PARKS AND RE-CREATION:
Space, Memory and the Judaization of Landscape
in the Northern Galilee, 1948-1967

A Senior Thesis

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PREFACE

When I was 11, my parents moved to Kibbutz Tuval; as small settlement that was founded in 1981 as part of the 'Hilltop Plan'. I was not aware of the recent painful history of my home on the mountain. My parents still live there. Before that, between the ages 2-11 I lived in Ma'alot-Tarshikha, only a few miles from the ruins of Suhmata. In elementary school day trips, we often hiked around the ruins of the Palestinian village, and our teacher told us the name of the place was "Kfar Nātush" - literally abandoned village in Hebrew. It was only in my teens that I learned the name of the village and its history. When I was a counselor in my youth movement, I took my 4th graders to Suhmata, and told them the story of the place. This project is part of my journey of understanding the place I grew up in.
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INTRODUCTION

The 'Judaization of the Galilee' is a term mostly associated with a particular historical event. During the years 1977-1982 Israel built 40 hilltop Jewish settlements in the Upper and Eastern Lower Galilee, where until then there was little-to-no Jewish settlement. In preparation for the building of the settlements, Israel confiscated more than 7,000 dunams of private Arab Palestinian lands for their construction and for the expansion of three Jewish cities: Safad, Karmiel and Upper Nazareth. In reaction to the land annexation, Arab residents of the Galilee initiated widespread protests in March 1976 that were met by harsh violence by Israeli army and police, during which six unarmed Arab citizens were killed. These events are marked until present time by Palestinians all over the world who stage annual "Land Day" ('Yom el-Ard') protests and vigils. While the Galilee maintains an Arab Palestinian majority today, the operation created dozens of "community settlements" that became a destination of internal migration for thousands of upper-middle class mostly Ashkenazi Jews.

The importance of the Land Day in Palestinian collective memory, the global visibility of the annual events, and the flow of elite Jewish population from the center to the periphery can explain why people associate the Judaization of the Galilee with the 'hilltop plan', as it is often called. In this paper, however, the Judaization of the Galilee refers not to a single event, but to the ongoing process of constructing the Galilee Jewish. This thesis explores the process through which the new Israeli state transformed a conquered Arab Palestinian territory into part of the Jewish homeland. In this process Israeli indigeneity in the Galilee was constructed through a rewriting of the Galilee's history and erasing signifiers of Arab Palestinian indigeneity. Rather than being the result of a coordinated, orchestrated process, the process of Judaizing the Galilee was the product of the work of many individuals and organizations that worked on many different

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projects that sometimes intersected and sometimes conflicted.

The author understands Israel as a settler-colonial state. The main difference between Israel and other settler-colonial project (Australia, Canada, Latin America), is that in Israel/Palestine the Zionist settlers did not have an empire or a metropole. While most Jewish settlers during the late Ottoman and British Mandate periods came from Europe, they did not settle in Palestine as an extension of their countries of origin. Rather, they settled in Palestine with the aim of building their homeland in Palestine. As the notion that Eretz Yisrael\textsuperscript{2} is the homeland for Jews was a product of the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, this thesis follows the process through which Israel as a settler-colonial society constructed a Jewish national identity, and an Israeli 'indigenous' identity.

During its first two decades of statehood, Israel had to secure and settle the Galilee quickly and effectively both for sake of state building and of nation building. Adopting Benedict Anderson's definition, a nation is "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."\textsuperscript{3} If the nation is limited, so a clear border of a homeland is essential for the articulation of nationalism. Until the partition of Palestine, Eretz Yisrael was a single administrative unit under British Mandate. After the 1948 war, the land was not only divided, but it did not have clear borders. While the northern border of Israel was drawn on the map during the 1949 armistice agreement, until the late fifties, it was still a porous line at best; and indeed many Palestinian refugees from Syria and Lebanon attempted to return to their homes to visit relatives, smuggling, and also to attack Israelis.\textsuperscript{4} In order for the members of the nation, and for the international community to acknowledge the armistice line as the Israeli

\textsuperscript{2} I use the names Palestine, Eretz Yisrael and Israel/Palestine according to what seems most appropriate. Jews referred to the geographical region as Eretz Yisrael before the creation of Israel.


border, there was a need to establish it on the ground and defend it.

The process of Judaization during the fifties and the sixties was not only a project of securing the borders of the Jewish State and shifting the demographic balance in a newly conquered region; it was a process of transforming the Arab Palestinian Galilee into the Jewish Israeli Galilee. Within the borders of Israel, the Acre and Nazareth subdistricts had a large Arab Palestinian population who became Israeli citizens after the conquest of the Galilee by Israeli forces in 1948. Further, the areas that were demographically Jewish after the 1948 war (i.e. the Safad Subdistrict, the coastal Western Galilee and the border with Lebanon), had more than a hundred of emptied Arab Palestinian villages, which along with groves, fields, mosques, churches, tombs and other material objects constituted the remains of a Arab Palestinian landscape. That landscape did not fit to the Zionist narrative of Jews returning to their homeland, but rather to a story of taking over the land of another.

The Judaization of the Galilee necessitated not only settling the Galilee with Jews, but also altering the landscape so that Jews would no longer be considered settlers in the Palestinian Galilee. It meant that Jews were to become understood as the indigenous population in the Galilee, and the native Arabs were to become the strangers; the Others. This process of creating Jewish indigeneity in the Galilee involved the retelling of the Galilee's history, erasing Arab Palestinian signifiers from the landscape, Hebraizing place names and the maps, sanctifying sites, and establishing national parks and leisure sites.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

To explain Judaization, Oren Yiftahcel defines the Israeli regime as 'ethnocratic', a democracy in which a single, hegemonic, ethnic group is in control of the political, economic,
and planning systems, and uses the democratic infrastructure to further the marginalization of another ethnic group. Land regime is central to Yiftachel's understanding of ethnocratic regimes. The hegemonic ethnic group is constantly trying to reach a state in which it controls as much of the territory.\(^5\) In order to understand the roots of 'hilltop plan' in the 70s (and indeed also projects such as the dispossession of Bedouin land in the Negev, the settlement in the West Bank after 1967 and the Judaization of mixed cities), this thesis follows the Judaization of the Galilee back to the conquest of the land during the 1948 war, through the first two decades of statehood. During that period, Judaization defined not only the spatial reality in the Galilee, but also fundamental components of Zionist national identity - the nation's history, and the borders of the homeland. Works that have been instrumental to the construction of my arguments, and for my research are the work of Noga Kadman on the erasure of the Palestinian villages from the Israeli discourse;\(^6\) Meron Benvenisti's work on the erasure of the Palestinian landscape and the Hebrew map;\(^7\) Zvi Efrat's work on Israeli physical planning,\(^8\) Doron Bar's work on holy sites in Israel;\(^9\) and the following scholars of Israeli archaeology and archaeologists: Nadia Abu el-Haj, Shlomit Geva and Raz Kletter.\(^10\)

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\(^5\) Summary of Yiftachel's work on ethnocracy in Israel can be found in: Oren Yiftachel, “Democracy or Ethnocracy?: Territory and Settler Politics in Israel/Palestine,” *Middle East Report*, no. 207 (July 1, 1998): 8–13.


Issues in Infrastructure

Each of the several departments, organizations and individuals that dealt with shaping the landscape - among them, Israeli generals, architects, archeologists, urban planners and politicians - had its own agenda and priorities. These different agendas at times met with harmony and at times discord. For example, the architects and engineers from the Planning Division in the Prime Minister's Office wanted to develop the Galilee according to their belief in specific modernist models of population distribution, and the urgent needs of settling waves of immigrants provided them with the opportunity to do so. The rapid plan of settling the Galilee with Jewish immigrants from Europe and North Africa involved destroying emptied Palestinian villages and building settlements on top of them. This conflicted with the needs of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, who wanted to conduct an archaeological survey in all the empty villages. Due to the widespread disorder and conflicting agendas, many high placed officials advocated for the establishment of an oversight committee that would streamline Israeli treatment of antiquities and ancient sites.

The Interdepartmental Committee for the Conservation of Historical Sites was founded early in 1950 to ensure that the treatment of old places and buildings would meet the multiple, conflicting needs of the new state. On one side was Shmuel Yeivin, head of the Israeli Department of Antiquities, who wanted to delay the destruction of structures as much as possible so his department could conduct a comprehensive archaeological survey of the Land of Israel. On the other side was Moshe Shilo from the Ministry of Defense who wanted to erase every Arab building. Arieh Altman, Advisor on Tourism affairs at the Prime Minister's Office, headed the committee. In the first meeting he explained to the members what he meant by 'Judaizing the land': "[there are places] which belong to us, and were in the possession of strangers in the past."
It has to do also with discovering new sites that are related to our history."¹¹ For Altman, Judaization meant reclaiming historical and ancient sites, and finding more sites that connect the Jewish people to the land of Israel.

The planners of the Planning Division did not want all the new immigrants to settle in the coastal plains, i.e. where they would prefer to live, so they created detailed strategies with the intent of dispersing the population. These plans, and other modernist experiments of 'right' planning, which stressed that a balanced distribution of the population across the country can ensure social and economic stability, could not be executed in areas that were privately owned, so they executed them in the confiscated absentee lands.

**Origins of Judaization**

The territory of the Galilee was effectively Judaized, in as much as it was conquered, in the aftermath of the 1948 war. The first stage of the war began promptly after the United Nations announced the Partition Plan for Palestine on November 29, 1947. The first stage of the war was a 'civil war' between the Zionist armed forces - Haganah, Etzel and Lehi - and Arab Palestinian militias with some support from the Arab Liberation Army. During that stage the Zionist forces conquered the coastal area of the Western Galilee (in the Acre Subdistrict of the British Mandate), and most of the Safad Subdistrict. The second stage of the war began in May 15, 1948, after Israel declared its independence. This second stage of warfare was waged between the Israel Defense Force (formed officially in May 26, 1948) and the Arab regular armies of Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq, which invaded Israel/Palestine in a coordinated attack timed to coincide with the declaration of Israeli Statehood. During the second phase of the armed

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conflict, Israel conquered the rest of the Galilee. In the first years of statehood, Israel secured its sovereignty by building settlements in strategic locations on the borders with Lebanon and Syria.

**Demographics**

The demographic aspect of Judaization, which will be discussed in chapter I, began during the 1948 war and continued long after the territorial conquest of the Galilee. In the areas of the Galilee that were conquered before May 15, 1948 - the Safad Subdistrict and a corridor connecting Acre, Nahariyya, and the Kibbutzim surrounding it to the area of the proposed Jewish state - the majority of the native Arab Palestinian population was expelled or fled by that time. In the areas of the Galilee that were conquered after May 15, 1948 - most of the Acre and Nazareth Subdistrict - significant number of Arab Palestinians remained while others were expelled or fled. The Arab Palestinian residents who remained within the borders of Israel were put under military rule and were granted citizenship. This concentration of Arab Palestinian residents was declared in state plans, maps and documents as "the Judaization of the Galilee Area" (see Figure 3).

During the first two decades of statehood, this Arab Palestinian landscape became a target of acts of erasure. The erasure of Arab Palestinian material culture that remained in emptied villages was an attempt to rewrite the history of the Galilee: to create a story in which Jews were returning to a Jewish land rather than taking it from its indigenous people of the land. The project of erasing the Palestinian landscape was essential both for the cultural and ideological efforts of nation building, and for the political and strategic efforts of state building. Two parallel processes, the destruction of Palestinian culture and the excavation and cultivation of Jewish archeological and sacred sites, strengthened the perceived Jewish historical connection
while simultaneously erasing the evidence of a Palestinian historical connection to the land. Concomitantly, the preparation of regional and national planning schemes by the Planning Division of the Prime Minister's Office, and the execution of these plans, created space for Jewish settlement of the land while eliminating the possibility of Palestinian return to and reclamation of the land.

