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The Development of Apartheid in the Naqab Israel's Prawer Plan and the Jewish National Fund's Blueprint Negev

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The Development of Apartheid in the Naqab
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the Jewish National Fund's Blueprint Negev

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in International and Multicultural Education

by
Ayla Schoenwald
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The Development of Apartheid in the Naqab:
Israel's Prawer Plan and
the Jewish National Fund's Blueprint Negev

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MASTER OF ARTS

in

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Approved:

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to critique and confront past and present iterations of political Zionism through a combination of historical excavation and discursive analysis, informed by the present embodiment of this discourse in the form of violence and violations of Palestinian human rights in the context of the Naqab, the southern region of historic Palestine, where Bedouin communities continue to reside and resist Israel's (ongoing) colonization of their land. The Prawer Plan, a proposed Israeli policy to be implemented in the Naqab/Negev, threatens approximately 70,000 Arab Bedouin Israeli citizens of with forced expulsion and displacement. In addition, 35 Bedouin villages unrecognized by the Israeli state have been slated for destruction. The Israeli state shrouds this plan and its devastating implications with/in the language of development. For the Jewish population of the region, however, *development* will be implemented in an entirely different manner. In fact, a completely separate plan has been developed for this population. This plan is not an official piece of state legislation but a project of the Jewish National Fund, a parastatal organization that has functioned for more than a century to facilitate, enact, and maintain the Zionist colonization of Palestine. Thus, although Blueprint Negev appears to be completely separate from the Prawer legislation, this is a misconception that functions to obscure the policies' perpetuation of systemic inequity and injustice. Through the discursive analysis of Zionist mythologies and their effects, both historically and in the present, this inquiry seeks to identify strategic points of intervention, particularly those that might be useful to struggles for Palestinian freedom, human rights, and self-determination in the immediate present.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Zionism is predicated on the erasure and effacement of Palestinian life/lives both (a) materially (through massacre, expulsion/displacement, and/or demolition/destruction, etc) and (b) discursively (through the production of national mythology/memory/history), all of which necessarily require the suppression of Palestinian narratives (Eid, 2008; Naber, Desouky, & Baroudi, 2006; Pappe, 2008; Sayegh, 1965; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2010; Youssef, 2012). This has led to egregious acts and regularized practices of violence against the Palestinian people, including those in the West Bank and Gaza, those in the diasporas (most of whom were expelled from Israel and made refugees as a result of the 1948 Nakba) and those who remain in Palestine and continue to live under the country's apartheid regime. However, a thorough explication of the ways in which this violence has been a harbinger of death, destruction and other devastating consequences for each of these populations, in each particular location, was beyond the scope of this study.

To avoid the problem of generality that so frequently arises when discussing an issue so vast in its scope, therefore, the writer has chosen to focus her analysis on two particular policies/projects, both of which are presented and promoted in the name of *development* and both of which will unfold across the Naqab (Hebraised as Negev), the southern region of historic Palestine: the Prawer Plan and the Jewish National Fund's (JNF) Blueprint Negev. The Prawer Plan currently threatens approximately 70,000 Arab Bedouin Israeli citizens with forced expulsion and/or displacement, as well as the

destruction of, according to the government of Israel, 35 *unrecognized villages*. The

villages are unrecognized because they were built without official and, therefore, remain

ineligible for municipal services, such as connection to the electrical grid, water mains,

and sanitation services and cannot elect government representatives. These citizens have

inhabited the region since the 7th century, predating the establishment of Israel in 1948

(Mihlar, 2011). Dr Younis Abu Rabia, an Arab Bedouin medical practitioner and activist,

states,

> We are citizens of the state of Israel. We belong to the state if we like it or we
> don't like it, if they like it or don't like it. If we are citizens we should be treated
> without discrimination, in the same way the Jews are treated. There is a Zionist
> theory that still continues that Arabs should not have land, in their subconscious,
> it goes like this: Arab plus land equals danger for the Israeli state. (Mihlar, 2011,
> p. 3)

Nevertheless, from 1948 to 1966, the Israeli government enacted laws that enabled the

state to appropriate large portions of Bedouin land for agricultural use and to create

nature reserves and military zones.

