‘5,000 Israeli military orders, regulating Palestinian life’, that form the legal counterpart to the material and physical obstacles to movement in the occupied territories, all painstakingly detailed by Saree Makdisi. What Makdisi describes as ‘Israel’s hyperregulation of everyday life’ conforms to what Nasser Hussain has termed the regime of hyperlegality that typifies the contemporary counter-terrorism state: the multiplication of laws and legal categories rather than the state of anomie that Agamben explores.

With this supplement to Agamben’s model, we can grasp that the combination of the regime of hyperlegality with the variegated and self-enfolding topology of ‘zones of exclusion’ constitutes an exemplary form of a new ‘state of exception’ that has become globally the increasingly generalised norm. As Agamben puts it, ‘the voluntary creation of a permanent state of emergency (though not declared in the technical sense) has become one of the essential practices of contemporary states, including the so-called democratic states’. For Agamben, it is the Nazi model that has become
generalised. Naomi Klein suggests another model for the global normalisation of exception and of techniques honed in a settler state: for her, Israel has become exemplary of this generalised state of exception, furnishing the model of ‘the cutting-edge homeland security state’. In order for Israel to become that cutting edge, the West Bank and Gaza have had to become the ‘laboratory’, as architect and theorist Eyal Weizman puts it, of a ‘territorial and urban conflict that can take place in other places’. It furnishes not only the technologies of surveillance (as Klein perceptively notes), but the spatial organisation of political control: for Weizman, the Occupation and the continuing and illegal settlements model ‘the design of a closely knitted fabric of homes and infrastructure – as acts of spatial exclusion creating wedges that separate the habitat of a population marked as a political “outside” and perceived as a political threat’.

Following Weizman, we can trace the genealogy of this topology of normalised exclusion and exception to the settler colonies of the past, to Algeria, South Africa, and, I would add, Northern Ireland, one that demonstrates the continual importation of colonial practices to the metropolis, from urban counter-insurgency techniques forged in nineteenth-century Algiers to surveillance technologies developed in Belfast that are now current in London and Birmingham. In line with that genealogy, the seeming contradiction between Israel’s claim to be a normal liberal democracy and its manifest status as a settler colonial society with a still ongoing project of expropriation of indigenous lands resolves, and resolves in ominous ways. Israel permanently imposes that state of exception that Benjamin found to be the historical norm for the oppressed. In doing so, however, it is no longer exceptional, although it may offer to other states a more advanced model of a future for sovereignty in which the Westphalian distinction between the moral persons within and the savages outside the law becomes increasingly a relation of exclusion by inclusion, to modify Agamben’s terms. That is, as neoliberal states increasingly manage and defend the corporate appropriation of public resources within their territories, as liberal states did with regard to colonial and neo-colonial states outside, and as they increasingly confront the redundancy of large segments of their own populations, so the topologies and protocols of the state of exception will become ever more the norm. For this new norm,
Israel offers the most pertinent and precocious model: having succeeded in incorporating the Occupied Territories within its undeclared borders as an included excluded, it has divided the populations over which it exercises de facto rule along apartheid lines, between the utterly privileged settlers and the redundant Palestinian remainder.

The techniques and technologies by which it maintains and enforces its colonial rule, far from causing scandal to the Western democracies, are coveted and purchased by them: as Klein points out, Israel’s economic prosperity is predicated on its development of the technologies of repression in the laboratory of the Occupied Territories and their export to the neo-liberal world; virtually every major police department in the United States has benefited from its instruction in racial profiling and other counter-terrorist methods. In this respect, the settler colony, managing its permanent state of exception, offers a model for the future of the neo-liberal states globally, and not least to those states that have occluded where they have not renounced their own settler colonial histories. Our fear may be that that historical norm is being projected from the exemplary state of exception that is Israel/Palestine to the generalised form of our collective future. If so, it ironically legitimates Israel’s claim to be a normal western state, though not in the sense that its proponents mean. Our hope may be that the continuing and insurmountable resistance of the Palestinian people to their transfer, dispossession and colonisation offers a counter-model and an inspiration within which the seeds of an alternative future may emerge.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

David Lloyd, Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Southern California, works primarily on Irish culture and on postcolonial and cultural theory. He is the author of Nationalism and Minor Literature (1987); Anomalous States (1993); Ireland After History (1999) and Irish Times: Temporalities of Irish Modernity (2008). His most recent book is Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity: The Transformation of Oral Space (Cambridge University Press, 2011) and is currently at work on two further books, a study of Samuel Beckett’s visual aesthetics and a work on aesthetics, race and representation. He has co-published several other books, including The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse (1991), with Abdul JanMohamed; Culture and the State, co-authored with Paul Thomas (1997); The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital (1997), with Lisa Lowe; and The Black and Green Atlantic: Cross-Currents of the African and Irish Diasporas (2008), edited with Peter D. O’Neill.
NOTES


11 Rose, *Question of Zion*, pp. 48-52.

12 For only one example of how such religious claims saturate the discourse on Israel, see Benjamin Netanyahu’s speech to the US Congress, May 24, 2011: ‘This is the land of our forefathers, the Land of Israel, to which Abraham brought the idea of one God, where David set out to confront Goliath, and where Isaiah saw a vision of eternal peace. No distortion of history can deny the four thousand year old bond, between the Jewish people and the Jewish land’. Reprinted in the *Jerusalem Post*, http://www.jpost.com/LandedPages/PrintArticle.aspx?id=222056 Viewed: 13/08/11.


Lloyd, ‘Settler Colonialism and the State of Exception’

16 Ram, ‘Colonization Perspective’, pp. 64-70.
19 Memmi, The Colonizer and the Colonized, p. 71.
20 On Jabotinsky, see Shlaim, The Iron Wall, pp. 11-16.
23 Memmi, The Colonizer and the Colonized, p. 62.
29 Grossman, Writing in the Dark, p. 103.
Lloyd, ‘Settler Colonialism and the State of Exception’

40 Agamben, ‘What is a Camp?’, p. 39 (Agamben’s emphasis).
44 Agamben, State of Exception, p. 2.
The Ongoing Judaisation of the Naqab and the Struggle for Recognising the Indigenous Rights of the Arab Bedouin People

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This paper argues that there is a current and renewed escalation in Israeli policies towards the indigenous Bedouin of the Naqab and Beersheba, and that this escalation emerges from two longstanding, fundamental Israeli aims: Judaising the Naqab; and putting an end to the persistent Bedouin claims to their historical land and rights. The repeated demolition of the village of Al-Araqib on July 2010 is just the latest outstanding example of the Israeli policies of Judaising the Naqab and denying Bedouin land claims and historical rights. Israel appears to be pursing an ultimate solution to the demographic concern of the Bedouin in the Naqab by bringing more settlers into the area, and expelling the majority of the Bedouin of the unrecognised villages to live in urban towns.

The ongoing demolition of al-Araqib has emerged as a new and potent symbol of the ongoing struggle between Israel and the indigenous population of the Naqab. As a result, in this time of peaceful resistance and people power, it has become a focus for demonstrations and unrest. We must not see the struggle of the people of Al ‘Araqib in isolation, however. Rather, we must understand that Bedouin sumud (steadfastness) on their land has long proved to be an effective form of non-violent indigenous resistance, and that the Israeli government has actually failed in its long struggle to resolve the issues of Bedouin unrecognised villages and Bedouin land claims. In fact, despite the ongoing Israeli policies towards the indigenous Bedouin, I argue that the indigenous Bedouin did not surrender their land claims and rights, and that their survival sumud strategy has had some success in keeping their land claims and community alive. This paper further argues that present Bedouin
demands regarding recognition of claims and for justice pose a threat to a settler society because of an insistence on being given indigenous rights.

Since the approval (2011) of the Israeli government plans to expel 30,000 Bedouin (Praver and Golberg Commissions), the ongoing conflict around land ownership and recognition of indigenous Bedouin rights have put the Naqab Bedouin case on the international map. Thanks to the village of Al-Araqib, and to Bedouin advocacy and activism, for the first time since 1948 the Naqab Bedouin case reached the international community through extensive media coverage and advocacy. The paper begins by discussing the relationship between settler societies and indigenous peoples. Then, the contested indigeneity of the Bedouins and their relation to the settler society is discussed. The paper also sheds light on the Zionist movement’s founding vision of colonising the Naqab, particularly through expropriating land and expelling Bedouin from the western Naqab to the enclosed zone (northeast of Beersheba) during the period of military rule (1948-1967), noting as well the role of state agencies in restricting Bedouin forms of life. The paper concludes by examining the current escalation of Israeli government policies to re-locate 30,000 Bedouin from their land.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ RIGHTS IN SETTLER STATES

It is essential to understand how a settler state treats the indigenous peoples that come to be included within its territory. The concept of ‘indigenous peoples’ came into scholarly use during the 1970s.\(^1\) Linda Smith points out that the term ‘indigenous’ is ‘problematic’ as well as unclear, since there are many other terms that have a similar meaning and overlap with it: e.g., ‘First peoples’, ‘First Nations’, ‘People of the land’, ‘Aboriginals’, and ‘Fourth World Peoples’.\(^2\) The concept has emerged in international law over the last 30 years as a means of classifying a wide range of indigenous communities, for example those in New Zealand, Australia, Mexico, and Brazil.\(^3\)

While there are no agreed definitions of indigenous people and their rights, the definition that was proposed by UN Special Rapporteur Jose Martinez Cobo in 1986 has de facto been adopted.
It describes numerous aspects that apply specifically to indigenous peoples:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.\(^4\)

According to Cobo’s definition, indigenous people constitute a nation that has lived in a territory which was invaded and subsequently controlled by a colonial state. Indigenous people have in common some important aspects, such as language, culture, land, identity, and historical continuity, and play a marginal role in contemporary society.

There have been decades of discussion and negotiation about the rights and self-government of ‘indigenous peoples’ at the United Nations and the World Bank, and also among professional lawyers and international scholars. Ian Brownlie took the debate a step further in a paper on the rights of peoples in modern international law. Aware that the use of the concept ‘indigenous people’ and that the recognition of indigenous claims might be controversial, he preferred to use the term ‘minority’.\(^5\) He identified claims as a core element of indigenous peoples’ rights, and noting the importance of sensitivity to such claims, he proposed three defining characteristics of ‘indigenous peoples’ claims’: (1) the claim for positive action to maintain cultural and linguistic identity of communities; (2) the claim to have adequate protection of land rights in traditional territories; and (3) the claim to political and legal self-determination.\(^6\)
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(Brownlie’s use of ‘minority’ rather than ‘indigenous peoples’, however, may affect indigenous access to self-determination.)

Richard Falk, on the other hand, recognised ‘indigenous’ claims. He argued as well that international law should recognise and take seriously ‘indigenous people’s claims’ for full self-determination:

It is not surprising that indigenous peoples are victimized by traditional procedure and frameworks. For one thing, indigenous peoples, to the extent that they centre their grievances around encroachments upon their collective identity, represent a competing nationalism within the boundaries of the state. Such claims, posited in a variety of forms, challenge two fundamental statist notions – that of territorial sovereignty, and that of a unified ‘nationality’ juridically administered by government organs.

Accordingly, Falk is very supportive of the claims of indigenous peoples, including the possibility of exercising their identity and even some kind of sovereignty over their territory. Recognition of indigenous claims and self-government should be treated differently in international law, even if they clash with a state’s project and interest. However, new states in particular see themselves at risk. These projects are about establishing a new sovereignty and a unified nationality from which to empower the state’s actions. Indigenous peoples stand against these core aspects of new state projects.

Benedict Kingsbury has noted that despite protracted discussions on the definition of ‘indigenous’ peoples, there is still no total agreement. He suggests that the fundamental claims raised by indigenous people include five particular issues: human rights and non-discrimination, minorities, self-determination, historic sovereignty, and claims to be recognised as indigenous peoples. Debate is ongoing on these five categories, as they relate to and are contested by states, and over whether to agree to the claims of ‘indigenous’ groups. Concerning the definition of ‘indigenous people’, Kingsbury concludes that ‘indigenous people as a global concept is unworkable and dangerously incoherent [...]. But it is a concept of
great normative power for many relatively powerless groups that have suffered grievous abuses’. This concept can indeed empower specific groups.

Indigenous groups around the world have a long history of resistance. Tully elucidates two forms of resistance to settler colonialism that have emerged from indigenous peoples: struggling against the structure of domination; and attempting to modify the governmental system of control. Tactics used include using words and deeds in day-to-day activities, exercising indigenous authority in indigenous territory, and appealing to international law, for example the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Canada’s indigenous peoples practised the art of using words and deeds to resist colonialism. Tully describes how they also practised everyday acts of protecting, recovering, and gathering together, as well as keeping, reviving, teaching and adapting their indigenous life in order to prevent it from being destroyed.

Similar is the case of the Aborigines in Australia, who resisted in order to have their land rights recognised. For the Australian Aborigines, struggle over land rights was critical. Linda Smith argues that while resistance could be traced back to before the Second World War, the ‘1960s saw the taking of direct action across several different states and the Northern Territories. Challenges were made by Aborigine groups for title to lands which were consistently refused by the courts and the state governments’. Their struggle also included ‘direct action, petitions, a tent embassy [...] silent protests, challenges both through the courts and state government’. According to Andrew Schaap, the 1972 establishment of the ‘Aboriginal Embassy’ in Front of Parliament House in Canberra was the strongest political demonstration in the history of Australia, a form of political agency that put the Australian state under political threat. Indigenous peoples have in fact achieved some success in their struggle, as shown by the more recent example of the New Zealand Maoris who succeeded in winning the right to self-determination.

It is, however, extremely difficult for colonial and settler states to recognise the claims of indigenous people. As Champagne notes, the
Nasasra, ‘Ongoing Judaisation’

inherent counterclaim to political action, territory, precedence, and cultural autonomy brands the indigenous communities as antagonistic to the nation-state. Nation-states often fear indigenous communities’ claims to self-government and cultural autonomy, which threaten the territorial and political stability of nation-states.\textsuperscript{18}

In other words, national and colonial states fear indigenous groups who do not hide their desire for self-government. They feel that their future stability will be threatened if they recognise indigenous rights that oppose their aims.

**CONTROVERSIAL INDIGENITY: THE NAQAB AND THE BEERSHEBA BEDOUIN CASE**

Identifying the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous peoples opens up the broader question of how one defines the rest of the Palestinian community. The position that will be taken in this paper is that all Palestinians should be considered indigenous to the land.\textsuperscript{19} In relations to the Bedouin in the Naqab, current scholarly approaches consider them as ‘indigenous peoples’; a status that opens up avenues to claim a variety of political rights. However, we cannot speak of a settled consensus over terms and definitions.\textsuperscript{20} The use of ‘indigenous’ approaches remains controversial.\textsuperscript{21}

At a simple level, the concept asserts the prior presence of indigenous peoples before the arrival of new settlers. In reference to the Naqab, the concept presents a deep challenge to the official Israeli narrative insisting that the Bedouin had no historical attachment to the land. Thus, this definition has generally been contested as inapplicable to the Naqab Bedouin by Israeli scholars.\textsuperscript{22} It is also contested by scholars for whom indigeneity as a concept has associations with certain pre-urban attributes which no longer apply to the society in the Naqab.\textsuperscript{23} Interestingly, Bedouin elders in the Naqab never used the term; rather they refer to themselves as ‘urban al-saba’, the ‘Arabs of Beersheba’, although the term is slipping out of use nowadays, and is restricted to some Jewish and Arab activists and scholars. Scholars such as Salman Abu Sitta even
critique the use of Naqab as an inauthentic term to define the Bedouin; pre-1917 maps do not use the term (British archives refer to ‘Negeb’, though).

In defining the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous peoples, one can refer to leading law scholars. Alexander Kedar, for example, agrees that the concept applies to the Naqab Bedouin. He discusses their status from the perspective of international law, equality, and as internally-displaced people. Other organisations such as the Negev Coexistence Forum, and the Regional Council of Unrecognized Villages (RCUV) have also considered the Bedouin to be indigenous peoples. In this regard, however, many other Arab activists in Israel use the term ‘national minority’, but not ‘indigenous people’.

In any case, from an international perspective, the Naqab Bedouin do meet the criteria of indigeneity defined by Cobo. It should be noted that the Bedouins preserve affinity to their land: they have followed pastoralism as a way of life, used wells as a source of water, and maintained traditional agriculture. They have also maintained their cemeteries, their villages existed before 1948, they use their own language, laws, customs and beliefs that are based on those of their Islamic communities, they have the sense of belonging to tribes in relation to migration, and they preserve their traditional economy. Finally the Bedouin today work at the political and juridical level for recognition of their land ownership according to traditional tribal laws.

Within the last few years, the Naqab Bedouin have joined the United Nations branch of indigenous people and have been accepted as a member of the organisation. It is important to note that the driver for the initiative of recognising the Bedouin as indigenous peoples included a list of Bedouin activists, academics, lawyers, NGOs, and also Jewish-Arab organisations (i.e., the Negev Coexistence Forum). However, joining the UN as indigenous peoples was not a shared community decision, and some local Bedouin leaders contested this identification.

In the Naqab, the Israeli policies of Bedouin assimilation have partly failed, since half of the community rejected the idea of moving to urban areas. Even those who had to move to towns still practise their culture. They are not fully integrated into the Israeli population, and they still behave as indigenous people in a variety of ways.
Despite living in towns they still live in their own neighbourhoods, and refuse to mix by living with other tribes in the same space. Tribal space and refusal to mix with other tribes is an obvious way of protecting indigenous life.

There are those who recognise the Bedouin as an ‘ethnic group’, rather than indigenous or minority. Scholars such as Jakubowska, Cohen, and Law-Yone, however, maintain that Israel is trying to frame Bedouins as an ‘ethnic’ group to dissociate them from the rest of the Palestinians in Israel. For these scholars, there is no such thing as Bedouin identity in the Naqab. The state of Israel refers to them as ‘good Arabs’, or ‘our Bedouin’, or by using terms such as the ‘Bedouin sector’. In fact, separate state agencies were created especially to deal with the Bedouin ‘problem’ and their ‘encroachment’ on ‘state’ land (e.g., the Bedouin Development Authority (BDA), the Bedouin Education Authority (BEA)). Hubert Law-Yone further rejects the ‘indigenous people’ concept, arguing that because the Naqab Bedouin have faced such a rapid process of sedentarisation, ‘it is technically incorrect to call them Bedouin’. His notion of the Naqab Bedouins emphasises modernisation and the abandonment of nomadic ways.

And yet, the Bedouin cannot be treated as an ethnic group on the basis of having a different religion – they are Arabs and Muslims, and Ibn Khaldun, the 14th century Arab historian and sociologist even called them ‘true Arabs’. Treating the Bedouin as an ethnic group that is different from the rest of the Palestinian population in Israel, serves the state’s vision and policies of colonising the Naqab and co-opting the Bedouin. This project, however, has thus far failed as the Bedouin have become increasingly aware of the deep and false dichotomy between them and other Palestinians implied in Israel’s policy. I have chosen to adopt the concept of ‘indigenous people’ as a form of Bedouin identity and resistance and to raise the voice of the community. The fact that I am using this concept is a way of opposing definitions of the Bedouin community as an ethnic group in the attempt to split the Bedouin from the rest of the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel.
During the last two years there has been an intensification of Israeli policies towards the indigenous Bedouin population of the Naqab, and this renewal has at its heart two old ongoing Israeli aims: Judaising the Naqab and putting an end to continuing Bedouin claims to their historical lands. These goals in fact emerged long before the creation of the Israeli state in 1948. The Naqab and Beersheba region was presented by Jewish leaders such as David Ben Gurion and Chaim Weizmann as a central objective towards achieving a full colonisation of Palestine since the 1930s.

In reference to the Naqab, Ben Gurion wrote in a letter to his son Amos dated 5 October 1937 that

Negev land is reserved for Jewish citizens, whenever and wherever they want [...] we must expel Arabs and take their places [...] and if we have to use force, we have force at our disposal not in order to dispossess the Arabs of the Negev, and transfer them, but in order to guarantee our own right to settle in those places.\(^{31}\)

One reason why the Zionist movement focused on the Naqab was its potential for settlement. Early on during the British Mandate period in Palestine, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and the Zionist Commission – under the leadership of Weizmann – developed a strategy for purchasing land in the Naqab in order to build Jewish settlements. Weizmann was no less eager than Ben Gurion to fill the Naqab with Jewish settlers, while recognising that the shortage of water in the desert might be an obstacle towards achieving such aims. In 1945 he spoke of ‘the possibilities of irrigating the Negeb’ and how ‘they could settle there at least a million [settlers]’.\(^{32}\)

In thinking about this vacant space, he realised that bringing in Jewish settlers would be a good strategy for ‘making the desert bloom’. Also, in conceptualising the notion that no one existed in the Naqab, he victimised indigenous Bedouins in order to facilitate his task of colonising the region. Efraim Karsh interprets Ben Gurion’s vision for the Naqab as crucial.\(^{33}\) On the other hand, while he acknowledges that Ben Gurion saw the creation of Jewish
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settlements in the Naqab as a possibility, he rejects the view that Ben Gurion wanted to evict or drive the Arabs off the land.

Various Jewish missions were sent to the Naqab to explore opportunities for Jewish settlement. Writing in the Jewish Chronicle in 1940, Sir Frank Sanderson (a Conservative Party Member of the British Parliament) described the Naqab as ‘an empty territory in Palestine’, further claiming that the time had come ‘for the Jews to colonize the Negev’:

I cannot understand why Jews should seek a Lebensraum in the most unlikely places of the world when they have the wide and empty spaces of the Negev to look to. I know that for Jews one square mile in the Promised Land is worth a thousand square miles anywhere else.34

Interestingly, however, there were other British commentators who did not deny the existence of the Bedouin in the Naqab. Writing a few days later in The Daily Telegraph on ‘Settlement in the Negev’, Sir G. E. Kirk (a Middle East expert) responded to this eagerness to colonise the Naqab:

I do not deny that some settlements in the northern and western Negeb is possible. It is vitally important, however, in that case that the Arab cultivator-herdsmen, who now inhabit the district to the number of several thousands, should be adequately protected. Like all primitive people they are attached to their tribal lands [...] the Empire that regards the rights of the aborigines of Australia and New Guinea must consider the fate of these simple people of south Palestine.35

Like other British commentators at the time, Kirk did not regard the Naqab as a ‘wasted’ and ‘empty’ land, but saw that there was a need to protect its indigenous people (a very common colonial attitude) and to consider possible resistance by its Bedouin population against
the colonisation of their land. It is also important to note that Kirk referred to the Bedouin as an indigenous people of Palestine.

FROM NAKBA TO MILITARY RULE: MECHANISMS OF CONTROLLING THE BEDOUIN

After the establishment of the state of Israel in May 1948, military rule was designed and imposed on the Bedouin people and the rest of the Palestinian Arab minority who remained under the control of the Israeli state. It was, of course, logical that in order to achieve its aims as a new settler state, Israel would wish to accumulate more territory for the use of its Jewish citizens. This process has been identified by Yiftachel as part of ‘the nature of the settler state’ to control the land and resources of indigenous peoples and to achieve territorial expansion.36

According to military governor of the Naqab in the late 1950s Penhas Amir, the overall aim of the military government was the control (shlita, in Hebrew) of the Arab population.37 Alina Korn notes how Israel adopted three main policies and methods of control: surveillance, administration, and registration.38 Abu Saad, following Lustick, suggests that Israel used a three-pronged system of control towards the Arabs based on segmentation, dependence and co-optation.39 A summary of the justification for the military government cited in the Ratner Committee’s report stated that the Israeli authorities felt the Arab community in Israel was not loyal to the state, and represented a threat because of a ‘common interest with the Arab people across the border’.40 Initially adopted against the Arab minority in Israel during the era of the military government (1948-1967), these regulations were subsequently maintained by the state for ‘security reasons’. Some of these regulations remain in force today. The professed goals of the military regulations were: to protect the safety of the public, to protect the state, to maintain public order, to quell rebellion or riots, and to secure the supply of essential services.

In the Naqab, and allegedly for ‘security reasons’, the majority of the Bedouin who stayed under Israel’s rule after 1948 were evicted from their original land and were concentrated in the ‘siyaj’ zone in the north east of Beersheba. The expulsion mainly took place in the
western area of the Naqab, which became a closed zone (*al-mantiqa al-muharama* in Arabic). The majority of the Bedouin were never allowed to return to their original land.

As a result of the special nature of the Bedouin community, according to an Israel Defence Forces Archive (IDFA) report, most of the military government’s work in the Naqab involved patrolling, maintaining a presence in the area as well as close daily contact with the Bedouin, collecting information, and registering hostile activities. The army was the obvious choice for this kind of work, with military units put in charge of evicting Bedouins from one location to another, and, from time to time, patrolling their encampments. The military government used the army in the Naqab in a way that was different from the way it used it the Galilee or the Little Triangle areas. Intense supervision was also obtained through the issuing of travel passes. And yet, despite being subjected to a harsh military regime, the Bedouin employed different tactics of resistance for their daily survival struggle, most importantly, ‘non-cooperation’ as a form of non-violent action against military rule.

**THE BEDOUIN NARRATIVE: TRANSFER FROM THEIR NATIVE LAND TO THE ENCLOSED ZONE**

Al-Araqib village (which is discussed later in this paper) epitomises the Bedouin narrative of living as Internally Displaced People (IDP) since 1948. The process of expelling Bedouin tribes into the siyaj included terrorising tribes into temporarily leaving their land with the promise that they could return a short time later. As an interviewee commented, ‘we were evicted from our land through the warning of Israeli methods’.

In the Naqab, sometimes the army would make its customary claim that the land of certain tribes was needed for military use. This became the main justification used when evicting the Bedouin from their native land into the closed zone. Many tribes, especially from the Western Naqab (*al-mantiqa al-gharbiya*), including the al-Araqib village, were asked to leave their native land and move into the siyaj. In such circumstances, exiled tribes were often forced to move onto land belonging to other tribes, and there were many
instances when such land might belong to a tribe that had been expelled and no longer lived in Israel.47

During my field research, I came across many cases where similar stories were told of Israeli tactics to control tribal land during the first few years of military rule, and how the tribes were promised that they could return to their land almost immediately, but often could never return. The cases of al-Oqbi and al-Tori tribes offer important narratives dealing with how they were evicted from their land into the siyaj zone.48 In 1951, these tribes, who lived in al-Araqib in the northern Naqab, were forced to leave their traditional lands and to live in the ‘designated’ siyaj zone.49 As a family member explained:

The aim behind concentrating the Bedouin in the ‘siyaj’ area, and convincing them to leave temporarily was all about land control. They claimed it might be weeks, or months. In fairness, it was a successful tactic used by the Israelis. The majority of Bedouin were exiled from their land by this tactic, and were not allowed to return onto their land.50

According to some interviewees, the Sheikhs of a number of Bedouin tribes met at tribal conferences to discuss their future and how to avoid being trapped by Israel’s fraudulent tactics of expelling them from their land. Some of the other tribes decided to send letters of complaint to the military governors for being expelled from their land.51

Until the present, these and many other tribes have been waiting for justice and to be allowed to return to their native land. The Al-Oqbi and al-Tori, and many other Bedouin tribes, lost their land by these fraudulent government tactics. They were promised an early return to their land by government officials, but they have now been waiting for more than sixty years. The Al-Oqbi tribe, however, has refused to give up its land ownership, resisted state policies, and has refused to accept any compensation.

Another interviewee described how his tribe lived before 1948 in Wadi al-Sharia’ in the western Naqab. The Bedouin villages of Wadi al-Sharia’, Zummara, Huj, Jammama, and al-Shalala (western
Naqab) were all populated by Bedouins, but many fled or were expelled after 1948. ‘My tribe was evicted from the western Naqab; like other tribes, we were evicted and forced to live in the siyaj zone’. Most of the Bedouin villages in the western Naqab were demolished. The strategy of demolishing Bedouin villages is another policy of denying the historical attachment of the Bedouin to their land. In addition to declaring their land an enclosed zone, another common justification used by Israel to deny Bedouin land ownership was to categorise Bedouin land as mawat, land uncultivated by its owners.

Israeli archival documents provide evidence that Bedouins resisted military government orders to be expelled from their land in the western Naqab. In addition, they wrote complaint letters to Israeli officials to be allowed to return into their land. For example, the sheikhs of the Tarabin tribes complained to the military governor against being moved from their land on 25 November 1950. In 1951, the leaders of the Tarabin tribes who remained in the Naqab sent a message to the military government asking to be allowed to return to their land, as they wanted to cultivate it. Military governor Michael Hanegbi replied to one of the Tarabin sheikhs refusing their request, and offering alternatives such as compensation.

The Al-Oqbi (the residents of al-Araqib) tribe sent a formal letter to the Israeli Prime Minister and other governmental offices, asking to be allowed to return to their land. In their letter, they stated that they had been evicted from their land by the army in 1951. They claimed that they had been settled on their land before 1948, that there were still no settlements or kibbutzim existing on their land, and that the land was being used for grazing by other tribes. Their argument was that the alienation of the al-Oqbi tribes from their land was arbitrary and had no basis in any of the claims that the government might usually have put forward (i.e., no presence prior to 1951, that the land was needed for Jewish settlements, and that the land could not be used by Bedouin). Therefore they petitioned the government to allow them to return to their land and claimed ownership.

Despite being expelled from the western Naqab since the 1950s, many Bedouin tribes did not give up their land claims, and are still hoping to return to their native land. The exemplary cases
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presented here show clearly that the native population did not submit to settler policies.

THE EARLY STAGES OF EXPROPRIATING BEDOUIN LAND

During the years of military rule, the Bedouin lost most of their land to the state of Israel through various mechanisms. Land is the most important aspect of Bedouin life, as it is fundamental to people’s identity in the Naqab. After the remnant Bedouin tribes were expelled from the western Naqab to the closed zone, they lost most of their historical land.

In the 1950s, relying in particular on Ottoman codes to argue that they had no land since they neither registered nor cultivated it, the Israeli state formally expropriated all Bedouin land.56 This is a common tactic of settler colonialism to continue the denial of indigenous land rights. The land category of mawat was the principal legal basis for expropriating Bedouin land. Ottoman land codes had been enacted in the nineteenth century to encourage people to register their land, but the Ottomans did not work hard enough at enforcing their laws on the Bedouin, or at asking them to pay taxes. Israel also tried to benefit from British Mandatory laws in order to claim that the Bedouin either did not own land or had not cultivated it. Israel continued to stick to its arguments in order to dispossess the Bedouin and control their land, claiming that Bedouin had never owned land in the Naqab, and did not register or cultivate their land according to the British ordinance of 1921 (‘the mawat law’).57 Israel continues to claim to this day that the Bedouin cannot produce official documents from either the Ottomans or the British to prove their land ownership.58 However, many Bedouin have provided both Ottoman and British documents supporting their claims.

According to Lord Oxford, who was Assistant District Commissioner of Beersheba in 1943, the British did not have any system in Beersheba to register Bedouin land, and thus accepted traditional patterns of ownership. Bedouin land was the collective property of the tribe: ‘All the tribes knew their land naturally without registering it with the government as the Ottoman codes of land asked’, he noted. He further explained Bedouin land ownership:
We did not oppose Bedouin land ownership, nor did we force them to register their land. They were happy about the way they recognised their land, so we thought it better not to impose on them something they did not like and would resist. For example, the city of Beersheba’s land belonged to a very well-known Bedouin tribe. As a result we did not confront the Bedouin about the way they perceived their properties. Because the Bedouin were not very rich, we preferred for economic reasons not to ask them to pay high taxes, but in fact some did pay tax. The economic situation of the Bedouin did not encourage the British to impose harsh taxation policies, but they assisted the Bedouin to survive. Only the Ottomans enacted land codes; we, the British, did not have any registration system for land in Beersheba. We did not want to force the Bedouin to do something that they resisted and did not like.\(^{59}\)

It is evident from the land itself that under both Ottoman and British rule the Bedouin cultivated their lands continuously. Reports from the British Mandate era clearly state that the Bedouin maintained a strong agricultural presence; for example, a report from January 1947 indicates that the area of Khalasa, located on ‘Azazma clan land, was cultivated by its Bedouin owners:

These Bedouin are keen farmers and very much alive to the possibility of improving their agricultural methods. Tractor ploughing has made considerable strides within recent years and an increasing area is being planted each year with fruit trees.\(^{60}\)

Looking at the Israeli state archives, one can argue that Israeli policies in relations to Bedouin land claims are hypocritical. The Israeli authorities were initially very careful in dealing with Bedouin land claims. In a 1952 now-declassified letter to both the Defense Ministry and the Prime Minister’s Office, military governor of the Negev Michael Hanegbi wrote that ‘During 1950/1951, a total
amount of 19,000 Israeli Lira were collected from the Bedouin as land tax by the Negev military governor with the help of Bedouin. Bedouin paid money for each dunam to be recognized’. Accordingly, in the 1950s, almost all the Bedouin who remained in Israel paid land taxes to the state. They were collected by the military governor and by Bedouin sheikhs. It is also important to note that the tax paid to both the British and the Israeli authorities applied to the same currently disputed land.

To deal with Bedouin land ownership, the Israeli government set up a small but important committee, which reported in 1952 to the Ministry of Justice. Testimony by Yosef Weitz, who headed the Jewish National Fund’s forestry division and later helped to found the Israel Lands Administration (one of the most important state agencies dealing with the Bedouin), can be found in the state archives. In 1952, he was appointed to head a government committee entrusted with investigating Bedouin land claims, and he and his colleagues came up with some interesting solutions. Their report noted that, even though some of the 11,000 Bedouin who remained under Israeli control after 1948 had been evicted from their historical land and then concentrated in a closed zone, their ownership of the land could not be denied. The report stressed that the Bedouin regarded all the land they cultivated as being owned by them.

The Weitz committee proposed, however, that it would still be possible to ‘avoid recognizing Bedouin rights on their land even if they prove that they have cultivated it for a long and extended time’. One recommendation was to hold off on ‘the opening of a registration office in Be’er Sheva’, so as to prevent any Bedouin from attempting to formalise their title (this office was opened only in the 1970s). Members of the panel also called on the government to speed up the passage of a land purchase law, ‘in order to facilitate the process of transferring the land which in the past was cultivated by Bedouin to Israel development authorities’. In the same vein, the committee declared that the Bedouins ‘should be compensated if they can prove land ownership’.

From this we learn that the committee accepted that the Bedouin had populated the Negev before the founding of the state, recognised land cultivation as constituting evidence of ownership,
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and recommended compensation to Bedouins whose land was to be expropriated. Israeli policies dealing with Bedouin lands were hypocritical: on the one hand, they recognised that Bedouin populated the Naqab before 1948; on the other, they continued using Ottoman and the British land codes as legal justification for denying Bedouin land claims and rights.

AL-ARAQIB: SYMBOL OF THE BEDOUIN STRUGGLE

Al-Araqib, located in the northern Naqab, a few miles north of Beersheba, is the symbol of the Bedouin struggle over land rights and recognition. Today, half of the Bedouin citizens of Israel live in 46 ‘unrecognised’ villages. These are Bedouin villages in the Naqab, which Israel does not recognise as legal. The villages are deprived of basic services like housing, water, electricity, education and health care. According to Falah, the rest live in townships that the state established in the 1970s in a policy of forced sedentarisation. Israel refuses to respect the rights of its own citizens; in this case, 100,000 persons who are part of the Palestinian people.

Despite being expelled from their land, as is the case of Al-Araqib village, many Bedouin families decided to ignore state policies, fines and penalties, by going back to their historical land and living in tents or stone houses. They adopted a ‘silent resistance’ approach, claiming their land and visiting it with their children during holidays. Since the 1970s, numerous Bedouin land claims also began to be heard in Israeli courts. To have their land claims recognised, many Bedouin families had to physically return to their ancestral land and cultivate it:

Everywhere I go with my family, we cultivate our land; this is what remains from our past. In order not to marginalise our historical claims for our land, cultivation is the symbol of our land and past. At least we will not give up; this is the piece of land where we grew up and played together, and I remember every metre of it, the valleys, the dams, the wells, and I could even tell you the number of trees we planted there. These olive trees, grape vines, fig trees are the symbol and testimony that
it is our land; it does not matter what the Israelis think.\footnote{66}

The unwillingness of the state to recognise Bedouin land claims and rights pushed some Bedouin tribes to take the initiative and return to their land. Debates in the 1950s over Bedouin ownership were not resolved. Similarly, the village’s land ownership case was debated for two years in the Beersheba district court without resolution. Many Bedouin families, not only in Al-Araqib, fed up with the Israeli authorities’ promises to solve land ownership claims, started to employ more effective forms of resistance, erecting tents and wooden shacks on their ancestral land, and living there for years.

Al-Araqib’s story goes back to 1951, when it was demolished and its residents were ‘temporarily’ relocated to the closed zone. Army officials promised the sheikh of the village that they would be able to return to their lands after six months. The land remained mostly vacant and over the years villagers continued to return to work their lands. In the late 1960s, after the abolition of military rule, most of the families returned to live in the village. In a series of interviews I conducted in 2009 (just a year before its new demolition in July 2010), the sheikh of the village recounted that:

\begin{quote}
In 1951, the army came to al-’Araqib and asked us to leave temporarily to the enclosed zone. We were promised by the army and some officials that we could return to our land soon after. They claimed it might be weeks, or months. The justification of the authorities to force the tribes to move from al-’Araqib was that the land was reserved for army use. By using this tactic, the majority of the Bedouin were exiled from their land, and were not allowed to return.\footnote{67}
\end{quote}

The Bedouins viewed this manner of returning to their land as a historical remembering of claims and of their past. The return of al-’Araqib village residents, amongst other cases of villages returning to their land (for example, the village of Twail Abu Jarwal), was a natural reaction to Israel’s refusal to recognise Bedouin land claims.
This return is therefore an act of ‘reviving’ the past, which played a crucial role in Bedouin survival tactics. As I mention elsewhere: ‘even the children know that they have land elsewhere: they are taken to gaze at it on public holidays’.68

Sheikh Sayah Al-Tori (one of the leading symbols of Bedouin struggle and the head of the village of al-’Araqib) recounted the story of how his tribe went back to their land. In an interview he stated that his tribe had become fed up with Israeli promises and had decided to return to their land in the 1980s-1990s:

I have been waiting for more than forty years to be allowed to return to my land, but this dream has never come true. The Israeli authorities promised us a couple of times we could return to our land, but it was only on paper. As a consequence, we decided to return into our native land and to build shacks and houses without obtaining the permission of the Israelis. This is our land, and I will live here for ever, and I will not wait for the Israeli authorities to defraud us any longer.69

Since the 1970s, al-’Araqib residents continually appealed through the Israeli courts and had been doing so for a long time before the village was demolished. The debate between the representatives of the state and al-’Araqib over the Bedouin ownership of al-’Araqib land continued for months in the Beersheba district court, but the Bedouin claims were ultimately rejected.70

In July 2010, and before their long-standing land claims had been finally adjudicated by the Beersheba district court, the Israeli state decided to wipe the slate clean. The Israeli authorities reintroduced expulsion policies to eliminate the Bedouin ‘threat’, and ‘cleansed’ the Bedouin village of al-’Araqib, which had existed since long before the state had ever come into existence.