Structure of the Paper

Chapter one follows the conquest of the Galilee during the 1948 war, and the exodus of Palestinian refugees from the Galilee. I argue that while there was no operative master plan to ethnically cleanse the Galilee, the mass expulsion of Palestinians and destruction of villages was not born out of the war, but is rooted in Zionist discourse and desires to 'transfer' the Arab population from the future Jewish state. Chapter II presents the official 'Judaization of the Galilee' policy of the Planning Division in the Prime Minister's office. The policy was born not only out of national strategic needs of securing the frontier, but also out of the planners' modernist agenda which used European scientific models of settlement patterns to design the National Planning Scheme, published in 1950. Chapter III follows the several projects which transformed the landscape and shaped the historical narrative of the Galilee: assigning places and geographical objects with Hebrew names, deciding which buildings and places require conservation and which not, allocating territories for national parks and nature reserves, creating and cultivating a system of Jewish sacred spaces and cultivating an ethnocentric culture nature preservation regime. Chapter IV follows the role of archaeological projects which took place in the Galilee in the fifties in constructing a nationalist narrative of Jewish history, and the role of the Israeli Archaeological Survey Society in erasing Palestinian memory. These separate
projects that at times worked coordinately, and at times conflicted, worked to establish the
Northern borders of the nation and secure the frontier, while shaping the memory of the Galilee
to exclude the recent history of the land, and to tell a story of a revival of an ancient connection
between the Jewish people and the land of Israel.

This thesis explores the various components of the Judaization process of the Galilee in a
period of state-building, nation-building and rapid development. Critical scholarship on the
Galilee in the 50s and the 60s is lacking. While much attention was given to the ethnic nature of
the land regime in Israel, and the legal aspects of dispossession, there is a lack of scholarship
on the role of science, experts and technocrats in Judaization, and in the construction of
national-identity. Paying close attention to experts who worked for the Israeli government, this
work examines the various mechanisms through which the settlement project defined both the
central constituents of Zionist national identity and executed various projects that shaped the
reality on the ground.
CHAPTER I: CONQUEST, EXODUS, AND DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE DURING THE 1948 WAR

The 1948 war had devastating consequences for the Arab Palestinian population in the Northern Galilee, the Safad and Acre district. By the end of the war the entire region was in Israeli control, the Arab population of Acre and Safad was expelled, 103 Palestinian villages were depopulated, resulting in the creation of some 86,500 Palestinian refugees from that region alone. Many Palestinians were expelled by force, and others fled out of fear that their villages will experience a similar fate. Rather than fleeing a battle zone of regular armies, many Palestinians fled before the invasion of the Arab armies on 15 May 1948. There were only a few depopulated villages that experienced warfare between Israel and any of the regular Arab armies. The occupation and depopulation of Palestinians in the Galilee was part of an operative plan (Plan D) to create Jewish territorial continuity within the proposed Jewish state and with the Jewish settlements that were designated to remain under the sovereignty of the Arab state. The occupation and depopulation of the Palestinian villages in the Galilee was the official strategy to prepare the Yishuv for the anticipated invasion of the Arab armies. While the Zionist leadership may not have anticipated such a massive exodus of Palestinians from their homes, it was a desirable outcome that represented a long tradition of efforts to promote the 'transfer' of Palestinians as part of any future partition plan (see below). Beyond the conquest and the dramatic demographic change created by the war, the war created vast changes in the

15 Yishuv, literally ‘settlement’ in English is a term used to describe the Jewish society in Palestine prior to the creation of Israel. ‘Old Yishuv’ refers to the Jews who lived in Palestine prior to the first wave of Zionist immigrants in 1882.
16 Ibid.
landscape. Many depopulated villages and city quarters were destroyed to prevent Arab soldiers from turning them into military posts, and to deny the return of the Palestinian refugees. The 1948 war was the founding moment that enabled the Judaization of the Galilee.

The 1947 UN Partition Plan

On the eve of November 29, 1947, the date of the decision on the partition of Palestine in the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Northern Galilee, the Acre and Safed Subdistricts of the British Mandate of Palestine had 145 Arab Palestinian villages, 35 Jewish settlements, and the two main cities had an Arab majority. The Arab population in the Acre Subdistrict was estimated to be 65,380 people (96% of the total population), dwelling in 64 villages and the Subdistrict city, and the Jewish population was estimated at 2,950 people in 9 settlements. In the Safed Subdistrict, there were some 46,920 Arabs (87% of the total population) in 83 villages and the main city, and some 6,700 Jews in 26 settlements. And thus, according to a 1946 report by the British Mandate 87% of the land in the Acre Subdistrict was Palestinian owned and only 3% was Jewish owned (10% signified as 'public' or 'other'), and in Safad, 68% of the land was owned by Arabs and 18% by Jews (14% 'public' or 'other').

The partition plan was good news for the Yishuv. It designated 55% of Palestine for the Jewish state, even though Jews owned only 7% of the land at the time, and constituted roughly a third of the population. Jerusalem and Bethlehem were planned to be an international zone (see figure 1). The Partition Plan had dramatic implications for the Palestinians in the Northern Galilee. The Safad Subdistrict was designated to become part of the Jewish state, even though Arabs constituted 87% of the population and owned 68% of the land in that area. The Acre

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Figure 1: The UN Partition Plan, November 1947

Source: Morris, Righteous Victims, 185.
Figure 2: Arab Invasion of Palestine, May 1948

Source: Morris, Righteous Victims, 216.
Subdistrict, however, was designated to the Arab state, with the Jews of Nahariya and the Kibbutzim in the region remaining under the control of the planned Arab state. The Arabs of Palestine, of course, did not accept the partition plan, which they deemed as unfair. They began to protest and riot, and within a few days a civil war broke out between Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

The Civil War and Plan D in the Galilee

During the first phase of the civil war, between December 1947 and the end of March 1948, Arabs attacked mostly at roads, which were very vulnerable, and managed to besiege the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, as well as remote Jewish settlements. Both sides committed acts of terror against civilians. The Arab Palestinian militias were receiving nominal support from the Arab Liberation Army (ALA), an army of Palestinians and Arab volunteers from Arab countries that was established by the Arab League in September 1947 preparing to resist the future partition plan. The ALA was led by Fauzi al-Qawuqji, who fought along the German Wehrmacht in WWII. 19 After four months of fighting, Zionist military leadership shifted from a mostly defensive warfare (retribution was mostly disproportionate and there were indeed acts of terror against civilians) to offensive attacks. On April 1, after a convoy of the Haganah 20 failed to reach besieged Jerusalem, the Zionist command launched Plan D. There were a number of objectives at Plan D that were aimed at civilian areas. Israeli historian Meir Pa’il described the part of the plan that relates to the villages as "cleansing the Arab villages which are located close to

20 Formed in 1920, Haganah was the main armed force of the Yishuv, Haganah means 'defense' in Hebrew. Haganah became Israeli Defense Force after the creation of Israel.
Hebrew settlements." The wording of the plan was as follows: "Mounting operations against enemy population centers located inside or near our defensive system in order to prevent them from being used as bases by an active armed force." The plan divided the operations into two categories. In the first category are villages which will be searched and manned by soldiers, and only "in the event of resistance, the armed force must be wiped out and the population must be expelled outside the borders of the state." In the second category, villages that will be destroyed: "(setting fire to, blowing up, and planting mines in the debris), especially those population centers which are difficult to control continuously." As Palestinian historian Ghazi Falah interprets the orders, Palestinian villagers had one of two choices, either to surrender or to escape. Additionally, the decision of whether a village is hostile or not, and what constitutes as resistance was open for interpretation of the commanders on the ground.

The first step of the plan was Operation Nachson on April 1, which attempted at connecting Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. It continued with 12 more operations, 3 of which were in the Galilee: Operation Yiftach on April 28th in the Eastern Galilee, Operation Matateh (broomstick) on May 3rd in the villages connecting Tiberias to the Eastern Galilee, and Operation Ben Ami on May 14th in the Western Galilee. Through these operations Zionist forces have already gained control over most of the Galilee before the declaration of independence and before the invasion of the Arab armies (see Figure 2). Most of the Safad Subdistrict, which was designated to form part of the Jewish state, was in Jewish hands and the majority of its Arab Palestinian residents were forcibly expelled or fled. On the coast, in the area designated for the Arab state, Jews

21 Pa’il, “Achieving Territorial Continuity in the War of Independence,” 11 Pa’il probably did not mean “ethnic cleansing” but rather “securing”. Pa’il’s article was published in the IDF journal Ma’arkhot and past the military censorship. The use of the term “ethnic cleansing” to describe the expulsion of Palestinians during the 1948 war became more prevalent in the 1990s after the Yugoslavia wars.
controlled a strip of land that connected Nahariyya, Acre and the Kibbutzim in their vicinity to the proposed Jewish state and cleared most of the area from its Arab residents.

Operation Yiftach began with the occupation of Nabi Yusha in 17 April 1948. One village along the border with Syria, Mansurat al-Khayt, was depopulated between January-February, before the beginning of Plan D, as a result of fierce assaults by Haganah. In April two villages were depopulated by force: al-'Urayfiyya (along the border with Syria) and Arab al-Zubayed (next to a main road in the Hulla Valley). The villages in their vicinity, al-Husayniyya, Kirad al-Ghannama, and Kirad al-Buqqara fled their villages in response to the attacks.24

The occupation of Safad was one of the main objectives of Operation Yiftach.25 On 1 May 1948, at 3:00am, the Palmach26 began attacking the village 'Ayn al-Zaytun, located on the side of a mountain that can be seen from Safad, with bombardments. It then entered the village and expelled its residents with shots, taking dozens of men as prisoners. Palmah soldiers killed many of the prisoners.27 The neighboring village of Biriyya was occupied and depopulated on the same day, but less is known about the specific circumstances. The atrocities in 'Ayn al-Zaytun may have very well scared the villagers away.28 The next day Zionist forces bombarded the villages of Fir'im, Qabba'a and Mughr al-Khayt, all in the hills around Safad.29 A week later, on the night of 9 May, Palmach forces attacked the village of 'Akbara, located a little more than a mile from Safad, and expelled the residents, many of whom have already left as a result of the attack on the neighboring 'Ayn al-Zaytun. The village was then destroyed.30 The attacks and the

24 Ibid., 266.
26 Formed in 1941, Palmach (acronym for 'crushing forces' in Hebrew) was the elite force of the Haganah.
27 Morris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited, 222; Khalidi, All That Remains, 437.
28 Morris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited, 222; Khalidi, All That Remains, 440.
29 Morris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited, 249.
30 Ibid., 224; Khalidi, All That Remains, 431.
expulsions from the surrounding villages, and the memories from the horrendous massacre in Deir Yassin a month earlier on April 9, influenced the morale of Safad's Arabs. On 10-11 May, the city was bombarded, occupied, and the Arab residents were expelled.