 The Israeli state has shrouded this plan and its devastating implications with/in the

language of development. For the Jewish population of the region, however, *development*

is intended to be implemented in an entirely different manner. In fact, a completely

separate plan has been devised for this population. For the Jewish population of this

region, *development* will be implemented not as official state legislation, but rather as the

primary project of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), a parastatal organization that has

functioned for more than a century to facilitate, enact, and maintain the Zionist

colonization of Palestine. Thus, although Blueprint Negev appears to be completely

separate from the Prawer legislation this is a misconception and as such, it functions to

obscure the policies' perpetuation of systemic inequity and injustice.

Background and Need for the Study

Despite vociferous objections and protestations by the Arab Bedouin community,

the Regional Master Plan for the Be'er Sheva Metropolitan Area was approved by the

Israeli government in August 2012, The Prawer Plan is grounded in this discriminatory

Master Plan. It provides a blueprint for the so-called development of the Be'er Sheva

Metropolitan Area. This development plan, supported by the JNF, includes concrete plans

for the state's confiscation of Arab Bedouin land in the Naqab, as well as eviction and

destruction of most of the *unrecognized villages*. According to Mihlar (2011), these

policies have had a devastating effect on Arab Bedounis. Specifically,

> The state has also disrupted the Bedouin's traditional semi-nomadic way of life by
> taking over their land and restricting their movement. This has had far-reaching
> consequences for Bedouin, from increasing poverty levels and already high levels
> of unemployment to a loss of traditional culture. Today the Bedouin live in
> impoverished conditions in the Negev desert. They are not recognized by Israel as
> an indigenous population and are therefore deprived of specific rights accorded to
> indigenous people under international law. (p. 2)

The Prawer-Begin Bill furthers this aim in several ways.

The Prawer-Begin Bill, or the Prawer Plan, as it is commonly referred to, is

essentially a reiteration of Israel's policy toward its Arab Bedouin (Palestinian) citizens

of al-Naqab. Many of these policies and practices are illegal, on the basis of established

international law. Through the Prawer-Begin Bill, the Israeli state seeks to legislate this

illegality. The bill threatens approximately 170,000 Palestinian Bedouin inhabitants of

the Naqab desert (the southern region of historic Palestine) with expulsion, displacement,

and dispossession. The bill also threatens to implement the total destruction of most

remaining unrecognized villages, where the region's inhabitants continue to reside and

resist, despite the state's refusal to recognize their legal rights to the land upon which

their families have lived for generations (See Appendix A). Proponents of the Prawer-

Begin Bill (approved by the Israeli Knesset in September 2011) were confident within six

months or less they would be granted permission to proceed with its implementation.

This has not been the case, however. Instead, the bill underwent numerous revisions

from its original iteration in 2011 through December of 2013. As a result of the strategic

and steadfast resistance of those whose lives (and livelihoods) are threatened by the

impending implementation of this bill, it was never (officially) finalized and the process

in general has been far from quick and easy for its proponents (See Appendix B for an

elaboration on the development and present status of the Prawer-Begin Bill).

The 1948 Nakba (catastrophe) was the first of a series of violent displacements

experienced by most Bedouin residents of the Naqab. Many became refugees in the Gaza

Strip, the West Bank, the Sinai Peninsula, or in nearby countries such as Jordan. Those

who remained within the borders of the incipient Israeli state were placed under

emergency military rule, a system of law that notably did not apply to Jewish Israelis.

Only Palestinians were forced to carry military permits if they were to move between

towns/villages, and only the land on which Palestinians continued to reside was

systematically identified as necessary for military purposes. Under the Defence

(Emergency) Regulations, which originated during the British Mandate period (1917–

1948) and was promptly adopted as Israeli state policy, military commanders were given

the right to declare any area a closed military zone, resulting in the expulsion of many

more Palestinians from their homes and off their land. The policies were the basis of the

military government imposed on Israeli Arabs from 1950 to 1966 and continue to be an

integral part of the legal framework applied in the West Bank today. As a result, many of

the homes and villages belonging to Palestinian Bedouins (and Palestinians in general)

were immediately destroyed by Israeli forces, so as to prevent the possibility of the

Palestinians returning. In other cases, Israeli settler families were moved into the

violently vacated homes and Jewish towns were established in their place. The planting

of trees (and the creation of forests, parks, and playgrounds) by the JNF also served to

prevent the Palestinians' return and to conceal the ruins of destroyed villages. This

unusual colonial tactic came to constitute a crucial component of Zionist mythology. The

expansive greenery was deployed as evidence of the settlers' miraculous ability to *make*

the desert bloom, while in reality, the vibrant history of Palestine and its indigenous

residents has been obscured beneath the shade of these trees and the ominous shadows

they were casting.