On 27 July, at least 46 homes and other structures in al-’Araqib, including animal pens and water tanks, were destroyed by officials of the Israel Lands Administration
The demolition of the entire village left 500 people, mainly women and children, with no shelter. The villagers refused to leave their land, and the only place they were allowed to stay was in the village cemetery. Since July 2010, the village has been rebuilt by its inhabitants and repeatedly demolished by Israeli authorities. This non-violent resistance by the indigenous Bedouin of al-‘Araqib is clearly a powerful symbol of survival and staying on their land (sumud), as well as of the continuing struggle between the state project and the Bedouin more than sixty years after the establishment of Israel.

In this age of people’s resistance and power, the plight of Al-‘Araqib has become the symbol of the land conflict between the indigenous peoples of the Naqab and the state. Indeed, the repeated demolition of the village has unified a fragmented Palestinian Arab minority. Demonstrations against the razing of the village were organised in almost every Arab town in the Galilee, the Triangle and the Naqab. Weekly demonstrations of the local indigenous people were organised in the Naqab asking for recognition. The Higher Arab Committee for the Palestinian Arabs in Israel declared a one-day strike in December 2011 to support this struggle, and in May 2011 the Committee called for a demonstration in Jerusalem.

Demonstrations in many Arab villages in the Galilee and the Triangle demanded that house demolitions be stopped and land rights recognised. For example, a day of support was organised for the Bedouin village in the northern town of Sakhnin. The Al-‘Araqib sheikhs were awarded recognition as heroes and the people were praised for their sumud. In 2011-12, many Arab members of the Knesset joined the citizens of al-‘Araqib for their weekly demonstrations. Even residents of the old city of Jerusalem, who are facing similar difficulties, came to the Naqab to show their solidarity and support. Mufti of Jerusalem Ikrima Sabri also came to show
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solidarity. Local women from al-‘Araqib, as well as other local women’s organisations, have also taken a significant part in the weekly demonstrations. This case also reached the international arena. Talks in the EU and the UK parliaments, interventions by Amnesty International, in Washington and in Geneva were also significant in the struggle for recognition. In summary, the struggle of the people of al-Naqab, and al-‘Araqib in particular, has motivated a broader shift throughout the Arab minority within Israel in response to Israel’s land policies and house demolitions.

NEW ISRAELI INITIATIVES: THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

As a result of the successful *sumud* and growing peaceful resistance, the struggle between the state and the indigenous Bedouins continues. Sixty years after the establishment of the state, Israel continues to be concerned about what it perceives as ‘Bedouin control of state land’. It is still introducing new policies in an attempt to eliminate Bedouin claims to their ancestral land. For instance, the Prawer and Goldberg plans to expel and re-locate 30,000 Bedouin by forcing them to live in urban spaces can be linked to growing anxieties and to attempts to finally secure more land for settlements.

Recently, the cabinet of the Israeli government approved another large-scale plan for ‘cleansing’ the Bedouin community from the Naqab. In December 2007, Ehud Olmert’s administration established the Goldberg Commission (Eliezer Goldberg is a former Israeli high court judge), which was tasked with ‘finalising’ the status of Bedouin land claims in the Naqab. Nowadays, the Bedouin seek to have 600,000 *dunams* (150,000 acres) of land recognised in the state registry as a small portion of their historical land. A report submitted in 2008 recommended that some of the Bedouin land be recognised. According to the Goldberg proposal, half of Bedouin claims on agricultural lands they currently occupy should be granted: around 200,000 *dunams* (50,000 acres) should therefore be listed as Bedouin territory in the land registry bureau. This is less than a third of what Bedouin land claims have demanded since the 1970s.

In January 2009, the government formed a team tasked with the implementation of these recommendations headed by Ehud Prawer, chief of the Policy Planning Department within the Prime
Nasra, ‘Ongoing Judaisation’

Minister’s Office. The Prawer panel worked to implement Goldberg’s recommendations offering less than 27 percent of Bedouin’s claims.\textsuperscript{74} However, in response to the possible implementation of the Goldberg recommendations, in late 2011, Yisrael Beiteinu, a right-wing party headed by foreign minister Avigdor Lieberman, urged the government to cancel the ‘offer’ and reduce the amount of land to be recognised altogether. Right-wing members of the Knesset and local Israeli council leaders in the Naqab came out against a plan that would divide the Naqab.

Recently, chief executive of the Jewish National Fund in the US Russell Robinson expressed his concern about ‘losing the Negev’.\textsuperscript{75} Robinson’s concern represents the growing anxiety of the Israeli authorities to secure the Naqab for Jewish settlers. According to Russell, the ‘ultimate solution’ is to bring in 500,000 Jewish settlers in order to maintain the Jewish majority in the Naqab. The Israeli Inter-Ministerial Committee of the Negev and the Galilee approved plans in 2010 to bring more Jews into the Naqab through an initiative aimed at encouraging ‘army personnel to relocate to the Negev’. In the first phase, the plan would ‘move 500 families of career soldiers to the Negev. This includes subsidising land sales to families including other benefits’.\textsuperscript{76} Such activities reflect the Israeli state’s fears about indigenous people’s claims. However, the growing concern of the Israeli authorities and the JNF about the future of the Naqab is not just about ‘claims’, but also about continued and intensifying Bedouin activism and its effectiveness. Israeli author and poet Amos Oz, called the Bedouin situation in the Naqab, a ‘ticking time bomb’, a conclusion shared by many other prominent Israeli figures.\textsuperscript{77}

It is clear that Israeli fears about ongoing Bedouin demands for preserving land and indigenous lifestyles have recently increased. State policies have thus begun to tighten their control over Bedouin communities. Neve Gordon, for example, has remarked how ‘the razing of a Bedouin village by Israeli police shows how far the state will go to achieve its aim of Judaising the Negev region’.\textsuperscript{78} It is evident that the Israeli state sees the Bedouin sumud in the Naqab as an ongoing ‘problem’ and a ‘danger’. The fact that its indigenous people have succeeded in staying on their land has obliged the state to rethink its relations with the Bedouin.
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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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NOTES

5 Brownlie, ‘The Rights of People in Modern International Law’, p.16.
7 Brownlie ‘The Rights of People in Modern International Law’, p.16.
14 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies, p. 109.
15 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies, p. 109.
Nasra, ‘Ongoing Judaisation’

[31] Ben Gurion in a letter to his son Amos, 5 October 1937.
[34] Jewish Chronicle, 9 April 1940.
[37] Interview with Penhas Amir, Tel Aviv, 2009.
[40] S. O. Lazar, The Military Government as Mechanism of Controlling the Arab Citizens: The First Decade, 1948-1958 (Hebrew) (Ha-Mizrah he-Hadash: Kirakht MG, 2002), p. 106. A Committee was appointed by the minister of Defense in 1955 to study the problems of the Military Administration. The Committee’s final decision was to maintain the military administration of the Arab minority.
[41] Israel Defence Forces Archive (IDFA), ref. 590/1961-60.
[42] Israel Defence Forces Archive (IDFA), ref. 590/1961-60.
43 The United Nations definition of IDPs is: ‘persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border’. According to this definition, the majority of the Bedouin are indeed IDPs.

44 Interview with Sheikh Abu Ahmad, Al-‘Araqib, July 2009.


46 The Bedouin used the term al-mantiqa al-gharbiya (‘the western Naqab area’) to refer to their native land from which they were expelled. As discussed, the majority of the remnant tribes had been expelled from the western Naqab into the siyaj.

47 This remains the case until now as Bedouin tribes refuse to settle on land that they know belongs to other tribes. This is to prevent conflict and is also a matter of respect. See Tom Segev, ‘The Making of History / Who owns this country?’, Haaretz, 09 July 2010.

48 The Al-Oqbi tribe lived historically in the Araqib and Muharaga region.

49 The Al-Oqbi’s land claims case was recently heard at the District Court in Beersheba. A report by Tom Segev explained how the al-Oqbi tribe tried to confirm landownership of 820 dunas of their historical land. Segev, ‘The Making of History / Who owns this country?’.

50 Interview with Nuri Al-Oqbi, July 2007.

51 Interview with Abo Omar, August 2008.

52 All these names are the original names of Bedouin villages in western Naqab, and many interviewees mentioned them as having been populated by Bedouin. A few years after the Nakba no one remained there, having either been expelled or forced to live in the closed zone. Interview with Ammer Rahat, September 2009.

53 Under the 1858 Ottoman land code, waste land or land that nobody owned was categorised as (mawat). Naqab land was classified as mawat and uncultivated, and if it was located at a distance exceeding 1.5 miles from the nearest permanent base (in this case Beersheba), it therefore did not belong to anyone. See G. Falah, Al-filastinyun al-mansyon: ‘arab al-Naqab (The Forgotten Palestinians, The Naqab Arabs 1906-1987) (Tayiba: Arab Heritage Centre, 1989).

54 Israel Defence Forces Archive (IDFA), ref. 1953/834-263.

55 Kibbutz Lahav Archive (KLA): a letter signed by representatives of the Bani Oqba tribe, 10 July 1960. The letter was sent to the Prime Minister, the military governor of the Naqab, the Minister of Agriculture, and the Minister of Development.


58 See the very recent debate in the Beersheba District Court about Bedouin land claims, as reported by Segev. Segev, ‘The Making of History / Who owns this country?’.


60 Public Records Office (PRO), ref. FO 371/61868

61 Israel State Archives (ISA), ref. GL 13904/14.


63 Yousef Weitz to the Minister of Justice, 20 October 1952.


65 The land claims of families from Al-‘Araqib are still with the Beersheba district court.
Nasra, ‘Ongoing Judaisation’

66 Interview with Yousef, July 2009.
67 Interview with Sayah al-Tori, al-‘Araqib, June 2009.
69 Interview with Sayah al-Tori, al-‘Araqib, July 2009.
70 For the debate on al-Oqbi/al-‘Araqib land ownership in the Beersheba district court see Segev, ‘The Making of History / Who owns this country?’.
72 See Jack Khoury, Zafrir Rinat, Tomer Zarchin, ‘Netanyahu’s office promoting plan to relocate 30,000 Bedouin’, Haaretz, 02 June 2011.
75 Interview with Russell Robinson, The Jerusalem Post, 12 January 2010.
77 Zvi Zrahiya, ‘State to help army officers move to Negev’.
Settler Colonialism and Conflict: The Israeli State and its Palestinian Subjects

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In this article I discuss the relationship between Israeli settler colonialism, group identities, conflict, and violence. The paper focuses on ‘1948 Palestinians’, and the relationship between them and the state. I explore the relationship between settler colonialism and communal identity through a case study of an incident of communal violence that erupted in Galilee in 1981 between two different religious groups within the Palestinian Arab community. I investigate the different narratives that emerged to explain and frame the incident. I trace this event to a larger structure rooted in the history of settler colonialism in Palestine, thus shifting attention away from culturalist explanations of ‘Arab violence’. In addition to the case in Kafr Yassif, I will briefly discuss other cases to illustrate the pattern in which the Israeli settler colonial state’s policies are tied to issues of identity, conflict, and violence within the native Palestinian community. The essay also addresses the importance of this framework to Palestine Studies.

This article focuses on the question of settler colonialism in relation to ‘1948 Palestinians’ – Palestinians who managed to stay on their lands after the 1948 War and became Israeli ‘citizens’. The Palestine/Israel issue is better understood, in my view, by grappling with the predicament of these Palestinians as a settler-colonial condition, and by studying the origins of the Israeli state and its historical development in order to understand how it deals with its colonised subjects. My discussion will focus on communal identity and conflict among 1948 Palestinians through a theoretical analysis of Israeli settler colonialism, and its impact on communal relations and conflict, and through a discussion of how, despite Israeli claims and rhetoric regarding the ‘rule of law’, ‘democracy’, and ‘modernity’, Israeli policies have led to conflicts and violence within the Arab Palestinian native community.

In other words, I argue that the question of communal/group identity, conflict and violence among Palestinians in Israel is better
understood with reference to the ways in which religion was exploited to further the settler colonial project. Although the paper will focus on 1948 Palestinians, I will briefly refer to one similar case from the 1967 territories to highlight the way in which the Israeli state works to advance intercommunal conflicts. The case from Kafr Yassif is based on more than three years of fieldwork (2002-2005), interviews of eye witnesses, archival work in the village, and Israeli official reports on the incident. The other cases are based on media reports and on brief interviews with local witnesses and community leaders. The article will first discuss briefly the different religious communities in Palestine and their relationship to the Israeli state. In the second part, I will discuss the test cases.

**THE RACIALISATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES: MUSLIMS, CHRISTIANS AND JEWS**

By end of WWI, Britain occupied Palestine, which had until then been part of the Ottoman Empire. It established what became known as the British Mandate in Palestine, facilitating over the course of two decades the economic, social, and political infrastructures for the establishment of the future settler colonial Israeli state, while repressing the economic, political, and social structure of the Palestinian native society.¹ The war on Palestine and the creation of the Israeli settler colonial state in 1948 led to the displacement and dispossession of the Palestinian native society and to the destruction of Palestinian cities and villages.²

From close to one million Palestinians only around 150,000 remained in the newly created state. From 500 villages, only 100 remained undestroyed by the Zionist Israeli troops, and all major cities were emptied of most of their Palestinian residents. Those that remained became minority enclaves in the Jewish dominated environment.³ Due to the Israeli and previous British colonial policies of imprisonment, deportation, and targeted killing of leaders, because of the challenge the leaders posed to the British-Zionist settler colonial project, the Palestinians who managed to remain on their lands found themselves almost leaderless. The remnants of the Palestinian society thus found themselves a minority in a state that was built on their own lands, and became citizens in a state that by its ideology and policies was and continues to be anti-Arab and anti-
Palestinian, that looks at them with contempt, as a threat, as a demographic ‘time-bomb’, and as an obstacle to Jewish rein state.

Although the idea of transferring those who managed to remain was and continues to be contemplated by Zionist and Israeli Jewish leaders, till this moment no such step was taken. This is due to several reasons. One is the rise of decolonisation movements worldwide since the mid-twentieth century. Another is the advancement of communication that could expose such actions much faster than previous genocides and ethnic cleansings performed by other settler colonial projects. Yet another is due to the fact that Israel heavily relies on Western support and works hard to make itself globally acceptable as a normal state. Such an action would harm such support and tarnish the Israeli self-presented image as a ‘democratic peace loving state’, and a state that respects Western modernity’s mantra – ‘the rule of law’. Instead, Israel designed several policies and strategies aimed at repressing, marginalising and dispossessing its Palestinian citizens on the basis of national identity and religious affiliations.

JEW AND PALESTINIAN

With the establishment of the Israeli settler colonial state, the policy regarding ethnicity, national identity, and religious affiliation became crucial. It continues to be so to this day. By defining itself as a state for the Jewish people, or a Jewish state, Israelis turned the Jewish religion into an official ethnic and national category. The fact that Judaism has been a religion for millennia, or that Jews have lived as a religious community among different societies, including the Arab and Palestinian societies, did not matter. This rupture in the history of Jews and Judaism was paralleled by the policy of turning the Palestinians who remained in the Israeli state into members of various religious communities lacking national identity. On the national identification cards, they were identified as a minority with one or another religious affiliation: Christian, Muslim, and Druze. The dominant terminology that was used and continues to be used to define them was that of ‘Israeli Arabs’. The aim was not only to divide and rule, but also to disconnect them from the larger Palestinian community and the Arab people at large. Internally, they are defined as a collection of religious sects; to the outside they are
branded as ‘Israeli Arabs’, so that they are disconnected from each other internally on a religious basis, and at the same time they remain disconnected from the Palestinian people and from the larger Arab identity. A policy of internal ghettoisation and of external disconnection defined the position of the Israeli state towards them from early on.

While the Jews became categorised as such (religiously and ethnically-nationally), the Palestinians were defined as ‘Israeli Arabs’ – a category that makes them belong fully to neither. It also defined them according to their religious affiliations and created new ones. Thus, as of 1948, they turned from being Palestinians, to become Christians, Muslims, and Druze.7

CHRISTIANS, MUSLIMS, AND DRUZE

During the war of 1948 most Palestinians resisted the Zionist onslaught on their lands. They did so in a variety of ways. Some, as in most cases of colonial interventions, cooperated with the colonial power. Among those who cooperated were the Druzes, members of an Islamic religious sect who, as access to their lands and source of living was in the hands of Zionist troops, were forced to cooperate with the Israeli leaders. Once the military regime was imposed on this community in 1948, they could not leave their village without a permit from the local military governor. As Druzes worked primarily in farming, and as they needed to leave the village and go to work on the land, they fell under intense pressure. Collaborating allowed them to get permits and make a living. There were also those among the Druze leaders who took advantage of the new situation and helped in swaying the Druze community to the Israeli side. Soon after the creation of the state of Israel, they helped impose military conscription on the Druze community. This was the first major split between the Druze and the rest of the Palestinian community.8

Not only did the Israeli state recognise the Druze as a religious community, in the 1950s it recognised them as an ethnic group. Their religious identity was thus ethnicised, politicised, and directed towards hostility against Arabs and Palestinians. While the Druze sect was only formed in the 10th century Fatimid Egypt, the myth of an ancient affinity between Druze and Jews, who both suffered under
the hands of Muslim Arab rule, became established in the Israeli official narrative. But myths are never enough to solidify identities; more measures were taken to further split Druze, Muslims, and Christians. In addition to the official definition of ‘the Druze’ as a separate community, first religious, and then ethnic, conscription in the Israeli military also helped creating and advance an anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab identity. Furthermore, the Israeli state took several economic and educational measures to ensure the further separation of Druze from the rest of the Arab Palestinian community.⁹

**EDUCATION, SEGREGATION, AND DIVIDE-AND-RULE POLICIES**

While the Israeli state created a separate educational system for Jews and for Palestinians, it also aimed to create a separate educational system for the Druze community. The separate educational system for the Druze community emphasised conflict with Palestinians and Arabs and affinity with Jews and Israel. The one developed for the rest of the Arab community emphasised the positive character of Jews and Israel to the detriment of Islam and Arabs.¹⁰ In addition, the Israeli state gave more funding to Druze localities than to Christian and Muslim ones. Also, as members of the Druze community serve in the Israeli military, they receive some benefits, including subsidised housing loans, access to Israeli academic institutions, and privileged access to some jobs.

In this context, it is worth mentioning that while religious Jews are by law exempt from military service, they still enjoy preferential treatment in education, jobs, loans, and state funding for their localities. Thus, the preferential and exclusionary category of military service is only used against the Palestinians, Christians and Muslims alike. Having said that, one should note that Druze are not treated on equal footing with Jews in Israel. Rather, they remain discriminated against. While they are generally treated better than the rest of the Palestinian community, they fall behind vis-à-vis the Jewish community when it comes to access to quality of education, jobs, and funding for localities. Druze land was also the subject of land confiscation, which is never practiced against Jews.
Since the creation of the Israeli state, a military regime was imposed on the native Palestinian community. Under this military regime, the Palestinian community faced restrictions on movement, political organising, and also faced economic and social repression. The military regime not only helped segregate them from the Jewish citizens of the state, but also from each other, as no person was allowed to leave his/her village without a permit, which was not often given without pressure to co-operate with the state. The military period also witnessed many curfews, especially during the nighttime, so as to prevent Palestinians from socialising, visiting each other, or holding events and meetings. Over time, the 1948 Palestinians were estranged not only from the rest of the Palestinian and Arab communities outside the borders controlled by Israel, but even from their own land and from each other internally. They became ghettoised, familiar only with nearby villages, while the Jewish localities that they visited or lived in remained alien to them.\footnote{11}

Instances of communal conflict and violence among Palestinians in Israel must be understood in this context. They remain within a supremacist ethnic settler colonial state that favors Jews (even those who live worldwide) over them, which works to marginalise and fragment them from each other and from the rest of the Palestinian and Arab peoples. They lived for more than 20 years without any contact with the rest of the Palestinian community in the 1967 territories disconnected from those who live in exile. They are also disconnected from the rest of the Arab culture around them. Ongoing repression of their national identity, and of their economic and social cohesion and development should also be considered.\footnote{12}

**INSTANCES OF COMMUNAL CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE AMONG PALESTINIANS**

I will now discuss three cases of communal conflict and violence; one at length, two others more briefly, in order to illustrate the link between Israeli settler colonialism and communal conflict. I will discuss these cases of communal violence – two among 1948 Palestinians, one from the 1967 areas – as a way to examine patterns of internal communal conflicts and violence, as well as the behavior of state security forces. I will illustrate the way these
conflicts erupt, and, more importantly, how the state encourages them. I will also outline community responses.¹³

1. KAFR YASSIF

It happened on the 11 of April 1981, in relation to a football game between teams from two adjacent Palestinian villages in Galilee. One village was Julis – a Druze village, the other was Kafr Yassif – a majority Christian village with Muslim and Druze inhabitants. The Israeli police are present at all sport events. The game was decisive because it would decide which of the two teams would be promoted to the upper division of the Israeli football league. The night before the game, the manager of the Kafr Yassif team received a threatening phone call that appeared to be from someone in Julis. The caller warned of possible violence should the team from Julis not prevail. The manager, as result of this phone call, contacted the regional police station and the mayor of Kafr Yassif. Both the team manager and the mayor called again asking for a police presence that would prevent violence from taking place during or after the game. Only 4 policemen were present at the Kafr Yassif football ground the following day.

As news about threats spread around the village at night and the next day, the atmosphere became tense. As Druze serve in the Israeli military, they often carry arms, and have used them on several occasions, even in the context of internal fighting within the Druze community. It is worth nothing that such misuse of arms is not allowed within the Jewish community, but it is tolerated within the Druze community and no one has been punished for such offenses.

Halfway through the game, the Kafr Yassif team scored one goal. The fans from Julis started to shout and make threats. Some individuals from Kafr Yassif, including members of the management of the team, asked Kafr Yassif team members during the break to let the team from Julis win the game. Julis then won the game by scoring two goals. Unappeased, Julis fans attacked Kafr Yassif fans. This led to mass fighting. One man from Julis was stabbed, and a grenade killed one young person from Kafr Yassif. Several others were injured. Although sport related violence is not unprecedented,
the use of arms was unusual. While Israeli police were present at the game, they did not interfere to prevent or stop the fighting.

The story did not end here. The mayor and leaders in Kafr Yassif complained to the police for not sending enough police force as requested. Yet, the head of the police station in the area claimed he had not expected violence. Then the mayor and leaders of Kafr Yassif also asked the head of the regional police station to send reinforcements to the village in order to prevent further escalation, as individuals from Julis had threatened further violence. They also contacted leaders from the larger Palestinian community in order to initiate a *Sulha* – a local method of conflict management used in communities that cannot rely on the Israeli security structure for safety, or on its judicial system for justice. At the same time, they called on members of parliament from the Israeli Communist Party (the only party at the time representing the Palestinian community), who in turn called on the Israeli Minister of Interior (responsible for interior security, and for the police department) asking for more police force to be sent to Kafr Yassif.

In the meantime, the *Sulha* initiative was making progress in securing a *Hudna* (truce), which is the first step towards conflict resolution. Suddenly, and after two days of talking to leaders in Julis, the *Sulha* delegation members called the mayor of Kafr Yassif for a meeting (which took place in Kafr Yassif), and informed him that the leadership in Julis had changed its opinion, that they were no longer observing the truce, and that the *Sulha* initiative had failed to secure a resolution to the conflict. Members of the *Sulha* committee (which is normally composed of community leaders, including heads of large families, experts in the conflict management method, politicians, and even poets) argued that their initiative failed because influential leaders within the Druze community, individuals who had strong connections with the Israeli establishment, were advising against it. They further asked the mayor and leadership in Kafr Yassif to continue making calls to the police and asking for more police to be sent to the village. At the same time, they promised to send as many people as they could from neighboring villages to help Kafr Yassif if further attacks took place.

Three days after the game, Julis residents attacked Christian residents of Kafr Yassif using Israeli military arms, vehicles,
equipment. As a result of the attack, two more individuals from Kafr Yassif died, over 20 were injured, and scores of houses and property were bombed, burned, and or damaged. This attack occurred under the eyes of the Israeli police but without any intervention. More than 20 policemen were present in the village, but they withdrew in a manner that eyewitnesses perceived was coordinated with the attackers. The attackers were allowed to move from one neighborhood to the next, shooting and bombing, and using military communication equipment. Eyewitnesses recognised an organised military operation. Memories of the past came to the fore for many in the village: the events of 1948, the Kafr Qassim massacre in 1956, and the Land Day of 1976 massacre committed by Israeli forces against Palestinians who demonstrated in opposition to land confiscations.

While the police force that was present inside the village acted in complicity with the attackers, and while it let the entrance between the two villages open, which allowed the attackers to enter Kafr Yassif, police detachments were present at the other two entrances of the village, preventing aid from coming from neighboring villages. The official Israeli narrative is contradictory: while it argues that ‘the police did not expect violence to erupt’, it also reports that ‘violence is part of Arab society and culture’ (suddenly, Druze are talked about as part of the Palestinian Arab community and culture – they are no longer separate religious and ethnic group with ancient ties to Jews).

Furthermore, while the police were unable to prevent the attack, they were able to prevent the hundreds from neighboring villages who tried to enter the village to help the residents of Kafr Yassif. While the police were unable to block the narrow entrance road between Julis to Kafr Yassif, through which the attackers entered the village, they were able to block the other two wider entrances of the village, from which those who came from neighboring villages to help were trying to enter Kafr Yassif.

Soon after the attack, the local council in Kafr Yassif demanded an independent investigation to look into police actions, but the Israeli government refused to respond. Instead, it appointed its own investigation committee that absolved the Israeli government and the security forces from any responsibility. It only recommended: ‘such incidents should be taken more seriously in the
future by the police’. Of course, this would not happen as we will see in the other cases I discuss here. Not one official was held responsible. It is also significant that the investigation committee only talked to Israeli security officials and ignored eyewitnesses who might have contested the narrative provided to them by the police.

After the report was issued, the local council in Kafr Yassif intensified its activism within the Arab community, the Israeli public, and even internationally in an attempt to allow for an independent investigation. Instead, the Israeli government forced the leaders in Kafr Yassif to accept a Sulha framework different from the one initiated earlier by the community itself. The Sulha agreement initiated by the government and its men in the region was accompanied by threats of more violence. While normally Sulha procedures require the naming of those who are responsible for the violence, they need to formally apologise, the Sulha imposed on Kafr Yassif ended without naming those who were responsible. On the contrary, it hinted at the responsibility of Kafr Yassif and its mayor, and some unnamed ‘irresponsible individuals’.

Here, the party accused (the Israeli government being responsible for the interior ministry and police) became the judge of its own actions. Unsurprisingly, it did not charge any Israeli official, and accused the victims for responsibility over an attack that took place against them. This pattern of Israeli official investigations of crimes committed against Palestinians and Arabs and against any group acting in solidarity with them continues to this day. Almost all investigations end with Israel taking hardly any responsibility, and often blaming the victims, as outlined by Edward Said.\(^\text{15}\) Even worse, Israeli officials who are accused of responsibility for crimes against the Palestinian community are often promoted in their military and political careers, as Emile Habibi writes.\(^\text{16}\)

To see whether the Kafr Yassif case was an exception or part of a pattern of Israeli policies, I will now briefly discuss two cases involving inter-communal violence in the Palestinian community; one from another village in Galilee, and another from a village in the West Bank near Ramallah.

2. AL-MAGHAR
Fighting took place in 2005 between Druze and Christian communities in the village of Al-Maghar in Galilee. Resulting from a conflict between two families, one Christian and one Druze, an attack on shops and homes belonging to members in the Christian community took place for a full day, and was renewed again the next day. While eyewitnesses indicated that the Israeli police was present in most places where the violence occurred, members of the police force at times even participated in the attacks. Much damage to property and injuries resulted from this incident; and shock and fear led many members of the Christian community to flee the village until a Sulha secured their return.

3. DEIT JARIR

Another case of inter-communal violence took place in the West Bank in 2006. It happened in Deit Jarir, a village near Ramallah, but located between area A (territory that is ‘controlled’ by the Palestinian Authority) and area C (territory controlled by Israel). In that instance, it was a conflict between a Christian and Muslim family that escalated. Leaders from Deit Jarir called on the Palestinian Authority to intervene. The Palestinian Authority immediately sent a security detachment to Deit Jarir, but was unable to reach the village because the Israeli military prevented it from going further. It took calls from the American Embassy in Jerusalem to allow this force to enter the village and stop attacks against property. While no one was injured or killed, the attack produced extensive damage.

SETTLER COLONIALISM, POLICE STATE, RESISTANCE

Immediately after its inception as a settler colonial state, Israel pursued different policies to repress, marginalise, and demobilise the Palestinian community. At first it created a military regime that officially lasted until 1966. During the period of the military regime, areas where Palestinians were concentrated were declared military zones and filled with military checkpoints. Restrictions on movement were paralleled by repression of any political organising. Furthermore, land confiscation was expedited. While confiscating lands from native Palestinians, the state was building Jewish
settlements in areas that limited the expansion of the Palestinian residential areas and destroyed the Palestinian farming sector. This same pattern took place later in the areas colonised by Israel in 1967. Land confiscation and house demolitions are still practiced against the native Palestinian citizens in the 1948 areas.

In addition to the policies of economic, social, and political repression, the Israeli-imposed and controlled educational system has been working to suppress Palestinian national history and identity while promoting a Zionist version of history that emphasises a very positive image of Judaism, its history, and Zionism and sought loyalty to the state. Although the military regime ended officially in 1966, hundreds of emergency regulations are still intact to this day. They severely constrain the political, economic and social empowerment of the Palestinian community.\(^{17}\)

Of course, these policies did not go without resistance. Contrary to narratives emphasising acquiescence and co-optation, Ahmad Sa’di focuses on coalition building and resistance.\(^{18}\) Resistance started immediately after 1948 and continues to this day. Interestingly, Ahmad Sa’di uses the case of Kafr Yassif to illustrate his argument.\(^{19}\) From Ahmad Sa’di’s study, as well as my archival work in Kafr Yassif, I found that from early on, a coalition was established between nationalists and communists in Kafr Yassif challenging attacks on the local council headed by Yanni Yanni, a well-known nationalist leader (of Greek origin). The residents of the village also challenged state policies of land confiscation, and, as importantly, the attempt by the local Israeli military governor to deport Palestinian refugees from neighbouring destroyed villages that had arrived in Kafr Yassif for refuge and protection. The struggle against these policies in the village led to publications in Al-Ittihad (the Communist Party Arabic newspaper), especially a well-known article by Emile Habibi calling on all Arabs to follow the example of Kafr Yassif. The news of the village reached Europe, and led to a visit by Simone De Beauvoir and Jean Paul Sartre.

Even the policy of ethnicising the Druze community, the draft into the Israeli military, and the attempt to completely disconnect it from the rest of the Palestinian community was not unchallenged. From the beginning, resistance to that policy came from within the community itself. Opposition against the military draft started early
on, and a formal association against the military draft was established in the 1970s and is still active to this day. Members of the Druze community continue to be involved in Palestinian political organising. Druze opposition to state policies was not only due to a sense of belonging to the larger Palestinian and Arab peoples, however. Discrimination and land confiscation were also important.\textsuperscript{20}

In other words, while the Israeli settler colonial state has been pursuing, since its inception, different policies aiming to marginalise, fragment, repress, and dispossess the native Palestinian community, and while these policies have taken several forms, from officially declared ones, to non-officially implemented others, from direct physical violence, to non-physical violence against the community’s identity and well-being, the community has not been passive. The native Palestinian community has been challenging the violence of the state and its policies through continuous political organising and protests, coalition building, maintaining and developing its national identity, language and historical memory, and constantly connecting to the rest of the Palestinian community in the 1967 areas as well as in the diaspora. They have done this through poetry and other forms of artistic expression, through different official and non-official projects, and through direct as well as virtual means of communication. As Nadim Rouhana argues, among others, they remain alienated from the Israeli state.\textsuperscript{21} Even the symbolic violence inherent in attempts to change the names of towns, villages, and other geographic locations is challenged by the community’s resilience and memory of the original Arabic names. The dialectic between repression, erasure, denial, and memory continues to this day.

**CONCLUSION**

While my paper focused on communal identity, conflict and violence, there are other forms of conflicts and violence taking place within the native Palestinian community in Israel. Violence occurs within the same family, within families from the same religious community, between individuals and groups belonging to different political parties (especially around election campaigns), and in between gangs. In some instances, guns are used. These events are always
reported in the Arab media, as well as in the Israeli Hebrew media. Community leaders and political leaders in the Palestinian community continue to call upon the state to initiate policies that would address this problem. To this day, the Israeli state continues to ignore these calls. Israeli security forces seem to only focus on the Palestinian community through the perspective of a security lens, always monitoring what they call the ‘radicalisation’ of the Palestinian public. Israeli security forces only intervene forcefully to suppress political organising and protests.

From the cases discussed here, it appears that the Israeli state encourages internal divisions, continues to repress the Palestinian collective identity, and lets conflicts erupt into violence. On the other hand, some in the Palestinian community are dealing with this problem through continuing calls on the state to maintain internal peace and order. At the same time, local conflict management methods are also used to manage tensions. Many political parties and organisations also work on education and mobilisation for unity.

This paper argued that linking the historical development of 1948 and that of 1967 Palestinians is not only about countering the rupture that took place in 1948, but could also illustrate the intentions of the Israeli establishment, and possible scenarios for the future. In other words, learning about 1948 Palestinians can tell us more about the history of that community, as well as highlighting the pattern of relationships the state has established with the 1967 Palestinians.

Failing to focus on the origins of the state, and on relations between settlers and natives, has led to a flawed understanding of the Israeli state and its relations to native Palestinians in the field of Palestine Studies. By not grounding the analyses on the origin of the state (at least since 1948), much scholarly work ends up missing the impact of settler colonial structures and their ramification for the Palestinians who are citizens of the state and those who reside in the 1967 Territories. In some sense, this work even legitimates the settler colonial structure established in 1948. By not connecting the scholarship about 1948 and that of 1967 Palestinians, we fail to recognise a pattern that started in 1948 and was replicated in 1967. By studying 1948 Palestinians, we can better understand the intentions of the Israeli state for the future of the Palestinians living
in the 1967 areas, as well as those in exile. A state that was established as a settler colonial structure on the ruins of the native population, cannot allow for coexistence unless it dismantles a founding ideology and goes through an historical self-evaluation. This must include the acknowledgement of past wrongs and a commitment to reparation.

Settler colonialism, as many theorists have argued, is based on a genocidal attempt to displace indigenous peoples. This produces endlessly conflicting relations with the native population, and can help explaining Israeli policies and positions towards the 1948 Palestinians, and all Palestinians in general. Furthermore, my work attempts, at least in part, to add to this field by linking the studies of settler colonialism with communal and group conflicts and violence. If the Israeli policy has been to divide and disperse, the Palestinian people, in response must be to unite and converge.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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NOTES

4 See Pappé, The Forgotten Palestinians, Magid Shihade, Why the Palestinians in Israel have been so ‘Peaceful’? (MA dissertation, Seattle: University of Washington, 2001).
5 Shihade, Why the Palestinians in Israel have been so ‘Peaceful’?
Shihade, ‘Settler Colonialism and Conflict’

13 Details of the events can be accessed in Shihade, *Why the Palestinians in Israel have been so ‘Peaceful’?*
Exploitation of Palestinian Labour in Contemporary Zionist Colonialism

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This essay, based on a paper presented at the ‘Past is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine’ conference at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London on the 5th of March, 2011, contains preliminary ideas for a future research, and does not represent a complete study. It contains ideas that need further development, and some of the facts presented here are based on interviews, personal experience and comments made off the record by officials who preferred not to be quoted by name. A future study will include a more comprehensive referencing for all the facts and arguments presented here.

The imperial powers of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries developed a colonial model built on exploiting local resources and cheap labor in the colonies. This model became an essential factor in the global economic systems which prevailed until the end of the Second World War, but has now been replaced by a different array of relations between Western powers and their former colonies. Israeli colonialism in Palestine has often been noted as an exception – a colonial movement which continued to expand while other colonial regimes were in remission.

When the Israeli government adopted the ‘Separation’ policies in the 1990s, it seemed to make a historic choice to favor segregation over exploitation. While the Zionist movement had contained an internal struggle between the proponents of segregation and ‘demographic victory’ and the proponents of expansionism and exploitation, the Israeli Prime Minister at the time, Yitzhak Rabin, clearly favored the former camp. The Israeli government allowed the Palestinian Authority to take over the management of the Palestinian
population not merely as part of its concessions in the Oslo negotiations, but also as part of a plan to minimise the friction between the Israeli military and the Palestinian population, and in order to lay the foundations for a segregation system that would minimise contact between the populations.

The imposition of blanket closures (and, subsequently, the erection of the Separation Wall and the siege of the Gaza Strip), preventing Palestinian workers from reaching Israeli employers, were the main manifestation of this strategy, and were an integral part of the same policy that allowed the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli business sector, especially the construction and agriculture sectors, which had become accustomed to disempowered and underpaid workforce, took an active role in drawing the first stage of the Oslo negotiations (‘Oslo A’). But when the government began severing their ties to the Palestinian workforce (‘Oslo B’), they lobbied the government, and were appeased with permits to import large numbers of labor immigrants to replace the Palestinian workers.

Much has been written in recent years on Israel’s changing economic policy, by authors such as Arie Arnon, Shlomo Swirski and Neve Gordon arguing that as Israel moves away from an exploitation-based policy, the occupation becomes less profitable, and eventually even a burden on the Israeli economy. Instead, ethnic domination and ‘purity’ now play an increasing role in the Zionist colonisation of Palestine. So how does the Palestinian working class fit into the new economic system, which promotes separation over exploitation? Is it a system which Israel can sustain?

**IS EXPLOITATION REALLY OVER?**

One should not be too hasty to conclude that Israeli employers stopped exploiting Palestinian workers. Merely glancing at the regular reports by Kav Laoved, an Israeli workers-rights organisation that has been monitoring mistreatment of Palestinian workers and migrant workers by Israeli employers, paints a disturbing picture of workers being overworked for long hours, denied their basic rights and put in extreme physical danger by their Israeli employers. But the reports also show that Israeli employers in the colonies in the
West Bank have perfected sophisticated mechanisms over time in order to distance themselves from their workers and their responsibility towards them. Jewish colonists who run enterprises in the West Bank employ local Palestinian contractors who bring the workers, thus avoiding their responsibilities for the rights of these workers and avoiding the need to report on the actual numbers of workers employed by them. Such disavowal of responsibility was deemed illegal by the Israeli courts but is nevertheless still in practice.

Prior to the outbreak of the first Intifada, 32% of the West Bank workforce and 57% of the Gaza workforce were employed by Israeli employers, and work in Israel was the biggest source of income in the Palestinian economy. Currently 0% of the Gaza workforce is employed by Israeli employers, and 12.6% of the West Bank workforce is employed by Israeli employers (3.2% in the colonies). Out of the total Palestinian workforce, only 8.5% are employed by Israeli employers (2.2% in the colonies). All data on the number of Palestinians employed in the colonies is based on rough estimates. Approximately 53,000 Palestinian workers (8.5% of the Palestinian workforce, or 12.6% of the West Bank workforce) enter Israel to work for employers inside Israel (about half of them without permits), and about 28,000 work in the colonies. This makes a total of 81,000 Palestinian workers who work for Israeli employers, none of them are from Gaza, compared with 202,000 labor immigrants who are currently estimated to be working in the Israeli economy (in Israel and in the colonies in the West Bank, most of them without permits). This means that the Israeli business sector now offers employment to a very limited proportion of the Palestinian public. Israeli businesses within Israel and in the colonies have grown to rely on labor immigrants instead.