Parallel to the expulsion and destruction of the villages around Safad, Palmach launched on 4 May 1948 a sub-operation of Operation Yiftach, Mivtzah Matate (Operation Broom). The aim was to clear the villages southeast of Safad. The villages of Qudayriyya, Jub Yusuf, al-Zanghariyya, Arab al-Shamalina, and al-Buthaya were attacked and their people expelled.31

Following the fall of Safad, a 'whispering campaign' of psychological warfare initiated by Yigal Alon on 10 May, and some 7 direct attacks on villages, the rest of the villages were occupied and their inhabitants fled by the end of May. 32

The Israeli declaration of independence on 15 May 1948 catalyzed immediately a coordinated invasion of the Arab armies from neighboring nations. The conquest of the rest of the Galilee was completed in Operation Hiram between 28-31 of October, 1948. Yigal Alon who was the head of the Palmach during the civil war said: "If it wasn't for the Arab invasion there would have been no stop to the expansion of the forces of Haganah who could have, with the same drive, reached the natural borders of western Israel, because in this stage most of the local enemy forces were paralyzed."33 Alon's quote shows that most of the strategic and territorial objectives were reached before the invasion of the Arab armies. Most of the Palestinians who fled from the Galilee left before the invasion of the Arab armies and not as a result of being caught in the midst of warfare.

There was a heated debate in the 1990s regarding the exodus of Palestinian refugees.

33 Khalidi, “Plan Dalet,” 19.
David Tal (1998) argues that Plan D was a result of strategic necessities that were responding to facts on the ground, and not part of a previously conceived of master plan for expansion. He argues that the Haganah’s actions and strategies were based on the assumption that the partition plan was going to be implemented and thus had accepted the creation of a Palestinian state next to Israel.34 For Tal, the timing for the execution of Plan D was a result of (a) the advantage reached by the Arab Palestinians during the first four months of fighting; and (b) the early withdrawal of British troops, which provided protection for the Yishuv, and prevented the anticipated invasion by the Arab armies. The Arab armies would not invade Palestine as long as it was under British control.

According to Israeli historian Benny Morris, while the Zionist military leadership put together Plan D early in the month of March, it originally wanted to implement it closer to the withdrawal of the British Mandate. It is assumed that one factor that contributed to the timing of the implementation of Plan D was that on March 19, the United States backed off from their support for the partition plan, and advocated for an international regime to succeed the British Mandate. Zionist leadership wanted to prove their capacity for sovereign rule by effectively defeating the Arab Palestinians.35

One essential aspect for the timing of Plan D was the demonstrated feasibility of an offensive campaign. On March 31, the Haganah procuring unit completed a large arms deal with Czechoslovakia. Benny Morris notes that until that moment, Zionist forces did not have enough arms and ammunition to concentrate in a single location for an initiated attack.36 An initiated offense, therefore, meant compromising the defense of Jewish settlements. The arms deal is not

35 Morris, Righteous Victims, 204.
36 Ibid., 205.
mentioned in David Tal’s discussion of Plan D, and it raises questions regarding the timing of its execution. Would the Haganah have begun Plan D earlier had they had the means?

'Transfer'

The 'transfer committee' was a self-appointed committee headed by Joseph Weitz along with Ezra Danin and Elias Sasson from the Foreign Ministry. Weitz, Danin and Sasson saw the exodus of Arabs from Palestine as a special opportunity created by the circumstances of the war. On May 18 1948 Danin wrote to Weitz: "Let us not waste the fact that a large Arab population has moved from its home, and achieving such a thing would be very difficult in normal times".\(^{37}\) The three asked to be appointed as an official body that would ensure the execution of what Weitz called "the transfer in retrospect". Even though they were not officially recognized, they met with no resistance and acted as advisors to David Ben Gurion in matters regarding the Palestinian refugees starting mid-late May.\(^{38}\)

Plan D was the first operative plan for a forced removal of Arab Palestinian population from certain areas in Palestine/Eretz Yisrael. The Plan uses the word 'cleanse' to describe the strategic need to evict Arab villages around the border areas, around major routes, and around Jewish settlements. While there is no evidence of an operative master plan for forced removal, the idea of 'transfer' had a long history within the Zionist movement. Zionist leaders, most notably Haim Weitzman and Moshe Shertok (Sharet) lobbied the Royal Commission on Palestine, known as the Peel Commission, to include a transfer clause in it.\(^{39}\) The commission's report, which proposed a partition of Palestine, suggested the transfer of 1,250 Jews from the Arab state

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\(^{38}\) Ibid., 313.
territory to the Jewish state and 225,000 Arabs from the Jewish state territory to the Arab state.\textsuperscript{40}

In a letter to his son Amos from October 5, 1937, Ben Gurion justified the acceptance of the Peel partition plan: "establishing a state - even a partial state - will be a maximal power boost in our time. It will give a powerful lift to our historical efforts to redeem the land in its entirety."\textsuperscript{41} Therefore, while there is no material evidence of a preexisting operative plan, or a master plan, to expel the native Palestinians from their homes, the circumstances that were created during the war created opportunities for the Zionist leadership to execute some of its old yearnings. The old idea of transfer could be partially manifested both through acts of expulsion and through the denial of return.

**War and the Destruction of Civilian Infrastructure**

While civilian infrastructure is often damaged during wars, it is important to distinguish between civilian targets that were destroyed as part of the fighting, and ones that were targeted directly. Falah identifies "the political strategy [of] obliterating vacated places" as one of the characteristics of a "total war"; a war in which every target is legitimate.\textsuperscript{42} For Falah, the erasure of "places that shelter human beings or symbolize their existence" was an essential part of the Israeli war efforts.\textsuperscript{43} During the 1948 war, the destruction of villages in the Galilee was due to the orders given in Plan D to 'clear' Arab villages from their residents in strategic locations, and later as a means to deny the return of refugees, not the result of warfare.

The intentional destruction of Palestinian architecture and infrastructure carried out during the 1948 war began as a means of deterrence and revenge. As early as December 1947, during the early stages of the civil war, the Hagana obliterated homes and villages that were

\textsuperscript{41} Quoted in: Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, 107.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 258.
suspected of hosting or aiding Arab fighters.\textsuperscript{44} Plan D stated clearly the goal of clearing Arab Palestinian villages on the border, around Jewish settlements and around main roads. At first, emptied villages were conquered and protected by Haganah to prevent Arab fighters from taking over villages and turning them into military posts. Later, the commands were to destroy the empty villages.\textsuperscript{45}

With the recommendation of the 'transfer committee', by the time of the First Truce, which started in June 11, the destruction of villages became a more deliberate and organized project with the aim of preventing the Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes. While Ben Gurion did not explicitly approve of that plan and did not order its execution, he suggested to Weitz that the Zionist organizations will take care of it.\textsuperscript{46} There was an increase in acts of destruction as peace talks were in progress. Benvenisti writes about 41 villages in the Jerusalem Corridor and the Southern Shfela that were destroyed in July 1949 when the negotiation on armistice with Syria were at their peak.\textsuperscript{47}

In August 1948 Israel authorized the establishment of Jewish settlements on Arab lands in the areas outside the 1947 UN Partition Plan.\textsuperscript{48} 270 out of 350 Jewish settlements that were founded between 1948-1953 were built on lands that were appropriated from Palestinians who became refugees during the 1948 war.\textsuperscript{49} Founding Israeli settlements on Palestinian villages was intended to prevent return and 'infiltrations', as well as to address the needs of mass

\textsuperscript{44} Benvenisti, \textit{Sacred Landscape}, 138–9.
\textsuperscript{46} Benvenisti, \textit{Sacred Landscape}, 177.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 167.
emigration. These two goals, however, conflicted at times. Some Zionist officials tried to prevent demolition in some cases to keep the buildings for settling immigrants. In 1949, the Jewish Agency decided to cease the building of settlements on top of the existing infrastructure and instead to build the entire settlement on the village non-residential lands. Many of the settlements that used the existing Arab infrastructure were relocated to a new location at a later point. It seems therefore that the use of abandoned property for settlement purposes was perceived as a temporary solution and not as a long-term plan. Perhaps settling Jews in Arab homes seemed necessary during and soon after the war, but after the war, the mere existence of the material remains of Palestinian homes was perceived as a threat.

In areas that had long established Jewish agricultural settlements prior to the war, such as the Hulla Valley, residents of these settlements often took the destruction of the emptied villages into their own hands; sometimes literally. They used their political leverage to promote the destruction of the villages and at times used their own machinery and manpower to do so independently. Often, the settlers from the Mandate period destroyed the villages because they did not want new immigrants to be settled in them and to get ownership over land in their settlements vicinity.

The Case of Tiberias

While not part of the studied region, the case of the destruction of the Old City of Tiberias provides an opportunity to understand the formation of Zionist Jewish identity. According to the

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52 Ibid., 230–1; Benvenisti, *Sacred Landscape*, 167.
54 Benvenisti, *Sacred Landscape*, 170.
ethnocentric logic, the places designated for destruction during the war should have been places that symbolized the enemy. What makes the case of Tiberias worthy of close investigation is that, while many Palestinian homes were destroyed by Israeli forces in Tiberias during the war, most of the homes destroyed belonged to Jews. The fact that hundreds of residential homes in one of the oldest Jewish communities in Palestine were destroyed deliberately during the war is puzzling. And indeed, the destruction of Jewish homes in Tiberias caused an outcry among the Israeli Jewish community. The person behind the destruction of both Arab and Jewish homes in Tiberias was Yosef Nahmani, Yosef Weitz's assistant, was a member of Tiberias City Council. Notes from Nahmani's diaries testify to his will to destroy the 'slums' of Tiberias and develop the city mostly for tourism purposes.\textsuperscript{55} His son, an Engineering Officer in the IDF, led the obliteration work.\textsuperscript{56}

Although Tiberias was one of the oldest, most consistent, localities of Jewish settlement in Palestine, and indeed at times a place with notable religious significance, the Jewish quarter in Tiberias was of no significance for Zionist articulations of identity. The Old Yishuv in Tiberias lacked two major signifiers essential for Zionist Jewish identity. Tiberias's Jews were neither secular nor Ashkenazi. While secular Ashkenazi Jews were considered as the 'founding' group of Israel, Sephardic Jews from the Old Yishuv, and later Jewish immigrants from North Africa, were not part of the hegemony and were excluded from centers of power.\textsuperscript{57}

The old quarter in Tiberias did not represent the identity of the new Jews. Nahmani identified Tiberias as a potential location for Christian tourism, because of the significance of the Sea of Galilee in the life of Jesus Christ. The old quarter on the coastal part of the city did not fit the


\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.

modern, touristic city Nahmani imagined. In that case, it did not matter if the homes were belonged to Jews or to Arabs - they had to go. The war provided Nahmani with the opportunity to execute his plans.

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The 1948 war provided the Zionist leadership with the opportunity to create a new territorial and demographic reality. Zionist leaders in the 30s had worked with the British leadership in an attempt to reach goals of transfer by diplomatic means. The war was an opportunity to do things that could not be done in ordinary days.\textsuperscript{58} The decision to deny war refugees from the right to return to their homes was a tacit act of transfer aimed at shifting the demographic balance between Arabs and Jews. The denial of return was one of the main reasons for the destruction of empty villages. The atmosphere of the chaos in the time immediately following the war, and the commitment of individuals to the project of transfer, enabled several private initiatives of village demolition. The main project of demographic Judaization during the war, the denial of return, brought upon the erasure of the Arab Palestinian habitat, and thus the project of the Judaization of the Galilean landscape was initiated.

\textsuperscript{58} See Ezra Danin’s quote on page 22.
CHAPTER II: "JUDAIZATION OF THE GALILEE": THE PLANNING DIVISION AND NATIONAL PLANNING SCHEME

It is impossible to neglect such a frontier region and leave it for the minorities, which are more inclined towards the State of Lebanon than to the State of Israel. It is also not logical to leave the development of land reserves to future generations, because the territory will surely be settled meanwhile - as an area that is heretofore unsettled and highly appealing - by unplanned and unwanted populations.