The Gaza Strip seems to be the model of extreme separation which Israeli officials are considering for the West Bank as well – at the cost of evacuating the colonies in Gaza, the Israeli government achieved total separation of populations, and prevents Palestinian workers from entering Israel from Gaza.

Work for Israeli employers is no longer the biggest source of income to the Palestinian economy. International aid, mostly humanitarian aid in the form of food and emergency services, is now
the largest source of income. Thus, even though Israel remains the sovereign power in the Occupied Territory, it shirks its responsibility to the economic needs of the population, a responsibility which the international community has so far been willing to shoulder on Israel’s behalf. The exploitation of labor still exists in the Occupied Territory, but has been declining since the early 1990s. It is no longer the major aspect of the occupation economy, and it was overtaken by security and military logic, by ‘ethnic purity’ considerations and by colonial politics.

**PALESTINIAN CITIZENS OF ISRAEL**

The dual nature of the Israeli economy vis-à-vis the Palestinians – a mix of exploitation and dispossession (mainly of land) – did not start with the 1967 occupation, but was entrenched in the complex way in which the Palestinian citizens of Israel were simultaneously included and excluded from the mainstream Israeli market, even before the establishment of the state of Israel in Palestine. On the one hand, many Palestinian citizens of Israel are employed in low-status jobs, and for low wages, especially in the service sector, in agriculture and in construction. These workers are testimony to the colonial methods embedded in the Israeli economy and the exploitation practices still utilised against non-Jews. On the other hand, a study by Amtanes Shehadeh demonstrated that decades of internal segregation within Israel pushed Palestinian citizens of Israel into forming a ‘niche market’, with its own small agricultural, commercial and service sectors (and a very small industrial sector) serving mainly the Palestinian community.³

Indeed, the concept of ‘Hebrew Labor’ was developed by the early Jewish colonists in Palestine at the beginning of the twentieth century as a call to employ only Jews and to buy only from Jews. This call was adopted by the mainstream of the colonist community as a strategy to entrench Jewish self-sufficiency and hegemony in Palestine. This internal tension in the Zionist movement between the desire for a tiered society in which Palestinian labor is sought as a tool to increase the profit of Jewish businesses, and those who seek a ‘pure’ Jewish economic sphere in which the working class is also predominantly Jewish, is far from being resolved. Recent years saw a
parallel increase in statements by senior policymakers about the need to ‘close gaps’ and bring the Palestinian citizens into all sectors of the economy (statements intended mostly for international ears), and of the ‘Hebrew Labor’ movement, with attempts to intimidate employers who employ Palestinians. These statements by senior policymakers and right-wing movements are aimed at marginalising Palestinians and can be seen as direct results of international criticism of Israel’s ethnic policies.

THE OLD INDUSTRIES

Shlomo Swirski noted that industries in the colonies tend to be slightly lower-tech and more labour-intensive compared to Israeli industries (although some notable exceptions do exist). While the Israeli government boasts that Israel is a world technology leader, large sections of the Israeli economy are still quite traditional. Many of the traditional industries (such as packaging, plastics, furniture and food processing) are able to compete with cheap East-Asian imports by building factories and warehouses in the industrial zones in the colonies, where they receive substantial government subsidies, pay lower taxes, and have access to the exploitable Palestinian workforce.

The decision of the Palestinian Authority from 2010 to organise a boycott of products from the colonies in the Occupied Territory served to highlight the role that this industry plays in the Israeli economy. The chairman of the Manufacturer’s Association of Israel, Israel’s strongest lobby of employers, is Shraga Brosh. Brosh himself owns a factory in the colonies, and used his capacity as chairman of the Manufacturer’s Association to lobby the government to protect businesses in the colonies, and to pressure the Palestinian Authority to refrain from boycotting products from the colonies or from preventing Palestinians from working in them.

Nonetheless, in the absence of statistics on the volume of production and economic activity in the colonies (the Israeli government uses different tools to obfuscate the distinction between colony industries and Israeli industries), the actual importance of the colony industries remains unclear.
FROM THE ‘SLAVE MARKET’ TO THE LABORATORY?

As Palestinian workers began to enter Israel in large numbers after the beginning of the 1967 occupation, certain areas (especially in the big cities) became gathering places for Palestinian workers, who would congregate in the early morning hours, and for Israeli contractors who would drive by and collect workers for the day. Palestinian workers would wait in these areas for hours, hoping to be picked up for work. Those who were picked up (those judged by the contractors to be young, fit and hard-working), would be paid for a single day of work, with no guarantees for another day of employment and no social benefits whatsoever. Those who weren’t picked up had to return home empty-handed, after wasting half a day. These areas were nicknamed by Israelis as the ‘slave markets’, perhaps an indication of the unease which they felt at the abuse of human beings happening under their noses.

Since the first Intifada, these ‘slave markets’ have been mostly dismantled, and with the enactment of new policies of closures and a restrictive permit policy (which made it very difficult for Palestinians to enter Israel if they don’t already have an employer waiting on the other side), today Israelis cannot simply pick up a worker for gardening or cleaning jobs at will. Palestinian workers have no longer access to a safe place to gather. This particular form of exploitation, in which the workers are expected to wait all day in the hopes of finding an employer, has been nearly (though not entirely) eliminated.

Yet new forms of exploitation may be emerging which transform Palestinians from exploited workers to exploited ‘guinea pigs’. In a 2007 article entitled ‘Laboratory for a Fortress World’, Naomi Klein first suggested the idea that Israel is turning the Palestinian Territories (especially Gaza) into laboratories for new Israeli-made weapons and control mechanisms, something which can be seen as a new form of exploitation. This idea has been further developed in her book The Shock Doctrine. The idea is that a powerful sector of the Israeli economy, the ‘homeland security’ sector, emerged to create technology for the Israeli government and army to control the occupied population and repress its resistance, and that companies such as Elbit, Magal and Nice have sought new
markets (other than the Israeli Ministry of Defense) for their products, and have come to rely on their equipment being tested on Palestinians in order to promote their sales. These companies and their practices were described and analyzed by Neve Gordon in an article entitled ‘The Political Economy of Israel’s Homeland Security/Surveillance Industry’.9

The new product which Israel is producing on the backs of Palestinians is therefore not a physical product but rather an accumulation of experience and technology designed to achieve what Jeff Halper calls ‘warehousing’, a form of mass-scale imprisonment and containment of impoverished people in controlled environments from which they cannot launch an effective resistance. This ‘warehousing’ is a product that is indeed greatly sought-after by many governments and corporations around the world, especially following the 9/11 attacks. However, it should be stressed that Israel’s growing military and homeland security industry accounts for merely 10-15% of Israel’s exports, 3-4% of its GDP and 1-3% of its workforce, so one cannot argue that the Israeli economy is primarily based on exploiting the Palestinian population.10

FROM SOCIAL GAPS TO POLITICS OF INCLUSION

The common element to both exploitation and dispossession is that they both serve to redistribute wealth from one group to another. While exploitation focuses on appropriating the value produced by the victim as it is being produced, dispossession focuses on appropriating value that has been previously produced or on the appropriation of natural resources. The exploitation and dispossession of Palestinians helped fund the military buildup of the Israeli state and to entrench the Zionist project, but, over time, the practices seeped inwards, creating vast gaps within Israeli society itself, and creating a growing group of impoverished Jews within Israel whose (economic) lot is no better than that of middle-class Palestinians in the West Bank.

Indeed, the mass protest movement that formed in Israel in the summer of 2011 demonstrates not only the impoverishment of the Israeli middle-class and the unbearable social inequalities that have come to plague Israeli society, but also the seemingly
insurmountable obstacles in the path of a social justice movement which grows out of an ethnically unjust society. The Israeli establishment saw an opportunity to repress the protest by hinting that the protestors are not patriotic enough, that ‘social justice’ might undermine Jewish superiority, and by reinforcing the notion that security needs come before economic needs.

These contradictions are not unique to Israel, but are common features of classical colonialist powers. Inequality, corruption and internal conflict flourish in societies which accumulate their wealth at the expense of occupied nations. The Palestinian resistance (in its many forms) to Israel’s economic practices has an opportunity to use this turn of event to its advantage. Although it could follow a traditional route of state-building (the resistance path through military struggle or through diplomatic efforts), establishing a partially independent economy based on internal exploitation and strong local elites, this path is unlikely to successfully redress the economic injustice which has accumulated over many decades.

The alternative is to exploit the weakness which Zionist colonial practices brought upon Israeli society to seek a political path to inclusion. Such resistance is based on grassroots protest, international solidarity and non-violent action. This path is much more revolutionary and will doubtlessly be resisted by Palestinian elites, but it has the potential to recruit dissatisfied groups within Israeli society, as well as re-connecting with the Palestinian citizens of Israel, and beginning to redress not only political injustice, but also the economic injustice which plagues Palestine.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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NOTES


3 Amtanes Shehadeh, Blocking the Development (Haifa: Mada al-Carmel, 2006).

4 As exemplified by various ‘Hebrew Labour’ websites, and different groups of right-wing activists who map businesses who employ Palestinians and call for their boycott.

5 Swirski, Cost of Occupation.


7 Naomi Klein, ‘Laboratory for a Fortress World’, The Nation, 02/07/07.


Purchase by Other Means: The Palestine Nakba and Zionism’s Conquest of Economics

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This article questions the singularity of the Palestine Nakba. It highlights some of the historical preconditions that enabled the Nakba to occur, revealing it to have been a consolidation rather than a point of origin. The preconditions that had equipped the Zionists for settlement before they first set foot in Palestine combined economic, technological, military, cultural and moral attributes that were the cumulative outcome of centuries of Eurocolonial history. The article introduces the concept of preaccumulation to characterise this complex historical endowment that settlers imported with them. The article also argues that the donors who funded the world Zionist project differed from the speculators who financed territorial expansion in other settler colonies in that they did not require a return on their investment. Unencumbered by the obligation to return a profit, Zionist settlers enjoyed the easiest of imported advantages in relation to the local population, a confounding of capitalist rationality that overwhelmed the limited set of resources available to Native Palestinians. Combining their unconditional funding with the ethnically exclusive strategy known as the Conquest of Labour, Zionists built up a contiguous zone of Jewish-only land on which to fashion their ethnocratic state-in-waiting in Mandate Palestine. Against this background, the article argues that the Nakba accelerated, albeit very radically, the ‘slow-motion’ means to Native dispossession that had been the only means available to Zionists while they were still building their colonial state.

The bare statistics of the Nakba are well enough established. Between late 1947 and early 1949, Jewish militias, subsequently regularised as the Israeli Defence Forces, forcibly expelled many thousands of Palestinians from their homes and prevented others who had fled the fighting from returning home. In the event, some three quarters of a million Palestinians were driven into exile, their homes being either destroyed or expropriated by Jewish immigrants. By the 1949 Armistice, the Jewish population – which two years earlier had constituted 26% of the population of Mandate Palestine
and had owned around 7% of the total land – had seized 77% of the land and come to constitute 80% of the population.¹ As settler takeovers go, this lightning dispossession dwarfs even the late-1830s seizure of Australia’s Port Phillip grasslands or the postbellum invasion of the US Plains.² Whether in Palestinian memory, as the ‘Great Catastrophe’, or in Zionist memory, as the ‘War of Independence’, these events truly constitute a watershed. On this at least, there is no disagreement.

From a historian’s point of view, the problem with watersheds is that they tend to obscure preconditions, continuities, the deep groundwork of historical possibility. This is not to discount the watersheds: the booms and busts, the revolutionary transformations or, for that matter, the seemingly miraculous flukes. But it is to say that they did not rest on thin air. Rome is not alone in taking more than a day. To be dazzled by a watershed is to miss the structure subtending the event. Thus the Nakba figures as a point of origin, as if it had no preconditions – apart, perhaps, from the Nazi Holocaust, itself a watershed.³ But just as the Holocaust presupposed and drew sustenance from a preceding history of European antisemitism, so did the Nakba rest on a well-established legacy of Zionist settler colonisation in Palestine. This article seeks to identify some of the structural preconditions that enabled the Nakba event to occur, revealing it as a consolidation rather than a point of origin.

SETTLER COLONIALISM

Settler colonialism’s essential feature – or so I have tried to argue – is ‘a sustained institutional tendency to supplant the indigenous population’, a cultural logic of elimination that ‘reconciles a range of historical practices that might otherwise seem distinct’.⁴ In the Australian context to which I was referring, the range of historical practices that commonly evince this cultural logic include homicide, spatial expulsion and/or confinement, various forms of assimilation, and a representational discourse that I term repressive authenticity. In the US context, the list overlaps substantially with the Australian one, augmented by certain features that flow from the acknowledgement of Indian sovereignty, in particular allotment and tribal termination.⁵ This commonality does not, of course, mean that Australian and United States histories are somehow the same, alike
reducible to a single underlying determinant. The idea that particular histories should share nothing in common would, however, be absurd – how else could we talk of such widely distributed commonplaces as capitalism, patriarchy or homophobia? As Paul Kramer has neatly observed, national histories are unique but unexceptional. Analytically, our task is to map the particular histories that sustain settler colonialism in any given locale, distinguishing the contingent from the systematic as well as the autochthonous from the transnational.

The primacy of the logic of elimination is a political and perspectival matter as well as an analytical one. It prioritises the outcome for conquered Native peoples. This has at least two consequences. First, it enables us to distinguish between different relationships of domination. There is a basic difference between being eliminated and being exploited for one’s labour, a difference that monolithic categories such as colonialism or imperialism tend to elide, their usefulness for understanding the coordinating activities of metropolitan hegemonies notwithstanding. Second, the logic of elimination is prior to features that distinguish settler societies among themselves, such as whether they are monarchical or republican, Christian or Jewish, Black or White, communist or democratic, Asian or European. As experienced by Native peoples, categorical distinctions within a typology of invaders can hardly compare in significance to the totality of dispossession. Seen in this light, scholarly resistance to the priority of the logic of elimination represents a settler perspective.

It is important to stress this analytical rigour when turning to the Zionist conquest of Palestine because the techniques of dispossession whereby settlers supplanted the Natives of Palestine differ significantly from the relatively uniform set of practices whereby settlers dispossessed the Natives of Australia and of North America. Nonetheless, the eliminatory outcome has been consistent, so the situation provides an opportunity to explore settler colonialism’s strategic versatility.

This article will consider two salient differences between the Zionist colonisation of Palestine and the companion colonisations of Australia and the USA. In the first instance, Zionism originated as an international movement that consciously avoided confinement to a
single metropole in favour of a supportive transnational umbrella that Maxime Rodinson termed the ‘collective mother country’. Second, prior to the end of 1947, Zionism was conspicuous for its policy of purchasing Native land in at least notional conformity with the domestic laws of the current local power. In these two important respects, Zionist policy in Palestine differed strikingly from – even, in the case of the purchases, reversed – settler policies in Australia or the United States. Thus it is highly significant that Zionist policy in Palestine constituted an intensification of, rather than a departure from, settler colonialism. In stark contrast to the Australian or United States models, for instance, Zionism rigorously refused, as it continues to refuse, any suggestion of Native assimilation. In this and other ways that will be discussed below, Zionism constitutes a more exclusive exercise of the settler logic of elimination than we encounter in the Australian and US examples. This conclusion only seems surprising if one concentrates on features that are extraneous to the logic of elimination, as Zionist apologists understandably do. Eschewing such diversions, this article will examine two features that have been held out as distinguishing Zionism from other forms of settler colonialism – the lack of a unitary metropole and the policy of purchase – in their particular historical context. As will emerge, these two features constitute linked elements in a uniquely developed programme of Indigenous dispossession.

PREACCUMULATION

The basic link between Zionism’s diffuse metropole and Jewish land purchases in Palestine consists in the fact that the former financed the latter. As the old joke went, Zionism meant one Jew using another Jew’s money to send a third Jew to Palestine. In common with many ethnoracial slurs, however, this joke represented a form of displacement, since there was nothing particular to Zionism about settler colonialism’s metropolitan funding. Rather, in much the same way as antisemitism furnished a lexicon for capitalism to talk about itself, so might this joke equally well have referred to the colonisation of Australia or the United States. The frontier was led from behind, typically by speculators – speculators, moreover, who tended not to be limited by nationality. In considering the transnational network that placed and maintained Jewish settlers in Palestine, therefore, we
should not think of Zionism as exceptional. Rather, the Zionist case enables us to see some general features of settler colonialism with enhanced clarity. This is particularly so because, in the annals of settler colonialism, Zionism presents an unparallelled example of deliberate, explicit planning. No campaign of territorial dispossession was ever waged more thoughtfully. Methodologically, this characteristic makes Zionism a particularly revealing archive for research into the logic of settler colonialism. The programme that Zionist planners consciously systematised combined elements that had converged more haphazardly in other dispossessions. To appreciate this, we should start before the establishment of the ‘frontier’ (in the Zionist case, before the Bilu settlers landed in 1882), and consider the historical preconditions that had equipped the invaders for settlement before they first set foot in Native country. These preconditions, a kind of historical capital, brought together a range of economic, technological, military, cultural and moral attributes that were the combined outcome of centuries of Eurocolonial history. I shall refer to this aggregate historical endowment that settlers brought with them as *preaccumulation*.

Settler preaccumulation had a global reach, a characteristic that endowed the settler project with an effectively unlimited capacity to reproduce itself. This near inexhaustibility opposed itself to the relative fixity of the Native stock. The disparity is crucial. In demographic terms, for instance, it meant that, where invasion rendered the Native population subject to extreme reproductive constraints, there were always more settlers where the first ones had come from – which, in the final analysis, meant anywhere else, the settler population being augmentable not only by further cognate settlers but, in addition, by any number of coerced subordinates imported from outside. Economically, Native societies were reduced to generating subsistence from an ever-shrinking repository that, even within territory that remained unconquered, became subject to the depredations of an advance guard of settlement made up of frontier irregulars, imported livestock, exotic predators and the like. The technological and military capacities that settlers inherited from Europe’s expansive history are also well-known, as is Europeans’ acquired immunity to the diseases they imported with them. On occasion, of course, the advantages could change hands, as when
Plains Indians acquired horses and guns, or Maori thrived on the introduced potato.\textsuperscript{12}

On the whole, though, settlers brought with them an invasive inheritance that had been forged through centuries of colonial expansion and associated class struggle within Europe. The two were inseparable, the cotton that the industrial proletariat made up in Manchester’s dark mills being sourced from unfree labour put to work in Egypt, India and the Deep South, the two parties further providing an expanding market for the products of their unwitting (not to say unwilling) collaboration. Thus it is important to appreciate preaccumulation culturally as well as materially, as a historical endowment of consciousness. European settlers brought with them historically specific ideologies of class, race and nation that had participated decisively in collective subjugations at home and abroad. As Barbara Fields once put it, in a different context:

\begin{quote}
When English servants entered the ring in [colonial] Virginia, they did not enter alone. Instead, they entered in company with the generations who had preceded them in the struggle; and the outcome of those earlier struggles established the terms and conditions for the latest one. But Africans and Afro-West Indians did enter the ring alone.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

In contrast to enslaved Africans in the Americas, Natives did not enter the ring alone. Their reinforcements were not oceans away. Nonetheless, their histories had equipped them with competencies that were not tailored to the unequal confrontation that settlers’ endless renewability set in train. Natives’ limited local stock was no match for capital’s global elasticity. This, in the end, constituted the metropolitan advantage, a general condition that, as we shall see, was played out in particular ways in the Zionist takeover of Palestine.

There is, however, a basic difference between preaccumulation and the European experience of primitive accumulation that has figured so prominently in Marxist historiography. This is even apart from a certain Eurocentrism in established Marxist history-writing, which tends to emphasise the final stages of the production process
– industrial technologies and the domestic process of class formation that accompanied their development – at the expense of earlier stages of primary production that were to a large extent conducted overseas, by enslaved and/or colonised labour as yet unmotivated by the lash of wages.\textsuperscript{14} Even apart from the Eurocentric nature of this narrative, whereby many of the raw materials of industrial production figure as somehow miraculously (or, at least, internally) conceived, the point is that, when Europe was piecing together its imperial-industrial-capitalist global hegemony, there was no prior Europe already riding on its back. True, there were rival civilisational conglomerates, in particular the Islamic world, but these proved to be no match once the Atlantic had become a West-European sea.\textsuperscript{15} Marx himself observed that capitalism in the Americas was of the purest historical type, unalloyed by feudal survivals.\textsuperscript{16} Though this view underestimated the new-world articulations between European and Indigenous economies, it expressed the momentous fact that, in contrast to the tortuous, centuries-long domestic development of industrial capitalism and its associated social relations, Eurocolonial society arrived in Native country \textit{ex nihilo} (or perhaps \textit{ex machina}) and ready-made, condensing the power and violence of the long run. This pre-formedness, a plenitude that is independent of local determinations, is preaccumulation’s central characteristic.

Initially, therefore – which is to say, prior to the moment of colonisation – preaccumulation is a metropolitan inheritance (the metropole itself being constructed in dynamic opposition to those whom it subjugates). Once on Native soil, however, settlers confront Natives endowed with different plenitudes, particular outcomes of their own local histories. Thus the outcome can never be predicted in advance. As Richard White and others have shown, the roots of Native American dependency could extend back for centuries.\textsuperscript{17} In the Palestinian case, the Natives were already incorporated in – and to that extent, protected by – extensive (albeit moribund) empires, first Ottoman then British. In relation to preaccumulation, this meant that they were already marginally articulated into global capitalism (at a remove, as it were). To explain a settler-colonial invasion, therefore, it can never be enough simply to invoke the global potency of capital, mighty though that is. Rather, in each instance, settler ascendancy rests on a particular contextual mobilisation of Europe’s preaccumulated colonial resources.
In the case of Palestine, as I hope to demonstrate below, the particular resource that Zionism was able to marshal distinguished the capital transmitted to Palestine from the general run of speculative investment whereby capital was exported to other European colonies. With the possible (and early) exception of Baron Rothschild, the capital that Zionists garnered for investment in Palestine, as Barbara Smith has pointed out, was not conditional on the return of a financial profit. In this important regard, donors who funded the world Zionist project differed from the speculators who had financed territorial expansion in Australia and North America. Unencumbered by the requirement to return a profit, subsidised Zionist settlers enjoyed the easiest of imported advantages in relation to the local population, a confounding of capitalist rationality that overwhelmed the limited Native stock. In broad outline, this situation came about as follows.

**OTTOMAN ORIGINS**

For a sustained colonising programme that was to achieve such enormous successes, the Zionist plan for Palestine displays a consistent set of features whose effectiveness has not been hampered by its remarkable simplicity. Ostensibly operating within established imperial frameworks, but always with an eye to eventually supplanting them, Zionists have secured international support, both from regnant imperial powers and from private sources, to convert an ever-expanding contiguous wedge of Palestine from Native ownership into an irreversibly Jewish endowment, and to procure the import from overseas of funding and Jewish personnel at a level sufficient to maintain the continued expansion of this ethnocratically consolidated zone by whatever means should prove available and viable. This strikingly simple plan has been pursued with a sleepless organisational tenacity that remains apparent in Israel’s ongoing disinclination to specify its borders.

When the Zionist (or, more strictly, proto-Zionist) Bilu group landed in Palestine in the early 1880s, they can hardly have had the foundation of an exclusively Jewish nation-state in mind. At least, if any of them had such ambitions, they would have been hubristic in the extreme. Moreover, unlike their Second-Aliya successors, who
began to arrive in the early years of the twentieth century, this group did not object to employing local Palestinian labour on the agricultural co-operatives that, after a false start, it established with funding from Rothschild. By contrast, the Second Aliya firmly repudiated the Bilu group’s reliance on Native collaboration, devoting its unremitting energies – again, with diasporan financial support – to establishing Jewish-only enclaves, initially the moshav agricultural collectives and, ultimately, the rigorously ethnocratic kibbutzim.

Despite this substantial difference, the Second Aliya chose to name itself as such – thereby retrospectively dubbing the Bilu group the ‘First Aliya’ – in the interest of establishing both a historical continuity and a historical rupture. The continuity consisted in a colonial entity termed the ‘new yishuv’, a mode of Jewish settlement in Palestine that was held to differ fundamentally from earlier Ashkenazi in-migrations, whose inspiration had been emphatically religious. Accordingly, these earlier arrivals became in their turn the ‘old yishuv’, disparaged and orientalised by the Zionists as lethargic rabbinical misfits. Thus, the rupture that Second-Aliya theorists ordained in co-opting the Bilu group’s legacy as a settler point of origin provided, as Yehouda Shenhav has put it, ‘an epistemological break, a point of discontinuity, which made possible the separation between the ethno-religious past and the ethno-national present’. Ideologically, Zionism was organic to the nineteenth century, a European secular-colonial-nationalist movement.

As a tiny group of new arrivals, the new yishuv was both constrained and protected by the Sublime Porte (the Ottoman administration). Natives recognised the incoming colonists’ territorial agenda very early in the piece. The earliest Palestinian protest against modern Jewish settlement in Palestine came in 1891 in the form of a telegram asking the Grand Vizir to stop further immigration to and land purchases in Palestine on the part of Russian Jews, a protest which, as Neville Mandel noted, ‘was lodged less than a decade after modern Jewish immigration into Palestine began and several years before the Zionist Movement was founded’. Mandel and others have documented the ways in which opposition to Jewish immigration and land purchases in Palestine gathered among Palestinian and other Arabs in the period leading up to World War I.
established enmity with Russia, the pogrom-plagued source of most of the Jewish immigration. Moreover, the sick man of Europe had no desire to encourage large numbers of immigrants who, as Europeans, would be entitled to special privileges, including tax exemptions, under the system of capitulations. Nor did it wish to incubate yet another nationalist problem in its midst. This last consideration prompted the Porte to place a selective ban on Jewish immigration into Palestine, which constituted a potential focus for the development of an unruly Jewish nationalism.

Faced with these constraints, Zionist colonisers devised a range of strategic responses. The Ottoman administration was badly co-ordinated and inefficient, with the result that many of the regulations designed to restrict Jewish immigration and land purchasing were inconsistently applied, temporary visas for the purpose of religious pilgrimage were routinely used to enable Jews to enter Palestine, whereupon they might simply vanish or bribe corrupt officials to allow them to stay, and the capitulation system enabled Jews who encountered problems to enlist consular support from their European nations of citizenship. In regard to land purchases, Jews who were already resident Ottoman citizens, and even on occasion non-Jewish Arabs, could be used to buy land on behalf of the newcomers. In 1901, taking advantage of a concession granted under an Ottoman land code dating from 1867, the Jewish Colonization Association was able to acquire a very large tract of land in Tiberias from the Greek-Orthodox Sursuq landowning family, who were based in Beirut. This purchase formed a territorial core around which further purchasing would subsequently enable a contiguous block of Jewish-owned land to be established. Though Jewish numbers remained a minute proportion of the population of Palestine as a whole, with landholdings to match, their rate of expansion (a tenfold increase over two decades) was dramatic.

A number of key features of Zionist settler colonialism that will figure importantly in the analysis to come are already apparent at this early stage. In particular, as noted, the acquisition of Native territory was initially carried out in conformity with the existing legal system. True, an appreciable level of friction between settlers and Natives developed once the settlers had moved onto the land they had purchased, friction arising mainly from the settlers’ disregard for
local protocols concerning access to and use of land. Nonetheless, the procedures whereby Zionists had obtained title to that land in the first place were more or less in accordance with Ottoman law, a situation that contrasts sharply with the lawless violence that characterised the acquisition of Native territory in Australia and the United States. Lawless violence was simply not an option for a small group of European settlers who were trying to establish a colonial beachhead within a powerful, albeit decadent, established empire. The conventional settler technique of violent expropriation only became available to Zionism in 1948, when the ethnic purging of Native territory heralding national independence occurred in response to metropolitan withdrawal. Up to that point, however, the yishuv had largely confined itself to operating within the framework of successive imperial umbrellas, first the Ottomans and then, under the League of Nations’ Palestine Mandate, the British. In addition to constraining the Zionist enterprise, these empires (in particular the British) also provided protection for it, together with a legal system that enabled the purchase of land and immigration regulations that were susceptible to strategic manipulation. Still lacking a colonial state, Zionism did not seek to end imperialism but to harness it. In this regard, a major success came about in 1917, when the Balfour Declaration anticipated the shift from Ottoman to British rule.

UNDER THE MANDATE

One of the biggest of the many very big breaks that Zionism was to enjoy in the twentieth century came about in 1914, when the Ottomans not only chose to participate in the First World War but picked the wrong side. In the wake of the Great War, Turkey, in common with Germany, was obliged to submit to its empire being dismembered and parcelled out among its victorious European rivals under the aegis of the newly-established League of Nations’ Wilsonian mandate system. In the outcome, in addition to Britain securing Iraq and France securing Syria (with Australia, under a different category of mandate, securing Papua), Britain not only gained the Palestine Mandate but, fatefully, succeeded in having an extended version of the Balfour Declaration inserted into what thereby became a unique form of mandate, providing as it did for the
preferential intrusion of a third party into the relationship between a European authority and the local population it was to administer.\textsuperscript{31}

The Balfour Declaration had been issued in 1917, while General Allenby was advancing on Jerusalem, at that point still an Ottoman possession. It expressed a favourable view of the ‘establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people’, an object whose achievement the British government would ‘use their best endeavours to facilitate’. Strengthening these words four years after the defeat of Turkey, Article 6 of the 1922 Mandate charged the British to ‘facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions and [to] encourage, in co-operation with the Jewish Agency […] close settlement by Jews on the land, including State lands and waste lands not required for public purposes’. Lest the implications of ‘close’ Jewish settlement on state and ‘waste’ lands – which, under the continuing Ottoman system of tenure, were scheduled as public property rather than as abandoned or ownerless – were not clear enough, Article 11 of the Mandate went on to provide that, ‘in connection with the development’ of Palestine, the British administration would have:

\begin{quote}
full power to provide for public ownership or control of any of the natural resources of the country or of the public works, services and utilities established or to be established therein. It shall introduce a land system appropriate to the needs of the country, having regard […] to the desirability of promoting the close settlement and intensive cultivation of the land.
\end{quote}

Thus did John Locke become an unlikely champion of Judaeocracy; the terms ‘development’ and ‘intensive cultivation’ invoking the classic liberal formula linking agricultural efficiency to population increase, while the repetition of Article 6’s ‘close settlement’ left no doubt as to which population was scheduled to increase as a result of its progressive (read ‘European’) development of the land. This form of words represented a triumph for Zionist lobbying in both Britain and the United States, Felix Frankfurter and Louis Brandeis having secured President Woodrow Wilson’s endorsement of the Balfour Declaration, which had itself resulted, in large part, from the
influence of Chaim Weizmann on British politicians, notably Arthur Balfour, David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill – Christian statesmen whose distaste for Jews was matched by their fondness for Zionism.\textsuperscript{32}

In this and other decisive ways, the yishuv’s influence on Whitehall did not suffer from the lack of a delegated governmental structure. Indeed, the absence of a formal metropolitan relationship enhanced Zionism’s capacity to mobilise a transatlantic network of support that was relatively independent of colonial rivalries between Western nations. In the years between the two world wars, the British Mandate provided an incubator in which international Zionism was able to make crucial progress towards assembling the demographic and territorial prerequisites for a European settler state in Palestine. To this end, with formidable organisational zeal, Zionist institutions secured the importation of Jewish people and capital into Palestine and maximised the efficiency of their distribution once they got there. This agenda was personified in the career and writings of colonial master-strategist Arthur Ruppin, whose incisive pragmatism informed the designs of central Zionist planners, including David Ben Gurion and key removal planner Yosef Weitz. The context in which this was made possible was the British Mandate. The harmony between Zionism and the British reflected a substantial convergence of interests.\textsuperscript{33} In the absence of the Ottomans, the yishuv needed an imperial protector to shield it from the resentment that its intrusive activities were bound to provoke among the Native majority. Support from the United States was effectively informal. Having only recently taken over from Turkey, Britain had the requisite administrative capacity without being compromised by long-standing affiliations (possession of which gave the yishuv a local advantage), and Zionists had high-level connections within the British government.\textsuperscript{34} Correspondingly, Palestine’s situation at the eastern end of the Mediterranean had major implications for British imperial strategy. The region as a whole, especially the Suez Canal, was vital to traffic between Britain and its imperial holdings in India and beyond. A Jewish state there could provide a reliable regional ally without incurring the need to overcome French resistance.\textsuperscript{35}

This convergence of interests extended back to the Great War years, when British support for Zionist aspirations in Palestine had
been intended to encourage Jews in both the United States and post-Czarist Russia to influence their governments to back Britain’s war effort, not only against the Ottomans, whose defeat would make Palestine available, but against imperial Germany – who, in waging war on the Czar, had taken on the instigator of the pogroms.  

Moreover, there was no saying that, after the war, the tripartite alliance of Britain, France and Russia would hold. A Jewish Palestine might provide a buffer-zone capable of insulating British interests in Egypt from threats to the north and the east (an option that Britain’s most influential Zionist, Chaim Weizmann, promoted as an ‘Asiatic Belgium’). It could even enable the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf to be linked by rail, through an ideally British Mesopotamia/Iraq. In the event, as Kenneth Stein observed, once the Mandate had been established, Britain would come to devote an ‘overwhelming predominance’ of administrative expenditure to strategic purposes, ‘while only small amounts of governmental revenue were made available to ameliorate the economic and social conditions of either the Arab or Jewish communities’ – an allocation that worked to the advantage of the one community that was already receiving international contributions. In this regard, the yishuv stood to gain from the metropole’s neglect as much as from its support.

The preference for Zionism that Britain had built into the League of Nations Mandate reflected these strategic interests. The Mandate’s preamble included a safeguard clause protecting the rights of ‘existing non-Jewish communities’. This clause is significant on a number of counts, not least the transience implied in the term ‘existing’, whose suggestion of temporariness was reinforced by the designation of 91 per cent of the population as ‘non-Jewish’. The implications of this terminology resonated through the concept of ‘national home’, which the Mandate adopted from the Balfour Declaration. The term heimstatte had originated as a Zionist codeword for the exclusively Jewish state that the movement actually desired, Zionist leader Theodor Herzl’s associate Max Nordau having suggested a formula that could ‘deceive by its mildness’ so long as there was a need to ‘dissimulate our real aim’. Understood as a euphemism for the Jewish state, the ‘national home’ commitment conflicted with the safeguards afforded the so-called ‘non-Jewish’
The inflow of financial capital that sustained the yishuv was beyond official control. So far as the companion inflow of human capital was concerned, Britain’s administration of the Mandate provided the conditions that enabled world Zionism to continue building its state-to-be, a state that would ultimately exist instead of, rather than in, Palestine.⁴⁵

In practice, of course, the preferential treatment that the yishuv was to enjoy under the British Mandate did not pass unopposed. Within Britain, there was significant resistance to the idea that Palestine’s Arab population should be betrayed, while prominent Jewish public figures under the leadership of Edwin Montagu opposed Zionism’s allying itself with antisemitism for the purpose of encouraging Jewish emigration out of Europe. Even Herbert Samuel – Britain’s first Jewish cabinet minister who, as first High Commissioner to Palestine, was foremost among a number of Zionists appointed to senior positions in the administration – frustrated leading Zionists by his adoption of ostensibly even-handed policies.⁴⁶ In 1921, in a huge blow to Zionist ambitions that has been oddly downplayed in much scholarly literature, the British created the Amirate of Transjordan in the two thirds of what was to become...
Mandate Palestine that lay east of the Jordan river. This concession to Arab expectations (or, at least, to those of Ali Ibn Husayn) had major unresolved implications that continue into the present day.\textsuperscript{47} In particular, it prompted Ze’ev Jabotinsky’s formation of Revisionist Zionism, which committed itself to revising the Mandate to reincorporate the ‘partitioned’ section into the Jewish national home.\textsuperscript{48}

With regard to Britain’s international obligations under the Mandate itself, official concern at the emergence of a sub-proletarianised class of dispossessed Natives rendered landless by Zionist purchases led, in the 1930s, to the introduction of measures designed to restrain the transfer of land into Jewish hands. As World War II loomed, British anxiety that Arabs should not be attracted to side with the Germans led, as in World War I, to significant concessions, including restrictions on Jewish immigration that the 1937 Peel Commission recommended despite the ascendancy of Nazism. Sharpening such imperial considerations, Native resistance was maintained throughout the Mandate period, recurrently peaking in violent opposition, often directed against Jewish immigrants, that prompted a number of British policy shifts away from the generally pro-Zionist norm.\textsuperscript{49} Typically, however, Zionist influence in Whitehall succeeded in having the new policies changed or, at least, in frustrating their restrictive provisions. Events surrounding the Shaw Commission and Hope Simpson reports, both published in 1930, provide a major case in point.

In the wake of homicidal street-fighting between Muslims and Jews that had started around the Western Wall in Jerusalem over access to holy places, the British established a commission of enquiry under Walter Shaw, which reported that the religious issue symptomatised wider Arab political and economic grievances stemming from British authorities’ implementation of the Mandate’s commitment to the Jewish national home. On this basis, the report recommended that Jewish immigration into Palestine be restricted and that ‘a scientific enquiry should be held into land cultivation and settlement possibilities’.\textsuperscript{50} Pending this second enquiry, the eviction of peasant cultivators, by which Shaw meant further Jewish land purchases, was to be checked. The head of the second enquiry, John Hope Simpson, asserted that the Mandate’s objectives required that
the encouragement of close settlement and intensive cultivation should apply to Arabs as well as to Jews. To Zionist consternation, he recommended that, for Arab Natives of Palestine to be able to maintain their existing standard of living, Jewish immigration should be summarily curtailed.

These recommendations found their way into a government white paper that was presented by Colonial Secretary Baron Passfield (British Labour Party luminary Sidney Webb). The objections that Zionists raised in response to the Passfield White Paper were revealing in regard to the dual economy that the Shaw and Hope Simpson reports had both problematised. In response to Hope Simpson’s assertion that Arab health was suffering as a result of the Jewish influx, Zionists argued that the immigration of more Jewish doctors could only alleviate the problem, an argument that denied the bifurcation of the two communities. At the same time, however, in response to Hope Simpson’s related assertion that, in view of the level of unemployment among Arab workers, the Palestinian economy was incapable of absorbing any more immigrants, Zionists argued that Jewish immigrants were joining the industrial sector and would not impact on employment in the Arab agricultural sector, an argument that relied on mutual separation.51

In the event, it was not argumentation, consistent or otherwise, that won the day. Labour Zionism, under the leadership of David Ben Gurion, secured its dominance of yishuv politics at around the same time as British Labour first succeeded, by a vulnerably slender majority, in gaining government in Westminster. While the Zionist labour organisation Histadrut, in the person of their London representative Dov Hos, lobbied Trades Union Congress leader Ernest Bevin, Chaim Weizmann was involved in a mysterious meeting with Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and his son Malcolm, from which emerged a memorandum that would, predictably enough, be dubbed ‘the Black Letter’ by Palestinian Arabs. Penned by Malcolm MacDonald, signed by his father, and addressed, Balfour Declaration-style, to Weizmann, the Black Letter ‘clarified’ the Passfield White Paper out of meaningful existence, negating the material that the Zionists had found objectionable.52 As Tom Segev has crisply noted, ‘The Passfield White Paper never went into effect;
indeed, it is notable only because the Zionist movement was able to get it revoked’. 53

Thus, the absence of a formal hierarchy actually meant more metropole rather than less. The composite transnational network whereby Zionist organisations secured sponsorship without reciprocal commitment not only enabled them to draw on multiple sources of support. Even within the formal Mandate relationship, Zionists’ capacity to influence British policy was hardly less than that enjoyed by colonial administrations elsewhere. In the outcome, Britain provided the military protection necessary for world Zionism to co-ordinate its importation into Palestine of international finance and east-European immigrants, an arrangement that enabled the would-be Jewish nation to marshall its preaccumulated combination of capital, culture and labour with unparallelled effectiveness.