– Ariel Kahane, General Planner for the National Plan (1954)59

The above excerpt appears in a planning document titled "Memorandum on the Jewish Development of the Western Galilee" from 1954. The memorandum accompanied a series of maps of the Galilee, which delineate a line that circumvents the block of remaining Arab Palestinian settlements in the Galilee following the 1948 war. This line is titled in the map key "boundaries of the Judaization of the Galilee zone" (see Figure 3). The map and the memorandum speak for themselves: it was perceived as urgent to settle the Galilee with Jewish populations, both because it was a frontier area, and because if Israel did not utilize the cultivable land in that moment, it was feared that it would be taken by Arabs in the future. While it is true that the architects and engineers of the Planning Division used their respective fields of expertise to serve the national project of Judaization, they understood the task that was given to them as an opportunity for them to execute their own professional agendas.

In June 1948, soon after the declaration of independence and even as the war waged on, David Ben-Gurion asked the prominent architect Arieh Sharon60 to form the governmental Planning Division and charged him with the task of preparing a national planning scheme to absorb a massive wave of immigrants in a short period of time. Physical planning was a high

59 Ariel Kahane, “Memorandum on the Jewish Development of the Western Galilee,” August 17, 1954, 1, G-5513/1, Israeli National Archive.
60 Arieh Sharon (1900-1984) was a prominent Israeli architect and frequent contributor to the development of Israeli architecture in the 1940s and 50s. He served as the leader of the first master-plan for the new Israeli state. Significantly and confusingly, not the same person as Ariel Sharon (1924-2014). Ariel Sharon became influential in the making of the Galilee in the mid-70s, when he finished his military career and became a politician.
Figure 3: Land Type Maps


Translation:
"Land Types Map"
Key:
Good agricultural land
Mountains and hills region (partially agricultural land)
Land that is not fit for agricultural cultivation
Sands
Judaization of the Galilee area boundaries
priority for Ben Gurion, therefore he placed the Planning Division directly under his office and allocated himself 12 weekly hours to sit with the planners (compared to 11 he allocated for security).\textsuperscript{61} Part of the importance Ben Gurion saw in planning was the understanding that Jewish settlement placed strategically in frontier zones would serve an effective line of defense against future invasion.\textsuperscript{62} When Sharon formulated his proposed of settlement, planners were anticipating that the existing Jewish population in Israel, 650,000, will triple itself in the course of only a few years.\textsuperscript{63} The expected wave of immigrants was comprised of Jewish refugees from post-holocaust Europe and Jews from Arab and Muslim countries, as violence and animosity was on the rise in neighboring countries in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Preparing a plan to absorb such a mass of immigrants was an opportunity for Arieh Sharon and his team to plan an Israel with "harmonious and well-balanced population distribution throughout the land."\textsuperscript{64} Sharon, who studied in the Bauhaus School in Dassau, Germany, was influenced by Walter Christaller's "Theory of Central Places" which stressed that the settlement pattern of small-medium towns located in the center of a rural agricultural area (hinterland) would ensure social and economic stability in face of crisis.\textsuperscript{65} Utilizing this model, the influx of immigrants provided an opportunity for planners as the aim of 'population distribution' would not require the tedious and challenging task of relocating people.\textsuperscript{66} Another rare opportunity for Sharon's team was the abundance of available public lands primed for development - all lands that had been recently expropriated from the Palestinian refugees.

In an article published in the Israeli Economic Association quarterly in 1955, Eliezer

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 993.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 69.
\textsuperscript{65} Eliezer Brutzkus, Regional Policy in Israel (Jerusalem, Israel: Israeli Ministry of Interior: Town and Country Planning Department, 1970), 18.
\textsuperscript{66} Sharon, “Planning in Israel,” 69.
Brutzkus, who was one of the main planners in Sharon's team, explained the rationale behind the 'population diffusion' policy. The scenario that Brutzkus wanted to prevent was that the recently arrived immigrants would elect to live where they would naturally choose - one of the three large cities in the Galilee, or in the Coastal Plain, where 82% of the Jewish population was then concentrated. Brutzkus anticipated that lack of civic planning would result in settlement patterns like the ones in New Zealand, Australia and the West Coast of the United States, where massive waves of immigration settled in the coastal cities, leaving large areas undeveloped. He explains this phenomenon by the fact that the areas were settled after the industrial revolution, at a time when only few people worked in agriculture, thus the large swaths of undeveloped land did not attract incoming immigrants. This pattern of unregulated urban settlement would inevitably result, stressed Brutzkus, in the creation of 'slums' and other socio-economic problems.

In Central and Western Europe, by contrast, the settlement pattern was created before the industrial revolution, and therefore small towns and cities were created 'organically' as centers for rural areas. Such areas, Brutzkus notes, proved to be more stable in light of the economic crisis of 1929-33. Brutzkus’s logic is taken directly from Christaller's "Theory of Central Places". The preemptive struggle against the challenges of urban congestion signified two things for the Planning Division: (1) The necessary creation of strategic population distribution by the locating of newly-created small-medium towns in the center of rural agricultural settlements; and (2) the designation of large areas of undeveloped land for leisure and recreation.

The preparation of the national planning scheme was completed in 1950 and presented in an exhibition in Tel Aviv. "Physical Planning in Israel" is the only national master planning

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68 Ibid., 8.
69 Ibid., 12.
scheme put together in Israel, and much of it was implemented.\textsuperscript{70} In the spirit of population diffusion, the national plan proposed the establishment of 24 new small-medium towns that will be built in locations with low Jewish settlement to ensure that the burden of absorbing Jewish immigrants would not fall on the existing cities. These towns later became known as the 'development towns'. The population dispersal plan was accompanied by a propaganda campaign geared towards the general public, warning from the damages of dense urban areas. The propaganda posters were originally presented with the plan in an exhibition in Tel Aviv in 1950 (See figures 4 and 5). Facing a reality in which some 82\% of the Jewish population lived in the three big cities (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa), the national planning scheme had the goal that by the end of the first stage of development (2,650,000 citizens) only 45\% of the future population would live in the big cities.\textsuperscript{71}

Like many other governmental bodies and offices, the Planning Division was modeled after its analogous department in the British Mandate government; and its dominant personnel, including Sharon and Brutzkus, had all previously worked as architects and engineers under the British Mandate (this pattern will repeat itself in the discussion of the Israel Department of Antiquities in Chapter IV). The fact that the people responsible for planning in the young state had been part of the earlier Mandate government is of great importance. Sharon and Brutzkus were well versed in British colonial practices and ideas, and this experience profoundly instilled a conviction towards the role of planners in society. If the design theory and planning model for the settlement pattern of the Galilee came from Germany, the model for the design of the new Israeli town came from the British planning legacy. The development town followed the British civic planning model of the "garden city", a town designed with low density, and with open spaces.

\textsuperscript{71} Sharon, “Planning in Israel,” 72.
between neighborhoods.\footnote{Eliezer Brutzkus, \textit{Physical Planning in Israeli: Problems and Achievements} (Jerusalem, Israel: Privately prnted, 1964), 63.}

The first small towns in the northern Galilee were Acre, the bulk of whose Arab residents had been expelled; Safad, without an Arab Palestinian population after the 1948 war; and Nahariyya. In 1950 Kiriyat Shmona was founded on the site of the empty village of al-Khalisa as a development town. Al-Khalisa had been the second largest Palestinian settlement in the Safad subdistrict. Located in the Galilee Panhandle, it was occupied and depopulated in May 11, 1948 as part of Operation Yiftach, after Haganah rejected Khasila's truce offer.\footnote{Khalidi, \textit{All That Remains}, 462.} The location of al-Khalisa, at the tip of the Galilee Panhandle was too important strategically. Additionally, by that time, it seemed probable that Operation Yiftach will be completed and the region will be in Jewish hands.

While development towns were intended to provide regional stability through the creation of small urban centers for rural agricultural regions, the old Jewish settlements in the Galilee Panhandle did not welcome the founding of Kiriyat Shmona. The neighboring kibbutzim claimed many of the confiscated cultivable lands that were meant to be the territorial basis of the new town, and thus attempted to prevent its establishment. Further, the implementation of the plan was also partial. The residential areas were completed but there were not enough industries in the new town to employ the incoming immigrants.\footnote{Golan, \textit{Wartime Spatial Changes: Former Arab Territories Within the State of Israel, 1948-1950}, 173–4.} While the planners rushed to settle the immigrants in the new towns, it took ten years until the first factory was founded in Kiriyat Shmona.\footnote{S. Ilan Troen, \textit{Imagining Zion} (Yale University Press, 2011), 198.} As such, as Brutzkus notes, 85% of immigrants were dependent on public bodies (the government and the Jewish Agency) for housing. This dependency "offered a unique
opportunity for their planned geographical distribution".\textsuperscript{76} as agencies could make provision of aid contingent on settlement. In retrospect, Brutzkus confessed that there were significant issues with the implementation of the "straight off the boat to development regions" approach. He acknowledges that the policy was implemented "against the free will of the settled subjects - namely the immigrants."\textsuperscript{77}

Israeli sociologist Smadar Sharon argues, "the decision to found new remote cities before solving the employment issue meant consciously sentencing the residents to long years of partial employment or unemployment".\textsuperscript{78} Indeed, development towns such as Shlomi in the Western Galilee and Kiriyat Shmona in the Galilee Panhandle are still among the most economically marginalized towns in Israel. The Judaization of the Galilee in the first years of statehood was a project of strategically settling a newly acquired territory and the distribution of waves of mass immigration more efficiently between the Coastal region, where most immigrants organically preferred to live, and the periphery. The Planning Division in the Prime Minister's office based their national planning scheme both on nationalist needs of settlement and security and on their professional agenda which stressed the importance of low density of population and a settlement pattern that is balanced across the country. The need to settle the frontier, and the planners' desire to execute the plan according to the scientific models of civic engineering gave birth to the Judaization of the Galilee policy.\textsuperscript{79}

\textsuperscript{76} Brutzkus, Physical Planning in Israeli: Problems and Achievements, 14.
\textsuperscript{79} See Figure 6 for the demographic transformation between 1947 and the 1950s.
Translation:
"1000 immigrants arrive each day - one dwelling unit has to be erected every two minutes. Should the new houses be built in the existing, already densely populated cities - or should housing and development be directed into new towns?"

Translation:

"Planning or laissez-faire. Instead of concentrating all immigrants on the narrow seashore strip, the target was to direct them into the new regions and towns."

Source: Arieh Sharon, "Planning or Laissez-Faire - Arieh Sharon," 1950, http://www.ariehsharon.org/NewLand/Planning-or-Laissez-Faire/16369418_5HrM7g#!/i=1242238898k=Qr9Xc8N.
Figure 6: Jewish and Arab Palestinian Localities

Source: Atlas Of The Conflict: Israel-Palestine (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2010), 82.
CHAPTER III: JUDAIZATION OF MEMORY, JUDAIZATION OF SPACE, HISTORICAL SITES AND NATIONAL PARKS

In order to effectively accomplish the goal of Judaizing the Galilee, it did not suffice to conquer the region and settle it with Jews alone. The landscape itself provided tangible material evidence of the generations' worth of Arab Palestinian life in the region. The demonstrably Arab landscape was not compatible with the narrative promoted by Zionists of the Jewish population returning to their homeland. The process of creating a perception of Jewish indigeneity in the Galilee involved the erasure, editing and rewriting of the spatial narrative in the Galilee. The process of erasing the Palestinian landscape and the process of Judaizing it, however, were in conflict. If the Galilee was perceived to be an ancient Jewish land that was to be redeemed by its native sons, there was a functional need to leave those parts of the landscape which signify the antiquity of the Galilee intact. The signifiers of the ancient Galilee were located in emptied Palestinian villages and quarters.

This revision of spatial narrative involved a number of interrelated processes: first, Hebraization - the assignation of Hebrew names for places and geographical objects, in addition to the creation of a Hebrew-language map. Second, conservation - the designation of particular places as important historical sites and particular places as insignificant. Third, sanctification - the construction of the Galilee as a region with high religious importance through the identification, development, demarcation, mapping and at times the invention of Jewish holy sites; and the establishment of a corollary culture of pilgrimage around these sites. Fourth, forestation and nature preservation – the transformation of vegetation through the planting of millions of European-reminiscent pine forests, and the creation of a rhetorical dichotomy between the Jews as protectors of nature and the Arabs as violators of nature.

The Judaization of space and memory served not only to erase the memory of the exiled
Arab Palestinian population, but also to transform the reality in the Galilee into one in which the Jews were no longer seen as settlers, and the Arab majority no longer perceived as native. The developments of historical sites for tourism, of sacred sites for pilgrimage, and of nature for hiking created an 'invented tradition'\(^8^0\) of nationalist, religious and secular rituals which served to incorporate the conquered Galilee into the territorial matrix of the Jewish homeland. These rituals shaped the national identity of Jewish immigrants to imagine themselves as natives of Israel.

**Mapping and Hebraization**

In 1951, David Ben Gurion formed the Governmental Name committee, tasking it: "to Judaize the map of Israel by assigning Hebrew names to each and every geographical object in the map of Israel".\(^8^1\) The effort to map the land of Israel consisted of a series of interrelated projects. One aspect of this initiative was to define the borders of the nation; the other was to forge a connection between the people and the land. Mapping functions as a source of power in the context of nation-states, both through its role in strategy and warfare and in its ability to shape scientific and political discourse. Harley and Woodward argue that throughout history "mapmaking was one of the specialized intellectual weapons by which power could be gained, administrated, given legitimacy and codified".\(^8^2\) The cartographer chooses what will appear on the map and within which boundaries, and more importantly, what data will be omitted and how places will be named.

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The project of creating a Hebrew map has more in common with the British mapping of Ireland in the seventeenth century than with the British mapping of Palestine in 1871. While in Ireland, the cartographical survey included the changing of the Gaelic names to English names; in Palestine, the British cartographers strove to be as accurate as they could in the transliteration of Arab names. In order to reach the necessary level of specificity with regards to place names, British cartographers interviewed local Palestinians and used native knowledge to create their data.\textsuperscript{83} In Ireland, the British sought to expand their homeland and to erase Irish cultural signifiers. Mapmaking in Ireland was a tool used to make Ireland British. In the case of Mandate era Palestine, while the geographical survey and mapping occurred in the context of empire building, the British never undertook to make Palestine British.

The geographical survey of Palestine of 1871 and was carried out by the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF), with the financial backing of the British War Office.\textsuperscript{84} The PEF were interested in locating place names of biblical sites, to provide justification for Christian text. The PEF interests collided with Britain's imperial aspirations. As Captain Charles Wilson of the PEF explained before the beginning of the survey: "The map would be of great importance as a military map should the eastern question come forward and Palestine ever be the scene of military operations."\textsuperscript{85} In addition to a concern with military strategy, members of the PEF sought in their survey to "firmly establish the veracity of the historical texts on which the tenets of the Christian faith were based".\textsuperscript{86} The Palestine Exploration Fund sought to record the Arabic names accurately because many of them sounded similar to the biblical names and were assumed to be the best indicators to aid in the orientation within a biblical topography. The

\textsuperscript{83} Abu El-Haj, \textit{Facts on the Ground}, 32.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 23.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 26.
thorough cartographic work the British did in Palestine in the late 19th century was instrumental for those who worked years later, in the fifties, on creating a Hebrew map of Israel.87

The Israel Exploration Society had a function that was similar to the British Royal Geographical Society - the "exploration" of places that had been colonized or were about to be colonized. The main difference between the work of the Jewish society and that of the British one is that beyond the aspect of exploring a previously unmapped landscape and the creation of a body of scientific knowledge, the Israel Exploration Society also functioned in the framework of a Zionist homecoming project. The scientific knowledge generated by the IES served as evidence for the ancient relationship between the Jewish people and the land of Israel. The IES's official mandate was to develop and promote the research of the land, its chronicles, and its antiquity, while emphasizing the land-settlement aspect and the historical-cultural connection between the People of Israel and the Land of Israel. Its researchers had attempted to provide 'concrete evidence to the continuation of the historical link, that was never disconnected, since the days of 93 hoshua Ben-Nun and until Ye hoshua Ben-Nun and until the days of the Negev conquerors in our generation.88

Joshua Ben-Nun is one of the 12 spies who were sent by Moses to scout the land of Canaan as told in Numbers 13. The reference to Ben-Nun is evidence to the mythic sense of mission the IES researchers felt. They saw themselves as the spies that were surveying the land prior to its conquest.

The importance of place naming for the Zionist project can be seen in the promptness with which Ben Gurion acted on creating a Hebrew map of the Naqab/Negev.89 In July 18, 1949, four months after Israel completed the conquest of the Naqab/Negev, Ben Gurion met with 9 members of the IES and tasked them with giving Hebrew names to all geographical

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87 Benvenisti, Sacred Landscape, 15.
89 'Naqab' is the Arabic name, and 'Negev' is the Hebrew name. I use them interchangeably in this chapter to represent the name that was used by the different groups and in different times.
features in the Naqab/Negev territory. Meron Benvenisti claims that the geographers and cartographers appointed by Ben Gurion understood their work in the Naqab/Negev as "claiming ownership" of the landscape.\textsuperscript{90} In June 1949, Ben Gurion wrote about the Naqab: "it is mandatory to give these places a Hebrew name - ancient if such exists, and if not - new." After the committee finished their task and assigned 560 Hebrew names to places in the Naqab, Ben Gurion wrote to thank the members of the committee: "you have completed the task that the IDF had started - liberating the Negev from foreign rule".\textsuperscript{91} The use of the term 'foreign rule' is remarkable, and it summarizes the process of Judaization - conquering and naming are not separate projects, they both, together, constitute the act of liberation.

The same sentiment repeated itself when the Governmental Names Committee (GNC) was formed in April 1951, based on the ad-hoc Negev Names Committee and the JNF Names Committee, which operated during the Yishuv. The GNC was responsible only for naming places and geographical objects and was instructed to Hebraize all the names on the map. Its role was fundamental and transformative: in a 1951 letter from Ben Gurion's military secretary Nechemia Argov to the GNC, the committee was instructed explicitly and strictly not to publish in the map any of the abandoned villages' names.\textsuperscript{92}

The GNC remained independent from the Hebrew Language Academy, which was founded in 1952 and is responsible for all other aspects of naming and Hebraicization, and continued to report directly to the Prime Minister's Office. This organizational detail bespeaks the importance of place naming for Israeli leadership. Ben Gurion wanted the mapping and place naming process to stay under his supervision.\textsuperscript{93} The composition of the GNC, well-respected

\textsuperscript{91} Azaryahu, "Hebrew and Hebraicization in the Formation of Cultural Identity (HEB)," 84.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 85.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 84–85.
scholars and politicians, contributed to the official status it received from the public. Among the members of the committee were Yosef Weitz and Shmuel Yeivin.

Assigning new names to places is a common tactic in areas that were conquered during a war. Italy gave 8,000 Italian names to places in Südtirol/Alto-Adige after it annexed the territory from Austro-Hungary in 1919 during WWI. In 1945, Czechoslovakia began the systematic expulsion of more than 2,000,000 German-speaking citizens who lived in the Sudetenland territory.94 The Czechoslovakian Government banned the use of German names in the region that until the war had maintained a German-speaking majority.95

The Hebraization of Arab place names in Israel in general and in the Galilee in particular was used both as a means to designate the territory as Israeli, and as a means to revive the Jewish history of the land. It is estimated that the people who lived in Palestine before Zionism maintained 178 Ancient Hebrew place names.96 In many cases, even when foreign rulers assigned the places new names, the people living in these places kept the old names. Other than the cases of the 178 cases where there has been confirmation as to the veracity of the names, it is estimated that the Hebrew names given to sites do not have relationship with any biblical Hebrew names.

The Arab population of Palestine was often perceived as "keepers" of the biblical names, due to their resemblance to Hebrew. The assignment of Hebrew names, therefore, was presented as an act of restoring something that was lost; a return to the way a previously established order. Ironically, in many cases the rush to assign places with Hebrew names caused

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the loss of the ancient ones. Many Arab names quite probably had connection with the old biblical names, but they were replaced with new, unrelated Hebrew names. The accuracy of restoring the biblical names, however, was not as important to the Zionists giving impulse to this project was the mere fact that these places had Hebrew names. The completion of the Hebrew map marked the completion of the act of conquest.

**Conservation of Historical Sites**

The question of which buildings and monuments needed to be conserved and which were to be destroyed was a highly political one. On one hand, there were several places and artifacts that could be used to strengthen the Zionist claim for the land of Israel, and on the other hand, old buildings were material evidence for the pre-existence of Arab Palestinians in the Galilee, whether they continued to live there or were living in exile. "Conservation as a social tool" architect Shmuel Groag astutely argues, "is a product of a social negotiation which defines what is represented and what is disremembered; what to remember and what to forget; what to keep and what to destroy; which narrative will be presented and which silenced". Consequently, the Interdepartmental Committee for the Development and Conservation of Historical Sites (Interdepartmental Committee) made during its four months of work designating material culture to be conserved significant decisions regarding what will be remembered and what will be forgotten.

Having worked for the British Department of Antiquities during the Mandate, Shmuel Yeivin adhered to the British professional standards with regard to the role of his department.

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97 Ibid., 2 Note no. 1.
The British Antiquities Ordinance of 1928 mandated that every site or place that was created by humans before 1700 should fall under the domain of the Department of Antiquities, and left untouched until surveyed by the department. Therefore, when Palestinian villages and buildings that were within the parameters of the British Antiquities Ordinance were demolished during and after the war without prior assessment, Yeivin decried this destruction and urged whomever was responsible to respect the authority of his department. He urged those authorities with sufficient power to include him in the decision making process regarding the assessment of ancient sites. Yeivin's protests received support from the Minister of Education, Zalman Shazar, and consequently the Prime Minister's Office decided to form the Interdepartmental Committee in March 1950.

Because the planning and development pace was rapid, and because the 'transfer committee' initiated the destruction of villages to deny the return of refugees, the sites that are important for the narration of the nationalist story were in danger. Therefore, the committee included representatives from 11 departments and offices that were there to represent their respective expertise and area of responsibility. While the committee included a variety of departments, professions, and approaches, considering the complexity of the tension between conservation and development, three voices emerged that dominated the discussions: Shmuel Yeivin, head of the IDAM and instigator of the committee, Arieh Altman, adviser for touristic affairs in the Prime Minister's office and committee head, and Moshe Shilo, representative of the Ministry of Defense.