As imagined in Zionism, the Jewish nation was a relationship between people and land that realised both. The yishuv was not merely a demographic unit. Indissolubly, and to no lesser extent, it was also territorial. As such, the yishuv was not so much a state-in-waiting as an agenda, a vision to be realised in the fusion of people and land. Such were the requirements of state-building, however, that this was to be a very particular fusion. The random purchasing of as much land as possible, which would have scattered islands of Jewish ownership across a multicultural Palestine, may have made room for more Jews but it would not have consolidated the yishuv. Rather, the isolated Jewish groups that resulted would have had to participate in the local economy. For the Jews in Palestine to become a nation, they had first to be (in)gathered together, a requirement that dictated contiguous land holdings. 54 In Zionism’s obsession with contiguous Jewish ownership, we see how the strategic combination of metropolitan funding and the policy of purchase made possible the institutional practice known as the Conquest of Labour (or Hebrew Labour, avoda lvrit), the thoroughgoing system of ethnoracial exclusion on which the Jewish nation was to be built.

THE CONQUEST OF LABOUR

As Gershon Shafir has shown, Zionist settlements in Palestine were modelled on European colonial experiments elsewhere, initially the
French colonisation of Algeria and subsequently Bismarck’s Germanisation of East Prussia.\textsuperscript{55} When Rothschild came to the aid of the failing First Aliya, he instituted an Algerian colon-style system in which Jewish settlers relied on a predominantly Native labour force to produce their crops (mainly grapevines). When viable returns remained unforthcoming, Rothschild precipitately withdrew his support, leaving the First Aliya in a crisis that was not at first resolved by the Second Aliya, who arrived early in the twentieth century in response to the fresh round of pogroms that had been unleashed in Kishinev. Initially, the Second Aliya sought to compete with Natives on their own terms, attempting to survive at the subsistence level of surrounding fellahen. Like their First Aliya predecessors, however, these European immigrants found themselves unequal to the task, defeated by what Shafir has termed ‘the contradiction between market-based colonisation and Jewish national aspirations’.\textsuperscript{56}

In 1905, however, the Jewish workers’ organisation Hapoel Hatzair resolved to abandon market rationality in favour of a Jewish-only isolate in Palestine that would reject any labour that was not Jewish.\textsuperscript{57} Thus began the Conquest of Labour. From the outset, it was not a strategy that made any pretence of competing with Palestinian labour on the open market. Rather, it depended on the provision and maintenance of a closed, protected and autonomously reproduced circuit of production, consumption and exchange – which is to say, on an exclusive and preferentially subsidised economy. As such, in a kind of wishful corpus nullius, its proponents sought to conduct their affairs as if nobody else was around.\textsuperscript{58} There might the scheme have rested, had not the internationally constituted World Zionist Organization taken it up, inspired in large part by Ruppin’s admiration for Bismarck’s colonisation scheme in East Prussia, under which the government had bought up failed Junker estates and broken them down into private allotments for subsidised sale to exclusively German smallholders, the idea being to rid the region of Poles.

The WZO wholeheartedly adopted the Conquest of Labour, funding Jewish-only initiatives through the Jewish National Fund, which it had established in 1901 for the purpose of extending Jewish ownership of land in Palestine. Ideologically, the Conquest of Labour
came to be sustained by the figure of the New Jew, whose distinctive iconography bore the marks of the extreme nationalisms that were emerging in Europe (Fig. 1). The ideal of the New Jew required incoming Zionists to remake themselves through the Conquest of Labour, not only clearing Natives from the land but boycotting Native labour and produce, a repudiation of dependency on others that progressively deprived these others of their means of subsistence.\(^5^9\) Thus bolstered, the campaign for the Conquest of Labour eventually produced the core institution of the kibbutz, a totally insulated Jewish-only capsule that really did conduct its affairs (at least, its non-military ones) as if nobody else was around, a posture that exceeded the exclusiveness that settlers attained in Australia or the United States.\(^6^0\)

The capital imports that enabled the yishuv to evade market realities were central to the dispossession of Native Palestinians. Relieved of the requirement to generate a surplus (the JNF was able to run up large debts), the yishuv could prioritise ethnicity over efficiency.\(^6^2\) Foreign capital was Zionism’s principal
preaccumulation. In this, it was no different from other settler projects. But freedom from the discipline of the bottom line set Zionism apart from other colonial projects. Without this freedom, there could have been no Conquest of Labour, no kibbutzim and, ultimately, no Jewish state. Accordingly, the profound outcomes of this creative subversion of market principles are poorly characterised in terms of labour alone. The premise that it was more important that labour be Hebrew than that it be productive was, rather, the centrepiece of an all-encompassing conquest of economics that was enabled by Zionism’s diffusely integrated metropole.

The centrality of economics did not relieve Zionism of the need for military support, even though the acquisition of Native territory was being conducted in at least notional conformity with the imperial legal system, which meant that the initial means to settler expansion was financial rather than military. As observed, the yishuv’s land-acquisition tactics were bound to provoke Native hostility. Thus military force was never far away, whether in the form of the colonial policing provided by British forces or, locally, by unofficial Zionist militias (the Haganah, forerunner to the Israeli Defence Forces, being formed by Jabotinsky in 1920). Here, however, in contrast to Australia and North America, violence or the threat of violence was deployed to secure territorial gains that had already been made by other means rather than to gain territory in the first place. Eventually, of course – which is to say, in 1948 – violence would become a viable way to gain territory, whereupon it would be used as such.

The relative restraint that Zionists displayed in the Ottoman and Mandate periods did not mean that they had yet to formulate the goal of replacing Palestinians in Palestine. The initial restraint was pragmatic – the eventual Nakba, to adapt Carl von Clausewitz, being a continuation of purchase by other means. Moreover, the purchases were prerequisite to Zionism’s attainment of these other means: a disciplined population with a territorial base and an adequately-funded state apparatus possessed of military resources and a functioning hierarchy of command. Without Zionism’s strategic co-ordination of human and capital imports, whereby a contiguous land base was secured and populated with Ashkenazi immigrants, none of these things would have been possible. When we observe this
remarkably disciplined and systematic programme of settler-state formation, the complementarity between the creation of the Jewish state and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine emerges with particular clarity, the two being inseparable features of a unified programme. Thus we turn to the land, the contested theatre on which all this took place.

**LAND PURCHASES**

In their ceaseless deliberations over the best ways to tailor Jewish immigration to the goal of transferring Palestinian land into exclusively and irreversibly Jewish ownership, Zionist planners were seeking to build a fully-formed ethnocratic parallel to the existing apparatus of government. To this end, they sought to modulate Jewish demographics so as to take maximum advantage of the Palestinian-owned land that became available for acquisition. Moreover, as noted, they did not simply seek to acquire land wherever it could be bought. Nor did they limit their purchasing to agriculturally valuable land. Rather, they sought to create unbroken expanses of Jewish ownership. Crucially, this ownership was not individual but collective. Once transferred into Jewish hands, parcels of land would cease being commodities in the general-alienability sense. Prior to leasing the land out to Jewish tenants, the Zionist organisations that had purchased it imposed conditions preventing it from ever returning to gentile ownership. On the basis of this plan, every inch of acquired Palestinian land would become forever Jewish. Which Jews took it over – efficiently, inefficiently or indifferently – was not the point. What mattered was that they – and, whether or not they flourished, their successors in perpetuity – be Jewish.

Conceptually, the idea of collective ownership on behalf of the Jewish nation diametrically reversed the US ideology of private property, which demonised Native ownership on the grounds of its collective nature. In practical terms, however, the Zionist strategy shared characteristics with US Indian policy, where the collectivity – in that case, the US government – acquired Native land and transferred it to into ethnically non-Indian hands. In the Zionist case, however, the acquiring had to be effected within the terms of an imperial legal system that could not be swept aside or imposed on in the way that settlers had dealt with Indigenous legal systems in the
USA or Australia. This legal system was based on the Ottoman tanzimat land reforms of the mid-nineteenth century, which were largely inherited and maintained by the British during the Mandate era and even, to a significant extent, by the post-Nakba Israeli state.

Operating within the continuing framework of Ottoman land law, abetted by the British penchant for property settlements, Zionist purchasers sought to convert nexuses of overlapping entitlements (a Levantine analogue to E.P. Thompson’s ‘messy complexities of coincident use-right’) into an exclusive form of ownership that compressed discontinuous sets of rights into consolidated units of Jewish property. So far as fellaheen ‘tenants’ were concerned, however, what mattered was not who had ultimate title to the land on which they made their livelihoods but the scope of that ownership. In general (there were exceptions), large-scale effendi landowners under the Ottoman tanzimat system, who were often resident elsewhere, owned, bought and sold their holdings subject to the continuing use-rights of fellaheen, whose rent or other forms of tribute provided the return on the effendi’s investment. To this extent, Ottoman land transactions were comparable to capitalist business takeovers, which do not generally involve the replacement of employees.

Much has been made of these absentee landowners, whom Zionists liked to characterise as unscrupulous orientals bearing responsibility for their humbler countrymen’s misfortunes. No doubt in some cases the Zionists had a point. In others, though, landowners had only become absentee because their homes had been separated from their landholdings in the post-war Anglo-French carve-up of the Ottoman empire. Regardless of effendis’ locations or motivations, however, the crucial factor for settler expansion was the attachment of usufruct to title. Settler colonialism takes place at the level of usufruct. Buying and selling between landlords, absent or present, does not change systems. Rulers can come and go. Laws change. Dispossession takes place – Natives become replaced – at the level of usufruct. The methods that Zionists used to attach usufruct to title, so that vendors might sell a consolidated right that would not otherwise have been theirs to sell, exploited the variety of social relationship that together constituted property under the Mandate regime.
Walter Lehn has noted how shifts in the acquisition policies of the Jewish National Fund reflected changing circumstances on the ground.\textsuperscript{72} While large landholdings were the consistent preference, the JNF initially targeted absentee landowners because they were relatively immune from local pressure not to sell.\textsuperscript{73} When British policy became more restrictive in response to Native insurgency in the later 1930s, however, ‘it became JNF policy to buy any land from any owner, large or small, who was willing or could be persuaded or forced (e.g. through mortgage foreclosure) to sell’.\textsuperscript{74} As Lehn’s ‘persuaded or forced’ formulation suggests, Zionist purchasing agencies used all available methods to acquire land that was suitable to their needs. In the early years of British rule, effendi who had been able to enlarge their holdings by informal means under the Ottomans found themselves hamstrung by British regulations and in many cases proved willing to sell.\textsuperscript{75} Absentee landholders had been unable to collect rent during the war, so they were often responsive to the offer of cash.\textsuperscript{76} After World War I, smallholding cultivators found themselves plagued by debt, with the result that many pledged their land as security for loans that they could not service, eventually forfeiting their security to moneylenders, who amassed substantial holdings that they could sell on to Zionist purchasers.\textsuperscript{77}

Under a plan of Ruppin’s that Mandate assistant treasurer Michel Abcarius termed ‘a vile use to which money can be put’, Zionists sought to buy up land before there were enough Jewish immigrants to cultivate it, expelling the fellahin and keeping the land in reserve and unused (the ‘dead hand’ of mortmain) until such time as Jewish tenants should become available.\textsuperscript{78} When the British introduced regulations to restrain such practices, ways were found around them.\textsuperscript{79} As in the Ottoman period, proxy buyers could be arranged, or sales could be made into a future time when the regulations had been relaxed.\textsuperscript{80} The widespread practice of under-registering landholdings so as to avoid taxation and military conscription enabled much larger parcels of land to change hands than the deeds indicated (by the same token, purchasers paid less tax).\textsuperscript{81}

As indicated, however, the crucial factor was not so much the sale itself as the prior clearing of cultivators from the land. Given collusion between a Native landlord and a Jewish purchaser, this
Wolfe, ‘Purchase by Other Means’

could be achieved in a number of ways. The requirement that tenants had a right of first refusal when land was sold could be evaded by having it publicly auctioned in satisfaction of mortgage debts ‘collusively arrived-at’ between a landlord and a purchaser.\textsuperscript{82} Alternatively, tenants could be moved around, the targeted portion of land being let to incoming tenants who then let it on as agents of the landlord, tenants of tenants not being protected against eviction.\textsuperscript{83} Landlords could apply duress to induce tenants to sign undertakings that they did not wish to purchase the land themselves as they had been adequately compensated with land elsewhere.\textsuperscript{84} To these ends, Zionist organisations were careful to protect the anonymity of Native vendors, who could also be leaders of the emergent Palestine national movement. Stein, who painstakingly tracked these multifarious ruses, has described various ways whereby debts to Zionist purchasers could be contrived in order to obtain court orders for the land to be sold in satisfaction:

\begin{itemize}
  \item This entire process was pre-planned so that the Jewish National Fund would obtain the land, the prestige of the seller would be protected, the rights of cultivators would be summarily circumvented, and the seller would obtain a price for the land well above the price set by the court.\textsuperscript{85}
\end{itemize}

A further, key component of Palestinians’ expropriation was an assimilation of public land to the category of state land that reflected the deeper penetration of the realm of property that the advanced-capitalist British state exercised in comparison to its Ottoman predecessor.\textsuperscript{86} Under the reformed Ottoman system, types of land tenure had been divided up into a mix of private and public categories.\textsuperscript{87} Public forms of ownership could be state, religious, or local-collective based. Private ownership generally fell under the heading of the mulk form of tenure, which covered dwellings and private plots accompanying them and which could be inherited. Waqf land was set aside for religious purposes, the revenue derived from it generally going to the upkeep of Muslim institutions. Metruke land was public in the widest sense, encompassing rivers, lakes, roads, public grazing areas and the like. Most of the land in Palestine was, however, classified as miri, a system under which ownership was
vested in the state but usufructuary rights were assigned to fellaheen. In the event of miri land not being tilled for a period of five years, usufructuary rights reverted to the state, which could redistribute them to other fellaheen. By introducing the notion of state land, which had not existed as an Ottoman classification, the British provided for land that had not been assigned to particular owners, including common pasturage and hunting or wood-collecting grounds as well as land that remained unregistered in the post-Ottoman confusion, to be treated as unclaimed. In effect, land that was everybody’s became land that was nobody’s, which meant that it reverted to the state.

Under the preferential provision whereby Mandate authorities were to encourage close Jewish settlement of ‘state land and waste land not needed for public purposes’, land thus reclassified could then be sold (or, in some cases, indefinitely leased) to Zionist purchasers. The wide distribution of state land made it particularly suitable for filling in strategic gaps in the Zionists’ overall land-acquisition programme, premised as it was on contiguity. Where fellaheen held land that was contiguous with existing Zionist holdings, for instance, state land could be purchased elsewhere to be used as compensation for their displacement. By such means, not only was the yishuv consolidated but Palestinian communities were further fragmented.

For Palestinians, the continuing effects of the Ottoman land-tenure system, itself an imperial imposition, did not end with the Mandate. Various key tanzimat reforms were to survive the Nakba to provide ongoing pretexts for Israel’s expropriation of Palestinian land. The preponderance of non-private forms of ownership became susceptible to interpretation as state ownership, which would come to mean collective Jewish ownership in the post-1948 era. A further pretext was provided by the five-year reversion rule, which meant that Palestinians who had been driven from their land in 1948 could be made subject to forfeiture through having failed to cultivate it. Another resulted from the fact that, in 1858, fellaheen had become obliged to register their interest in particular tracts of land, an obligation that had become more thoroughly bureaucratised by the British in the Mandate period. A major disincentive to registration under the Ottomans had been that it rendered the person registering
liable both to taxation and to the much-feared military conscription, consequences that encouraged large numbers of fellaheen to avoid registration or to register the land in fictional or absentee names. Eventually, this led many fellaheen to resort to urban-based moneylenders, to compensate both for their increased tax burden and for the loss of labour that they sustained as a result of increased military conscription. Subsequently, when they had fallen behind with their payments, the moneylenders could claim the land as collateral and sell it to Zionist purchasers, as occurred in the case of the Sursuq family’s large sale. In terms of future implications, however, the chaotically disordered record of local land tenure that resulted from this situation led to numerous fellaheen being unable to establish their entitlement to their land under the more demanding administrative requirements imposed by the British and, subsequently, under the punitive conditions of the Israeli legal system. The recitation could be continued indefinitely. It is a litany of dispossession.

**BEYOND THE WATERSHED**

It may seem perverse to offer a narrative of Palestinian dispossession that dwells so obliquely on the Nakba. My intention has not been to understate the repeated enormities that the nascent Jewish state perpetrated in the Nakba. Rather, it has been to situate it in the context of the ongoing (in Saree Makdisi’s term, ‘slow-motion’) enormity that Zionists, with imperial and comprador connivance, had been conducting incrementally, day by day, for over half a century before the Nakba. In the absence of that context, the Nakba would make no sense. We might even agree with Benny Morris that ethnic cleansing was a spontaneous aberration that took place in the heat of warfare. In the preceding context of Zionism’s conquest of economics, however, the Nakba makes only too plain sense. There was no change of ends. The Nakba simply accelerated, very radically, the slow-motion means to those ends that had been the only means available to Zionists while they were still building their colonial state.

If, in the 1930s, Palestinians had fled their homes instead of rising up against British rule, there would not have been enough Jews to fill them. The same can be said for the dream of ‘transfer’ (the Zionist euphemism for removing the Natives from Palestine). Though
there had been much talk of transfer before the Second World War, the practical exigencies of the mid-Mandate years meant that it could be no more than that – talk. To understand the Nakba, therefore, we have to keep in mind the crucial fact that it was Zionism’s first opportunity. The fact that the emergent Jewish state seized this opportunity with such devastating effectiveness was both a testament to and a legacy of its preparedness. As we have seen, the creation of the Jewish state and the ethnic cleansing of Palestine were two sides of the same coin. The conquest of economics was a Nakba-in-waiting.

As historians, then, we should approach events carefully, recording them at face value but also looking behind them to their enabling contexts, the historical conditions that made them possible. This, I think, is why Israel Shahak refrained from discussing the infamous April 1948 massacre that Zionist troops carried out at Deir Yasin (the Jerusalem suburb since renamed Kfar Sha’ul): ‘Accurate and detailed knowledge of Zionist thought as expressed by its leaders led to many incidents like Dayr Yasin [sic] and, more importantly, can yet again lead to similar or worse events’. Shahak’s prescient warning brings us to the most urgent reason of all for attending to historical structures. It is in the nature of structures that, often as not, the deep-seated regularities subtending individual events can be traced forwards as well as backwards in time. For there to be any hope that the study of history might help us to escape being collectively condemned to repeat history, we should not submit to the tyranny of detail. This is not, of course, to jettison rigour. Rather, as Ted Carr retorted to the implacable G. R. Elton, ‘Accuracy is a duty, not a virtue’.

The details do not speak for themselves. They speak in context. Four decades after the Nakba, for example, Israeli economist Ira Sharkansky was astounded to find that the Israeli government’s expenditure exceeded the gross national product (not government revenue, GNP!). On investigation, Sharkansky discovered that the government received revenues that did not emanate from productive activity, so they were not counted for GNP purposes: ‘grants from overseas governments and private contributors, plus loans from overseas and domestic sources’. Sharkansky found all this surprising. Aware of the historical background to Israel’s diasporan funding, we should not be surprised.
As I write, in February 2012, Israeli authorities are engaged in forcibly evicting Palestinian residents from Wadi Hilweh (Silwan) in occupied al-Quds (East Jerusalem). 50,000 Palestinians live there. There is no saying how many will be driven from their homes. The pretext for this ongoing post-Nakba removal has been provided by a highly dubious archaeology according to which King David built a Jewish city there in the third millennium BCE. The City of David Archaeological Park, which is replacing the Palestinian homes, is being financed by, among others, Ron Lauder of Estee Lauder perfume fame, who currently chairs the Jewish National Fund. Lauder is but one of numerous plutocrats who are supporting this contemporary exercise in ethnic cleansing. We should not be surprised. It is no random event.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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NOTES


3 Thus it is debatable whether shifting the point of origin back from 1967 (the Six Day War and Israel’s seizure of the Occupied Palestinian Territories) to the Nakba is an improvement. The antidote to being blinded by a watershed is surely not another watershed. The concept has proved itself a versatile ideological resource in Israeli discourse. Avi Shlaim has noted that liberal Israelis regarded the 1982 invasion of Lebanon as a watershed marking the end of ‘ein breira’, or the idea that Israel only went to war because there was no alternative. ‘Until then, Zionist leaders had been careful to cultivate the image of peace lovers who would stand up and fight only if war was forced upon them’. Avi Shlaim, ‘The Debate About 1948’, in Ilan Pappe (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 172-194, quotation at p. 177. This watershed ended abruptly with the publication of an article by Prime Minister Menachem Begin entitled, with characteristic Revisionist candour, ‘On Behalf of a War of Choice’. Ironically, Begin’s title belies the notion of ‘resort’ that informs the book that publicised it: Shapiro, *Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881-1948* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), which cites Begin’s article as its inspiration (p. vii). The idea that the Nakba was a miracle (biblical overtones included) has furnished grounds for its justification, as in A. Granott’s assertion that, ‘Since the Arabs surprisingly fled from the territory of the State’, restitution was out of the question because ‘[m]istakes may be corrected but not miracles’. A. Granott, *Agrarian Reform and the Record of Israel* (London: Eyre & Spottiswood, 1956), p. 96. Granott was here echoing the description of the Nakba by Israel’s first president, Chaim Weizmann, as ‘a miraculous simplification of Israel’s tasks’ (quoted in Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel’s Control of a National Minority* [Austin, TX: Texas University Press, 1980], p. 28). As Erik Cohen notes, Israel’s 1967 seizure of the balance of Mandate Palestine could also be depicted in ‘miraculous or providential terms’. Erik Cohen, ‘The Changing Legitimizations of the State of Israel’, in Peter Y. Medding

4 Patrick Wolfe, ‘Nation and Miscegenation: Discursive Continuity in the Post-Mabo Era’, Social Analysis, 36 (1994), pp. 93-152, quotation at p. 96. Back then, we still had to fight for the capital N in Native, let alone the capital I in Indigenous.


7 ‘[I]f I come and say: “you, work for me”, it’s not the same as saying “you, go away”’. Lorenzo Veracini, ‘Introducing settler colonial studies’, settler colonial studies, 1 (2011) pp. 1-12, quotation at p. 1. I am saving my disagreement with Lorenzo over his next line – ‘This is why settler colonialism is not colonialism’ – for another time. This article is long enough as it is.

8 Obvious examples respectively include Britain or Canada as opposed to the United States in North America, the British Mandate authorities as opposed to the Zionists in Palestine, Botswana as opposed to Britain in Khoi-San country, the Chinese in Tibet, the Indonesians in West Papua, etc.


15 This sea was, of course, actively populated by many different groups (Paul Gilroy’s The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness [London: Verso, 1993] remains the classic source). My point concerns the ultimate overlordship of this densely transacted zone.

16 In one of his panoramic asides, Marx characterised ‘North America’ as ‘a country where bourgeois society did not develop on the foundation of the feudal system, but developed rather from itself; where this society appears not as the surviving result of a centuries-old movement, but rather as the starting-point of a new movement […] where, finally, bourgeois society itself, linking up the productive forces of an old word with the enormous natural terrain of a new one, has developed to hitherto unheard-of dimensions and with unheard-of freedom of movement, has far outstripped all previous work in the conquest of the forces of nature […]. In England [by contrast], bourgeois society does not exist in pure form, not corresponding to its concept, not adequate to itself’. Karl Marx, Grundrisse:
During the years before 1908. Mandel, few passing Bedouin could have directly felt the presence of the Jewish settlers during the years before 1908. The yishuv ‘could tap the resources of sympathetic Jews throughout the world, and these donations, along with capital imported by the immigrants themselves, could be used without prime regard to the profit motive. The Zionists were willing for reasons other than material gain to invest their resources in Palestine, and this motivation differentiated them from traditional colonialists’. Barbara J. Smith, The Roots of Separatism in Palestine: British Economic Policy, 1920-1929 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), p. 11.

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Unlike the Balfour Declaration, which, being very short, had referred only once to ‘a National Home for the Jewish people’, the longer Mandate, which consisted of a preamble and 28 articles, having adopted the Declaration’s indefinite ‘a national home’ in its preamble, had occasion to refer back to the concept, initially as ‘their [i.e., the ‘Jewish people’s’] national home’ (preamble), and subsequently as ‘the Jewish national home’ (Article 2). This formula, in its use of the definite article and, significantly, in adjectivally rendering Jewishness a property intrinsic to the home (Palestine) itself, far exceeded the Declaration’s avoidance of any suggestion of the exclusively Jewish state that the Zionists had patently wanted. Earlier drafts of the Declaration had come closer to accommodating Zionist ambitions but, in the immediate wake of the Sykes-Picot agreement, and with a war still to fight in the Arab heartland, Britain had been too sensitive to Arab perceptions to entertain Weizmann’s more candid statements of intent. These were expressed in what David Fieldhouse termed ‘the first real draft of the eventual Declaration’, which called for ‘Palestine to be recognized as the Jewish National Home, with liberty of immigration to Jews of all countries, who are to enjoy full national political and civic rights; a charter to be granted to the Jewish Company; local government to be accorded to the Jewish population; and the Hebrew language to be officially recognised’. Six months later, in July 1917, a revised Zionist draft called upon the British government to ‘use its best endeavours to secure the achievement’ of the object of ‘reconstituting’ Palestine as ‘the national home of the Jewish people’, a task that the British government should carry out in consultation with the Zionist Organization. The fact that the ‘best endeavours to secure the achievement’ wording was incorporated into the final Declaration testifies to Weizmann’s influence on its formulation. In the following month, Balfour himself issued his own first draft, which closely followed the Zionist version, whereupon Milner and Amery circulated further drafts to Cabinet which avoided mention of the World Zionist Organization, played down the likelihood of an exclusively Jewish state, and built in safeguards for ‘existing non-Jewish communities’, before the final draft, including the safeguards clause, was published on 31 October 1917. Five years later, with Arab allegiance in wartime no longer being a concern, the British succeeded in persuading the League of Nations to incorporate into the Mandate the key elements of the Zionist drafts that had been excluded from the Declaration (in addition to those already mentioned, consultation with an ‘appropriate Jewish agency’, Article 4; political and civic rights, Article 7; Hebrew [along with English and Arabic] an official language, Article 22; and local government [qualified] to the Jewish population, Article 4). For the successive drafts and final text of the Declaration, together with the discussion just quoted, see D.K. Fieldhouse, Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 134, 149-150. For a penetrating critique of the wording of the Declaration that partly anticipates my comments here, see Erskine B. Childers, ‘The Wordless Wish: From Citizens to Refugees’, in Abu-Lughod, Transformation, pp. 170-71.

Phase of Western Imperialism’, in Abhu Lughod, Transformation, pp. 27-59, especially pp. 36-37.

33 ‘All this [the 1915 de Bunsen Committee recommendations] would surely have been grist to the mills of Herzl and Chamberlain if they had still been in power. The former thought that British imperial needs could be made to serve Zionist purposes, the latter that Zionist needs could be made to serve British ones, a realistic basis for effective co-operation’. Frank Hardie, Irwin Herrman, Britain and Zion: The Fateful Entanglement (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1980), p. 19.

34 ‘There were scarcely any Arabs living in Britain. Zionist leaders had the ear of many of the highest in the land and made almost daily use of that privilege; there was no corresponding channel for the Arab point of view’. Hardie and Herrman, Britain and Zion, p. 76.

35 Fieldhouse, Western Imperialism in the Middle East, pp. 138-148.

36 ‘When Herbert Samuel was the Home Secretary in 1916, he was faced with a serious controversy with Britain’s Russian Jewish immigrant community who refused to enlist in the British Army to fight alongside Russia, the county they fled against Germany. Out of a total of 70,000 Russian Jews who were eligible for military service, only 700 volunteered’. Victor Kattan, From Coexistence to Conflict: International Law and the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1891-1949 (London: Pluto, 2009), pp. 64-65.


39 Ilan Pappe has picked up on Barbara Smith’s identification of this factor. Pappe, ‘Zionism as Colonialism: A Comparative View of Diluted Colonialism in Asia and Africa’, South Atlantic Quarterly, 107, 2008, pp. 613-633, especially p. 630. See also Smith, Roots of Separatism, pp. 135-158. Moreover, as Perry Anderson has pointed out, ‘Unlike any other [colonial relationship], the relationship of the Yishuv to Whitehall was without sentimental ties of kinship or culture’. Perry Anderson, ‘Scurrying Towards Bethlehem’, New Left Review, 10 (2001), pp. 6-30, quotation at p. 9.


43 Smith, Roots of Separatism, pp. 84-85.

44 Smith, Roots of Separatism, pp. 77-81, citing Robert Szereszewski.

45 I have adapted this poignant distinction, which encapsulates Zionism’s settler-colonial essence, from Victor Kattan’s observation that the Balfour Declaration
‘provided that it [a Jewish national home] would be established in Palestine, not instead of Palestine’. Kattan, Coexistence to Conflict, p. 60.

46 When Samuel was appointed in 1920, Palestine was still under British military occupation (resulting from Allenby’s conquest in 1917). Samuel presided over the shift to a British civilian administration in 1920 and the imposition of the Mandate in 1923. Turkey formally ceded its rights under the Treaty of Lausanne.

47 During the second half of 1915 and the beginning of 1916, when securing Arab allegiance had become critical to Britain’s conduct of World War I, an exchange of letters between Husayn, Sharif of Mecca, and Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Cairo, had resulted in a strategic agreement whereby a wartime revolt against the Ottomans (which Husayn and his two sons, Abdullah and Faysal, duly launched in July 1916) would be rewarded with British support for Arab independence in the post-war era. The substantive elements of this deal were apparently ignored in the subsequent Sykes-Picot agreement, which divided Arab homelands between the British and the French, and in the Balfour Declaration. In token acknowledgement perhaps, in 1921 the British had Abdullah crowned in Transjordan and Faysal in Iraq.

48 Neither Labour Zionism nor the Revisionists’ party-political successors (who, since the late 1970s, have dominated Israeli politics) have formally renounced the claim to the southern part of present Syria and the majority of present-day Jordan.


50 Quoted in Peel Commission Report, p. 71.

51 The arguments and factors are summarised in Smith, Roots of Separatism, pp. 66-76.

52 For a well-documented account of the events leading up to the Black Letter, see Atran, ‘Surrogate Colonization’, pp. 730-731. See also Peel Commission Report, pp. 70-78; Tom Segev, One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate (New York: Metropolitan/Henry Holt, 1999), pp. 335-38.

53 Segev, One Palestine, Complete, p. 336.

54 As Anita Shapira has pointed out, this policy not only limited the extent of Jewish landholding. It also laid the ground for partition. Shapira, Land and Power, p. 176.

55 Shafir, Land, Labor, and Origins, pp. 50-51, 152-154.


59 Clause 23 of the lease that Jewish settlers signed before taking up land purchased by the JNF required lessees to ‘execute all works connected with cultivation of the holding, only with Jewish labour’. Quoted in M.F. Abcarian, Palestine: Through the Fog of Propaganda (London: Hutchinson, 1946), p. 131.

60 There is at least superficial tension between the emphasis that I place on the importedness of preaccumulation and Gershon Shafir’s insistence that the doctrine of the Conquest of Labour was not derived from European Zionist theory (the concept of productivisation) but was born on the ground of settlement out of struggles between Zionists and Palestinians. See Shafir, Land, Labor, and Origins, pp. 81-82. My perspective is dialectical: in the encounter between metropole and
colony, as in that between theory and practice, the two elements mutually condition one another.  
62 Confronting probable restrictions on its land purchases in the wake of the Peel Commission Report, the JNF resolved to adopt any measures, including deficit financing, to buy as much land as it could, a policy whereby, as the JNF reported in 1939, its ‘indebtedness has been much enlarged’. Quoted in Lehn, Jewish National Fund, pp. 72-73.  
63 Benny Morris, Righteous Victims, pp. 96-97.  
64 Carl von Clausewitz, On War (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2004), p. 42, # 24. ‘The whole of Palestine, or at least most of it, must belong to the Jewish people [...] this can be achieved by three means: by force, but we do not have it, governmental coercion or purchase’. Menachem Ussishkin, The Ussishkin Book (Jerusalem, Ussishkin Publications, 1934), p. 105, translated and quoted in Pappe, ‘Zionism as Colonialism’, p. 616. Israeli journalist Z. Schiff caricatured this perspective: ‘We have always stolen lands. We always chased our Arabs. Don’t bother us with the argument that in the past we purchased the Arabs’ lands. Indeed, we bought lands from the effendis but we chased away the tenants who lived on them [...]. If this is what we did in the past, why not continue doing so in the present and future? God forbid that we should stop this tradition’. Schiff quoted in Baruch Kimmerling, Sovereignty, Ownership, and “Presence” in the Jewish-Arab Territorial Conflict: The Case of Bir’im and Ikrit’, Comparative Political Studies, 10 (1977), pp. 155-76, 166.  
65 ‘[T]he result of the purchase of land in Palestine by the Jewish National Fund has been that land has been exta-territorialised [...]. The land is in mort-main and inalienable’. Hope Simpson Report (Cmd. 5479), 1, p. 54. Compare with: ‘The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me’. Leviticus, chap. 25, verse 23.  
67 In Ottoman terminology, this typically involved converting masha’a (collectively held land allocated to individual cultivators in rotation) into mafruz (Dawes-style individual allotments).  
68 ‘Arab landowners before World War I could and did evict tenants without offering them compensation’. Stein (citing ‘Mr. Bennett of the [British] Palestine Lands Department’), ‘Legal Protection and Circumvention of Rights’, p. 238. See also Stein, Land Question in Palestine, p. 19.  
69 According to Ruppin’s testimony to the Shaw Commission, 90% of vendors were absentee. Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August 1929, Command paper Cmd. 3530 (Shaw Commission report), p. 114. Granott’s figures showed a drop from 86% in 1923-1927 to 14.9 % in 1933-36, the bulk of the difference being provided by ‘large resident landowners’: ‘if we add up all these figures we shall find that not less than 90.6 per cent. of all acquisitions were of land which formerly belonged to large landowners, while from fellaheen only 9.4 per cent. was purchased’. A. Granott, The Land System in Palestine: History and Structure (London: Eyre & Spottiswood, 1952), p. 277.  
70 Atran has argued that some scholars, including Stein, have been influenced by orientalist stereotypes into disparaging the traditional style of land-distribution, and in particular, the masha’a system of circulating tenure, which Atran sees as having protected fellaheen landholdings from alienation. Atran, ‘Surrogate Colonization’, pp. 738-739.  
71 See, e.g., Abcarius, Fog of Propaganda, p. 128.


Stein, *Land Question in Palestine*, p. 5.


Revealingly, however, ‘the corporation tax imposed by the Turkish Government on such lands [held in mortmain] was practically the only fiscal measure which the Palestine [Mandate] Government failed to reinstate’. Abcarius, *Fog of Propaganda*, p. 137.


In “forcing” a sale through the courts, the Arab seller blamed the British for forcing him to sell his land to the Zionists’. Stein, ‘Jewish National Fund’, p. 201. See also Atran ‘Surrogate Colonisation’, p. 733.


Stein, *Land Question*, p. 72. Albert Hyamson had earlier made much the same point: ‘When the transfer took place the land was consequently empty, without tenants for whom to provide. And all parties were satisfied – the vendors, the purchasers and presumably the money-lenders, permanently, the tenants for only a short time’. Albert Hyamson, *Palestine Under the Mandate*, 1920-1948 (London: Methuen, 1950), p. 87. For a general survey of these ruses, together with loopholes that Natives were able temporarily to exploit (for squatting, opportunistic grazing, etc.), see Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, *A Survey of Palestine*, vol. 1 (reprint of the 1946-47 original [Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1991]), pp. 289-294. For an overview of JNF purchases up to the Nakba, see Lehn, *Jewish National Fund*, pp. 69-74.

Susan Reynolds has noted this deeper penetration in the increased resort to the power of compulsory purchase (or eminent domain) to provide for roads, canals, railways, airports and other core undertakings of the modern state. Susan Reynolds, *Before Eminent Domain: Toward a History of Expropriation of Land for the Common Good* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2010), pp. 45-46, 139.


The position of the [Ottoman] Sultan as the ultimate owner of the land (the holder of the raqabeh) was necessarily transferred to the [British] High
Commissioner who replaced him and who inherited the Sultan’s ultimate theoretical ownership of all the lands of Palestine’. Rajah Shehadeh, *Occupier’s Law: Israel and the West Bank* (Washington, DC: Institute of Palestine Studies, 1985), p. 25. The land thus affected ‘included lands for government and army use, as well as railways, roads, rivers, wadis, antiquity sites, forests, marshes, sand dunes, and mountainous and rocky areas [...] also unoccupied and uncultivated (and often uncultivable) lands [...] lands to which title-claims had not been made or upheld’. Lehn, *Jewish National Fund*, p. 77. Under the Land (Settlement of Title) Ordinance of 1928, land not established as privately owned was to be registered in the name of the state. David Kretzmer, *The Legal Status of Arabs in Israel* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), p. 52.


90 Lehn, *Jewish National Fund*, p. 76.

91 As one of the architects of Israel’s post-Nakba campaign of expropriation expressed this pretext: ‘From whence could Jewish settlement derive its terrain following the establishment of the State of Israel? On the day that the sovereignty of the New State was proclaimed, it inherited automatically and legally all real property previously belonging to the Mandatory Government. Under international law the State is the heir to the rights of the former Government, including ownership of land, just as, following the first World War, the prerogatives of the Ottoman State passed to the Mandatory Power. The Palestine Government had certain rural and urban lands registered in its name, according to law, in the Land Registry. However, their precise size was never clearly defined; the Mandatory authorities published different figures on various occasions, with substantial discrepancies’. A. Granott, *Agrarian Reform and the Record of Israel* (London: Eyre & Spottiswood, 1956), p. 90.

92 ‘Rightly fearing that the tax collector and army recruiter would make effective use of the new registers and hardly understanding the enormous importance of the new records and deeds to their own future, when the implementing regulations of the [tanzimat] code began to be applied, they [fellaheen] evaded massively and stubbornly’. Ruedy, ‘Dynamics of Land Alienation’, p. 124.

93 Polk, ‘Existing Non-Jewish Communities’, pp. 236-238.


95 ‘Hebron is living evidence of what it means for Palestinians to be inexorably forced out of their homes and pushed off their land. It is a slow-motion “portrait” of Palestine being turned inside out’. Saree Makdisi, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation* (New York: Norton, 2008), p. 212. In relation to the settler long run, it should be noted that this is a description of the situation today.

96 That is, so long as we overlook the cold-blooded system with which Zionist forces prevented Palestinians who had fled their homes from returning. See Morris, *Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, pp. 341-413. Compare with Nafez Nassal, *The Palestine Exodus from Galilee* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1978). Ben Gurion noted: ‘I don’t accept the formulation that we should not encourage their return: Their return must be prevented [...] at all costs’. Quoted in Simha Flapan, ‘The Palestinian Exodus of 1948’, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 16 (1987), pp. 3-26, 17.

97 For the genealogy of the Zionist dream of transfer, see, e.g., Benny Morris, ‘Yosef Weitz and the Transfer Committees, 1948-1949’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 22
Wolfe, ‘Purchase by Other Means’


Shahak, ‘Concept of “Transfer”’, p. 33.

E.H. Carr, What is History? (London: Penguin, 1987), p. 11. Though Carr properly credited A.E. Housman with the remark, it seems fair to say that the offspring has outgrown the source.


See, for example, www.cityofdavid.co.il/hp_eng.asp Accessed: 21/02/12.
Malice Enough in their Hearts and Courage Enough in Ours: Reflections on US Indigenous and Palestinian Experiences under Occupation

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To see for ourselves the conditions under which Palestinians live and struggle – this was the mission of the delegation of Indigenous and Women of Color Feminists that traveled to Occupied Palestine in June 2011. All of us had been part of social justice struggles in our respective communities and all of us sought to increase our capacity for effective solidarity action with Palestinians. I traveled with the delegation as an Indigenous woman living under US occupation seeking to understand how another Indigenous population struggled under settler colonialism. Sometimes it takes seeing the suffering of others to realise the full magnitude of our own suffering. As a Dakota woman in Palestine, I had the painful experience of witnessing the monstrous destructiveness of settler colonialism’s war against a People and a land base. I told one friend that it was like witnessing a high-speed and high-tech version of the colonisation of our Indigenous homelands. Colonisation ought to be one of the most easily recognised forms of oppression in the world, but it is not. In fact, colonising powers work so steadfastly to rationalise and justify this crime against humanity that it eventually becomes normalised, acceptable, and even righteous. I come from a place where the government denies that it is colonial – it denies that it is a government of occupation. I recognised this
same colonial deception at play in Israel’s disavowal of itself as a colonial entity.

In spite of Israel’s attempt to project a righteous image to the rest of the world, one of the first impressions upon arrival in Palestine is that there is something terribly wrong. The Apartheid Wall, frequent security towers and checkpoints, as well as excessive use of barbed wire, instead appear as manifestations of an illegitimate government trying desperately to exert control over a land and people that are not its own. These prominent physical structures powerfully and immediately convey the essence of colonial domination in a way that few other images can. Most of us coming from a militarised society like the US are familiar with surveillance and the constant threat of military or police crack-down for any disobedience (anyone who bumps up against the system knows this). But what exists in Palestine is a particular reflection of the combination of a highly-technologised (or high-modern) Israeli military apparatus and the use of that apparatus to facilitate colonialist aims. It targets the Indigenous population for elimination or exclusion, harassment, and subjugation, just as when the US military targeted Indigenous peoples. If the US was still in its heyday of its expansionist frenzy but had twenty-first century technology, I imagine the visible effects of colonisation across the continent would look very similar to those in Palestine. It is only because the US militarily subjugated Indigenous Peoples by the end of the nineteenth century that we do not see the level of surveillance and checkpoints, or an Apartheid Wall on every reservation. Today the US does not consider Indigenous Peoples a serious threat to national security or to its settler population and thus does not need to employ such severe tactics of control and repression in the name of ‘security’ and ‘defense’.

In general, Indigenous people respond to colonisation by fleeing, fighting, or capitulating. When an Indigenous population is faced with land theft, occupation, constant encroachment, ethnic cleansing, and other forms of naked repression, resistance to violence will escalate and at least some of the colonised will act in self-defense. Israel has attempted to justify its extreme militarisation and repression under the banner of ‘security’, but in the context of colonial occupation this is a farce. As one of our hosts in Qalqilya
said, ‘The Wall isn’t about security – it is about stealing land!’ The discourse of security employed by Israelis is really about ensuring that the violence proceeds unilaterally – that Israelis can continue invading, stealing, destroying, oppressing and colonising while trying to minimise the impact of any defensive actions by Palestinians. A speaker for one of the women’s organisation also summed it up concisely: ‘Israel is not defending itself; it is defending its occupation’. An illegitimate and oppressive power must always use violence and force, or the threat of violence and force, to sustain itself. In this case, the ruling regime has created repression so severe that the militarised landscape belies Israeli narratives of peaceful intentions and has the potential to finally tip world opinion in favor of the Palestinians. It is precisely because the Palestinians have continued to resist settler occupation that the Israelis are pushed to ever more obvious and atrocious violations of human rights in their theft of Palestinians lands. While listening to Palestinians tell their stories, we repeatedly heard people say they do not have a problem with Jews or Judaism, but with Zionism and occupation. There is no question that Zionist Jews would not have to fear Palestinian violence if they were not colonising Palestinian lands.

The same logic is true in the US context. Pioneer narratives are filled with the expressed fear of Indian or ‘savage’ violence, as if Indigenous acts of violence could ever have been anything but defensive. If settlers did not occupy Indigenous land (if they were back in Europe, for example), and if they were not benefiting from the exploitation of our people, land, or labor, they would have no reason to fear Indigenous people. It is only when colonisers want to stay in the business of colonising that they use whatever means they can, including the building of physical control mechanisms, to facilitate white colonisation and Indigenous subjugation. Our people had lived freely in our homeland for thousands of years and never needed jails, fences, or walls. These control mechanisms employed by the settler society were shocking to my ancestors. Those who could see past their fear had nothing but disgust for the people who would create and use such inhumane devices. I had the same reaction upon seeing the Wall for the first time in the prison city of Qalqiliya. What kind of people would build such a monument to oppression?
In the era of rapid colonial expansion in the US, military forts were usually the first structures built on Indigenous territories, while jails followed shortly after. In fact, a jail was among the first buildings created by government workers at the Upper Sioux Agency in Minnesota to house non-compliant Dakota people. It was just a little more than a decade after being confined to reservations and beginning to live under a colonial regime that our people declared war against the US government and its citizens. When our resistance was at its peak, during the US-Dakota War of 1862, General John Pope wrote to General Henry Sibley:

We have now the means to make a final settlement with all these Indians [...] All annuity Indians must be notified that hereafter they will not be permitted on any pretext to leave their reservation, that all the soldiers have orders to shoot them wherever they are found and citizens are authorized to do the same.²

By the following summer the colonisers forcibly removed Dakota people from our homeland and placed bounties on our scalps. The tactics of colonial control continue to the present day. Indigenous people in the US remain disproportionately represented in the prison system, with rates thirty-eight percent higher than the national rate.³ In Dakota territory, few, if any of our people, have been untouched by these high rates, as almost everyone has at least one family member who has served time in prison. However, even when we are not in prison we do not have to see physical walls or barriers because we know that if we violate the invisible borders we will join the ranks of the incarcerated or dead. Two centuries of colonisation have impressed that upon us and our population has become remarkably obedient. I saw something different in Palestine.

Our first day in the West Bank we visited the village of Awarta, where they had just experienced 45 days of terror in which their village was under siege by Israeli settlers and military. Even as we spoke with them, they reported that just a few hours before we arrived settlers had set fire to their wheat crop, attempting to destroy their food production. As I listened to the stories conveyed by village
council leaders and families about their lives under occupation, it was as if time had compressed and I was listening to descriptions of the tactics used by American settlers and military in North America. While colonial leaders were often responsible for dictating policies that supported colonial expansion, civilian populations of settlers had much to gain from helping to implement those policies. For example, scorched and burned was a tactic used in the earliest stages of American colonisation, prompting the Seneca victims of his policy to name George Washington, one of America’s most famous founding fathers, Town Destroyer. Major General John Sullivan’s army carried out Washington’s orders by razing Haudenosaunee orchards and ripening fields of corn and beans. Washington’s troops and their families were later rewarded for their service with title to Indigenous lands.

Similarly, as people of Awarta described the theft of their sheep and goat herds, the confiscation, theft or destruction of their olive trees and the introduction of destructive wild boars, images also flashed through my mind of the obliteration of bison herds on the great plains, the theft and ruin of our prairies, and the introduction of ill-suited and destructive cattle that have devastated that biome. In addition to striking terror into the hearts of a population, these attacks on food sources and eco-systems are intended to starve civilian populations, cripple ancient cultures and practices, and subdue those who manage to survive. Sullivan summed up the colonial character required of such actions when he stated that ‘the Indians shall see that there is malice enough in our hearts to destroy everything that contributes to their support’. Indeed, the cause of the malice in a colonising Israel, as in the occupied US, is that they covet a land that the original inhabitants do not want to relinquish.

Awarta council leaders told us of the spring 2011 arrests of a hundred women, a tactic used by the military to put pressure on the village. They described the arrest of one of their 83-year old women who was taken to the nearby military camp, interrogated, and forced to sign papers in Hebrew she did not understand. And all this was in addition to the beatings, shootings, invasion of homes, theft of resources and traumatising of children. The examples were reminiscent of similar tactics employed by American colonisers who used combinations of deceit, blackmail, bullying, bribery, threats,
and terrorism to achieve acquiescence or compliance, especially for land cessions, all while adhering to perverse colonial notions of legality.

Incredible sadness swept over me when we viewed from a hilltop the encroaching Israeli settlements, which the people of Awarta have seen gradually expand. Awarta elders described the progression from temporary structures to permanent structures, as land is confiscated and the colonisers move in. I had seen all this before. And, I knew that if this colonial invasion was not stopped, the colonial appetite would not be sated until there was total and complete Israeli domination over the land, no matter the consequences for Palestinian people or the land base. Still, the people we met in Awarta were committed to never relinquishing their homes.

Of course the Zionist ideology that underpins Israeli colonial occupation is the same as the Manifest Destiny ideology that underpinned US colonial expansion, in that both are based on a belief in a divinely-sanctioned right to occupy someone else’s land. The legal systems arising from these colonial contexts are specifically designed to codify colonial claims. Like in Palestine, every Indigenous nation in what is now the US faced similar actions of legalised land theft. US courts adopted into law (and they still uphold) the Doctrine of Discovery, a principle originating with Pope Nicholas V. As scholar Steve Newcomb has argued, this doctrine allowed Christians to declare war on non-Christians throughout the world by sanctioning the conquest, colonisation and exploitation of non-Christian nations and territories. Thus, when colonial laws sanction theft and colonisation, the colonised cannot expect justice to be administered in the courts. As many Indigenous nations have experienced, colonial ideology manifests itself throughout the judicial and legislative bodies of the US government. Dakota people, for example, experienced legalised land theft when the US negotiated treaties with my ancestors that they never intended to honor, repeatedly violated those treaties, and then used our attempts to defend ourselves against ongoing invasion, starvation, and colonisation to unilaterally abrogate the treaties and ethnically cleanse us from our Minnesota homeland. That is, in the end, they kept the money, the goods, and the land – all ‘legal’ within the
apparatus they had constructed to justify their actions. When they needed to remove us from our homeland, they simply passed a bill to do so and made it law.⁷

In Palestine I also observed how a constructed legal apparatus facilitates colonisation. Our delegation met democratically elected leaders targeted by Israeli authorities for their participation in the Palestinian Legislative Council and the Hamas government. They faced prosecution and imprisonment in the Israeli (in)justice system, the confiscation of their identification cards, and expulsion from their homeland.⁸ We visited three of the legislators who have been living in a tent at the Red Cross headquarters since July 1, 2010. The threat of deportation of these lifelong residents of Jerusalem is in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, but Israel has established its own legal code for addressing anyone who is perceived disloyal to the Israeli state. PLC Member Muhammad I. Totah relayed: ‘We have to pay a high price for the freedom of our country’. Indeed, attesting to the urgency of the situation, just three months after our visit, the occupation forces abducted Ahmed Attoun from the Red Cross tent and took him into Israeli custody. Because their freedom is threatened by the government, there is no hope that justice will come from it. While they continue to steadfastly refuse to leave Jerusalem and sacrifice any kind of normal life, while participating in this long-term sit-in (or in prison, in the case of Attoun), to find justice they will need help from the rest of the world.

Likewise, in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem, I witnessed the consequences of Israeli’s usage of legal tactics to steal and occupy Palestinian homes. In this case, groups of Jewish settler organisations falsely laid claim to property and used the court system to obtain ‘legal’ title. We met Sheikh Jarrah families who had been betrayed by legal counsel that conspired with the Jewish settlers and created the ‘Toussia-Cohen’ agreement, an agreement never approved by them and one that did not challenge Jewish ownership claims. Israeli courts have, nonetheless, determined the agreement as legally binding and used it as grounds to issue subsequent eviction notices. Like in the case of the PLC members, such examples illustrate the extreme unlikelihood of finding any semblance of justice within the Israeli court system, a system specifically designed to serve Israeli colonial interests.
Colonial governments are particularly adept at enforcing colonial court rulings with police and military power, and the case of Palestine is no exception. We heard one story of armed soldiers using explosives to blow off the door of the family’s house at 4:45 a.m., and then physically throwing out terrified members of the family, including elders, children, and women in their night-clothes. Within a few hours of their eviction, all their belongings had been thrown in a park and they were forced to watch as Jewish families moved in to occupy their homes. Families already evicted have since experienced Israelis destroying their tents at least seventeen times, repeated outrageous court fines, arrests, daily clashes with settlers and constant surveillance. While the evicted families personally experience the daily consequences of displacement and occupation, they also recognise that this is part of the larger colonial project of creating a Jewish majority within East Jerusalem by ethnically cleansing Palestinian people neighborhood by neighborhood. The people of Sheikh Jarrah are committed to resisting this physical erasure from the land, but they too seek help from the rest of the world knowing that they are battling an unjust and powerful government of occupation.

Erasure is another tactic used by colonising powers and it takes a variety of forms. I witnessed the attempted erasure of Palestinian people and presence on the land in multiple ways. We heard from students that in their academic work in Israeli-controlled institutions they were required to refer to themselves as ‘Israeli-Arabs’ rather than Palestinians, thereby re-constructing an identity that denied their ancient relationship with the land. I saw signage in Hebrew that re-named the landscape, denying Palestinian place-names and imposing a colonial identity on the land. I heard our Palestinian hosts describe how history was being re-written to insert and give prominence to Jewish presence at Palestinian sites. This was especially apparent in the Old City of East Jerusalem, where a small Jewish Quarter once existed but has now expanded and colonised the area. We were all deeply disturbed when one of the guides on our counter-colonial tour realised that the place where he once went to school is now claimed and occupied by Jewish institutions and settlers. Indeed, behind the tall fence separating us from them, Jewish children were happily playing. Our Palestinian host was visibly stunned. We learned that the Old City is, both
metaphorically and literally, a place where Israeli colonisers have bulldozed over the Palestinian presence on the land in order to impose a Jewish-only narrative. The Israeli destruction of the Maghariba Quarter on 11 July, 1967 is a spectacular example of the lengths to which the colonial state has gone to physically eradicate Islamic people and history from a central religious and historic site. The once densely populated Maghariba Quarter and the Maghariba Wall (formerly known as the Al-Buraq Wall) have been claimed and renamed as part of the Israeli policy of Judaising Islamic sites by military force.  

All such colonial efforts are designed to assert a claim to land while, simultaneously attempting to make the indigenous the foreigner. Similar tactics characterise colonial claiming and renaming of Indigenous spaces in the US. Accompanying the theft of our lands and the implementation of major campaigns of ethnic cleansing was always a process of ideological colonisation. While some Indigenous names continue to dot maps and infiltrate the English language, the vast majority of our place-names, and historic and sacred sites were replaced with European or Euro-American constructions. Like the eradication of Indigenous plants, animals and eco-systems and their replacement with European plants, animals and desire to exploit, the imposition of new names on the land was a central part of the colonial project. Every lake, mountain, river, forest, village, city, valley, plateau, and sacred site was claimed and re-named, usually after some white male or European landmark. 

Unlike in Palestine, however, what US Indigenous people witness now is a manifestation of imperialists’ nostalgia, in which, after centuries of occupation, settler Americans seek to revive some form of indigeneity in public spaces. For example, I have seen dozens of cases in which Leftist-leaning settlers want to bring back Indigenous place names (after settlers worked to systematically obliterate our languages). They still do not want permanent Indigenous presence at those sites, or to relinquish control over these sites, but they want to appropriate and tokenise what they perceive as more romantic, authentic names, while assuaging their own sense of colonial guilt. That is, with our populations thoroughly subjugated, it is now safe for them to acknowledge that Indigenous people were here first, while feeling no sense of obligation for
accompanying actions toward justice. They do not perceive us as a serious threat. This also allows settlers to incorporate Indigenous people into a fictional narrative. For example, Minnesota’s original state seal depicts an outdoor scene in which a white farmer is working out in the field while an Indian on horseback rides into the fading sunset. In this instance, Dakota people have been incorporated into the state mythology, but the constructed story suggests a voluntary relinquishment of our homeland to the benevolent settler. In 1983 the state legislature re-drew the seal so the Indian is angled slightly southward, closer to the settler, which contributes the added suggestion of friendly Dakota-settler relations, and even further obfuscates the actual history of the state. All versions conveniently deny the history of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and land theft, while incorporating indigeneity.

In Palestine, I saw no such nostalgia exhibited by Israelis because the people have not yet been subjugated and they still pose a very real threat to the Israeli occupation. With the colonial war raging, everything Arab and Palestinian is denigrated and reviled. Further, given the Zionist desire to create a Jewish-only state, there will be no room for such nostalgia. Another distinction in the Palestinian context is the concerted effort with which Israelis lay claim to Indigeneity. While this seems an impossible task, considering that God purportedly told Abraham, ‘I give you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan’, Zionists routinely falsify their relationship to place. One way they attempt this is, as mentioned, by imposing Hebrew names over Arabic and biblical names. This was particularly apparent at the major historic and religious sites we visited: Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

While European colonisers have not claimed indigeneity in the Western Hemisphere, they have consistently attempted to deny the indigeneity of the Peoples of this land. For example, in the earliest days of their expansion into the Western hemisphere, Europeans attempted to explain the existence of lands and people about whom they had no knowledge – especially biblical knowledge – by placing us within their existing paradigms. They thus attributed our origins to one of the Lost Tribes of Israel. While that theory was short-lived, the
attempt to place the origin of our ancestors elsewhere has continued unabated for more than five hundred years.

Our Peoples are forced to watch as others lay claim to all we hold dear. We become trespassers in our homelands and criminalised for attempting to remain. We wonder how such violence can continue to be perpetrated against our bodies, our lands, and ways of being, and how the perpetrators continue to justify it to themselves and the rest of the world. We wonder why the lessons of previous centuries’ colonial failures have not been learned. Through systematic programming, even coloniser children understand their superior place in the social order, while the children of the colonised are forced to swallow daily doses of humiliation and injustice. It is these daily assaults, experienced a hundred times a day, that characterise life under colonial rule. Assuming that we have not capitulated or become a collaborator, these assaults fill the colonised with a burning rage that always simmers under the surface until it has an outlet for release. During my time in Palestine I heard the pleas for justice and my rage joined that of the Palestinians.

One young woman from An-Najah University confided to me that she hoped the Palestinians did not end up like us – the Indians of North America. Embarrassed by her frankness, she quickly apologised. There was no need for an apology – she simply expressed what I had felt the entire trip. Centuries of colonisation have taken a toll on Indigenous populations in the US. To withstand ongoing occupation requires never losing sight of the end-goal of liberation and fiercely engaging and supporting acts of resistance. In Palestine, this is happening. The majority of Palestinians are still treating settler-colonialism like a war that is being waged against them. They have never abandoned their belief in their right to their homeland. And, they believe liberation is attainable.

Though there are 4.9 million self-identified American Indians according to the 2010 Census, few express a belief in our continuing right to our homelands, very few are actually committed to resisting American occupation, and even fewer believe liberation is possible. So successfully entrenched is settler-colonialism in the US that it is invisible to most of the population, settlers and Indigenous alike. It is not that settler-colonialism is any less violent or destructive in this hemisphere, it is that our resistance has waned over its extended
duration, rendering the more obvious aspects of repression and control less visible. This is a product of our historical experience. Initial invasion and colonisation was so brutal that most Indigenous populations in the Western hemisphere suffered a ninety-eight percent extermination rate and retained only a small fraction of their original land bases. For example, the ethnic cleansing policy in the US was so successful at eradicating the Dakota presence in our Minnesota homeland – which allowed for the unobstructed theft of our lands – that today we occupy approximately .012% of our homeland.

The violence of colonisation did not end there, however, and was followed by sustained attacks on Indigenous ways of being. Even today colonisation manifests itself in myriad ways: corporate and government interests continue to encroach upon remaining Indigenous lands, notions of private property protected by law and enforced by police and military prevent us from regularly accessing sacred sites as well as lands and resources for subsistence purposes, we are subject to every institution and system of the colonisers while our own systems and institutions have been systematically eradicated or threatened, and, most importantly, our homelands continue to be exploited and destroyed at warp speed, jeopardising the survival of entire ecosystems and all the life they support. We have learned that if we step one toe out of line, or challenge US colonial power in any way outside of the prescribed legal routes open to us, people with guns show up to threaten us with imprisonment or death. Most of us have been trained to not step that toe out of line. Thus, populations of Indigenous people in the US have arrived at a place of acceptance or apathy. Many have embraced the values and culture of the colonisers and no longer imagine a liberated future. Not so in Palestine – visible evidence of a spirit of resistance is visible in the landscape and in the words and actions of Palestinian people who refuse to accept the loss of their homeland.

Among the people I met, I felt an enduring sense of defiance in the face of injustice. The gift I received in Palestine was one of inspiration. The Palestinians have become experts at maintaining a culture of resistance. Over and over again I witnessed fearless and courageous acts of truth-telling about their experiences under occupation, disallowing settler narratives to infiltrate or corrupt their anti-colonial perspectives. In every city and every town I met people
willing to risk their lives and their personal freedom for a liberated Palestine – both people with ‘martyrs’ in their families who paid the ultimate price for their commitment and men and women who had already spent years in Israeli prisons. I met people who had been used as human shields by the Israeli army, who had been beaten and shot, yet still did not allow this to dampen their spirit of resistance.

Given the similar processes of invasion, occupation, and colonisation, what is striking is not that our Peoples have similarly suffered, but that in the twenty-first century our responses to the suffering are so vastly different. At one time Indigenous Peoples in the U. S. did respond to these crimes against humanity in similar ways. For example, Dakota people, after attempting to negotiate with the invaders only to have those negotiations break down, began to challenge the occupation more forcefully, eventually engaging in direct warfare against the invaders in 1862. In the nineteenth century our people faced death, imprisonment, starvation, and execution when they did not bend to the colonial will. Still, people resisted. When Dakota collaborators were discovered, our resisters burned their houses, destroyed their crops, and sometimes killed or banished the betrayers of our people. The presence of collaborators, however, was indicative of the beginnings of a growing fissure within our population. It took only several decades of occupation by missionaries, traders, government agents and then settlers, for colonial divide-and-conquer tactics to take hold. Even before the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, a few of our people began to lose faith in our capacity to continue living as Dakota people and began to believe in the inevitability of settler dominance within our homeland. Their strategy for survival thus shifted from one of resistance to colonisation and hope for complete liberation to acceptance of, and compliance within, the new social order. When our people lost the 1862 War and the colonisers imprisoned us in concentration camps (civilian and warrior populations alike), sent us into exile, thereby effectively ethnically cleansing us from our beloved homeland, placed bounties on our scalps, and unilaterally abrogated our treaties, that was deemed proof of the failure of resistance and the collaborators gained converts. One hundred and fifty years later, those who still dream of liberation and engage in acts of resistance against colonial authority are in the vast minority, though a few of us are still here.
In the century and a half since our homeland was stolen from us, the colonisers have also waged a war against the land itself, causing unprecedented destruction through intensive mining, manufacturing, logging, industrial agriculture and feedlots, as well as coal, nuclear and hydro-electric energy production. In their desire to extract anything of monetary value, they have destroyed ninety-eight percent of Minnesota’s white pines, ninety percent of the wetlands, ninety-eight percent of southern Minnesota’s Big Woods, and ninety-nine percent of our prairies. The above-ground water systems all have toxins – major rivers like the Minnesota and Mississippi have levels of toxins so dangerous we cannot swim in the waters – and underground systems continue to be threatened by corporate use. Industrial agriculture has devastated the topsoil, the basis for all life on the land and the source of our food. Like the rest of the planet, we can only guess at what additional harms will come from global climate change, but it is already clear that the colonising society is threatening to all life.

Meanwhile, our culture, which has always been land-based, continues to languish as our capacity to renew it is severely curtailed by colonial dominance. While a growing number of our people fight to maintain our language, spirituality and connection to the land, we are still a minority and the rest have almost entirely embraced the values, religion, and ways of the colonisers. Most of our people have abandoned any hope of living freely within our homeland and they assume the permanency of the US government. In fact, many no longer feel particularly constrained by colonial society because they have fully embraced colonial culture. Where injustices are recognised and change is sought, most of our people (Dakota specifically, but Indigenous people more broadly) do not challenge the institution of colonialism but instead seek remedies within colonial paradigms and institutions that will never fundamentally alter the colonial relationship. Yet, we are at a stage now in which the failures of colonial ways of being, including the industrial civilisation, are now apparent and it is more important than ever that we seek to eradicate them. Right now, most of our people would starve if we had to rely on our limited land base for survival. Our lives may very well depend on our capacity to reclaim and protect the integrity of our homeland. For this, we need to revive a culture of resistance.
It is coming from this context that I stepped into Palestinian territory and experienced the always present spirit of intifada or ‘shaking off’. In every way possible, from boycotts to fighting soldiers with fists and stones, Palestinians have resisted every aspect of colonisation. Even while experiencing tremendous hardship from Israeli colonial actions, a palpable sense of hope remains. It was clear that the sense of hope is not based on a naive belief in a magic answer that will fall from the sky, but a hope that rests in the capacity of the people to overcome through struggle. While not all Palestinians are committed to resisting settler colonialism, there is clearly a strong section of the population among whom struggle is honored. Within this population, acts of resistance are celebrated and those who engage in them are honored. It was my experience in Palestine that awakened me to the realisation that though I have experienced support from small pockets of like-minded people, I did not know what it was like to be immersed in a culture of resistance, to have it surround me as I walked the streets, to see it in the graffiti and the monuments to the ‘martyrs’, to hear it in the indomitable voices of people who are still telling their stories to the world in spite of the efforts to silence them. I have never lived under conditions in which struggle was celebrated by anything other than a small minority. It is this aspect of Palestine that I found most beautiful.

The celebration of resistance is particularly clear in the honoring of the ‘martyrs’. Precisely because the spirit of Indigenous resistance has languished in the US, these monuments held a particular significance for me. We, too, have our martyrs, but even their memory is often co-opted by collaborators who invoke their names and images to serve their own purposes. For example, on 26 December, 1862, thirty-eight of our Dakota warriors were hanged in what remains the largest simultaneous mass hanging from one gallows in world history. Some of us celebrate their memory because they were hanged for defending our land, our people, and our way of life. Today, however, major memorial events held in their honor emphasise reconciliation with white settlers rather than resistance, while justice has yet to be served (for example, the vast majority of our people still live in exile and settlers continue to deny us our homeland while they benefit from our dispossession). That is not what our people fought for. While I am sure Palestine has its share of colonial collaborators who work at odds with resistance efforts, in
many of the villages, refugee camps, cities and neighborhoods, there was an obvious atmosphere of resistance and deep reverence for those who gave their lives for Palestine. Pictures of ‘martyrs’ are plastered on the walls of neighborhoods, spray-painted with stencils, printed on banners, posted on signage and stories of their sacrifice are told and re-told. Even universities are positioned as locations of struggle and resistance. Though this is often true amongst student groups on college campuses in the US, rarely do institutions themselves maintain an anti-colonial political agenda. When we met with people from the Women’s Studies Center at Bir Zeit University and the administration, faculty and students at An-Najah University, we learned how institutions have flourished despite the occupation and how they aim to teach students how to be active members of society. They support students and faculty who participate in the struggle, they offer special scholarships for political prisoners and families of martyrs, and they take time to honor and remember them at various events, including graduation ceremonies. Ironically, the Indigenous warriors honored in our public gatherings in the US tend to be those who assist the US government in their wars of imperialism rather than fight for liberation or the defense of our homeland. Those of us ramping up Indigenous resistance today have much to learn from the Palestinian example.

As one imperialist nation to another, the US government is important in maintaining the Israeli system of occupation – to the tune of $8.2 million every day. As Indigenous Peoples of the US, we can offer our solidarity to our Palestinian relatives by also challenging American imperialism at home. One of my favorite anti-colonial intellectuals, Kenyan scholar Ngugi wa Thiong’o, wrote that any ‘blow against imperialism, no matter the ethnic and regional origins of the blow, is a victory for all anti-imperialist elements in all the nationalities’.13 We all must continue to struggle against settler colonialism wherever it exists.

Palestinians have risen to challenge that colonial violence by exerting their claim to the land. In Sheikh Jarrah I heard voices say: ‘This is our land. This is our life. This is our right’. Members of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign stated: ‘Without resistance, we can never achieve our rights’. I saw signs in the kindergarten classrooms in the Ibdaa Cultural Centre in Deheisheh
Refugee Camp that said: ‘The Right to Return Home is Inalienable’. In Nablus I heard: ‘We will continue our resistance until our land is returned’. In Al-Bustan, the threatened neighborhood in Silwan, I read on one of their banners: ‘In Jerusalem our home we shall remain, like a wall upon your chest and a shred of glass in your throat’. I heard from the people: ‘We are ready to die – all of us – but we are not going to give up our homes’. Everywhere we went, the people of Palestine conveyed their love of homeland and their desire to live freely. In spite of the extremely high price of resistance, the people fight on. Palestinians have demonstrated that repression also breeds courage.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Waziyatawin is a Dakota writer, teacher, and activist committed to the pursuit of Indigenous liberation and reclamation of homelands. Her work seeks to build a culture of resistance within Indigenous communities, to recover Indigenous ways of being, and to eradicate colonial institutions. She is currently writing on the topics of Indigenous women and resistance and Indigenous survival in the collapse of industrial civilization. Waziyatawin comes from the Pezhutazizi Otunwe (Yellow Medicine Village) in southwestern Minnesota. After receiving her PhD in American history from Cornell University in 2000, she earned tenure and an associate professorship in the history department at Arizona State University where she taught for seven years. Waziyatawin currently holds the Indigenous Peoples Research Chair in the Indigenous Governance Program at the University of Victoria. She is the author or co/editor of five volumes, her most recent being What Does Justice Look Like? The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland (St. Paul: Living Justice Press, 2008).

NOTES

1 This North American delegation was organised by Rabab Abdulhadi, Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies and Race and Resistance Studies, and Senior Scholar, Arab & Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Initiative (AMED) at San Francisco State University, California, and Barbara Ransby, Professor of African American Studies and History and Director of Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of Illinois-Chicago (and founder of Ella’s Daughters). Other members of the delegation included: Ayoka Chenzira, Angela Davis, Gina Dent, Melissa Garcia, Anna Guevarra, Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Premilla Nadasen, and Chandra Talpade Mohanty. For the declaration we issued upon our return, ‘Justice for Palestine: A Call to Action from Indigenous and Women of Color Feminists’, see: http://electronicintifada.net/blog/ali-abunimah/after-witnessing-palestines-apartheid-indigenous-and-women-color-feminists-endorse#.TsqOZbLNrTM. Accessed: 12/01/12.


Waziyatawin, ‘Malice Enough in their Hearts’

7 ‘An Act for the Removal of the Sissetons, Wahpatons, Medawakanton, and Wahpakoota Bands of Sioux or Dakota Indians, and for the Disposition of their Lands in Minnesota and Dakota’ was passed by the US Senate in 1863. Not only did this unilaterally abrogate treaties with the Dakota, it awarded Dakota treaty money to white settlers for ‘depredations’ incurred during the 1862 War.
9 This process was relayed to our delegation verbally.
10 In this case, the Israelis destroyed the houses in the quarter, expelling residents to refugee camps or to Jordan, and burying alive those who remained inside. Malice in their hearts, indeed. Further, in their push to exert dominance and control over the site, Israelis re-named the Mughariba Quarter the ‘Wailing Square’, and the Mughariba Wall the ‘Wailing Wall’, thus establishing a new narrative on a site that is now devoid of the original inhabitants. Forty years later, the Israelis were still working to fully eradicate evidence of Islamic presence there. In 2007, Israelis excavated and hauled away Islamic and Arab antiquities uncovered during the destruction of the path to the Mughariba Gate. See The Aqsa Foundation for Islamic Sacred Places Development, *Standing Firm: The Nakba of the Maghariba Quarter in Photographs Forty Years under the Israeli Occupation* (Um El Fahem: 2007).
12 Genesis 17:8.
The Arab Worker under the Palestine Mandate (1937)

GEORGE MANSOUR

Palestinian trade unionist George Mansour (b. 1905 – d. 1963) initially worked as a baker, then as school teacher in Nazareth before his family moved to Jaffa in 1927, where he worked first in trade and then in manufacturing. As Secretary of the Arab Workers Society, a labour organisation founded in 1934, he was a central figure in the 1936 General Strike, helping to write and distribute communiques and leaflets, and organise rallies, marches and pickets. After his arrest in late 1936, and after the assassination of AWS’s leader Michel Mitri by British forces in December 1936, Mansour testified before the Royal Commission in January 1937 about the grievances of Arab labourers in Palestine. Frustrated by the Peel Commission Report, he published The Arab Worker under the Palestine Mandate. Based largely on his evidence to the Commission, this booklet was designed to appeal to British public opinion and ‘to give the English reader some idea of why Arab labour is at one with the rest of the Arab population in its opposition to Zionist immigration’. After his testimony and due to his strong relationships to trade unionists in Britain, he was appointed to the Palestine Office in London, where he remained until the Second World War. Returning to Palestine, he was unable to revive his labour work as a result of continued harassment and repeated arrests. He left for Baghdad, where he worked as a teacher and organised popular committees in solidarity with Palestine. After the war, and the Nakba, he spent time in Egypt working on labour organising, journalism, and education, as well as working with the Arab Higher Committee (AHC). He then moved with the AHC to Beirut in 1959, spending the last years of his life doing trade union work.

This text provides a lucid account of the wider socio-economic implications Zionist colonisation and Jewish immigration to Palestine had on the indigenous society in general, and on the labour market in particular. As an articulate representative of the budding Arab Labour Federation and Arab labour movement, Mansour was the antithesis of Zionist propaganda. This propaganda insisted on the underdevelopment of Arab labour consciousness and portrayed the Arab working class as a whole as a tool of their feudal Arab masters. It asserted that there was little ground on which to organise jointly with Jewish labour. However, as the text illuminates, the Histadrut’s strategic decision against joint organisation and its ‘conquest of labour’ strategy was necessitated by Arab labour’s increasing linkage of economic and political demands and its realisation that the Zionist labour movement’s political goals marginalised and displaced Palestinians both as workers and as natives of the land. Another target of Mansour’s testimony are British claims regarding the positive impact the development of a Jewish national
Mansour, ‘The Arab Worker’

*home in Palestine had in areas such as the provision of health, economic development, in particular on the agricultural sector, and urbanisation. Dismissing such claims as founded on Zionist propaganda, the evidence given by Mansour exposes British support for Zionism. The following excerpts from The Arab Worker under the Palestine Mandate were prepared by this issue’s editors.*


Compiled by George Mansour, formerly Secretary of the Arab Labour Federation (Jaffa), from material submitted by the Arab Labour Organisations.

**Introduction**

The following passage occurred in the Debate on Palestine, held in the House of Commons on July 21st, 1937.

Earl Winterton: A cardinal feature of the arguments of the right honourable and gallant gentleman (Colonel Wedgwood) and some other members opposite is a belief that the opposition on part of the Arabs is confined to a few effendis and a few landlords [...]. It is obvious that the Commission do not hold that view, and it is obvious to anyone who visits Palestine that it is not so. Let me say frankly that I think there is the same mood among the Arab people of Palestine as there was among the Southern Irish some years ago, exactly the same.

Colonel Wedgwood: The Commission did not take any evidence from the fellahin. They hardly went about the country at all.

Earl Winterton: The Royal Commission certainly took evidence. There was evidence given by Mr. Mansour on behalf of Arab labour.

Mr. Stephen: He represents nobody but himself.

Earl Winterton: It is not true to say that the Gentleman in question represented nobody but himself. He represents the only organised Arab labour in the country. His evidence was to the effect that Arab labour could not accept the present position and were at one with the people of other classes in objecting to Jewish immigration as it stands at present.
The following pages have been written in order to give the English reader some idea of why Arab labour is at one with the rest of the Arab population in its opposition to Zionist immigration, and why it resents the well-known attitude of Col. Wedgwood and Mr. Stephen. At the same time, we hope to call attention to the inadequacy of the Royal Commission’s treatment of the relationship of Jewish and Arab labour in Palestine. While recognising that the fundamental issue is political, we believe that economic factors played a tremendously important part in the disturbances of 1936 [the general strike had lasted from April to October 1936] and that this aspect has been totally ignored by the Royal Commission. […]

**Arab labour organisations**

The Arab world has not passed through an industrial revolution similar to that of the West. No labour movement comparable to those of Europe exists in the Near East. The workers have never entirely lost contract to their natural leaders and have preserved the devotion to outstanding personalities, rather than to parties, which is characteristic of the older world.

Of the various beginnings towards an organisation of labour in Palestine, the most developed are the Arab Labour Federation in Jaffa, of which Mr. Mansour was Secretary and the late Mr. Michel Mitri President, and the Palestine Arab Workers Society in Haifa. The former has a membership of about 7,000. Its headquarters are in Jaffa. It holds public meetings which are attended by as many as 2,000 people. It endeavours to assist the workers and the fellahin in their relations with the Government and with employers. The organisation is rudimentary, but both societies possess branches throughout the country. […]

Efforts directed towards bettering the lot of the Arab worker in Palestine encounter all the difficulties which exist in other countries as well as other special to Palestine. The latter proceed from the fact that the Government is charged with the task of ‘placing the country under such political, administrative, and economic conditions as will ensure the establishment of the Jewish National Home’. In this task it is ‘assisted’ by the Jewish Agency, a powerful international
organisation, disposing of great financial resources and tremendous power of propaganda in almost every country of the world. The Agency has the privilege, which it constantly uses, of direct approach to the highest officials in the land. If any of its demands are not granted, questions are at once raised in the British Parliament and Press, and in half of the newspapers of the world.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Administration has little time or energy left over for considering the interests of the ‘other sections of the population’. The latter do indeed make their grievances known through the proper official channels, but there the matter generally ends. Nor did the Arab Higher Committee have any legal standing or means of bridging pressure to bear by an adverse vote in a legislative council or otherwise.