The central argument presented by Shmuel Yeivin in the meetings was that the committee had an obligation to ensure that Israeli archaeologists would be able to conduct a

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100 Abu El-Haj, Facts on the Ground, 60.
101 “Protocol from the Meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee for the Development and Conservation of Historical Sites.”
"quick and comprehensive" survey of relevant sites [italics are mine]:

There was a survey conducted once during the 70s of the last century. A delegation came, and they wrote and described all the things on the ground. The previous survey is no longer relevant, as it was conducted in a time when our archeology was prohibited from erecting monuments to our history in their correct locations and faced resistance from the local residents, etc. Nowadays the situation is different. *We are able to reach every place in the land* and also the scientific discipline has developed profoundly.Yeivin's approach was both scientific and nationalist. He wanted to conduct a survey in accordance with innovations made to archaeological inquiry since the time of the last survey in 1871. It is evident from the quote, however, that Yeivin is motivated to conduct this new survey not simply by commitment to the practice his discipline, but by nationalistic zeal. The days in which Jewish archaeological missions were not allowed to excavate biblical sites were over, and Yeivin rejoiced at the the fact that 'we can reach every place in the land'.

Opposing the initiation of a new archeological survey was the representative of the Ministry of Defense, Moshe Shilo, who held a different understanding the significance of the conservation of Jewish historical sites. Shilo's quotes from the committee's protocols show the extent to which the Arab Palestinian material culture, and landscape were perceived as a threat to Zionism. In the committee's first meeting, Moshe Shilo said:

… we shall not fabricate facts, but it is our duty to do everything to strengthen our cultural and national claim to our land. That means we must not approach exploring and cultivating historical and holy sites from a strictly scientific point of view.

For Shilo, who was recruited onto the committee to represent the security considerations with regards to conservation, strengthening Jewish claims for the land of Israel is a security issue. Science, therefore, should be put aside. Shilo opposed the idea of conducting an archaeological survey of Israel because he did not want "to fill the land with the antiquities and holy sites of foreigners." He perceived the designation and protection of non-Jewish sacred sites as an

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102 Ibid., 1–2.
103 Ibid., 4.
unnecessary advancement of foreign interests, in opposition to Zionist interests: "Towards the Christian and the Muslim world, we ought to do only that what we are obliged to do."\textsuperscript{104} For Shilo, Jewish rule over Palestine was an opportunity to avenge the treatment of Jewish sacred and historical sites received throughout history: "I have learned how the rulers of our land during the generations covered its map with foreign names."\textsuperscript{105} Shilo perceived the change of names in previous eras as historical acts of aggression against the Jewish people. Now that Jews controlled the land, he saw it as an opportunity to do justice by not giving non-Jewish sites special treatment. Moshe Shilo perceived the initiation of an archaeological survey as an unnecessary complication to the project of nation building. He believed that a systematic survey would weaken the claim Jews have to the land because it would expose more sites that held significance for non-Jews.

What was perceived as a threat and an unnecessary complication by Shilo, was ‘3viewed as an opportunity by Arieh Altman, from the Prime Minister’s office [all underscores in the original]:

With regards to tourism, an archaeological and historical survey would bring with it significant gains. By collecting the materials, and \textit{exploring} the historical sites it is possible to \textit{expand} the country. Setting and publicizing the valuable places will enable the slowing of the pace of car travel in the country. To say it bluntly, I would say that the tourist must travel in one kilometer per hour instead of sixty. We must prove to the tourist that one cannot see the country in a serious and thorough manner neither in hours nor in days.\textsuperscript{106}

Altman’s employment of the words ‘expand’ and ‘exploring’ are remarkable. By this, he did not mean that the survey should endeavor to go beyond the current borders of the country. Rather, he suggested that within the given territory, effort should be made to find 'new' historical and sacred sites, thereby giving the tourist an experience of a larger, denser country.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 11.
The discussions of the interdepartmental committee were concurrent with the intensive development spree of the early 1950s. The tension between development and conservation was present in the work of the Planning Division as well (as discussed in Chapter II). Space was an important tenet of the population distribution policy. The distance between urban centers, rooted in Christaller's 'central places theory', and the spacious design of the new towns, rooted in the Garden City model, were based to an extent on the assumption that working people require places for leisure and recreation. Thus, the preservation of the landscape and the establishment of national parks were understood as central to the national planning scheme. Acknowledging that the project of settling Jewish immigrants requires "maximal utilization - agricultural and industrial - of the state's territory,"107 Eliezer Brutzkus expressed early in 1950 that territories that protected nature reserves and national parks "are necessary first and foremost to satisfy the essential demand by residents of dense population centers for leisure and recreation."108 Brutzkus noted that this is what "customary in civilized countries".109

In a lecture from August 1949, Arieh Sharon articulates the importance of national parks not only for productivity, but also for the instilling of nationalist sentiments among Israeli citizenry:

Man shall not live on bread alone. And our working people need also sights and recreation and green. And our youth needs options for leisure, vacation and hiking, which will connect it to the land and its history. … The important historical sites will lie within these green recreational territories. … We encounter in every place remnants of our land's glorious past, traces of large buildings, ancient graves, or ancient-days' tells, that were yet to be excavated by archeologists. The value of these remnants is not merely scientific. They create a connection between us and the land with its long history.110

108 Ibid., 129.
109 Ibid.
110 The content of the lecture was sent to David Arian, assistant for the prime minister's secretary, in August 1949. Quoted in: Ibid., 14.
National Parks provided the staging ground for secular rituals which served to connect the citizens both with the land and with history. The establishment of national parks around sites that were regarded as important for the national historical narrative served to foster a self-perception of indigeneity. In order to instill nationalist sentiments, Sharon wanted Jewish immigrants to feel connected with their land and with the history; a single history that will be shared by Jews coming to Israel from different countries and realities.

In a memorandum from 1950, Eliezer Brutzkus predicted how the "future landscape of the country" would look like, taking into account the expected intensive development. He wrote, "not much will be left of the original and natural landscape in the land in the future. It is necessary to dedicate much of the state's territory to intensive agriculture and for settlement and industry mandates; while, as a counterpoint, leaving certain territories without economic exploitation (ie development).” In 1964, Brutzkus acknowledged that the 'original' landscape in Israel was coming under significant threat of erasure:

Nearly the majority of the state, and most certainly its intensive areas, will receive a new 'artificial' landscape designation, whether a 'urban-industrial' landscape, a 'rural-agricultural' landscape, or a 'forest' landscape of new forests. What is currently in danger of extinction is especially natural, original landscape, and to a lesser extent, 'traditional' landscape, also somewhat 'artificial', but is different from the new 'artificial' landscape by the slow pace of the historical process that cannot be repeated in our era.

The development spree and the erasure of Arab Palestinian signifiers from the landscape endangered the 'traditional' and 'original' landscape of the Galilee. The suggestions of the Planning Department, written by Brutzkus, were accepted by the Interdepartmental Committee, which concluded "that all the historical sites and monuments, which are related to the land's past and the tradition of its residents, will be considered as public property; and must be

handed over to the hands of the state or corollary official public bodies.\textsuperscript{113}

They committee prepared a list of the sites they recommend will be designated as National Parks.\textsuperscript{114} Noga Kadman conducted a comprehensive research on how emptied villages are being presented in National Parks, JNF forests and on marked hiking paths. She concludes that today there are 15 emptied villages from the Acre and Safad subdistricts that are in the territory of a national park, 12 in the territories of planted JNF forests, and 5 more that are in a site that is both a national park and a JNF forest.\textsuperscript{115} In most of the cases there is no mention of a Palestinian village in the park's signs and brochures. For example, one of the proposed national parks, the Jarmak Park (Mount Meron) is covering the remains of 5 villages: Ghabbatiyya, Sabalan, Mirun, 'Ayn al-Zaytun and Al-Sammu'i. There are no signs in the park that give information about the villages.\textsuperscript{116} A map of the planned park from Sharon's 1950 plan still has the Palestinian village names underneath the park's plan. The site was officially declared as a National Park in 1965.

Haim Yacobi sees architecture as "first and foremost a statement of an ideological program that concisely symbolizes the political power of the state which imposes a certain collective identity and not another."\textsuperscript{117} The same can indeed be applied to landscape architecture. The Interdepartmental Committee for Conservation shows how bureaucrats and experts from different governmental agencies approached the landscape they conquered from the Palestinians. By undertaking this work, the committee effectively made decisions about what memories were to remain in the future landscape of Israel.

\textsuperscript{113} The Interdepartmental Committee for the Improvement of Historical Sites (8.23.1950)
\textsuperscript{115} Kadman, \textit{Erased from Space and Consciousness: Depopulated Palestinian Villages in the Israeli-Zionist Discourse}, 154. Map B.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 159. Table no. 3.
Figure 7: The Jarmak Park - "Physical Planning in Israel" 1950


Translation:

Built up area - yellow patch.
Afforested area - green patch.
Reservation - dark-green patch.
Rest house - red circle.
Hotel - red oblong.
Recreation camp - red triangle.
Youth hostel - red ring with flag.
Spring - green ring.
Antiquities - blue.
Access road - white line.
Footpath - thin white line.
Sanctification

The partition of Mandatory Palestine in 1948 created a new territorial reality in which access to the holy sites in Judea and Samaria was denied. Under the British Mandate Jews did not have sovereignty but they could access the West Bank. In response to the experience of territorial division, Shmuel Zanvil Kahane from the Ministry of Religion worked on a project of locating alternative holy sites, accessible to those living within 1948 Israel. One of the main sites for Jewish pilgrimage prior to the creation of Israel was the tomb of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai (Rashbi) in the Meron Mountain. During the first decade of statehood, S. Z. Kahane worked cultivated the culture of pilgrimage to Meron, and added nationalist components to the religious site. For example, Kahane created a memorial in Meron, in which he presented ritual articles and objects that were used by soldiers during the 1948 war. Kahana's most important project in the Meron was organizing the Hilula celebrations of Lag BaOmer and turning them from a merely religious celebration into a nationalist ritual. The Hilula has been a pilgrimage celebration since the 16th century. However, after the establishment of the State of Israel, the Ministry of Religion took responsibility for organizing the celebration. In an attempt to add a nationalist valence to what was prior a strictly religious celebration, Kahane invented a ritual of lighting the main bonfire in Meron from a torch that was lit in Mount Zion the night before. In 1951 hundreds of soldiers joined the main march from Safad to Mt. Meron. They gave the religious ceremony a secular, nationalist character. In 1955, political parties funded for the first time the buses for the Hilulah celebrations and up to 50,000 people participated. In 1957, candles were lit as the number of soldiers who died in the 1956 Sinai War, demonstrating a

119 Ibid., 127.
120 Ibid., 131.
121 Ibid., 128.
122 Ibid., 133.
further elision between the religious ritual and the nationalist ritual.\textsuperscript{123}

As Doron Bar notes, Zionism, as a civilian religion, did not adopt the tombs of the rabbis of the Talmud in the Galilee and King David's tomb in Mount Zion, Jerusalem, as sites for nationalist rituals. These symbols did not sit in line with the secular nature of nationalism. Nonetheless, S. Z. Kahane worked relentlessly on cultivating a culture of pilgrimage and state sanctioned religious ceremonies. While he was not always successful in creating new traditions, Kahane's efforts did manage to change the landscape in the Galilee.