The Government has no time whatsoever to spare for Arab labour questions, and nothing specific has been done to better the workers’ lot. International agreements concerning hours of labour and conditions are simply ignored as far as Arab labour is concerned. Those people who interest themselves in the workers’ lot are regarded as a nuisance; if they become at all influential, they become suspect as possible nationalist agitators, or, alternatively, as potential communists. There are also agents, Arabs and Arab-speaking Jews, who are paid by the Jewish labour organisations to keep a watch on the Arab unions and to prevent Arab workers from joining them. [...] 

How the National Home affects Arab Workers

To illustrate the effect of the [Jewish] National Home on Arab labour conditions, we would like to call attention to the case of Haifa Harbour. Until towards the end of 1936, the labour employed by the Harbour authorities was almost entirely Arab, though a good deal of Jewish labour was employed by private agents. The Jewish Agency made frequent efforts to persuade the authorities to employ Jewish labour directly. This the Government refused, not for the sake of the Arabs, but because Jewish labour would be more expensive. The Government, indeed, did not favour Palestinian Arab labour in the port, but utilised Hauranis from Syria, because they were cheaper
still, accepting a wage of 100 mills per day or even (according to Mr. Epstein’s evidence before the Royal Commission) 70 for 10 hours work. The Agency, however, finally persuaded the Administration to introduce Jewish labour on a system of payment in bulk. The Jewish labourers were supplied with labour saving devices by the Agency, or by the Jewish labour organisations, who met the capital expense. They are thus able to do more work with less labour and so in fact receive higher wages for less work. The result is obvious. Arab workmen are displaced and their place is taken by Jews. As the Government, which controls the national funds of the Arabs, does not provide them with labour saving devices, they remain working in primitive conditions, while the Jewish immigrants who have supplanted them receive equipment and training which enables them to improve their financial and technical position [...]

**Arab Progress**

On page 129 of the Report of the Royal Commission, seven points are mentioned on which the Royal Commission bases its statement that whatever advance there had been in the social services provided for the Arabs of Palestine, it was largely due to the establishment of the [Jewish] National Home [only six points are actually mentioned in the text]. Before considering these points, one by one, we must call attention to the fact that the Commissioners state that they came to these conclusions ‘after hearing the evidence submitted to us, both orally and in writing, by the Jewish representative on this question’. We feel that before expressing an opinion on their own on this subject, the Commissioners should have questioned Arab witnesses in *detail* about this matter and, if possible, have consulted independent economic experts as well. Conclusions based on the evidence of one side only are not likely to command general agreement.

1. *‘The large import of Jewish capital has had a general fructifying effect on the economic life of whole country’*

This statement appears to us to lack relevance. What needs to be considered is the effect of this import of capital on [the] Arab economy. If the effect of the Jewish capital had been to transform the
country into an entirely Jewish economic unit, and there had been no Arab industry left in the country at all, it would still be possible to speak of ‘a fructifying effect on the economic life of the whole country’; but this is not the issue. We are concerned here with the effect on the economy of the Arab inhabitants of the country.

2. ‘The expansion of Arab industry and citriculture has been largely financed by the capital thus obtained’

The word ‘thus’ in this sentence is very imprecise. Capital may be obtained in many ways, but hardly from ‘a general fructifying effect’. Jewish capital has passed to Arab hands primarily through the sale of land. The greater part of this money has gone to absentee Syrian landlords and therefore has not been available to Palestinian agriculturists and industrialists. These sales of land have moreover created such conditions in Palestine that the populace, despairing of gaining redress by legitimate means, have resorted to terrorism and the evil thereby created has gone far to cancel out any beneficent effects resulting from the increased capital at the disposal of the Palestinian Arabs. With regard to Arab industry, the Commission gives no statistics to illustrate its alleged expansion [...]

With regard to the citriculture, the question, to our mind, is not whether the necessary capital was actually derived through the sale of land or other goods to Jews, but whether there would have been capital available for the industry, had there been no [Jewish] National Home. The Jaffa orange was already cultivated in the country and esteemed before the War, the groves being then, as now, half in Jewish and half in Arab possession. The industry was flourishing and to some extent could finance its own further developments. It is fairly certain that even if there had been no [Jewish] National Home, a good deal of Jewish capital would have been invested in the industry [...]. The industry might have indeed developed more slowly, but this would have had the advantage of preventing the present crisis of over-production which is entirely due to the Zionists’ desire to develop everything unnaturally quickly, in order to facilitate Jewish immigration. If there had been no [Jewish] National Home, Arab labour would never have been driven out of the groves and, from the Arab national point of view, it would have been far more
advantageous for them that that the capital invested should not be so overwhelmingly Jewish.

3. ‘Jewish example has done much to improve Arab cultivation, especially of citrus’

Some of the present crop is due to Jewish production, and we cannot, then, avoid the conclusion that Arab production in this sphere is much less than it was. Now these are crops that were raised in areas which in many cases have become centres of Jewish colonisation. It is evident, then, that any improvement in cultivation has not been sufficient to compensate for the loss of land sold to Jews. It, of course, follows that the land, when in Arab hands, yielded considerable crops and was not, as Zionists claim, all marshes and land.

In certain branches of agriculture, there has undoubtedly been Arab development. This, however, in so far as it is not simply due to Arab initiative, is due to the Department of Agriculture and to the example of the German Christian Colonists and the Monastic Orders, who live and work among the people without dispossessing them. There is, for example, a flourishing banana industry at Jericho, remote from Jewish settlement. With regard to fruit trees other than citrus and bananas, a Jewish writer in the Palestine Review [14/08/1936] points out, on the strength of Government data, that the Arabs have, in recent years, very greatly increased their area of olives, figs and vines; while the Jews, in a disastrous rush to make quid profits by planting citrus, have decreased theirs. Now the areas in which Arabs carry on this cultivation are precisely those which are furthest from Jewish influence and least affected by Jewish land sales. [...] 

It is safe to say that, given anything like equal opportunity, the Arab peasant is superior to the Jewish colonist as an agriculturist. At the time when the Mandate was established, some half million Arab peasants managed to live on the land, in spite of all kinds of difficulties. It is very doubtful on the other hand whether even a dozen Jewish colonies would survive if they were deprived of financial, medical and technical assistance provided from funds subscribed abroad.
4. ‘Owing to Jewish development and enterprise the employment of Arab Labour has increased in urban areas, particularly in the ports’

The port of Tel-Aviv employs no Arab labour whatsoever. Its founder’s evident intention is that it should develop into a port like Haifa and eventually supplant Jaffa altogether. Jaffa certainly at first developed in part owing to Jewish activity, as well as owing to the growth of the citrus industry. But, as in every other sphere, this benefit only lasted until the Zionists found an opportunity to take over the activity themselves. The project of the Tel-Aviv port had been urged on the Government by the Jews for years; and the strike of 1936 was only the immediate, not the ultimate cause, of its inauguration. Indeed the small benefit which the Jews derived from it during the strike would not have justified its expense, had they not hoped to profit from it in the future. The Administration in fact sanctioned it, not as a temporary relief measure, but as a punitive action against Jaffa. Sooner or later, the Government would in any case have yielded to Zionist pressure. Towards the end of the strike, the Administration made a half-hearted attempt to establish a joint port; but when the Jewish Agency made it clear that there ‘could be no question’ of such a solution, it at once abandoned the project. […]

5. ‘Institutions, founded with Jewish funds primarily to serve the [Jewish] National Home have also served the Arab population. Hadassah, for example, treats Arab patients, notably at the tuberculosis hospital at Safad, and the Radiology Institute at Jerusalem admits Arab country folk to clinics of its Rural Sick Benefit Fund, and does much infant welfare work for Arab mothers’

As regards this, it is sufficient to […] quote from Dr. Canaan’s ‘Conflict in the Land of Peace’ [Taufik Cannan, Conflict in the Land of Peace, Jerusalem, Syrian Orphanage Press, 1936], page 84:

The improved health of the peasants, thus the Zionists argue, is the result of their direct and indirect medical and sanitary help and of the improved economic condition of the country. It is true that the Jews have provided extensive medical services
but only an insignificant proportion thereof has affected Arabs. We do not deny the authoritative aid of some specialists [...].

The Zionists boast, as [political director of the Jewish Agency] Mr. Shertok has done lately, that they have built the hospitals. He forgets to mention the great many hospitals run by Christian Institutions and scattered all over the country and such institutions as Dr. Dajani’s Arab hospital in Jaffa. These are much more numerous than the Jewish hospitals and continue to do a great service to Jews; while the small amount of medical help given by Jewish hospitals to non-Jews may be clearly seen from the following:

In the Government dispensaries and clinics in Jerusalem, Hebron, Jaffa, Ramleh, Haifa, Acre, Beisan, Safad and Tiberias 76,985 patients were treated in 1934; 8,172 or 10.63% were Jews. In the same year 55,877 new patients were treated in Jewish dispensaries and clinics in Jerusalem. Of this number 1,654 were non-Jews. Even if we take the number 1,654 to represent nobody but Arabs, only 3.25% of the total number treated in the Jewish dispensaries were Arabs. In the same year 77,328 new patients were treated in non-Jewish clinics and dispensaries in Jerusalem. 21,906 i.e. 28.3% of the whole attendance were Jews. If we deduct these numbers treated in the Christian English Hospital (the Eng. Mission Hospital) we still have a total of 61,355 out-patients of whom 6,727 i.e. 10.85% were Jews.

Let us compare the proportions in the dispensaries and clinics in Haifa. The proportion of non-Jews who have been treated in Jewish dispensaries and clinics is 12% while that of the Jews treated in non-Jewish institutions is 17.3% [...].

More revealing is the proportion in the Haifa Hospital where 34.46% of all patients who entered non-Jewish hospitals were Jews, and only 0.7% of all admissions to Jewish hospitals were Arabs.

These statistics show clearly that the Jews have received infinitely more medical help from non-Jewish institutions than non-Jews have received from Jewish institutions.
6. ‘The general beneficent effect of Jewish immigration on Arab welfare is illustrated by the fact that the increase in the Arab population is most marked in the urban areas affected by Jewish development. A comparison of the Census returns in 1922 and 1931 shows that, six years ago, the increase per cent in Haifa was 86, in Jaffa 62, in Jerusalem 37, while in purely Arab towns such as Nablus and Hebron it was only 7, and at Gaza there was a decrease of 2%.’

This argument is really extraordinary. We would ask the Commission to state in which cities of Palestine they would have expected the Arab population to increase most rapidly, if there had been no [Jewish] National Home. Surely it would have been in Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem and the centre of the citrus trade; in Haifa, the second port and terminus of the pipeline, and in Jerusalem, the capital?

The fact that these three cities have developed disproportionately to other Arab cities is also partly because of the landless workers that inevitably drift to the big towns and partly on account of the neglect of the Arab interests on part of the Government. [...] In point of fact, the most conspicuous example of an ‘urban area affected by Jewish development’ is Tel Aviv. Here there are no Arabs at all. Of the vast sums which the Jews have brought to Palestine, something has of course passed into Arab hands by the sale of land, for the rent of houses, for various services rendered and for the purchase of fruit, vegetables and other commodities. This money is momentarily ‘fructifying’, but the permanency of this depends on its being profitably invested in industry and agriculture. It seems to us highly improbable that the Arab people of Palestine have acquired any advantages compensating for the loss of a great part of their most fertile land and for the fact that the chief preoccupation of the Government of their country is the establishment in it of a National Home for an alien people whose agricultural and industrial development is constantly favoured at the expense of their own. [...]’

**Attitude of the Histadrut towards Arab Labour**

The most influential party in the Jewish Agency in Palestine is the General Federation of Jewish Labour [the Histadrut] which comprises
practically all the Jewish Labour Organisations. Within the party the most important unit is the so-called Mapai, Mifleget Poale Erets Israel, the ‘Party of the Labourers of the Land of Israel’. Mr. Ben Gurion, President of the Zionist Executive, belongs to this Party, so do Mr. Shertok, political director of the Agency, and the powerful Mr. Berl Katznelson, director of the ‘Davar’ newspaper. The Mapai is a very powerful and highly organised institution which carries on a great deal of constructive social work for the benefit of Jewish Labour.

According to the Memoranda prepared for the use of the Royal Commission by the Administration, ‘the party supports a Zionist programme for the widest possible immigration of the Jewish masses to Palestine [...] One of the aims of the Party is the so-called conquest of labour, namely the penetration of Jewish Labour into all spheres of work, industry, trade, the public services and most of all into agricultural work’.

Socialist in theory, Mapai holds the orthodox Socialist view concerning ‘imperialism’, which it regards as something inherently evil. It might therefore have been expected to be an ally of the Arab workers in their struggle against British ‘imperialism’. This is however not so, because its Zionism, on all occasions, takes precedence over its socialism.

Now Zionism in Palestine could not exist for a single day without the assistance of British ‘imperialism’. While Zionism therefore opposes ‘imperialism’ in all other countries, it is its ally in Palestine.

According to its ideals, Mapai should do everything possible to assist the ‘natives’ to raise their standards of living and enable them to hold their own against the intruding colonists. In the case of Palestine there is this difficulty. If the ‘natives’ reached the European standard of civilisation, there would be no conceivable justification for a Mandate. If the peasantry were prosperous and content, they would never sell their land to the foreigner. If there was a flourishing local industry, there would be no justification for introducing competing industries from outside. If there was an independent autonomous Government, there would be no possibility of setting up a rival Zionist or semi-Zionist Government. The attitude of the Mapai towards Arab labour, then, is that of any other colonising immigrants
towards the native inhabitants, very much intensified by the fact that Zionists regard the indigenous inhabitants as inconvenient interlopers in a land that ought to be entirely Jewish. […]

Officially the attitude of the Mapai is expressed as follows:

As part of its programme, the Labour party is also striving to co-operate with Arab labour in non-Jewish undertakings. The scope of such co-operation in present circumstances is, however, limited. (Government Memoranda for the use of the Royal Commission, page 114).

The Histadrut’s fundamental aim is ‘the conquest of labour’, that is, to introduce as many Jews of its own type into Palestine as quickly as possible and to push these into every sort of work. The Histadrut accepts no responsibility for the Arabs in this respect. No matter how many Arab workers are unemployed, they have no right to take any job which a possible immigrant might occupy. No Arab has the right to work in Jewish undertakings. If Arabs can be displaced in other work too, say, in Haifa or Jaffa ports, that is good. If a port can be established in Tel Aviv and Jaffa ports are ruined, that is good. If some Jews still employ Arab labour in their orange orchards, either because Arab labour is cheaper and better for this purpose, then the fact can be used as evidence of the employment provided by Zionism for Arabs. But if Arab labour can be pushed out by ‘picketing’ and ‘pressure’, that is much better.

If the Histadrut had been sincere in its protestations of good will, if it had been willing to do something to improve the lot of the Arab worker in return for ‘penetrating into all spheres of labour’ and turning the country into a Jewish fatherland, it might have done something as follows. It might have employed one quarter Arab labour with its own labour and have taught the Arabs its own skilled processes and have paid the Arab the same wage for the same work. In that case, the Arab would not have felt quite the same bitterness that he feels now. The Histadrut never did anything of the sort. It never employed a single Arab if it could help it; when it was forced to do so, it paid them half the wages that it paid to its own men; and whenever it could oust Arab from any sphere of work, it did so.
The Conquest of Labour

An example will make clear the methods employed in the ‘Conquest of Labour’. As is well known, the Communist Party in Palestine is opposed to Zionism, on the ground that it is an imperialist movement. At one time, this Party issued a newspaper, called ‘Ha Or’ ['Light']. This published an Arabic supplement in order to expose Zionist aims to the Arab workers. Thanks to this paper, the following illuminating document, circulated by the Labour Council of Tel Aviv to all the workers in the building trade, was made known to the Arab Public [Ha Or, 7, 23/11/1934]:

Dear Comrade,

As the result of the shortage of Jewish workers, Arab workers have increased in many industries. And in certain secondary trades the increase has become a striking feature and Jewish labour has been expelled and the industries have thus been Arabised.

This is also the situation in two branches of the building trade. These are the zifzif [gravel] and stone trades. In these two trades hundreds of workers are employed and tens of thousands of pounds are paid monthly to Beduins and Hauranis of every sort.

It is quite obviously imperative to consider this important matter. Not only is our situation vitally affected by the low wages, but our other industries are threatened with being affected by cheap labour, industries which provide a living for thousands of our Jewish workers’ families.

The Labour Council of Tel-Aviv has started a big campaign against this danger. The Council is negotiating with the owners of Jewish stone quarries to effect the introduction of Jewish labour into this important trade, and has reached a satisfactory agreement in [the] Majdal Yaba quarries. This agreement guarantees to supply Tel-Aviv with Jewish stone. But this demands the immediate consideration of the workers, because without their assistance and help the attempt will
encounter serious obstacles. Therefore we have decided to call on those concerned, contractors, masons, labourers and drivers to demand from them from now on to use the Jewish product only. It is the duty of workers to see that these orders are carried out in their sphere of work. It is only through the determination of those concerned that this trade can be brought under the control and into the hands of the Jews. [...] 

Most important of all are the workers in the building trade itself. It is in their power to abstain themselves, and to prevent others, from using stones produced by Arabs. It is their duty not to allow the unloading of stones unless they are certain that it is Jewish. Further, a special controller’s seal is to be seen on the invoice brought by the driver. The absence of the seal indicates that the stone is of Arab provenance. Moreover, special inspectors will pass through the town for the said purpose and all comrades are requested to assist them in their task.

We feel certain that we shall receive your assistance. You must absolutely refuse to work with stone of Arab provenance. The refusal to unload such stone at the place of work will not only be an important step towards making this industry Jewish, but will also prevent cheap labour from creeping into the other Jewish industries.

With the compliments of your comrades,

The Executive Committee.

A few words of explanation are necessary to make clear the point at the time that this document was issued. The great influx of capital and immigration which began in 1933 created a boom in the buildings trade, which drew Jewish workers out of all the lower-paid trades and occupations. There was thus a so-called ‘shortage’ of Jewish workers in agriculture, the police, the railways, the post office and so on. This is the ‘shortage’ which is referred to in this document. It was obviously an artificial phenomenon, which would cease the moment the building boom came to an end. In point of fact, when a crisis was precipitated by the Abyssinian War in the autumn of 1935, the position was at once reversed. Jewish workers
made great efforts to get back into the lower-paid jobs and the Agency was faced with a serious unemployment problem.

In the meanwhile, however, this position was utilised by the Agency as a pretext for demanding an enormous labour schedule. This is the explanation of the apparent inconsistency of a document which speaks in the same breath of a shortage of Jewish labour and of the necessity of introducing Jewish workers into a number of new trades. The real object was to make use of the opportunity of the tremendous immigration to introduce Jewish labour into new occupations, while retaining as far as possible all the posts held already.

The greater part of the stone used at Tel-Aviv at this period was brought from the quarry at Majdal Yaba [Migdal Zedek]. This was Arab property leased to Jews on long leases soon after the War. As no question had arisen at that time of displacing Arab labour, no stipulations on the subject were put in the lease. In 1934, the quarries employed about 30 villagers and some 400 Palestinian workers from other villages, not Hauranis or Beduins as is pretended in this document. The preliminary step of the Jewish labour agents was to send instructions to the managers of the quarry to accumulate large heaps of stones. When this had been done, they were to dismiss the Arab workers, on the ground that there was evidently no demand for stone at present. The plan was thus to persuade the workers to return to their villages. Once they were safely out of the way, Jewish workers would be introduced and the Arabs faced with an accomplished fact. The Arab Labourers’ Federation of Jaffa, however, got wind of what was happening and sent word to the workers to not leave the village. The Jews waited for days, and then sent a party of 150 Jewish workers. The Arab workers refused to allow them to start working. After repeated attempts, lasting for 17 days, the managers of the quarries consented to reengage the Arab workers. The attempt had for the moment been defeated. At the end of the disturbances of 1936, however, the Jews came to demand work, and there were disputes. The police were called in and, under the command of a Jewish police officer, arrested 97 Arab workers. Another sphere of work had been successfully ‘conquered’ for Jewish labour, and another 400 Arab workers had been deprived of their livelihood. [...]
In general, the year 1934 was distinguished by a tremendous extension of ‘picketing’. This was designed to prepare the way for the mass immigration of the succeeding years. The Jews had by now bought a great part of the most fertile land in the country, and the Histadrut was concerned in expelling Arab labour from all those areas in which the Jews had an interest.

Wherever Arabs were working for Jewish contractors or employers, in Hadar Ha Carmel, in Rehavia, in Kfar Saba, in Bait Vegan and elsewhere, or where Arabs were selling material of Arab provenance, as stone in Tel-Aviv, the Histadrut sent its pickets to persuade the Arabs to leave, and if necessary to drive them away by force. If the picketers were arrested by the police for attacking Arabs, they were at once described in the Jewish press as martyrs and heroes of the Zionist cause. This campaign of press incitation continued, week after week, entirely unchecked by the Government. [...]

By such means, which often included violence and other illegalities, were created the ‘vacancies’ for Hebrew workers, to fill which the Government obligingly granted the Labour Schedules, which made 1935 the record year for immigration and, incidentally, prepared the way for the disorder of 1936 and the accompanying economic crisis.

In all the publications and propaganda which the Histadrut issues, it states that it is opposed to cheap labour and that it sincerely desires to raise the standard of the Arab workers, by introducing higher wages and shorter hours, etc. This is not the truth. The Histadrut aims at driving Arab workers away, or, when that is not possible, at keeping them in their present condition. They are thus able to point out to the Jewish workers, and particularly to the newcomers, the contrast between their position and that of the Arabs, and the great advantages to be gained from belonging to the Histadrut. At the same time, it enables them to convince the Jewish workers that if they really and sincerely cooperated with Arab workers, it would mean their descending to the wretched standard of living of the Arab worker, who has not enough to eat or even a roof to shelter his head. [...]

Mansour, ‘The Arab Worker’
Zionist Colonialism in Palestine (1965)

FAYEZ SAYEGH

Fayez Abdullah Sayegh (b. 1922 – d. 1980) was born in Kharraba, Syria, where his father was a Presbyterian minister. Starting his studies at the American University of Beirut, he moved to the US and earned a PhD in philosophy from Georgetown University in 1949. He subsequently taught at the American University of Beirut, Yale, Stanford and Macalester College. Publishing widely on numerous topics pertaining to the Arab world, and the question of Palestine in particular, he became one of the foremost intellectuals and diplomats representing Palestine internationally. In 1965, he founded the Research Center of the Palestine Liberation Organization and served as a member of its Executive Committee. In this capacity, he edited and cultivated the main intellectual output of the 1960s revolutionary period in the Palestinian national movement, and was a foundational member of the diplomatic leadership of the movement. He served as the Chargé d’Affaires of the Arab States Delegations’ Office at the United Nations. His most lasting legacy came on 10 November, 1975, when, as a delegate of Kuwait, he jointly authored and presented United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379, which determined Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination. This Resolution would be revoked in 1991 by UN General Assembly Resolution 46/86, a precondition set by Israel for its participation in the Madrid Conference.

The following excerpts are from of his ‘Zionist Colonialism in Palestine’, which is possibly one of the clearest and most concise descriptions of its generation to discuss the organisational set-up of the Zionist settler colonial movement, its diplomatic strategies, as well as the ideology and structural features underpinning it. As a document of its time, it places Zionist settler colonialism in the context of European colonialism, and yet it distinguishes the Zionist project from other settler colonial movements. Sayegh does so by highlighting Zionism’s aspiration to racial self-segregation, its rejection of any form of coexistence or assimilation, its unbending drive towards territorial expansion, and the necessary violence, structural and physical, it has to employ to achieve its goals. These phenomena are not passing features of Zionism, but, as Sayegh remarks, are ‘congenial, essential and permanent’, and consequently also manifest themselves in the policies of the Israeli state towards Palestinians and the wider Arab region.

Palestinian resistance to Zionism has demanded many sacrifices, but, as Sayegh argues, these were not in vain, for ‘[r]ights undefended are rights surrendered’, and while the Palestinian nation lost its homeland, it did so ‘not without fighting’. ‘It was dislodged’, he notes, ‘but not for want of the will to defend its heritage’. However, he also argues, the threat emanating from Zionist settler colonialism, and the
duty to challenge it, is not only the concern of Palestinians alone. Rather, a regional response to Zionism is necessary, given its constant threat to destabilise the region and wage wars on its neighbours. Likewise, it is also a challenge to anti-colonial movements everywhere, ‘[f]or whenever and wherever the dignity of but one single human being is violated, in pursuance of the creed of racism, a heinous sin is committed against the dignity of all men, everywhere’. The following excerpts from Zionist Colonialism in Palestine were prepared by this issue’s editors.


I. The Historical Setting of Zionist Colonialism

The frenzied ‘Scramble for Africa’ of the 1880s stimulated the beginnings of Zionist colonisation in Palestine. As European fortune-hunters, prospective settlers, and empire builders raced for Africa, Zionist settlers and would-be state-builders rushed for Palestine.

Under the influence of the credo of Nationalism then sweeping across Europe, some Jews had come to believe that the religious and alleged racial bonds among Jews constituted a Jewish ‘nationality’ and endowed the so-called ‘Jewish nation’ with normal national rights – including the right to separate existence in a territory of its own, and the right to create a Jewish state. If other European nations had successfully extended themselves into Asia and Africa, and had annexed to their imperial domains vast proportions of those two continents, the ‘Jewish nation’ – it was argued – was entitled and able to do the same thing for itself. By imitating the colonial ventures of the ‘Gentile nations’ among whom Jews lived, the ‘Jewish nation’ could send its own *colonists* into a piece of Afro-Asian territory, establish a *settler-community*, and, in due course, set up its own *state* – not, indeed, as an imperial outpost of a metropolitan home-base, but as a home-base in its own right, upon which the entire ‘Jewish nation’ would sooner or later converge from all over the world. ‘Jewish nationalism’ would thus fulfil itself through the process of colonisation, which other European nations had utilised for empire-building. For, Zionism, then, colonisation would be the instrument of nation-building, not the by-product of an already-fulfilled nationalism.

The improvised process of Jewish colonisation in Palestine which ensued was hardly a spectacular success, in spite of lavish financial subsidies from European Jewish financiers. By and large,
Sayegh, ‘Zionist Colonialism in Palestine’

Jews were more attracted by the new opportunities for migration to the United States or Argentina than by the call for racial self-segregation as a prelude to state-building in Palestine. The objective of escape from anti-Jewish practices prevailing in some European societies could be attained just as well by emigration to America; the objective of nation-building – which alone could make the alternative solution of large-scale colonisation in Palestine more attractive – was still far from widespread among European Jews in the late nineteenth century.

*   *   *   *

The failure of the first sporadic effort to implant a Zionist settler-community in Palestine during the first fifteen years of Zionist colonisation (1882-1897) prompted serious reappraisal and radical revision of the strategy. This was accomplished by the First Zionist Congress, held at Basel in August 1897 under the leadership of Theodor Herzl.

Haphazard colonisation of Palestine, supported by wealthy Jewish financiers as a mixed philanthropic-colonial venture, was from then on to be eschewed. It was to be supplanted by a purely nationalistic program of organised colonisation, with clear political goals and mass support. Hence the over-all objective of Zionism formulated by the Basle Congress: ‘The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law’.1 [...] 

In addition to defining the ultimate objective of Zionism, the Basel Congress made a diagnosis of the special character and circumstances of Zionist colonisation in Palestine, and formulated a practical program suited to those special conditions. Three essential features in particular differentiated Zionist colonisation in Palestine from European colonisation elsewhere in Asia and Africa, and called for Zionist innovations:

(1)Other European settlers who had gone (or were then going) to other parts of Africa and Asia has been animated either by economic or by politico-imperialist motives: they had gone
either in order to accumulate fortunes by means of privileged and protected exploitation of immense natural resources, or in order to prepare the ground for (or else aid and abet) the annexation of those coveted territories by imperial European governments. The Zionist colonists, on the other hand, were animated by neither impulse. They were driven to the colonisation of Palestine by the desire to attain nationhood for themselves, and to establish a Jewish state which would be independent of any existing government and subordinate to none, and which would in due course attract to its territories the Jews of the world.

(2) Other European settlers could coexist with the indigenous populations – whom they would exploit and dominate, but whose services they would nevertheless require, and whose continued existence in the coveted territory they would therefore tolerate. But the Zionist settlers could not countenance indefinite coexistence with the inhabitants of Palestine. For Palestine was fully populated by Arabs, whose national consciousness has already been awakened, and who had already begun to nurse aspirations of independence and national fulfilment. Zionist colonisation could not possibly assume the physical proportions envisaged by Zionism while the Arab people of Palestine continued to inhabit its homeland; nor could the Zionist political aspirations of racial self-segregation and statehood be accomplished while the nationally-conscious Arab people of Palestine continued to exist in that country. Unlike European colonisation, therefore, the Zionist colonisation of Palestine was essentially incompatible with the continued existence of the ‘native population’ in the coveted country.

(3) Other European settlers could, without much difficulty, overcome the obstacles obstructing their settlement in their chosen target-territories: they could count on receiving adequate protection from their imperial sponsors. But the prospective Zionist colonisers of Palestine could count on no such facilities. For, in addition to the Arab people of Palestine, certain to resist any large-scale influx of settlers loudly proclaiming their objective of dispossessing the ‘natives’, the
Zionists were likely to encounter also the resistance of the Ottoman authorities, who could not view with favour the establishment, on an important segment of their Empire, of an alien community harbouring political designs of independent statehood.

* * * *

It was in order to counteract these peculiar factors of its situation that the Zionist Movement, while defining its ultimate objective at the First Zionist Congress, proceeded to formulate an appropriate practical program as well. This program called for action along three lines: organisation, colonisation, and negotiation:

(1) The organisational efforts were given supreme priority; for, lacking a state-structure in a home-base of its own to mastermind and supervise the process of overseas colonisation, the Zionist Movement required a quasi-state apparatus to perform those functions. The World Zionist Organization – with its Federations of local societies, its Congress, its General Council, and its Central Executive – was established at Basel in order to play that role.

(2) The instruments of systematic colonisation were also promptly readied. The ‘Jewish Colonial Trust’ (1898), the ‘Colonization Commission’ (1898), the ‘Jewish National Fund’ (1901), and the ‘Palestine Office’ (1908) were among the first institutions established by the Zionist Organisation. Their joint purpose was to plan, finance, and supervise the process of colonisation, and to ensure that it would not meet the same fate which the earlier experiment of haphazard colonisation had met.

(3) While the instruments of colonisation were being laboriously created, diplomatic efforts were also being exerted to produce political conditions that would permit, facilitate, and protect large-scale colonisation.
At the beginning, these efforts were focused mainly on the Ottoman Empire, then in control of the political fortunes of Palestine. Direct approaches to the Ottoman authorities were made; lucrative promises of financial grants and loans were dangled before the eyes of the Sultan; and European powers were urged to intercede at the Porte on behalf of the Zionist Organisation, in order to persuade the Sultan to grant the Organisation a Charter for an autonomous Zionist settlement in Palestine. Other efforts were exerted to induce the German Emperor to endorse the creation of a Chartered Land Development Company, which would be operated by Zionists in Palestine under German protection. Still other attempts were made to obtain permission from the British Government to establish an autonomous Zionist settlement in the Sinai Peninsula, as a stepping-stone towards colonisation in Palestine. But none of these efforts bore fruit.

* * *

In 1907/1908, therefore, a new phase of Zionist colonisation was inaugurated, without prior ‘legalisation’ or sponsorship by a European Power. It was more consciously nationalistic in impulse, more militantly segregationist in its attitude towards the Palestinian Arabs, and more concerned with strategic and political considerations in its selection of locations for its new settlements. But, for all its enhanced dynamism and sharpened ideological consciousness, the second wave of Zionist colonisation was not appreciably more successful than the first, as far as its magnitude was concerned.

By the outbreak of the First World War, therefore, the Zionist colonisation of Palestine had met with only modest success in over thirty years of action. In the first place, Zionists were still an infinitesimal minority of about 1% of the Jews of the world. Their activities had aroused the fear and opposition of other Jews, who sought the solution of the ‘Jewish problem’ in ‘assimilation’ in Western Europe and the United States, not in ‘self-segregation’ in Palestine. In the second place, Zionist colonisation had proceeded very slowly. After thirty years of immigration to Palestine, Jews were
still under 8% of the total population of the country, in possession of no more than 2 1/2% of the land. And, in the third place, Zionism had failed to obtain political endorsement from the Ottoman authorities controlling Palestine, or from any European Power.

The war, however, created new circumstances which were destined to improve considerably the fortunes of Zionist colonisation in Palestine. For the War set the stage for an alliance – concluded in 1917 – between British Imperialism and Zionist Colonialism, which, during the following thirty years, opened the gates of Palestine to Zionist colonisers, facilitated the establishment of a Zionist settler-community, and paved the way for the dispossession and expulsion of the Arab people of Palestine and the creation of the Zionist settler-state in 1948.

Whereas unilateral Zionist colonisation failed, in the thirty years preceding the First World War, to make much headway, the alliance of Zionist colonialism and British imperialism succeeded, during the thirty years following the First World War, in accomplishing the objectives of both parties. [...]
settler-community – was denied analogous facilities and deprived of the means for self-protection. [...] 

But Britain had not entered into the partnership with Zionism in Palestine solely in order to serve the purposes of Zionist colonialism; it had expected the partnership to serve, equally, the purposes of British imperialism as well. Whenever Zionism sought to accelerate the process of state-building (which would eventually render Britain’s continued presence in Palestine neither necessary nor desirable in Zionist eyes), Britain pulled in the opposite direction to slow them down. The Second World War precipitated the showdown, which in the end brought about the dissolution of the Anglo-Zionist alliance. [...] 

In the mid-forties, therefore, the Zionist colonisation of Palestine, sheltered and nursed for thirty years by British imperialism, was ready to look for a more powerful and more militant supporter to see it through the forthcoming struggle for outright statehood; and the United States was available as a willing candidate that admirably fitted the requirements of Zionism. [...] 

But, for all the means of survival it manages to acquire, now from one Western power and now from another, the Zionist settler-state remains an alien body in the region. Not only its vital and continuing association with European imperialism, and its introduction into Palestine of the practices of Western colonialism, but also its chosen pattern of racial exclusiveness and self-segregation renders it an alien society in the Middle East. No words could better describe the essentially alien character of the Zionist settler-state than the following passage, written by its veteran Prime Minister: 

The State of Israel is a part of the Middle East only in geography, which is, in the main, a static element. From the decisive aspects of dynamism, creation and growth, Israel is part of the world Jewry. From that Jewry it will draw all its strength and the means for the forging of the nation in Israel and the development of the Land; throughout the might of world Jewry it will be built and built again.²
III. The Character of the Zionist Settler-State

Apart from its vital link with Imperialism and its inescapable status as a total stranger to the Middle East, in the heart of which it has chosen to plant itself, the political embodiment of Zionist colonialism (namely, the Zionist settler-state of Israel) is characterised chiefly by three features: (1) its racial complexion and racist conduct pattern; (2) its addiction to violence; and (3) its expansionist stance.

A. Racism

Racism is not an acquired trait of the Zionist settler-state. Nor is it an accidental, passing feature of the Israeli scene. It is congenial, essential and permanent. For it is inherent in the very ideology of Zionism and in the basic motivation for Zionist colonisation and statehood.

Zionism is the belief in the national oneness of all Jews – who are identified as such in terms of their supposedly common ancestry. Neither religion nor language comprises the alleged ‘national bond’ of Jews, according to the Zionist creed: for relatively few Zionists are in fact believing or practicing Jews; and the Hebrew language was resuscitated only after the birth of Zionism [...] .

Zionist racial identification produces three corollaries: racial self-segregation, racial exclusiveness and racial supremacy. These principles constitute the core of the Zionist ideology.

By its very nature, racial self-segregation precludes integration or assimilation. From Herzl to Weizmann, from Ben Gurion to Goldmann, the leaders of Zionism have all believed and preached that the chief enemy of Zionism is not Gentile ‘anti-Semitism’ but Jewish ‘assimilation’. ‘Anti-Semitism’ and Zionism thus agree on the basic premise: that all Jews are one nation, with common national characteristics and a common national destiny. The difference between them is that, whereas ‘anti-Semitism’ disdains the alleged ‘national characteristics’ of Jews and delights in Jewish suffering, Zionism idealises those fancied characteristics and strives to bring all Jews together into a single Jewish state, to which even moderate Zionists attribute a ‘special mission’.
According to the Zionist creed, ‘assimilation’ is the loss of ‘Jewish identity’; it is the prelude to the ‘dissolution’ and ‘elimination’ of the ‘Jewish nation’. Self-segregation is the Zionist retort to the call for ‘Jewish assimilation’ [...] ‘self-segregation’ is envisioned as the only pathway to national ‘redemption’, ‘salvation’, and ‘fulfillment’.

By the same logic, by virtue of which it uncompromisingly repudiates the assimilation of Jews into non-Jewish societies, the fundamental Zionist principle of racial self-segregation also demands *racial purity and racial exclusiveness* in the land in which Jewish self-segregation is to be attained. As such, the Zionist credo of racial self-segregation necessarily rejects the coexistence of Jews and non-Jews in the land of Jewish regrouping. [...] 

The Zionist ideal of racial self-segregation demands, *with equal imperative ness*, the departure of all Jews from the lands of their ‘exile’ and the eviction of all non-Jews from the land of ‘Jewish destination’, namely, Palestine. Both are essential conditions of ‘Zionist fulfillment’ and Jewish ‘national redemption’.

It is only in such a condition of thoroughgoing self-segregation that ‘Jewish superiority’ can at last manifest itself, according to the teachings of Zionism: the ‘Chosen People’ can attain its ‘special destiny’ only when it is *all together and all by itself*.

*   *   *   *

Herein lies an important difference between Zionist racism and other forms of European racism familiar, since the advent of Colonialism, to the peoples of Asia and Africa. *Race-supremacist European settlers elsewhere in Asia and Africa* have, by and large, found it possible to express their ‘supremacy’ over the other strands of ‘lesser people’ and ‘inferior races’ within the framework of ‘hierarchical racial coexistence’. Separate and unequal, the European colonists and the ‘natives’ have on the whole coexisted in the same colony or protectorate. Though they have openly disdained the ‘natives’, ruthlessly suppressed them, and methodically discriminated against them, European colonists have as a rule deemed the continued presence of the indigenous populations ‘useful’ for the colonists...
themselves; and, as such, they have reserved for the ‘natives’ all the menial functions and assigned to them inferior in the settler-dominated societies. Not so the Zionists! Race-supremacist Zionist settlers in Palestine have found it necessary to follow a different course, more in harmony with their ideological system. They have expressed their fancied ‘supremacy’ over Arab ‘natives’, first, by isolating themselves from the Arabs in Palestine and, later on, by evicting the Arabs from their homeland.

Nowhere in Asia or Africa – not even in South Africa or Rhodesia – has European race-supremacism expressed itself in so passionate a zeal for thoroughgoing racial exclusiveness and for the physical expulsion of ‘native’ populations across the frontiers of the settler-state, as it has in Palestine, under the compulsion of Zionist doctrines. (Perhaps this divergence of Zionism from the norm of European colonisation may be explained in terms of the fact that conscious dedication to the racist doctrines inherent in the ideology of Zionism has preceded, stimulated, inspired, and at every stage guided the process of Zionist colonisation in Palestine – at least since the inauguration of the new Zionist Movement in 1897).

So long as they were powerless to dislodge the indigenous Arabs of Palestine (the vast majority of the country’s population), Zionist colonists were content with isolating themselves from the Arab community and instituting a systematic boycott of Arab produce and labor. Accordingly, from the earliest days of Zionist colonisation, the principle was established that only Jewish labor would be employed in Zionist colonies. The ‘Jewish Agency’, the ‘Jewish National Fund’, the ‘Palestine Foundation Fund’, and the ‘Jewish Federation of Labor’ vigilantly ensured the observance of that fundamental principle of Zionist colonisation.

Contentment with boycotting the Arabs of Palestine instead of evicting them from their country was, however, only a tactical and temporary suspension of the Zionist dogma of racial exclusiveness. It was forced upon Zionism by the circumstances surrounding the early stages of Zionist colonisation. And it was viewed as a necessary evil, to be endured only so long as a more rigorous application of the racist doctrines of Zionism was prevented by extraneous factors beyond the control of the Zionist Movement. The ultimate aim of ousting the Arab inhabitants of Palestine in order to make possible
the incarnation of the principle of racial exclusiveness, though momentarily suspended, was never abandoned, however. […]

If *racial discrimination* against the ‘inferior natives’ was the motto of race-supremacist European settler-regimes in Asia and Africa, the motto of the race-supremacist Zionist settler-regime in Palestine was *racial elimination*. *Discriminatory treatment* has been reserved by the Zionists for those *remnants* of the Palestinian Arab people who have stubbornly stayed behind in their homeland in spite of all efforts to dispossess and evict them, and in defiance of the Zionist dictum of racial exclusiveness. It is against these remnants of the rightful inhabitants of Palestine that Zionist settlers have revealed the behavioural patterns of racial supremacy, and practiced the precepts of radical discrimination, already made famous by other racist European colonists elsewhere in Asia and Africa.

In fact, in its practice of racial discrimination against the vestiges of Palestinian Arabs, the Zionist settler-state has learned all the lessons which the various discriminatory regimes of white settler-states in Asia and Africa can teach it. And it has proved itself in this endeavour an ardent and apt pupil, not incapable of surpassing its teachers. For, whereas the Afrikaner apostles of *apartheid* in South Africa, for example, brazenly proclaim their sin, the Zionist practitioners of *apartheid* in Palestine beguilingly protest their innocence!

The remnants of Palestine’s Arabs who have continued to live in the Zionist settler-state since 1948 have their own ‘Bantustans’, their ‘native reserves’, their ‘Ghettoes’ – although the institution which they encounter in their daily lives is given by the Zionist authorities the euphemistic name, ‘security zones’. […]

The agricultural lands and homes of the Arabs of the Zionist settler-state are subject to confiscation by administrative decree, under a succession of drastic laws, introduced by the state between 1948 and 1953, which deny aggrieved owners the ability to seek redress through the courts. Whole Arab villages have been expropriated and given to Jews for the establishment of Zionist settlements. […]

Finally, the enjoyment by Arabs of the elementary right to citizenship in their own country is curtailed by *statutory*
discrimination. Whereas a Jew, under the Nationality Law, is eligible for citizenship immediately upon arrival, indigenous Arabs of the Zionist settler-state are subject to a system of qualified eligibility which has left a majority of Israel’s Arab languishing in the limbo of non-citizenship.

**B. Violence and Terrorism**

Habitual resort to force, by the military or para-military arms of the Zionist settler-state, has been directed principally against the Arabs — whose very existence in the land coveted by the Zionists rendered them automatically the primary and the ultimate target of Zionist hostility. But this addiction to violence has not been totally confined, in its manifestations, to Zionist relations with the Arabs. Towards the end of the British Mandate — when the alliance of British imperialism and Zionist colonialism, having served its purpose, was beginning to undergo the strains which finally led to its dissolution — the para-military and terrorist Zionist organisations (which Britain had respectively aided and condoned for decades) turned against the British garrison and British civil authorities in Palestine. And, after the outbreak of Zionist-Arab hostilities in Palestine, and the advent of United Nations mediators and truce observers, Zionist violence turned against the international personnel also. The assassination of the first United Nations Mediator and his military aide [Count Folke Bernadotte and André Serot], and the occasional detention of United Nations observers, have served notice that no one who stands athwart the path of Zionism is immune from Zionist vengeance.

But obviously, it is against the Arabs that Zionist violence has been most long-lasting, most methodical, and most ruthless. Prenatally and at birth, the Zionist settler-state resorted to violence as its chosen means of intimidating the Arabs of Palestine and evicting them. Such massacres as those which were perpetrated at Dair Yaseen, Ain ez-Zaitoun, and Salah ed-Deen (in April, 1948) were calculated measures in a formal program of eviction-by-terrorisation.

Since its establishment, the Zionist settler-state has turned its violence both inwardly and outwardly: against the Arabs remaining under its jurisdiction, and against the neighboring Arab states. In the Zionist-occupied territories of Palestine, *massacres and other outrages*
visited upon such Arab towns and villages as Iqrith (December, 1951), Al-Tirah (July, 1953), Abu Gosh (September, 1953), Kafr Qasim (October, 1956), and Acre (June, 1965) have been the most infamous – but by no means the only – instances of a program of racial hate elevated to the level of state policy and efficiently executed by the official apparatus of the state.

To these instances must be added the large-scale pogroms unleashed on the Arab population of Gaza and Khan Younis during the brief but eventful period of Zionist occupation of the area, in the wake of the Tripartite Invasion of Egypt in 1956. Systematic military attacks on the territories of neighboring Arab states are perhaps the most widely known manifestations of Israel’s ready resort to violence – for many of these attacks were fully discussed by the United Nations Security Council. [...]  

C. Territorial Expansion

No student of the behavioural pattern of the Zionist Movement and the modus operandi of the Zionist settler-state can fail to realise that Zionist attainments at any given moment, if they fall short of the standing objective constantly aimed at by the Zionist movement, are only temporary stations along the road to ultimate self-fulfillment and not terminal points of the Zionist journey – notwithstanding the assurances to the contrary which are solemnly given Zionist and Israeli leaders.

For example, although from 1897 until 1942 the official leaders of Zionism constantly denied in public any intentions of seeking ‘statehood’, emphasising that it was merely a ‘home’ that they were after, the internal documents of the Movement and the diaries of its leaders clearly indicate that, notwithstanding public disavowals, it was indeed statehood that was the objective of Zionism all along.

Similarly, until 1948, the leaders of Zionism were constantly assuring the world that they harboured no intention of dispossessing or evicting the Arabs of Palestine from their homeland – although evidence abounds that, in fact, they were aiming at nothing less than the thorough Zionisation and de-Arabisation of Palestine from the
very beginning; and, when the opportunity arose in 1948, Zionists wasted no time in pushing the Arabs across the frontiers. [...] 

Territorial extent is a third element of the Zionist plan, regarding which the same stratagem of deceptive public disavowal has been utilised. It differs from the other two elements (viz., statehood and eviction of Arabs) only in that, whereas these two aims have been realised and the camouflage has finally been removed, the third aim (viz., territorial expansion) remains only partly realised, and the veil remains only partially lifted.

The perennial aim of Zionism was and still is statehood in all of Palestine (called by Zionists ‘Eretz Israel’, or the Land of Israel), completely emptied of its Arabs.

The minimum definition of the territorial scope of Palestine, as Zionism envisions it, was officially formulated in 1919; and it covers about double the area currently occupied by the Zionist settler-state. It includes – in present geographical terminology – the Kingdom of Jordan (on both sides of the River), the ‘Gaza strip’, Southern Lebanon, and Southern and south-western Syria, as well as the portions of Palestine now occupied by the Zionists. This area still falls short of the territory bounded, in accordance with the famous Biblical phrase, by the Nile and the Euphrates – which is the territory claimed as their national heritage by Zionists ‘extremists’. But, even if only the minimum Zionist concept of Palestine is taken to be the real basis of Zionist planning, that will leave the road towards Zionist territorial expansion in the future wide and open. [...] 

In view of the consistent behavioural pattern of the Zionist movement; in view also of the traditional Zionist concept of the territorial extent of ‘Eretz Israel’, of which even the ‘moderate’ version comprises an area twice as large as the one usurped thus far by the Zionist state; and in view of the clear warnings, voiced by the most candid and authoritative leaders of Zionism, to the effect that the Zionist state has not abandoned its determination to seize new Arab territories – in view of all this, it would be absurd to believe, ostrich-wise, that Zionism might indefinitely rest content with possessing only a fraction of the territory which, it maintains, is its ‘national heritage’, and which in any case it has planned all along to occupy.
Of the three essential elements of the Zionist program – racial self-segregation in a Zionist state, racial exclusiveness and eviction of Arabs, and occupation of all of so-called ‘Eretz Israel’ – only the third remains unrealised. It is the ‘unfinished business’ of Zionism. It cannot fail to be the main preoccupation of the Zionist Movement, and of the Zionist state, in the future.

For the Zionist settler-state, to be is to prepare and strive for territorial expansion.

IV. The Palestinian Response

The response of the people of Palestine to the menace of Zionism has passed through five stages.

(1) At the outset – when Zionists were coming in relatively small numbers and emphasising the religious or humanitarian motives of their enterprise, while concealing the political, ideological, and colonial-racist character of their movement – the Arabs of Palestine believed the immigrants to be ‘pilgrims’ animated by religious longing for the Holy Land, or else ‘refugees’ fleeing persecution in Eastern Europe and seeking safety in Palestine. Palestinian Arabs therefore accorded the immigrants a hospitable welcome. Even Herzl noted the ‘friendly attitude of the population’ to the first wave of Zionist colonists.

(2) When, after the inauguration of the new Zionist Movement in 1897, the second wave of Zionist colonisation began to roll onto the shores of Palestine (from 1907/1908 onwards), Arab friendliness began to give way to suspicion and resentment. The methodical ouster of Arab farmers, labourers, and watchmen from the new Zionist colonies, and the systematic boycott of Arab produce aroused Arab anger. But the larger political-nationalist dimensions of the Zionist program remained concealed from Arab sight: it was the immediate impact of the Zionists’ presence upon the Arabs directly affected by the Zionists’ race-exclusivist and race-supremacist practices, that was causing Arab wrath. Inasmuch as Zionist
colonisation was still of modest proportions, however, the hostility it provoked remained more or less local.

(3) The alliance of British Imperialism and Zionist Colonialism, concretely expressed in the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917, and the British capture of Jerusalem on 9 December 1917, at last opened Arab eyes to the true significance of what was happening, and brought home the realisation that nothing less than dislodgment was in store for the Arabs, if Zionism was to be permitted to have its way. Palestinian masses instinctively recognised the events of the day as an occurrence of dire portent; and, for thirty years thereafter, Palestine was to be the scene of persistent and tireless Arab resistance to the Anglo-Zionist partnership. The period from 1917 to 1948 was the period of Arab resistance \textit{par excellence}. [...] 

Palestinian Arab opposition to the Anglo-Zionist partnership was first expressed, in 1919, \textit{in diplomatic representations and in collective declarations} of the general will of the people. The American King-Crane Commission was left in no doubt about the true feelings of the people of Palestine. On 29 August 1919, the Commission reported that:

\begin{quote}
the non-Jewish population of Palestine - nearly nine-tenths of the whole – are emphatically against the entire Zionist program [...] There was no one thing upon which the population of Palestine was more agreed than upon this [...] .\end{quote}

The findings of the Commission corroborated the decisions of the General Syrian Congress, consisting of elected representatives of the populations of Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. A resolution, passed unanimously by the Congress on 2 July 1919, announced:

\begin{quote}
We oppose the pretensions of the Zionists to create a Jewish Commonwealth in the southern part of Syria, known as Palestine, and oppose Zionist migration to any
part of our country; for we do not acknowledge their title but consider them a grave peril to our people from the national, economical, and political points of view, Our Jewish compatriots shall enjoy our common rights and assume the common responsibilities.\(^4\) […]

But declarations of opposition, however important as an expression of national will, were not the only means of resistance to which the people of Palestine had recourse.

In March 1920, armed hostilities broke out between Arab villagers and Zionist colonists in northern Palestine; and in April 1920, Arab-Zionist fighting took place in Jerusalem. These were followed by uprisings in 1921, 1929, and 1933, and by a country-wide rebellion in 1936, which was renewed in 1937 and lasted until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. And, from December 1947 until the withdrawal of Britain and the simultaneous proclamation of the Zionist settler-state in May 1948, Palestinian Arabs were engaged in a life-and-death battle with the British garrison as well as with the Zionist colonists. […]

At the height of the famous rebellion of 1936, the people of Palestine launched a devastating civil disobedience movement, coupled with a country-wide strike which lasted for 174 days (perhaps the longest national strike in history) and affected all businesses, communications, and government services run by Arabs. In spite of its high cost to themselves, the men and women of Palestine persisted in their strike, resisting all efforts of the Mandatory Power to break it, and did not call it off until the rulers of the neighboring Arab States intervened and promised to initiate collective Arab negotiations with the British Government with a view to remedying the causes of Palestinian Arab grievances. […]

(4) In 1948, the Palestinian Arab people was forcibly dispossessed. Most Palestinians were evicted from their country. Their unyielding resistance and their costly sacrifices over three decades had failed to avert the national catastrophe.
But those sacrifices were not in vain. For they safeguarded the Palestinian national rights and underscored the legitimacy of the Arabs’ claim to their national heritage. Rights undefended are rights surrendered. Unopposed and acquiesced in, usurpation is legitimised by default. For forfeiture of its patrimony, the Palestinian generation of the inter-War era will never be indicted by the Palestinian generations to come. It lost indeed – but not without fighting. It was dislodged indeed – but not for want of the will to defend its heritage. [...] 

(5) The people of Palestine, notwithstanding all its travails and misfortunes, still has undiminished faith in its future. And the people of Palestine knows that the pathway to that future is the liberation of its homeland.

It was in this belief that the Palestinian people – after sixteen years of dispersion and exile, during which it had reposed its faith in its return to its country in world conscience and international public opinion, in the United Nations, and/or in the Arab states – chose at last to seize the initiative. In 1964, it reasserted its corporate personality by creating the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Only in the liberation of Palestine, spearheaded by Palestinians prepared to pay the price, can the supreme sacrifices of past generations of Palestinians be vindicated, and the visions and hopes of living Palestinians be transformed into reality.

Epilogue: The Liberation of Palestine

The problem of Palestine, although it directly afflicts only the Palestinians, is not the concern of Palestinians alone. The Zionist settler-state, bent on expansion, is a threat to the security and territorial integrity of the Arab states as well. It has already invaded their lands. It still covets their territories.

As a colonial venture, which anomalously came to bloom precisely when colonialism was beginning to fade away, it is in fact a challenge to all anti-colonial peoples in Asia and Africa. For, in the
Sayegh, ‘Zionist Colonialism in Palestine’

final analysis, the cause of anti-colonialism and liberation is one and indivisible.

And – as a racist system animated by doctrines of racial self-segregation, racial exclusiveness, and racial supremacy, and methodically translating these doctrines into ruthless practices of racial discrimination and oppression – the political systems erected by Zionist colonists in Palestine cannot fail to be recognised as a menace by *all civilised men* dedicated to the safeguarding and enhancement of the dignity of man. For whenever and wherever the dignity of but one single human being is violated, in pursuance of the creed of racism, a heinous sin is committed against the dignity of all men, everywhere.

**NOTES**

الكولونيالية الاستيطانية واستئصال/محو السكان الأصليين

بتريك وولف

ترجمة: داغيا طه

لا يعتبر مسألة الإسهام الجماعي أبدا بعيدا عن النقاشات حول الاستعمار الاستيطاني. فالآفات هي الحالة- أو على الأقل الأفراد ضروري للحياة. وبالتالي فإن الصراع على الأرض يمكن أن يكون وعادة ما هو- صراع على الحياة.

لكن هذا لا يعني أن الاستعمار الاستيطاني هو ببساطة أحد أشكال الإسهام الجماعي. ففي بعض مواقع الاستعمار الاستيطاني (وفي هذه الحالة من السكان الذين يفجّرون), فإن مجتمع السكان الأصليين وعلى الرغم من أنه تم على حالة بضوحية كان قادرًا على استيعاب الغزاة والنظم الاجتماعي الاقتصادي المتاحل الذي قاموا بإبдельه، وحتى في مواقع أخرى حيث كانت مصدات الأراضي تتم على مقاييس ضخمة كما في أستراليا أو أمريكا الشمالية، فإن الإسهام الجماعي الناتجة عن الاستعمار الاستيطاني لم يكن موزعة بشكل متساو في السكان والرامل. قد تلقي التشريعات الخاصة بالسكان الأصليين في أستراليا أو قانون سيادة الهنود الحمر في الولايات المتحدة حصانة ضارة، ولكنها بالكاد تذكر بأثر الإسهام على الحدود. بالإضافة إلى ذلك فإن الإسهام الجماعي قد تحصل في غياب الاستعمار الاستيطاني. إن أكثر الإسهامات الجماعية شرارة تلك التي حصلت داخل أوروبا، كما أن الإسهام الجماعي التي ارتكبت في أرجينتينا، كوبوديا، رواندا أو (وبحير أفولا) دافور لا تبدو مرتبطة باستعمار استيطاني. في هذه المقالة سأبدأ في استكشاف، بأسلوب مقارن، العلاقة بين الإسهام الجماعي، والنزع الكولونيالية الاستيطانية والتي تُسمى لنطق الحماية/الإلغاء (1). سأجدل بأن على الرغم من أن الحالين قد تداخلت - أي أن نطاق الإلغاء/المحاصرة في الكولونيالية الاستيطانية قد تلقي أحيانا على شكل إسهام جماعي. فإنه يجب التفريق بينهما، فالكولونيالية الاستيطانية قادرة بطبيعتها على الإلغاء والحراش ولكنها ليست مرتبطة بجميع الحالات للإسهام الجماعية.

وظلت كل من الإسهامات الجماعية والكولونيالية الاستيطانية في الممارسات الأوروبية الثنية التنظيمية للعرق. تفاريخ الرهاب (السينولوجيا) الأوروبي كما في مساحة السامية، الرهاب من الإسلام، والرهاب من الزوج يعبر أكثر قدرًا من العرق، والذي كما أظهركترون أصبح بشكل متكرر منهجًا عمليًا مع نهاية القرن الثامن عشر. (2) ولكن تحقيق أن العرق هو عبارة عن بناء اجتماعي لا يخيرنا بضرورة الكثير. فكم جدلا، هناك أنظمة عرقية مختلفة تطور وتعيد توجيه نفس العلاقات الاستثنائية والتي باستعمالها قامت أوروبا بإرضاء هذه الجماعات. على سبيل المثال، قد تم التصنيف العرقي/العنصري للسود والهنود الحمر في الولايات المتحدة بطريقة متداخلتين تبعيديا، تعيد دورها المتافض في تشكيل المجتمع الأمريكي. فاستعاب السود أنتج تصنيفا حزريا يؤدي بشكل تلقائي إلى استبعاد
Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’

Nelson describes the process of colonization through the lens of settler colonialism, which involves the displacement of indigenous peoples and the establishment of white supremacy. Wolfe argues that settler colonialism is not merely about the physical displacement of peoples, but also about the cultural and ideological imposition of white supremacy. This is achieved through various means, including the establishment of white-majority societies, the suppression of indigenous cultures, and the creation of a narrative of white exceptionalism. Wolfe’s work is a critique of the ways in which settler colonialism has been perpetuated and continues to exist in various forms around the world.
Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’
Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’

من الناحية الإيجابية فإن الكولونيالية الاستعمارية لا تخل مكاني المجتمع الأصلي ببساطة. بل إن عملية الإحلال تحافظ على بصلة غير قابلة للإنذار للمكان الأصلي، البصلة نفسها التي يتم تخميتها المكان الأصليًّ لإناث شرعية. لا تقترح هذه الظاهرة فقط على العالم الرمزي. في الحالة الصهيونية على سبيل المثال، وكما أشار غيرونولن شافير بلباقة، فقد نع جوفر عن عقدة "غزو العمل" والتي أنتجت الكيبيتوس ويهوستروت، المؤسسات المركزية في دولة إسرائيل، من المواجهة المحلية مع العرب الفلسطينيين، وبشكل مختلف تماما عن المبادئ الأصلية لعمليات تعزيز الإنتاجية كما تم صياغتها في أوروبا. استحدث مفهوم "تعزيز الإنتاجية" كردية فعّل على كره الذات الذي شجعه الإقتصادات النفعية من الصناعات الإنتاجية بين يهود أوروبا الشرقية (هذا المعنى، وكما لاحظه شافير بدقة، فإن الصهيونية عكست، المعايد للسامية من قبل المضطهدين). في شكله الذي نع داخلي أوروبا، لم تهدف مبادرات "تعزيز الإنتاجية" إضعاف أي شخص آخر. بل سممت لنسية متواجدة تهدف إلى تحقيق الاكتفاء الذاتي لدى الجماعات اليهودية التي عزت في وظائف طبيعية (على الأغلب سابئية)، ووظفت وصمت من قبل الجماعات المحتلة اليهودية بأنها طفيلة. وهو إجهاض تبنا من نمذج "يهودي جديد" نفس الدرجة التي رفضوا إدخاله. تحوّلت هذه العبءة على انتزاع من عقول البلدين إلى دعوة إلى الصواري الإقتصادية. حيث تم إعاقة الصناعات اليهودية بشكل فعال من منظمة يد عاملة غير يهودية، على الرغم من أن العرب كانوا يعملون بأجور أعلى، وفي حالات كثيرة، فعلياً أكبر.

إن "المملكة اليهودية" أو "غزو العمل"... ولدت من الظروف الفلسطينيّة، ودعت للقضاء ضد العالم الفلسطيني العرب. هذا الفرق الديمغرافي يوضح البسج الذي يخلق في الإشارة إلى "المملكة اليهودية" خلال حركة تعزيز الإنتاجية، وبالتالي تنصيبه زمنياً كتوجه يجعل بشكل حيوي من أصول أوروبية شرقية.

كونه مفهوما تطور على أرضية كولونيالية، فقد قام "غزو العمل" بإخضاع الفعلية الاقتصادية لصالح متطلبات بناء جماعة يهودية تأسيسية ومكتفية ذاتيا في فلسطين (يشوف)، وذلك على حساب الجماعات العربية المجاورة. أنتج هذا النضال المضادي اليهودي الجديد، كموضوع عمل الذي يعزو. وحسب تعبير المهندس العربي الصهيوني يوهانس بوستر، وهو يعتبر "إذكاء فولكلوري" "لم قدمنا إلى هذا الأرض لتنبي، ولتنبي من جديد عليها. إن خلق اليهودي الجديد... (هو أيضا) الخلق لهذا اليهودي" (15) كان "غزو العمل" مركزا لكل من التخيل المؤسساتي لمنطقة خالية من الآخرين، وتموسو المستمر للهود الذين لم يعطو وفاضلواQuebec في المطالب. إن النوع الإيجابية التي حركت الشعب اليهودي وأفراده من اليهودي الجديد، نفعت من العملية السلبية المنطوية على إقصاء الملاك الأصليين لفلسطين.
والمختصر، فإن السحو/الإنغلى يشير إلى ما هو أبعد من تصفية السكان الأصليين للأرض، دون أن نتفق أنه يشمل ذلك. من الجانب الإمبراطوري، فإن منطق السحو/الإنغلى يشكل عامة عمودًا، حيث يستمر السكان الأصليين المضطهدين في تشكيك بنية المجتمع الكولونيالي الاستعماري. ولأن الكولونيالية الاستعمارية تشكو دورًا متعاقده معاء بالإفادة المعروفة، فهي تشكل حركة مستمرة في الزمن، فهي تأسسها اصطلاحًا، بنية وليس حديثًا، وعلى هذه القاعدة سببًا.

في دراسة علاقتها بالإضاءة الجماعية.

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لمبدأ من الأعلى، معالمة الأوروبية الذين ادعوا بأحقتهم بالأراضي التي يسكنها غير المسيحين (يطلق عليهم في حالات أخرى مغلفة أكثر علانية، غير المخصصين) في أنحاء العالم، استندت التبريرات لهذه الآراء إلى حلول الدراسات البحثية الإشكالية والمثيرة للجدل، والتي منحت النزاعات الأوروبية في الأمريكتين دفعه قوياً، وهي تسمى بشكل مماثل قانون الإقلاع (16) على الرغم من أن الاكتشافات ارتبطت بشكل يديوي بت просмотр كبر لاستحقاقات الأوروبا والأراضي الأصلية (17). فحسب حينها العديد من الصيغ النظرية التفاعلية لاحجاً الدوريات الإستعمارية الحروب، والتي كان الحكام الأوروبيين يرافقون فيها بسهولة للتنافس على التوسع في الأراضي. وهذا فإن الحقوق التي ثبتت للسكان الأصليين كانت تعكس موازين القوى الأوروبية في أي نقطة كولونيالية استعمارية. على سبيل المثال، في استراليا حيث لم تكون السيطرة البريطانية مهذة، كما خرجت القوى الأوروبية الأخرى، تمتيح السكان الأصليين أي حقوق بالنسبة لأراضيهم، وظهرت أشكال مختلفة حول تمتة الأراضي الأصلية كانت تؤخذ بشكل متغير من هن في ثقافة المستعمرين، والمصالح بشكل مثير للتنافس فقد أبرزت في أمريكا الشمالية معاهدات بين الهندو الهندي والأوروبية تقوم على سيادة عكس قدرة الهندو الهندي على تشكيك شبهات محنية من كل من القوى الإسبانية، البريطانية الفرنسية، الهولندية، السويدية والعربية المستأنفة (18). وبرغم ذلك، فحتى في الأماكن التي اعترف فيها بسيادة السكان الأصليين، ظلت السلطة المطلقة على تلك المنطقة مازلية للقوة الأوروبية التي ياسوها تم "الاستشارة". بغض النظر عن ذلك، فإن الجمع يتفق على الفرق واضح بين السلطة السوية، السلطة، الملازم للقوى الأوروبية فقط، وحق السكان الأصليين في الإعلان، الذي يعبر عنه أيضاً بحق الملك أو الانتفاع، بحيث يُسمح للسكان الأصليين بالإستخراج الشرعي (الصيد وليس الزراعة) لحقوق قاف الأوروبية باكتمالها.

يوضح هذا التمييز بين السلطة السوية وبين حق الاستخراج/الاستغلال اعتماد المشروع الكولونيالي على إلغاء مجتمعات السكان الأصليين.

من خلال كونه الأوروبي الأول الذي يزرع منطقة معاينة ويطالب بها، يكتسب المكتشف باسم حاكمه ومقاطع الأوروبية الآخرين الذين جاءوا بعد الحق بشراء الأرض من السكان الأصليين. هذا الحق الذي يسوي أيضاً
Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’

...
Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’

فقط من أراضي الهند الحمر، لكنها كانت تدخل في حيز الملكية الخاصة. بعد أن يتم إخلائها، تستخرج أراضي الهنود الحمر قبلياً للعملة السوداء لإنتاج القطن، والذي يعتبر ذهب الجنب الأبيض. ولهذه الغاية، تداخلت تجارة البيض العالمية والقيادات العليا في النظام الصحي الرسمي عبر ثلاث قارات مع أخرى المحتوى النكبة البيضاء والخطة بالنظام، والتي قد تكون أو قد لا تكون "غير قانونية" إلا أنها كانت مصنفة كجماعات بضاءة. وفق ذلك، فإن شعوبهم المجحزة إلى أي قيمة يمكن أن تستخرج من أراضي النيلريكي، سوقت ذهب الأفريقي العنصريين عبر الانتفاضة فقط بسرقة العائل. وهذا فهم المجزم المؤثر في ذلك الوقت، والذي في النهاية بل قيمة، بعد القرن الثامن عشر، استخدم كخطة شرعية لإدراك الحقوق العربية التي أعطت الحق في الأراضي إلى الأطباء. على أراضي الشعوب الأخرى، جعل من جماجم قناع النيلريكي بضاعة تماسكية لا يمكن إقصائها (24) في أباعوا المتعدد الطبقات بشكل لا نهائي. لم يكن هناك موضوع محدد في هذا الاستحلال الحرق، والذي شاركت فيها الحمالة.

بدلاً من أن تأخذ موقفاً متصلاً بإتجاه معاكس للدولة الكولونيالية، فإن العنف الدموي الذي تمارسه الجماهير الخارجية عن القانون على الحدود يجعله شائعة الدولة الكولونيالية الرئيسية للتوعيم. قد تحدث تلك "خليف شائعة الحدود"، في الصورة حيث ما إن استقر الغبار حتى تم تنظيم الزوار الانتقائية التي حدثت، وتوضّعت حدود مستويات البلاد البلاد. على نحو مميز، فقد عبر المسؤولون عن ندمهم حول الأحداث الانتقائية التي وقعت في الوقت نفسه الذي يسلطون بحثهما (25) تحت هذا الضوء، فنحن في موقع نسمع لنا نفهم نظرية الاستكشاف بشكل أكثر واضح، فهمها كأنها تأكيده على حق الهنود الحمر، فإن الدليل ما بيد النيران والأشغال يصبح غير متسمب بفهمها كصيرور، كمرحلة في عملية تشكيل الدولة الاستعمار الإستيطانية (شريحة خاصة، كمرحلة التي تربط ما بين الانتقائية وتحقيق الاستيلاء على الأرضي، فإن التباين ممكناً جدًا، وكم نلاحظ فإن النية عند بأنه يمكن للمسلمين الأصليين أن يشلون بدفع حقهم في الإستيلاء إلى القرى المكشوفة ولا أخير. لم يكونوا قادرين على نقل البداية لأنها ببساطة لم يكون لهم، لقد كان هذا ملؤاً للقوى الإستعمارية منذ حزينة اكتشافهم للبلاد. إن البداية من دون العنز تؤسس للمرحلة الانتقائية (أو غير المكشوفة) ومخططات الزعم الأمريكي جون مارشال، فهو يظل متبرعاً "التحقيق من خلال التملك" (27) هذه الكلمة المصادفة بذكاء "التحقيق" هي بدعة ما كانت تحقق الجماعات الخارجية عن القانون في النيلريكي، نيو تورن عام 1838. بكاملاً أخرى، فإن حق الإشغال لم يكن تأكيده على حقوق الهنود الحمر، بل اعتراضاً وراضيًا بفعل القتال الذي ينتمي مشهورًا ومحليًا، بين التحقيق المحلي لهذا الغزو في التأمين النهائي للاستيطان الأوروبي، والذي حقق بشكل رئيسي من خلال التنازل من حق السكان الأصليين. وبالتالي فإنه ليس من المكروه أن حق السكان الأصليين لم يكن مشدداً عليه بأكثر من الصيحة التي راد فيها القاضي أوليني معاودة مارشال، إلا أن نضخة القرن الواحد والعشرين من
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"the fact that it was the first in its category, and which from the perspective of complicity in the crimes of the tyranny of Wolfe, (28) and which we now recognize as a clear violation of the law, is not a matter for debate."

By asserting the historical narrative, the location that is no place of its own, by asserting the loci of the colonizers, the perpetrators of the terrible acts in the world, which are often confused and overlooked in the official narrative, the historical narrative of the subjects, the contributions of the indigenous people are an integral part of the process of development and the elimination of the indigenous people in the earth. In this context, the indigenous peoples maintain their rights to the land and their cultural heritage. They maintain their rights to the land and their cultural heritage, and they have fought and continue to fight against the forces that seek to deny them these rights.

In the context of this struggle, the indigenous peoples have maintained their rights to the land and their cultural heritage, and they have fought and continue to fight against the forces that seek to deny them these rights. In this context, the indigenous peoples maintain their rights to the land and their cultural heritage. They maintain their rights to the land and their cultural heritage, and they have fought and continue to fight against the forces that seek to deny them these rights.

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On the other hand, there is no evidence that a particular group, or a group of individuals, successfully or completely eradicated the indigenous peoples of the world. The indigenous peoples maintain their rights to the land and their cultural heritage, and they have fought and continue to fight against the forces that seek to deny them these rights. In this context, the indigenous peoples maintain their rights to the land and their cultural heritage. They maintain their rights to the land and their cultural heritage, and they have fought and continue to fight against the forces that seek to deny them these rights.

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ضحايا النازيين ومن ضمنهم اليهود والجبر (سيني ووروم), لم يقتلون في معتقلي الاعتقال، بل ضمن نوبات اطلاق نار ذات طابع بحاج لدرجة مماثلة، ذُكر بالمارسات الإبادة في القرن السادس عشر في الأمريكتين أكثر مما تستوفي من النمط الإداري الوردي. بينما جوع أيضا الملايين من المدنيين السابقين والمجمّعين اليهود والأجانب في حائلة القرن الثاني عشر أو أواخر القرن الثاني عشر. يحالي منتصف القرن التاسع عشر (34) لا يعني هذا أن نظَّم الهولوكوست إلى قسمين أخذهما حدادي والأخر.

بدائي، بل هذا يؤكّد على الطابع الحادل الاستعماري.

شكل الاستعمار الاستطلاعي قائدة للحالة. فدعم الافراد الذين يتنوّعون على الحدود إلى الحالة من قبل الدولة تقترب قاسيا مشتركا بين العالم الخاص والرسمي. في معظم الحالات (كَونورت(N. K. رحلة استطلاعية) فإنها كانت تقترب من مقمات عالمية ومن سلسلة الأمور. ربطت الحدود الاستعمارية بعيدة بالعاصمة (35) يقع كيف كل هذا المهرجان الدافع المشتاق في قوى السوق العالمية، والتي وصلت ما بين الصيغ الاسترالية، الطوائف في بوركينا فاسو. وبشكل مكمل زراعة البلاد الذي ينتج تحت ظروف استعمارية خاصة في الهند، مسرر الولادات الاستعمارية في أقصى جنوبي أمريكا. وكم لاحظ كلون هاريس فيما يخصّر الهدوء الممّر في كولومبيا تابعة لبريطانيا، "حين تجمع غابة رأس المال في توفير إمكانية منظمة للحصول على الأرض، ومصلحة المستعمرين في الأرض كموضع رزق فإنه تجد بالصدارة القوى الديموغرافية الاستعمارية الاستعمارية". (36) إن الثورة الصناعية التي تصور في الرؤى الشعبي بشكل خاطئ تطهّر فانشة بشكل أصيل في المدن، اخضعت إلى أراض وآيد عاملة مستعمرة لإنتاج المواد الخام بنفس المركزية التي اخضعت فيها إلى المصادف الحضرية وآيد عاملة صناعية للعملية صناعية، ذلك كله بالإضافة إلى أن المستعمرات احتجت أيضا كأبواق. إن المسكان الأوليتيين الذين لبيت أمراضهم، الإقليمية، والأمريكي المستعمرين، أو الأفريقيون العاملين بالسخرة هو كائنات حادة بشكل كامل كما هو عامل المصطنع، الموظف، جاهز ملود على الجو في الأراضي المدنية. إن واقع أن العدّ هو أغلب لا يعني أن من الحضور الوسيط. والاعتماد على ذلك فإن حقيقة أن اليونانوس في رواندا استخدموا أداة زراعية لتقديم جودة أو رؤي من الموضوع. وللحم استخدام الساحة المطلق. إن رواندا وبيروني نتاج ناجحة كولونيات. ليس فقط بما يخص العامل الواضح المستقل بحدوده الجغرافية، ولكن أيضا بشكل أكثر توغلا، بما يتعلق بالحدود المتماثلة التي أكّد وأعاد إنتاج التقسيم هوتوليني. ويما لاحظ روبرت ميلوسن في تحليله التالي النائب لما حصل "إن الإبادة الجماعية التي حصلت في رواندا هي نتاج الحالة السابعة كولونيات، أوبولوجيا غرناط، نوبة تدعى الشرعية الديمقراطية، والحرب- وجميعهم تعبيرات عن العالم المحديث. (37) إن التفاصيل المعينة من قبل الطريق هوتوليني، والذي على أرضيه قام هذه الأيديولوجية السابعة كولونياتها كان نفسه مكيدة كولونياتها."
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وبالاستناد للنموذج الفيتوكي الكلاسيكي، فإن الأسوار الأمازيج والباجيكي الذين تل بعضهم البعض في رواية الحديثة،
فرضوا شبكة عرقية على النظام الاجتماعي الأصلي المعمد. مستقبلين الأرستقراطية الريفية المكونة من التوسي
كنغة كوبيرنودوريا تكون زمام المصالح الأوروبية ويسهل استغلالهم لقلم الهوتور الزراعية والتوسيتي الأكال مرتين.

استحدث هذا التفريق العنصري من قبل الإداريين والأثريولوجيين البلجيكي الذين ادعوا فيما عرف لاحقاً باسم
نظرية لعن ع-Mar. لأن التوسي كانوا في الأصل فاتحين تعود أصولهم إلينوبيا (القرن الأوروبا) وأن الهوتور عبرة
عن قبيلة تم غزوها وهي بمنزلة أدنى لأصولها المحلية. (38) أشياء للفرانسيس ونجله، بنغرس هذا الخطاب
العنصري في أذهالهم، أصبح الروانديين حادين بشكل مكثفي. حتى المعالم الفئوية التي استخدمها بعض الهوتور
في قتل مواطنين التوسي زرعوا إلى الزراعة التي لم تطغ فقط ما يفوقهم على ضحاياهم، بل كانت هذه المعال
هي الأدوات التي زرعت لانخرط الهوتور في السوق العالمي.

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لوحدها، لا تستطيع الحداثة أن تفسر ديناميكية هذا النعم الذي لا يشيع بحث الاستعمار الاستيطاني دوما إلى
المزيد من الأراضي. إن الأجابة التي تخطى بسهولة هي الزراعة، على الرغم من أنها ليست السبب الوحيد. فإن
الانطلاق الواسع للقطاعات الرئيسية من الممكن أن نحظر المشروط، بالإضافة إلى الزراعة، بالطريقة، التي استخدمها:
الزراعة، صيد السمك، الرعي، واستخرج الخطاب (إن القوة التي قسمت ظهر الجرير فيما عنصراتي هي
اكتئاب الذهاب في أراضيه). باستثناء الزراعة (والبيض الرعى) لا تعتبر أي من هذه القطاعات كافية لوحدها.
فإن لا تستطيع أن تأكل الخشب أو الحطب، صيد السمك لمحة العالم يطلب مصانع التعلب. وفق كل هذا فإن
عمال المناهج العليا أو أحلام منتظرون، بينما قد يفضل السمك والغابات وستكون هناك حاجة لاستزاعهم. لا تدعم
الزراعة فقط القطاعات الأخرى، فهي تطبعها مستقرة وبالتالي ثابتة. على عكس الصناعات المتميزة.