In the case of the Hilulah celebration in Mt. Meron, Kahane capitalized on an already popular tradition, and succeeded to increase the number of attendees by organizing free buses to transport the public, and to embed secular nationalist aspects into the celebrations. In other cases, Kahane tried to revive old traditions of pilgrimage and rituals around righteous tombs in the Galilee. These are sites that were mostly inactive during Ottoman and British periods.\textsuperscript{124} He located the sites, at times with questionable evidence, and renovated the area around the tomb to make it accessible for visitors. Kahane then placed signs near the tombs and on main roads near them. After preparing the new righteous tombs for visitors, Kahane printed maps and tour guides to inform the public about the importance of the sites. Many of the 'new' righteous tombs cultivated by Kahane were holy sites for the local Muslim population prior to 1948.\textsuperscript{125}

\textbf{Forests, Goats, and Perceptions of Nature}

The nature preservation discourse in Israel portrayed the native Arab population of Palestine as the enemies of nature and the "returning" Jews as its savior. According to Naama Meishar it was long assumed that prior to 1948 ecological habitats "suffered centuries of interferences such as

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., 134.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 139–42.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., 31.
fires, intensive logging and over-grazing, caused by Arabs and Bedouins”. This discourse concluded that these interferences have prevented the ecological system in Palestine from "reaching its climax”, a theory for the development of the Mediterranean woodland. Based on the assumptions that human (Arab) activity in Palestine has damaged the ecology of the land, a law was passed in 1959 to limit the activity of Arab fellahin. The Nature Preservation/Goat-Induced Damages Law of 1959 "limited the number of goats legally acceptable in a private herd, as well as the size of grazing areas". Israel's approach for nature preservation in the early decades was not only anthropocentric, but also ethnocentric because it perceives Arab uses of nature as interferences.

   Forestation was a way to cover Palestinian villages, occupy land, strengthen the connection between the people and the land, and create a European aesthetic. It was stated explicitly in public JNF documents about forestation that the European forest served as a model for the widespread use of pine trees. Ilan Pappé notes that only 10 percent of the trees planted by the JNF were species indigenous to the region. Nowadays, Israeli environmentalists decry the destruction of the local eco-system by the proliferation of European pine trees. In al-Ghabisiyya, in the Acre district, houses blown in 1955, many of the residents remained in neighboring villages and requested in vain from the government to repair their mosque. Today there is a JNF forest, Yehiam Forrest, where the village once stood.

   In the Christian imagination, the Galilee is the land of the bible. In nineteenth century accounts of pilgrims and travelers who visited the Galilee, the area was described as a region that

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127 Ibid., 305.
129 Benvenisti, Sacred Landscape, 293–4.
had not changed since the days of Jesus Christ. The sight of an Arab fallah (Arabic for 'farmer') herding goats in the green mountains was just another object in the biblical landscape. As a movement that was created in Europe, Zionist perceptions of the Palestinian natives were influenced by Western Christian perceptions of the Holy Land. As Meron Benvenisti argues, native Arabs were used as a proof to the ancient Jewish ways of living and were perceived by Zionists as part of the landscape.\(^{130}\) During the Yishuv period, Zionist pioneers adopted and coopted many aspects of Palestinian fellahin aesthetics. This was a way for Jews of European descent to claim an identity that is rooted in the Land of Israel. That identity was called Sabra.\(^{131}\) Guntram Herb argues that "the rural landscape, which expresses continuity, holds special significance in national discourse because it links the nation to the land as well as to the shared past. This is most forcefully expressed in the image of the peasant living in harmony with the land".\(^{132}\) On one hand, the Palestinian fellahin were admired for their connection to the land and for the ways in which they embodied the purity and simplicity of ancient days of the bible. On the other hand, as Na'ama Meishar points out, the fellahin were charged with the crime of overgrazing the land. They were seen as people who did not have the capacity to protect nature. After 1948, the same Arab Palestinian aesthetics that were used to revive the Holy Land narrative were considered a threat to the Zionist story.

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The fifties and sixties in Israel witnessed processes of building a state after a war, and building a nation out of immigrants. Creating a sense of indigeneity required an erasure of Arab signifiers, but these signifiers were often the ones who also enabled the imagination of the Land

\(^{130}\) Ibid., 61–62.
\(^{132}\) Herb, Nested Identities, 18.
of Israel as antique. In order to feel a sense of connection to the land and to each other, people needed to share the history of the Israelite settlements and of the first and second temple. The rapid development and the erasure of Arab signifiers threatened the survival of the 'ancient' parts of the Galilean landscape. The processes described above show how different individuals and organizations tried to Judaize the landscape, and retell the story of the Galilee. The creation of holy sites, national parks, and nature reserves, promised not only the preservation and conservation of the ancient landscape of the Galilee, but also created traditions and rituals that familiarized and connected to their new homeland and their new history.
CHAPTER IV: ARCHEOLOGY AND THE STATE: PROFESSIONALISM/NATIONALISM

Israeli archaeology in the fifties and the sixties was central both for the construction of the nationalist narrative of an ancient, glory past, and for the erasure of the Palestinian past from the landscape. In the fifties, biblical archeology enjoyed an official status from state leaders. The Meetings of the Israel Exploration Fund were public ceremonies in which the public was informed about the new findings in the field of biblical archaeology. The archaeological findings from biblical eras were had significance far beyond science. Archaeological sites served as evidence for Jewish ownership over the land. The reinforcement of the nationalist story served both to strengthen the national identity of the new Jewish immigrants, and to gain further international legitimacy for the state of Israel. The Galilee was an extremely important site for the enunciation of the Zionist historical narrative due to two projects which attempted to find material evidence for the story of the Israelite settlement in Canaan. Two archaeologists of the Israeli Department of Antiquities (IDAM), Yohanan Aharoni and Yigal Yadin, had differing claims regarding the story, and their debate received public attention.

The plan of the IDAM to conduct a comprehensive archaeological survey did not materialize in the 1950s. But a new non-governmental organization, the Israeli Archaeology Survey Society, was formed by a group of archaeologists in the sixties, who managed to receive funding from the Israeli Land Administration (ILA) for conducting a survey of the remaining deserted Palestinian villages from the 1948 war. The ILA used the IASS to obliterate the remaining villages. The scientific aspirations of Israeli archaeologists were utilized to authorize the demolition of whatever remained from the Arab Palestinian rural landscape, erasing the

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134 Geva, “Israeli Biblical Archeology — the First Years.”
memory of the Palestinians, while excavating remnants from ancient times.

**Nationalist Archaeology**

It is often argued that early Israeli archaeologists were scientists in the service of a nationalist project. Raphael Greenberg, for example, argues that Israeli archeologists, especially in the early stages of statehood, saw themselves, essentially, as part of the projects of nation-building and state-building. He shows that when there are conflicts between and scientific interests and political, economic, or security interests, it is often the scientific interests that get trumped. Shulamit Geva argues that early biblical archeology in Israel did not function as a discipline that created and defined a scientific agenda, but as a body that provided the national movement with the sound bites and proofs for what people already knew. "Biblical archaeology," Geva states, is "the most 'Israeli' archeology of them all".

The nationalist nature of Israeli archaeology led to selective definitions of what periods count as biblical. Israeli archaeologists left some 'unappealing' periods outside of their coverage of the biblical era. They typically finished their coverage in 586 BC, the destruction of the First Temple. One example of a difference between the practices of Israeli biblical archeologists and their foreign colleagues (i.e. W. F. Albright and Katelyn Kenyon) is that the Israeli archeologists did not include the return to Eretz Yisrael under the Koresh Declaration, mentioned in Ezra and Nechemia books, even though it happened only 48 years after the destruction of the Temple. Shlomit Geva argues that they excluded that era from their biblical chronology because "homecoming by a decree of a Persian ruler was not an appealing event for the generation of

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pioneers and the fighters of the liberation war". Even though the Koresh Declaration is part of the bible, it is not appealing enough for Israeli biblical archaeologists to include that period as 'biblical'.

Since its inception Zionist movement, the main archeological project that was used to establish the historical connection between the Jews and the Land of Israel was biblical archeology. As important as that biblical archeology was for the Zionist narrative, until the end of the British Mandate, Jewish archeologists played only a marginal role in that project. In 1935, Shmuel Yeivin addressed the conference of the IES and announced that during the past decade there had been a significant rise in the discovery and excavation level of material culture from the First Temple period. As true as this statement was, the increase was not due to the initiative or work of the Jewish archeologists. Because sites from that period were of high interest for the Christian American and European missions, the Jewish delegations, namely the IES, were not given permission to dig them and worked mainly on later periods. They focused their efforts on finding Jewish material culture, mainly synagogues and tombs, which could be used as evidence for Jewish continuity. Nadia Abu El-Haj argues that the archaeological work done by the IES in that period:

never quite integrated into a cohesive historical vision or scientific method. This work did not fully coalesce into an integrated method or generate a larger set of scholarly or historical questions or arguments. … [I]t was the very *collection process itself* that seems to have been significant. … [T]he examination of specific tombs and particular synagogues was governed by the quest for signs of (ancient) Jewishness continuous in and dispersed across the land of Israel. This work had all the characteristics of butterfly collecting: an amassing of sometimes seemingly inchoate data not limited to what would later be defined today as archaeology, strictly speaking.

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137 Ibid., 97.
139 Ibid., 73–74.
140 Ibid., 77–78.
The Israelite Settlement in Canaan - Constructing Nationalist History

Archeological work in the Galilee was a site of an intensive project of constructing a national historical narrative during the 1950s. Archeology had a prestigious role in the civil religion in Israel. Every year dozens of archaeologists and researchers of the Land of Israel from other disciplines gathered to present their research and findings in the Gatherings of the Israeli Exploration Society, which were attended by thousands of citizens at their peak in the fifties and the sixties.141 The opening keynote speaker would always be an important political figure from the state leadership. The popularity of these conferences and the embrace they received from the political leadership show that biblical archaeology was a science with high national importance. The 1958 annual IES gathering took place in Safad. The main panel was an attempt to settle a debate that drew a lot of attention in the fifties - the debate between Yigal Yadin and Yohanan Aharoni regarding the Israelite settlement in the Galilee.142

This particular archaeological debate had high stakes because, as Aharoni states in his book from 1957 on the subject, the "settlement era is the first era in which it is possible to track the people of Israel as an historical factor. ... The history of the People of Israel begins, in the full sense of the word, only in Eretz Yisrael, with the beginning of the settlement in the ancient land of Canaan".143 The settlement story, therefore, was believed to be the earliest historical record of the Jewish nation. Yigal Yadin excavated Tell Hatzor and reached the conclusion that the Israelites have conquered the Canaanite city by force in the thirteenth century BC. Yohanan Aharoni conducted a survey in the upper Galilee in the early fifties and has reached the

conclusion that the Israelites have settled slowly, and that they only settled in Hatzor in the 12th century BC, through a gradual process. Aharoni claimed that the Israelites did not possess the military capacity to attack and conquer Hatzor in the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{144}

Seeking to track the origins of the Jewish nation, Yohanan Aharoni, IDAM inspector of antiquities in the Northern District, conducted a survey of specific locations in the upper Galilee he believed were sites for Israelite settlement around the thirteenth century BC. Aharoni's main argument in his research was that the Israelite settlement was done slowly and not by quick conquest. The main implication of that finding was that the original Israelite settlement was not achieved by a violent war. In the early days of the state, Aharoni's slow settlement theory was not nearly as compelling as Yigal Yadin's findings in Hatzor. The epic story of the battle in Hatzor served as a counter argument to Aharoni's slow settlement theory.\textsuperscript{145} While nowadays Aharoni's theory has nearly reached a consensus in the biblical archeology discipline, following the fuss around Yadin's excavations in Hatzor, Aharoni did not continue with his project on the slow settlement theory, but worked on more grandiose projects: tells, forts, temples and such.\textsuperscript{146}

Shlomit Geva, who studies Israeli biblical archeologists in the 1950s argues that it was only in the 1960s that "the survey approach and examining processes came back to the center of the discussion table, and began slowly pushing away the excavation of a single tel in isolation from its environment".\textsuperscript{155} This trend can be seen in the creation of the Israeli Archeological Survey Society in 1964.