استخراج المواد من بابول الأرض والتي تعتمد على ما صدر أن يوجد هناك، فإن الزراعة مبنية على حسابات
البداية للجهد الجبهية لكي نتمكن إعداد إنتاج نفطيًا. لهذا بنيت_ser prazo من أن يقلص إلى مجرد أولد البرك
وبالتالي تتناسب لمنزلة الحيوان. فوق ذلك، كما أشار إليه كان لوك دون أن يكون من نكراب ذلك، فإن الزراعة تدعم
جماعات بشرية أكبر من تلك التي تدعمها نماذج الإنتاج غير المستقرة. (39) وبأعدة الاستعمار الاستيطاني فإن
هذا يسهم للشعب أن يزداد من خلال الهجرة المستمرة على حساب أراض السكان الأصليين، وموارد ورقي. إن
الظلم، القوانين، والنقابات التي تقع في المجتمعات القاطنة في المدن المركزية تضمن توافر دينيا للمهاجرين
الجدد، والآخرون كما نذكر سابقاً القادمون من طبقات غير مشابهة هذه المخبأة فإن المحارف الريفية تداخل مع
الضرورة الحتمية للسوق العالمي في التوسع. من خلال توزيعها المستمر، فإن الزراعة (وهي نشاط، لهذا الهدهف،
الرعاية الجبرية) تسمى بشكل متزايد على أراض السكان الأصليين، تراكم بين يد الحرب والجوانب على
أراض السكان الأصليين إلى مصدر يتضاؤل ليتر إعداد إنتاج إنسانية الأصليين في الإنتاج. بالنسبة للسكان
The colonists find themselves faced with the challenge of the settler colonialism that they have inherited. They have been taught to view the indigenous peoples as obstacles to their economic prosperity. Even when they are confronted with the reality of the native peoples, they often view them as obstacles rather than partners.

There is a common misconception that settler colonialism is only about the displacement of native peoples. However, the settler colonialists are also motivated by economic interests. They see the natives as a barrier to their economic development. They often use violence and intimidation to force the natives to leave their land.

Despite these challenges, the settlers find ways to overcome them. They often use legal and political means to their advantage. They are also able to adapt to the local conditions, which allows them to continue their economic activities.

The settler colonialists are not only interested in economic development. They are also interested in maintaining their cultural and religious practices. This is why they often establish new communities and religious institutions.

In conclusion, the settler colonialism is a complex phenomenon that is characterized by the displacement of native peoples, economic interests, and cultural and religious practices. It is a system that is sustained by violence and intimidation, and it is one that is difficult to overcome.
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...and the elimination of the Native, as Wolfe argues, is a product of settler colonialism in which the native is not seen as a subject but as a collection of resources to be exploited. This form of colonialism is characterized by the displacement of the native, the destruction of their culture, and the imposition of a new order that is fundamentally different from the one they had before. Wolfe argues that this form of colonialism is not just about the physical displacement of people, but about the cultural and political displacement as well. This is why he sees settler colonialism as a form of violence that is different from other forms of colonialism. Wolfe’s work is a powerful critique of settler colonialism and a call for a new way of thinking about colonization and its consequences.
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"...towards the intractable situation of indigenous groups and their struggle for survival. The implementation of policies and strategies designed to eliminate the indigenous population..."

"...wrote a treaty to the effect that the indigenous population was to be relocated to reservations and that their lands were to be transferred to European settlers. This policy was based on the belief that the indigenous population was inferior to the European settlers and that their lands were not suitable for European agriculture. The treaty was signed in 1871..."

"...the indigenous population faced numerous challenges and had to adapt to their new living conditions. The reservation system was established, and the indigenous population was subjected to various forms of discrimination and exploitation. Despite these challenges, the indigenous population continued to resist and fight for their rights and culture..."
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...
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نفسي التي هي موضوع إحصاء سكانية. وبغض النظر، فإن المساحة المتعددة للتدير الديمغرافي للجماعة
المتضررة لا ليس فيها.

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لذا إن منطقة الإلغاء/المحو بدلاً من الإبادة الجماعية؟ كما أشارت في البداية فإن الكولونيالية الاستيطانية هي بنية
اجتماعية خاصة، ومن الضروري الحفاظ على تلك الخصوصية. ولكننا ويفر ما تسمى في معرفي، فإني لا
استطاع الول ستون في الفهم الكولونيالية الاستيطانية سياسيا في تلك الفترة الذي استمر الأحداث في أوروبا
القرن الوسطى، أو التوقيت في روايا، أعداء الشعب في كمبوديا، أو اليهود في آسيا اللادينية (إن التيبنداوم
هي أمراً آخر). ومن نفس النطق، ومع إمكانية إنتاج النصوصات (الخط الأول يرتبط تقليلاً بشكل جماعي على ما يبدو
بغير اجتماعي كبير) فإن باقي عناصر القليل الجماعي لا تملك سوى الظل لتقوية حول سعي الكولونيالية
الأستيطانية المشروعة والمجال الأطراف لمجرّد مجتمعات السكان الأصليين. فإن الهولوكوست، الذي كان مصمما
بالمادية وليس آليات (وأصلي) لا يمكن أو حتى تقريباً أكثر، إن الكولونيالية الاستيطانية بشكل نسيble لا يتأثر بتغير الحلف. إن الإبادة الجماعية للهولدن أمريكا أو السكان الأصليين في أميرليكا
لا يخلص للإلتقاء. ماذا إذا كان عن نوع خاص من الإبادة الجماعية. كمثال الصيغة الإلتقائية فياء
"indigeneous"
تم طرحها، مثل (الإبادة الجماعية الثقافية، الإثني، السياسية) (66)؛ إن الشكلة المضادة والتي لا يمكن تجاوزها فيما
يخص الإبادة الجماعية المؤهلة هي أنها ويفر ما هي ذاتية بجحورها، فإنها تعيش تحت تهديد حل نفسها، فهي لا
تتوجه أبداً باتجاه ما يعبأها الحلف الإثني بالقومية (سجهما) والذي يبدو منطقة إلا أنه يعني أيضاً
أن هؤلاء الأشخاص ليسوا أستراليين أو أمريكيين بالكلام. ولكن بعيدا عن تلك الشكلة الثقافية، هناك أساس
تاريخي للحلول النسب للككاوات الجماعية المؤهلة، وهذا الأساس هو بالطبع الهولوكوست، هذا النموذج لا-
نموذج، الذي يكون لستا لا غنى عنه، لا يستطيع في الوقت نفسه أن يعني تماشاً. إبقاء على على
الهولوكوست الذي هو دائماً البشري غير المؤهل نحو الإبادات الجماعية المؤهلة، لا يمكن إلا أن يضر بالسكان
الأصليين لأنه يشكل متوال لا تجد حتى قمة النقص في قلب اللاجئ. فوق ذلك، فعلى حين يبره الهولوكوست
الدول الإقليمية المتشابهة للإبادات الجماعية. إن هذه النموذج نفسها لا تملك ما تكفي من مسؤوليتها عن
الإبادات الجماعية الكولونيالية. على أرضية تاريخية وتصنيفية في ذات الوقت، فإن هذه الإبادات الجماعية ذات
التصنيفات المختلفة تظل بصلة تأكل السكان الأصليين. لا تبرك شكلة من هذا النوع تحمل نطاق الإلغاء/المحو
والذي في مصوصاته المرتبطة بالكولونيالية الاستيطانية يركز على تحقيق الحصول والخوف، على الأرض
(66) إن هذا المطلة يتطور بإحصاءات من تلك الأرض، ولكن دون أن يشير إلى طريقة معينة، وهذا ما يجعله
أوسع من الإبادة الجماعية. على سبيل المثال فإن نموذج التمييز الرومانسي والذي أطلق عليه اسم "الاصالة
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Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native'

Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’, is one of the key works in the field of settler colonialism studies, focusing on the historical and ideological processes through which the indigenous peoples were systematically displaced and marginalized. Wolfe critiques the notion of the settlers as innocent or passive agents of history, arguing that settler colonialism is a form of violence and exploitation that has been integral to the development of modern societies.

The book examines the historical context of settler colonialism, particularly in the context of the colonization and displacement of the Indigenous peoples in Australia and New Zealand, and the ways in which these processes have been legitimized and sustained through various forms of discourses and practices. Wolfe argues that settler colonialism is not merely a historical event, but a contemporary phenomenon that continues to shape the social, political, and economic landscapes of the settler societies.

Wolfe’s work challenges the dominant narratives that portray the settlers as victims or innocent players in the historical process, and instead presents a more nuanced and critical perspective on the role of settlers in the dispossession of the Indigenous peoples. The book is widely regarded as a seminal work in the field of colonial studies and has been influential in shaping the contemporary debates on colonialism and postcoloniality.
How can one predict how the elimination of the native community is possible in the beginning, considering the colonial and settlement colonialism? In the beginning, it was obvious that the actions of colonialism led to the destruction of the native community, and this destruction is due to the colonial and settlement colonialism, not necessarily due to the actions of the native community. However, the destruction of the native community is not only due to the actions of colonialism, but also due to the actions of the native community. The destruction of the native community is due to the actions of colonialism and the actions of the native community, and this destruction is not only due to the actions of colonialism, but also due to the actions of the native community.

Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’
Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’


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Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’


26. Williams, American Indian in Western Legal Thought, p. 269.


"إن الإذاعة الذي ينتج عن ما يشكل أكثر واحد من الأفكار المزعومة المطلوبة تؤدي في يد مرات تلبية ما تنتجه الأرض.


Creek Phoenix, February 28, 1828.

"إن الإذاعة الذي ينتج عن ما يشكل أكثر واحد من الأفكار المزعومة المطلوبة تؤدي في يد مرات تلبية ما تنجح الأرض.


Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’


Frederick E. Hoxie, A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880–1920 (Cambridge: Nebraska University Press, 1989); Prucha, Americanizing the American Indians, passim.


Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’
Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native’


72. In February 2002, a group of Bedouins from the Jerusalem Region (as well as others in the south)骚扰了一个犹太定居点的居民。根据《耶路撒冷邮报》，大约有22%的（2,200）个家庭经营着商业。由于这些家庭主要由来自以色列的犹太人组成，这些定居点每天需要数千名工人，以维持其正常运作。


78. “The system is built on the idea of a ‘white homeland’ separated from the rest of the world, a system that is structured to maintain a certain power relationship.” Thomas C. Holt, Rebecca J. Scott, Frederick Cooper, Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies (Chapel Hill, NC: North Carolina University Press, 2000), pp. 2–3.

79. On the need for an understanding of the colonies and their impact on the colonies in the Ottoman Empire, see Tatz, With Intent to Destroy, p. 181.

This article was originally published in English as: Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 8, 4 (2006), pp. 387-409.

This translation is published with the permission of the publisher, Taylor & Francis Ltd (www.tandfonline.com). Patrick Wolfe would like to express his appreciation to the translator, Dalia Taha, and to Taylor & Francis.
Aziz Rana’s *Two Faces of American Freedom* is an impressive piece of historical scholarship inspired by an important contemporary issue: the rise of the ‘imperial presidency’, a marked institutional and ideological shift in the United States toward administrative centralisation and aggressive foreign interventionism that has reached an apex (or nadir) with the now decade-long War on Terror. As the author noted in a recent book talk sponsored by the Yale Law School, ‘today the US enjoys tremendous global power, but this power is increasingly disconnected and unmoored from democratic commitments at home’. Despite politicians’ pious appeals to the necessity of protecting America’s uniquely free, self-governing society from those who would threaten its security, each successive expansion of the War on Terror’s battlefield is accompanied by contractions of Americans’ civil liberties and new assertions of unchecked executive authority in the realm of foreign affairs.

Rana turns to history in order to criticise this development. In *Two Faces*, he provides ‘an alternative image of the nation’s founding and experience’ which unearths ‘a robust account of human freedom embedded in our past’. He calls this lost vision ‘freedom as self-rule’, a ‘radicalized’ classical republican concept of liberty formulated by colonists in British North America, which ‘involved the elimination of all modes of arbitrary authority and required individuals to assert actual decision-making power over economic and political relations, through productive control and democratic participation’. Freedom as self-rule is, to be sure, a powerful
antidote to present-day quiescence in the face of the imperial presidency, but its appearance in colonial America was not unproblematic. As the book’s title suggests, the colonial notion of freedom as self-rule was ‘two-faced’: ‘colonists saw their own internal account of liberty as necessitating external modes of supervision and control’. While white, male, Protestant inhabitants of British America enjoyed individual freedoms and access to governing institutions unparalleled in the metropole, they imposed a distinctly different regime on non-whites, females, and non-Protestants. Nor was this a contingent hypocrisy; Rana insists that ‘[r]ather than separate currents flowing into the well of American values, the democratic ideals themselves gained strength and meaning through frameworks of exclusion’. The confiscation of indigenous territories, coercive practices of labor-organisation imposed upon African slaves and Chinese migrants, subordination of women, and exclusion of Catholics and other religious minorities provided indispensable material support for freedom as self-rule.

Of course, Rana is not the first historian to notice contradictions in American political thought and development. His work follows on earlier accounts, most prominently Edmund Morgan’s American Slavery, American Freedom, which famously asserted that ‘Americans bought their independence with slave labor’. Nor is Rana the first political theorist to describe the undemocratic entanglements of democratic thought. His book pursues themes in American jurisprudence history previously highlighted by critical race theory, and joins a growing literature on the connections between liberalism and imperialism. However, Rana advances on these precedents in several ways. Too often scholars have confined their analyses of racial, gender, and religious exclusion or domination to a ‘distant period of conquest and subordination’ – colonial Virginia, for example, in Morgan’s seminal work. By describing the pairing of internal equality and external subordination as ‘the basic governing framework for American life for over three centuries’ and tracing its manifestations from the seventeenth century to the present, Rana forges a much broader account, which nonetheless remains compelling and well-supported. He provides insightful new interpretations of several critical points in the United States’ political development, which I describe in greater detail below. In the realm of political theory, Rana issues a challenge to
those critics who would use the United States’ disgraceful history of racial exclusivity and imperial expansion to dismiss American political thought as a possible source of emancipatory insight. By highlighting individuals who called for the extension of freedom as self-rule to all Americans and the dismantling of the U.S.’s projects of external expansion, Rana shows that ‘apparently marginal views of freedom and social membership are themselves foundational aspects of our identity’, ready to be reactivated in the present day. Because of these important innovations, *Two Faces* has attracted much, and much deserved, attention from historians, legal scholars, and political theorists, who have published useful reviews of the book’s contributions to political history and political theory.

Here, I review a third contribution of Rana’s work, which I expect will be primarily appreciated by comparative-historical sociologists, anthropologists, and students of comparative politics: *Two Faces* argues that ‘most of the American experience is best understood as a constitutional and political experiment in […] settler empire’ and thereby provides a framework for a comparative approach to the United States. Rana’s claim that many of the treasured features of the American experience ‘are present to varying degrees in numerous settler societies, as diverse as the French in Algeria, the English in Northern Ireland, the European Jewish community in Israel/Palestine, and the Chinese in Taiwan’ may be the book’s most provocative intervention. This critique of the commitment to American ‘exceptionalism’ that structures so much of both scholarly and popular work on the United States is bound to ruffle many feathers. Below, I first describe Rana’s use of the concept of settler colonialism to frame his study of the United States, noting in particular how this approach lends itself to comparison; secondly, I raise some general questions about applying the concept, in future work on the United States.

THE UNITED STATES AS SETTLER EMPIRE

In *Two Faces*, Rana adopts a definition of ‘settler colonialism’ originally proposed by David Fieldhouse in 1965, which persists in the literature on the subject today: ‘settler societies are characterized by substantial and long-lasting imperial populations,
which seek to transplant home country ways to the new environment’. The distinguishing feature of settler colonialism, for Rana as for his forbears, is the settlers’ relations with indigenous communities and other racial and ethnic groups. In settler colonies, as opposed to other kinds of colonies, ‘the primary approach to the local population’ was driven less by the desire ‘to govern indigenous peoples or to enlist them in their economic ventures than to seize their land and push them beyond an ever-expanding frontier of settlement’. Thus, as we saw above, Rana places the United States as occupying a category shared by other former British colonies in Southern Africa and the Antipodes, French colonies in North Africa, or Jewish settlements in Palestine, rather than one shared by the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of the Americas, where extensive use was made of both indigenous and imported African labor, resulting in societies that bore little resemblance to their respective metropoles. I make special note of this implication of the settler colonialism framework here, because it will figure importantly in my evaluation below.

Rana interprets several important qualities of the United States’ colonial pre-history through the lens of settler colonialism. Like other settler colonies, British America exhibited ‘greater equality within the settler colony than in the imperial metropole or home country; a cultural sense of being ‘chosen’ as an ethnic or religious community for a historical mission; a greater emphasis on militarism due to perceived threats from indigenous and foreign populations; and, finally, a wariness of metropolitan social and political customs, which are depicted at times as corrupt or decadent’. In the particular context of British North America, these elements combined to form a ‘unique settler ideology’ with four components: a radicalised republican concept of liberty, which viewed ‘economic independence as the ethical basis of free citizenship’; a defense of territorial conquest as ‘the basic engine of republican freedom’, the surest means of acquiring and diffusing the material requisites of economic independence and thus freedom; a presumption that ‘republican principles at root were not universally inclusive’, but rather exclusive to fellow-settlers; and an openness to European immigration as a means of increasing the population of settlers. Rana traces appearances of this ideology, which he calls ‘settlerism’,
through the first century of the United States’ independent existence, dividing his presentation into three chapters.

The first chapter takes us from the origins of British colonisation in North America to the American Revolution. Rana describes an early version of colonial administration, which ‘situated settlers on a continuum of feudal subjectship alongside native groups and even African slaves’, giving way to a new framework, ‘based on ethnicity and Protestant faith’, wherein ‘settlers saw themselves alone as free Englishmen’, entitled to a range of privileges denied other inhabitants of the colonies. This shift provided the necessary context for the emergence of settlerism:

Anglo colonists increasingly viewed their own expansive practice of freedom as the product of British ancestry [...] This combination of extensive autonomy and cultural pride in Anglo heritage made settlers particularly wary of threats to liberty. Surrounded by French imperialists, Catholic settlers, African slaves, and Indian tribes, it also bred a sense of continual crisis that sowed the seeds for revolt.

British success in the Seven Years’ War did the rest; Protestant colonists initially celebrated victory over France, thinking that British expansion would bring Catholic persecution and vast new lands in its trail. The metropole, however, had other ideas: a series of proclamations, court decisions, and Acts of Parliament limited settlers’ ability to acquire Indian lands, and extended significant protections to both non-European and non-Protestant inhabitants of the new territories. Rana achieves his impressive best in describing Anglo-Protestant colonists’ furious reactions to these developments. Because settlers thought of their own freedom as dependent upon the unfreedom of ethnic and religious others, the British Empire’s shift to ‘greater tolerance and ethnic inclusiveness meant depriving all British subjects – regardless of British ancestry or Protestant faith – of economic and political self rule’. Far from ‘universalizing freedom’, for these settlers, the Empire’s ‘new practices simply truncated the meaning of liberty and reduced Anglo colonists to the
level of their cultural inferiors’. The Revolution, then, emerges as an act of self-assertion by embattled colonists, an effort to preserve Anglo-Protestant supremacy in the New World by stifling a new experiment in more universal freedom and equality, a perfect mirror image of the standard account.

It would be difficult to overstate the originality and importance of Rana’s portrayal of the American Revolution as ‘settler revolt’. Though able historians have treated the connection between the reforms that followed the Seven Years’ War and the thirteen colonies’ drive to independence before, no previous work has placed the American Revolution within a framework that so clearly lends itself to comparative analysis. In Rana’s telling, British reforms were an attempt to solve a dilemma posed by their rather sudden acquisition of a ‘polyglot empire’ composed of peoples with very different racial and cultural attributes. The policies proposed for North America are precursors of the systems of ‘indirect rule’ which would later be imposed in Africa and South Asia. Rana’s colonists, on the other hand, stage the world’s ‘first [...] successful settler revolt against metropolitan rule’, setting an example that would be followed later in settler outposts throughout the world. By making imperialism and settlerism central concepts in his approach to the American Revolution, Rana deals a devastating blow to scholarship committed to American exceptionalism, which has sequestered the study of American history and politics for too long.

If this were Two Faces’ only contribution, it would be quite a worthy book, but in subsequent chapters, Rana extends his analysis through history, tracing the evolution of settlerism in the years between the ratification of the Constitution and the Civil War (Chapter Two), and between Reconstruction and the turn of the twentieth century (Chapter Three). In a sense, these two chapters tell similar stories, separated by half a century. In each, Rana documents the rise of a ‘populist’ alternative to settler exclusivity, which sought to expand the community of persons enjoying freedom as self-rule and de-couple internal equality from external domination. Thomas Paine and William Manning attacked growing inequality in the early republic, suggesting policies to broaden land ownership. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Landon Bylesby, Orestes Brownson, and Thomas Skidmore sought to use the powers of the federal
government to serve the interests of working people, arguing that the capacity of territorial expansion to provide an increasing population with the requisites of economic independence was necessarily limited. And, in the years following the Civil War, Terence Powderly, Tom Watson, and William Neville attempted to organise across racial divides, drawing connections between external assertions of power and the creation of hierarchical institutions for domestic rule. Each of these promising movements was met and overcome by the concerted efforts of mercantile or industrial capital and the federal government, with the result, each time, being a constriction of universalist, pro-statist, anti-imperial populism to xenophobic, anti-statist, aggressively-expansionist settlerism: ‘with a more robust vision of populism in retreat, white laborers struggled to preserve their economic and political freedom by consolidating the forms of discretionary power’ exerted over non-white laborers.

In this manner, Rana interprets both the Jacksonian era and the end of Reconstruction as further flowerings of the same settler ideology that underlay the Revolution. Along the way, he offers interesting re-readings of the legal framework of westward expansion, several Supreme Court cases – the analysis of Justice Taney’s infamous majority opinion in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* is particularly worthwhile – and the evolution of immigration policy. These constitute important contributions to American history, but unfortunately and perhaps inevitably, the comparative impulse that animates *Two Faces*’ early chapters seems to fall by the wayside as it marches steadily through the centuries. Rana provocatively notes the similarity between Kwame Nkrumah’s concept of ‘Neo-Colonialism’ and the fears of ‘settler elites’ in the newly independent United States, ‘the first significant postcolonial society’, but this is the last insight of its kind, and it is less well-developed than earlier comparisons. This is less a failure of the work than a missed opportunity; Rana’s adoption of the concept of settler colonialism might have permitted him to make significant advances on a number of questions central to American political development – the rise of the administrative state, the weakness of socialism, the changing nature of the presidency – which have been previously framed as comparative puzzles, but never effectively investigated in comparative perspective.
The absence of explicit comparisons in these chapters also diminishes the force of the normative argument Rana makes. It is hard, at times, to imagine how the story he tells could have been otherwise, how the populist alternatives that briefly appeared on the American scene could have been anything but fleeting, and thus how they could reemerge today as part of a revitalised commitment to freedom as self-rule. Perhaps Rana would reply that comparison cannot strengthen his case, since no other country has succeeded in offering a broader swath of its citizenry access to the requisites of economic and political independence than the United States, but if this is so, then we have stumbled, unwittingly, into yet another narrative of American exceptionalism, though one lacking the rose tint of its predecessors.

The book’s fourth chapter only intensifies the sense of despair. Here, Rana charts the demise of settlerism, a consequence of the closing of the frontier in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Again, Rana draws upon previous accounts that have treated the 1890s as a critical turning point, while advancing their claims by placing them in a broader framework. For Rana, the turn of the twentieth century ushers ‘a revised account of liberty’ into American political discourse, which replaced freedom as self-rule with ‘security from economic want’ conceived now not as a ‘precondition for achieving economic and political independence,’ but rather ‘an end in itself.’ Rana finds reflections of this paradigm shift in immigration policy – a system permitting relatively free entry and alien voting for European immigrants is replaced by quota restrictions and bureaucratised deportation procedures – and foreign affairs. For ‘early colonists, the primary motive driving empire had been new land for white settlement’, which led to a practice of incorporating new territories on the same terms as established states. But after the Spanish-American war, ‘the United States found itself with a variety of possessions none of which could be settled by white Americans, and whose local populations did not fit historic criteria for ethnic and cultural assimilation.’ Thus, at the turn of the century, the Supreme Court broke with its precedents, developing a new legal framework in which territorial acquisitions – Puerto Rico being the preeminent example – could be preserved in a permanent limbo characterised by discretionary authority and offering no clear path to statehood.
Rana also describes the emergence of what he terms the ‘plebiscitary’ or ‘imperial’ presidency as an aspect of this shift away from settlerism. The Great Depression allowed Franklin Delano Roosevelt to achieve the sort of discretionary executive authority in domestic affairs his cousin Theodore had wielded externally. ‘Under the New Deal, the presidency became both the primary instrument for collective change and the single agent held responsible for government action’.36 The ideal of popular self-government was set aside to attend to the basic material needs generated by a rapidly-industrialising society. Rana allows that the New Deal was ‘experienced on the ground by many Americans as decisively improving their daily lives’ but insists that ‘as the economic crisis abated, the ultimate implications of the new order became more apparent’ with the creation of new, and newly pervasive bureaucratic organisations ‘further separating ordinary Americans from actual decision making’.37 The conclusion that America’s early attachment to republican freedom was overcome by the politics of necessity is surprising in a book that began by stating its disagreement with Hannah Arendt’s exceptionalist narrative of the American founding, but it is not an unconvincing genealogy of our current predicament.38

Rana’s depiction of the present conjuncture is, then, rather bleak. The Civil Rights Movement’s leading lights – W. E. B. DuBois and Martin Luther King – outlined a new vision of universal and non-imperial republican liberty.39 But ultimately, this alternative populism also succumbed, with supporters of racial equality coming to focus ‘on distributing more meritocratically the country’s few positions of corporate and governmental power [...] rather than democratizing all of collective life’.40 As a result, we inhabit a world dominated by an imperial power expanding its influence over an ever-greater portion of the globe’s surface, which allows even its own citizens a marginal and diminishing share of authority. The United States’ experiment with settler empire has been replaced by an ‘orientation to the world [that] combines some of the most problematic features of the settler past without its emancipatory aspirations’. We are encouraged to ‘invert such developments, to revive accounts of self-rule, and to dissolve their connections to external subordination at home and abroad—to make freedom truly universal’ but, again, the absence of a comparative perspective leaves us with little reason to think things could be otherwise than
they are. Here it would have been helpful to know whether, in Rana’s estimation, another country offers us an example of a better-managed transition to post-colonialism. On the other hand, the fact that Two Faces encourages us to ask that question, one that has rarely been posed regarding the United States, is an extraordinary accomplishment in its own right.

SETTLERISM AND COLONIALISM

In closing, I would like to briefly step back from the specific work under review in order to consider the concept of settler colonialism and its applicability to the United States more broadly. My return to first principles should not be taken to undermine, even slightly, the compliments I’ve paid Rana’s work above; in Two Faces, Rana uses the concept of settler colonialism to illuminate the American experience in an unassailably effective and innovative manner. Nonetheless, we may still wonder whether a different concept would be preferable for future work in this vein.

As I noted above, in treating the political history of the United States as an ongoing experiment in ‘settler empire’, Rana adopts a well-established analytical framework. The basic intuition receives an admirably succinct formulation in Lorenzo Veracini’s essay introducing this journal: ‘colonialism is not settler colonialism.’ The two are ‘not merely different’, but actually ‘antithetical formations’, distinguished by the fact that ‘colonisers and settler colonisers want essentially different things’. While colonisers arrive in a new territory and seek to exploit the pre-existing population as cheap or compliant labor, settler colonisers seek to displace or eliminate pre-existing populations, desiring only the territory they formerly occupied. The different motivations behind colonialism and settler colonialism produce further divergences, particularly in the ideological strategies used to justify exploitation or displacement: whereas colonisers claim that their racial or civilisational superiority entitles them to extract labor, settler colonisers premise their territorial claims on the absence of a pre-existing claimant or on the incapacity of pre-existing claimants to make legitimate claims on territory. The two structures are also associated with different forms of resistance by the colonised, and different forms of post-colonial society.
Settler colonialism is, then, an eminently plausible analytical category; it relies on an immediately intuitive distinction and responds to an apparent confusion in existing literatures on colonialism, imperialism, and post-colonialism. In practice, however, the concept of settler colonialism is exceedingly difficult to apply. As even Veracini concedes, colonial and settler colonial 'stances are often intimately intertwined and there are elements of both demands in most statements uttered by both colonisers and settler colonisers'. If it is hard to disentangle individual attitudes, it is even harder to categorise entire societies according to the distinctions drawn above. There may never have been a 'settler colony' that was not, at the same time, also a 'colony'; certainly this is the conclusion frequently drawn in individual case studies. Thus, attempts to classify a given society as either 'colony' or 'settler colony' often rest on superficial, stereotypical, or teleological assumptions.

The United States and Latin America provide a useful illustration. The pair seems, at first blush, to exemplify the difference between colonialism and settler colonialism. In David Fieldhouse's early and influential work, it did just that: Fieldhouse argues that in the Americas, Spaniards and Portuguese 'worked out four of the five models for effective colonization which were typical of the first colonial empires' omitting only 'the “pure” settlement colony of British and French North America, where, because Amerindians would not work for Europeans and conditions were unsuited to plantation production, emigrants created a still closer facsimile of European society than the Spanish “mixed” colonies'. One can find similar distinctions drawn in other works, but as the historian John Elliott has argued, these binaries 'while ingenious, [are] not [...] persuasive'. Both the British and Spanish Americas were exceedingly diverse entities. Though parts of British North America could perhaps be called 'pure' settlement colonies, others bore more resemblance to the 'plantation' colonies of Portuguese Brazil, or the 'occupation' colonies of Spanish Chile. Conversely, parts of Spanish America were relatively 'pure', that is to say, Spanish colonists also adopted policies of indigenous displacement and extermination rather than exploitation.

These points might seem relatively obvious, but overly-simple characterisations of the Americas' major colonial systems creep into
scholarly work with striking frequency, and the settler colony/colony schema could easily contribute to this problematic tendency. In Two Faces, for example, Rana writes that ‘In many ways, the legal and political structures imposed by colonial administrators in the earliest decades of English expansion in North America best approximated those taking root in the Spanish colonies.’ However, ‘just 100 years later, the North American colonies diverged dramatically from their Spanish counterparts, emphasizing settler social supremacy as well as internal self-government and decentralized administrative control’. Any scholar of Spanish American history (unfortunately Rana does not cite one) would be surprised to learn, by implication, that Spanish American colonialism did not ‘emphasize settler social supremacy’ or display ‘internal self-government and decentralized administrative control’. In fact the descendents of Spanish settlers in the Americas – known as criollos – did participate in many local and regional political and administrative institutions, though as in British North America the degree of participation varied across both time and space. Their fellow Americans of indigenous, African, or mixed descent were, as in British North America, largely excluded. This is not to say that there were no differences between British and Spanish America – there were, and they were multiple and profound. But they cannot be captured by the analytical categories of ‘settler colonialism’ and ‘colonialism’ because neither British nor Spanish America was ever unambiguously one or the other kind of society.

Where, then, does this leave attempts, like Rana’s, to use the concept of settler colonialism to frame studies of the United States? As I noted above, Two Faces is a compelling work because it expands the compass of inquiry, opening the way to comparative approaches that were previously closed off by scholarly commitments to American exceptionalism. Insofar as future works follow in this form, they too will make important contributions to American political and intellectual history. However, as I’ve argued, the concept of settler colonialism also carries the potential to constrict comparative approaches, as when it is used to draw an excessively sharp distinction between the forms of colonialism practiced in what are today the United States and Latin America. In this way, use of the concept could lead to reformulated exceptionalist narratives no less problematic than their forbears. By all appearances, this possibility
remains remote, but it will be worth considering as future work emerges on settler colonialism in the Americas.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**


**NOTES**


3 Rana, Two Faces, p. 12.

4 Rana, Two Faces, p. 3.

5 Rana, Two Faces, p. 7.


8 For an excellent recent review, see: Jennifer Pitts, ‘Political Theory of Empire and Imperialism’, Annual Review of Political Science, 13 (2010), pp. 211-35.

9 Rana, Two Faces, p. 13.

10 Rana, Two Faces, p. 18.


12 Rana, Two Faces, p. 3 (Italics in original).

13 Rana, Two Faces, p. 11.


15 Rana, Two Faces, pp. 8-9 (internal citations removed).

16 Rana, Two Faces, p. 11.


18 Rana, Two Faces, pp. 37 and 48.
Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 58.
22 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 27.
23 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 72.
27 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 165.
33 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 262.
34 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 272.
36 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 301.
37 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 313.
40 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 328.
41 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 329.
42 See cites above, note 6.
45 See, for example, the ones assembled in Elkins and Pedersen, *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century*.
50 Rana, *Two Faces*, p. 50.
Review: On Settler Colonialism and Science Fiction (Again)

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Cowboys and Aliens. Universal Pictures, 2011 (118 minutes)

I have elsewhere drawn attention to what I believe is the intimate relationship between a specifically settler colonial form of consciousness and science fiction. Following on from this work, in this review I argue that Cowboys and Aliens (2011) provides a clear example of this relationship. (Its relevance for an understanding of settler colonial sensibilities does not make the movie any less atrocious – it was a well-deserved, resounding flop).

What can possibly supersede the indigenous-settler relation? Or, as Mahmood Mamdani rhetorically asked, ‘When does a Settler Become Native’? Logically, there are only two ways out of this predicament: either the indigenous collective disappears, leaving the settler one in the position of being the default new-indigenous group, or the settler collective fully indigenises, thereby acquiring a type of indigeneity that makes it indistinguishable from the old-indigenous group. The first option, making the indigenous forcibly disappear, once widely practiced, has now become unfashionable. Indigenising, however, is also hard work and must be done while paying constant attention to the risks of ‘going native’. Then again, there is a third option, indeed a shortcut: a new invasion – the appearance of new settlers – can immediately turn the settler into a ‘native’. Even if the English had been in America longer than the Americans (and even if the Indian allies of both had been there from time immemorial), it was the possibility of recoding the English presence as ‘invasion’ that allowed the American rebels to fully embrace their nativism. True, invasion remains a double edge sword, and settlers are often, recurrently and obsessively concerned with the possibility of an
invasion that will turn them into natives. At the same time, fantasies of alien invasions can fulfill a settler craving for immediate indigenisation. *Cowboys and Aliens* constitutes an example of this fantasising.

There is no settler-indigenous relationship without invasion. In an often quoted passage Patrick Wolfe quipped that settler ‘invasion is a structure and not an event’. Settler colonisation, he noted,

is at base a winner-take-all project whose dominant feature is not exploitation but replacement. The logic of this project, a sustained institutional tendency to eliminate the Indigenous population, informs a range of historical practices that might otherwise appear distinct – invasion is a structure not an event.\(^5\)

But there is an event that can replace that structure: further invasion. Thus, settlers often dream of alien invasions that will fully indigenise them. Yet again, it will all be in vain if these invasions do not ultimately fail. In other words, the invading aliens must depart at the end, while the indigenisation of the settler that their presence brings about must be irreversible. Dread and desire invariably mix: invasions must happen and must fail. *Cowboys and Aliens* is an example of this type of settler wishful thinking and of the narrative structure that sustains it.

Here is the story: an alien spaceship lands in Arizona in 1873 near a town called Absolution and a newly constituted ensemble comprising a few of the inhabitants of Absolution, natives, and a group of outlaws is humanity’s only remaining hope.\(^6\) The movie’s setting is significant: it is set in Arizona (a locale that has been at the forefront of US debates about unwanted ‘aliens’ – could this be a coincidence?), and it is set in a Territory (a locale where the political order is by definition still unsettled, even if in the process of becoming established). Then again, even the name of the movie’s location cannot possibly be a coincidence. When there is absolution, a crime must have been committed in the first place. But this is the point: the history of this alien invasion is also the history of settler absolution.
Even if there are pastoralists and settlers, and they are obviously not the same thing, the denizens of Absolution, Arizona, are the typical settlers of an iconic wild ‘western’ settlement. Faithfully observing the stereotypes of the genre ensures that they are already ‘normal’ in a setting that decidedly isn’t. In settler colonial fashion, it is the setting that will eventually change and end up conforming to their normalcy, not them. They could have called their town Normalisation, Arizona.

The aliens want to take over the planet: they are not ultimately interested in exploiting humans. Thus, in order to assess whether their takeover is feasible or advisable, they still need to probe a few human samples. To do this, they are kidnapping the people of Absolution and a few other humans they find in the vicinity. They are also doing some mining and prospecting as well: they want to take over, if it’s worth it, and to replace the humans, if it’s practicable. In other words, even if they are still considering their options, they are developing a structure, and its dominant feature is replacement, not exploitation. They are settler colonisers.

The Indians, at first, are not yet subdued. However, the Indians are eventually ‘stunned’ into an alliance with the (settler) inhabitants of Absolution. Good alien magic allows this type of ‘shock and awe’ (a good and beautiful alien from a planet that was previously conquered and destroyed by the bad and ugly ones has been dispatched to Earth in order to save it from experiencing the same fate). (Isn’t it remarkable that Indians, like indigenous people elsewhere, are by definition incapable of making rational decisions and that magic is essential to prompt them into political decisions?). In turn, Indian magic allows the protagonist to finally figure out what is really going on. It all began in a fantasy of settler self-reproduction involving a beautiful woman, an isolated homestead and surrounding fields. Then the aliens ruptured the fantasy, and brutally kidnapped both the protagonist and his spouse. She did not survive. What is significant is that this settler colonial fantasy is recovered in a very settler colonial way. Acquiring ‘secret’ indigenous knowledge, after all, has always been a favourite way to speed up settler indigenisation and ensure that they better belong. Even if these settler-indigenous exchanges have been most unequal, indeed exactly
because they have been most unequal, the Indian Chieftain and the settler leader begin working together.

When the bandits (settler-invaders who until now had been beyond the limit of the consolidating political order) also join in, the settler/normal regime has finally coalesced. (For the sake of comparison, it is significant that the bandits don’t need magic; their decision is entirely rational: if the aliens take over, they assume, it’s over for everybody.)

Alien invasion has thus united all human agencies. A number of structuring contradictions separating pastoralists and settlers, newcomers and indigenous peoples, and law abiding people and outlaws has been subsumed. At the end of a process of (settler) self-constitution, both indigenous and exogenous alterities have been subsumed within a single political order. Despite the appearance of a coming together, that the whole sequence is fundamentally settler-oriented and settler-directed should be emphasised.

The story of the *reductio ad unum* of an inherently temporary plurality is the real point of the narrative. What happens next is merely a necessary coda. Having performed their role, all aliens – good and bad ones – have to disappear. How better to kill two birds with a stone than having them killing each other off? The good alien heroically sacrifices herself to save humanity and is thus successful in her quest. Thanks to her, the bad aliens are annihilated. Of course, though, nothing goes back to the way it was. The bandits and the indigenous people must also disappear. Thus neither the Indians nor the bandits survive the crisis as autonomous agents. The first depart, and the latter, now incapable of challenging the settler order, withdraw away from sight and perform the usual vanishing act that is generally expected of them. The settlers acquired their land and even their gratitude for saving them from mortal danger – another typically settler colonial fantasy. Once fiercely independent, they fought valiantly and successfully against the aliens but their insurgency against the settlers has been quelled. They have become a domestic dependent nation. How this happened remains unclear, but this is neither alien nor Indian magic; this is settler magic. Absolution is absolved, and the settler has become the default new native. Future Arizonians will keep keeping aliens at bay.
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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NOTES

4 Thanks to Edward Cavanagh for first discussing this point with me.