\textsuperscript{144} Ben Zvi and Weitz, "Summary of the Fourteenth Archaeological Convention, Safed, Sept.—Oct., 1958," 95.
\textsuperscript{145} Geva, "Israeli Biblical Archeology — the First Years," 94.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., 94–96.
The Israeli Archeological Survey Society and The 'Clearing' of Emptied Palestinian Villages in the 1960s

Having worked for the British Mandate Department of Antiquities, the Israeli archeologists of IDAM were committed to the British approach to antiquities. In fact, the Jewish archeologists of the BMDA were so committed to British models that some of them advocated for a continuation of British management of antiquities after the establishment of the state. Eliezer Sukenik, Yigal Yadin's father and an archeologist of the IES himself, said in 1947: "I do not believe the Jewish state will preserve its antiquities. … We must place scientific sovereignty above political sovereignty. We are interested in the archaeology of the whole land, and the only way [to ensure this] is a unified department". 147 According to the British Mandate law, sites that included artifacts from before 1700 were considered ‘ancient’ and such sites therefore should remain untouched until the Department of Antiquities sufficiently examined the artifacts. 148

The 1948 war and its aftermath saw the destruction of Palestinian villages and quarters in the Galilee and elsewhere. The most vocal person who protested the destruction was Shmuel Yeivin from the Israeli Department of Antiquities. He decried the destruction of ancient buildings and urged the different departments to discuss him and the IDAM prior to the destruction. His efforts resulted in the formation of the Interdepartmental Committee for Conservation of Historical Sites. The Committee recommended protecting holy sites for all religions, and the development of national parks and touristic sites around the special sites and monuments. 149 While Yeivin's effort to slow down the destruction of ancient sites was somewhat successful, he was not able to raise enough support for his plan of a comprehensive, systematic archeological survey. However, Israeli archeologists did not let go of their aspirations for an

148 Abu El-Haj, Facts on the Ground, 60.
archeological survey.

Israeli archeologists were not the only ones who did not let go of their plans. Many people in the Israeli establishment did not like the fact that so many of the empty Palestinian villages are still part of the landscape. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Governmental Tourism Corporation were among the main advocates for the destruction of emptied Palestinian villages. In 1957, Avraham Dothan who served under Foreign Affairs Minister Golda Meir as the manager of the Public Relations Department wrote a letter to the Director-General of the Ministry of Labour, asking the Labour Office to act quickly to remove village ruins: "The ruins from Arab villages and Arab neighborhoods, or intact blocks of houses that have stood deserted since 1948, have difficult associations that cause considerable political damage." It was most urgent for Dothan "to get rid of ruins in the middle of Jewish settlements, in important centers or along major routes of transportation." Dothan offered a number of bodies and organizations that may help in executing and funding the project, but warned that "it is desirable that the operation is done without anyone becoming aware of its political meaning." Yeivin, still the head of IDAM, received a copy of Dothan's letter and replied in a confidential memorandum in which he gave IDAM's position regarding the demolition of villages. Yeivin divided the empty village into four categories of importance:

a. Completely new settlements, in which the IDAM has no interest. …
b. Settlements in very close proximity to ancient sites. …
c. Settlements located on the surface of Tells or ancient Khirbes. …
d. Arab quarters in various cities, such as Accho, Jaffa, Ramla, etc.

Yeivin opposed the destruction of villages from types C, D and most of B, but did not oppose the destruction of villages from type A and some of type B. This memorandum can teach us that

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150 Kletter, Just Past?, 57.
151 Ibid., 58.
152 Ibid., 58–59.
Yeivin’s opposition for village demolition was not of ethical nature. Yeivin simply wanted the opportunity to excavate the villages that sit on ancient sites and to give the authorization before their destruction. He was not defending Palestinian material culture, but whatever is underneath it. Yeivin offered to be part of an interdepartmental committee that would give an archaeological perspective for the demolition work, but this initiative was not rewarded by the establishment of a new supervisory body this time.

In 1965, two old dreams have materialized in what seemed to be a symbiotic collaboration of two bodies: the Israeli Archaeological Survey Society (IASS) and the Israeli Land Administration (ILA). The IASS is a non-governmental organization founded in 1964 with a very low budget and one aim: to conduct an archaeological survey of Israel. If in 1950 Shmuel Yeivin's concern for protecting remnants of ancient times (before 1700) resulted in even the slightest slowdown in the pace of village obliteration, so the formation of the IASS did the opposite - in enabled and expedited the ‘clearing’ of the emptied Palestinian villages.

IASS’s desperate need for funding for the survey project intersected with the interests of the ILA. Founded in 1960, the ILA’s first head was Joseph Weitz, who provided primary impetus behind the Transfer Committee, which in 1949 advised Ben Gurion to destroy Palestinian villages to deny the return of refugees. The ILA managed both JNF lands and state owned territories. It was in the ILA’s interest to clear the territories it administered from the remaining emptied Palestinian villages. In 1965, after Weitz had already left the ILA, it recruited the newly founded IASS for the execution of its plan to ‘clear’ empty villages.

The ILA needed the IASS because the Antiquities Law, which lasted from the British Mandate, did not allow them to touch villages that sit on an ancient site. On the one hand, the ILA could not do the work on its own, because in some point someone would have noticed. On
the other hand, it could not wait for the archaeologists to examine each and every village. The IASS was a perfect solution for them because the organization did not have the sufficient funds for their survey work. Aron Shai reveals how the IASS archaeologists accompanied the destruction teams of the ILA, and quickly 'separated' all the 'old' artifacts from the 'new' ones, and then it gave the ILA the permission to destroy. Shai notes that at times the archaeologists had very little time to do their work, and at times they reached the site after the bulldozers had already began their work. Aron Shai concludes that the IASS "subordinated their scientific agenda to that of the governmental bodies with which they cooperated". As Raz Kletter and Gideon Sulimani articulate it: "as long as the memory of war was fresh, the villages were identified with the enemy and were perceived as a threat. The archeologists (except for a few) defined the villages as "recent" and lifted the protection given to ancient sites. By that, they made their destruction easier". The archeologists of the IASS did not protect Palestinian memory, but enabled its destruction. Kletter and Sulimani conclude, in one of the only papers written about the villages destruction operation: "Israeli archeology did not have the ability to see the material remnants of the abandoned villages as a representation of a society that existed and of the lives of the people in that society, that are worth studying and that some of them deserve protection and conservation."

By the time the National Parks and Nature Reserves laws passed in 1964, most of the areas designated for conservation and development were already identified and marked. Yeivin was not in a position of authority to try and stop the campaign from happening, but it is also likely that most of the sites that were dear to him were already protected. Because in the first two

\[155\] Ibid., 214.
decades of statehood Israeli archaeologists, geographers, and historians worked on creating places of Jewish heritage, whatever was left untouched was disposable as far as Israel was concerned. The creation of a 'clean' Hebrew map without the empty villages in the early sixties may have also helped erasing the villages from the landscape.

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Israeli archaeology in the 1950s and the 1960s was instrumental for the construction and the reinforcement of the Zionist historical narrative. That narrative tried to create direct continuity between the Land of Israel of the bible and the modern state of Israel. The scientific agenda of Israeli archaeologists, who strove to conduct a comprehensive archaeological survey of the land, met the interests of the ILA who wanted to clear the memories of the presence of Arab Palestinians in Palestine prior to the creation of Israel.
CONCLUSION

The Judaization of the Galilee in the first two decades of statehood is a process that began with the conquest of the Galilee in the 1948 war and peaked at the establishment of National Parks and the obliteration of the remaining of the Palestinian villages in the 1960. During that process the Galilee became under Jewish control and 86,500 Palestinians fled, many of whom were expelled by force, after the Hagana executed Plan D to create Jewish territorial continuity in the land. The destruction of Palestinian infrastructure during and in the aftermath of the war served both to deny the return of the Palestinian refugees and to erase Arab signifiers from the Galilean landscape. The De-Arabization an Judaization of the landscape in the Galilee were necessary for the construction of a Jewish sense of indigeneity in the galilee.

Following the war, the Planning Division of the Prime Minister's office, mostly Arieh Sharon and Eliezer Brutzkus, worked on a national planning scheme to settle more than a million of Jewish immigrants that were expected to arrive mostly from post-holocaust Europe and from North Africa. Based on the planners' modernist approach, which used efficiency settlement pattern's models developed by German scholar, and planner of the Nazi regime, Walter Christaller, the planners developed a population distribution plan, which was designed to secure the frontier and reduce the population density in the Coastal Plain and Jerusalem. The 'population distribution' model and the need to secure and define the Northern borders gave birth to the 'Judaization of the Galilee' policy of the Planning Division. During the execution of that policy, five new 'development towns' were established in the 1950s and the 1960s, and were settled mostly by immigrants from North Africa. The Planning Division failed to execute the part of the plan which was supposed to build industrial zones and employment for the immigrants in the development towns, sentencing the geographical periphery to become a social periphery.
Efforts of Shmuel Yeivin from the IDAM to protect antiquities in Palestinian villages from the spree of demolitions during and after the war, led to the formation of an Interdepartmental Committee which decided which sites are to be preserved, and by process of elimination, which sites will be destroyed. The committee adopted the Planning Division's vision of a system of national parks. These national parks include many historical sites, and sacred sites, that serve to connect the citizens of Israel with its geography and with its past.

Archeology played a central role in the Judaization of the Galilee. The public debate over the biblical story of the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan was another component of the construction of Jewish identity in the Galilee. Yigal Yadin's excavation in *tell* Hatzor, and Yohanan Aharoni's survey of the Israelite settlement in the Upper Galilee created a strong connection between the Galilee and a fundamental part of the history of the Jewish people. Israeli archeology not only constructed the national historical narrative, but also created facts on the ground. While the Interdepartmental Committee for Conservation did not adopt Shmuel Yeivin's proposal for a comprehensive archaeological survey of Israel in 1950, fourteen years later, in 1964 a group of archaeologists formed the IASS, which, as described in chapter 4, enabled the village obliteration campaign of the ILA in 1965.

During the first two decades of statehood, an intersection between several projects enabled the transformation of the landscape and memory in the Galilee. The effort to shift the demographic balance in the Galilee continued far after the period studied in this paper. In the 1970s, the planners of the 'hilltop plan' were able to attract thousands of upper/middle-class, mostly Ashkenazi, Jews to move into 40 new 'community settlements'. How were the architects of the 'hilltop settlements' able to attract upwardly mobile population to the Galilee, while in the 1950s the Planning Division had to take the immigrants "from the boat to the development
towns”? This is a topic for a different paper. Perhaps the process described in this paper was successful. Perhaps because the Arab signifiers were erased from the landscape, the border was secured, and the Golan Heights, occupied in 1967, created a buffer zone between the Galilee Panhandle and Syria, the Galilee was no longer an undesirable place to live. Perhaps because of the Judaization of the landscape the remains of the Palestinians villages were no longer threatening to people, but were perceived as part of nature. But the memory of the Nakba is far from being erased. As Ghazi Falah, a Palestinian historian whose work was instrumental for this paper writes: "for the Palestinians, the ruins of the villages represent the remains of a lost cultural topography. [Yet] their survival constitutes material evidence refuting Israel's claim that the Palestinians are not part of Palestine.”

BIBLIOGRAPHY