The current priority of the JNF is their Blueprint Negev campaign, designed to

facilitate the Judaization of the Naqab region and simultaneously function as a

component of Israel's re-branding strategy. Blueprint Negev, the latest JNF project,

implements language invoking U.S. notions of "Manifest Destiny" and Westward

expansion, in its attempt to market settlements such as Carmit primarily in a U.S.

context. This propaganda strategy is not only about luring U.S. and Canadian Jews to

participate in Israel's ongoing conquest of Palestine: Carmit itself functions as marketing

mechanism, as well, fomenting support for the Israeli state and the Zionist project more

broadly, primarily amongst the same population that the JNF hopes will settle in the

region.

The Blueprint Negev settlements are allegedly free of the constraints of conflict,

controversy, and political complexity, unlike their West Bank counterparts. It seems that this is a blueprint for nothing less than a neo-liberal utopia—complete with upscale housing, an organic foods grocery store, and several art galleries—which promises prospective settlers the chance to live the "pioneering" life in luxury. This myth is contingent on that of a desolate desert, wild and barren—and most importantly, uninhabited. Once again, the Zionists claim to have discovered "a land without a people," awaiting the arrival of a "people without a land," whose conquest and cultivation of the soil will be made possible by an amalgam of political zealotry and advanced agricultural technologies.

Purpose of the Study

This study constitutes an interrogation of Zionist discourse in the present, as well as an exposition of its effects in the context of the Naqab, the southern region of historic Palestine, where Bedouin communities continue to reside and resist Israel's (ongoing) colonization of their land. Through the discursive analysis of Zionist mythologies and their effects, both historically and in the present, this inquiry seeks to identify strategic points of intervention, particularly those that might be useful to movements for Palestinian rights, freedom, and self-determination in the immediate present. Thus, this study seeks to critique and confront past and present iterations of political Zionism, through a combination of historical excavation and discursive analysis, informed by the present embodiment of this discourse in the form of violence and violations of Palestinian human rights.

Research Questions

This study was guided by three specific research questions. The research

questions were:

    1. What is the relationship between the Prawer Plan and Blueprint Negev—and how is this relationship obscured?

    2. How are signifiers of modernity and progress deployed by the Jewish National Fund (JNF) in its promotion of Blueprint Negev?

    3. How have these and other signifiers of civilization and productivity been deployed by the JNF in relation to its other endeavors, missions, and projects—and what is revealed/illuminated by a study of the (dis)continuities in the discursive tactics and strategies implemented by the JNF?

Theoretical Framework

Postcolonial theory was the primary theoretical framework upon which this study was based. Edward Said's *Orientalism*, often identified as a foundational text in postcolonial studies, was especially relevant to this study. The use of a postcolonial theoretical framework may seem paradoxical in the context of this study, due to the contemporary presence of Israel's settler-colonial regime in Palestine. However, it is important to distinguish between postcolonial scholarship and the use of the term post-colonial as a temporal marker. Postcolonialism is sometimes understood as a category of colonization. Postcolonial theorist Achille Mbembe (2007) emphasizes this interpretation in his text *On the Postcolony* with terms such as "postcolonization" (p.125).

Postcolonialism can also be seen as an ongoing practice of politicized scholarship, a way of grappling with colonization and its egregious aftermath. Postcolonial thought and scholarship underscores and addresses the centrality of colonialism in the complex configuration(s) of the present; it is therefore highly relevant to the questions posed in

this study. To describe the present as entirely post-colonial, however, or to invoke or allude to the notion of a post-colonial epoch in which all of us currently exist, would re-enact and reinforce the old Orientalist characterization of Palestine (and its indigenous population) as outside of history, outside of time, and untouched by the teleological progression (or "progress") from which the majority of the world allegedly benefits. Fortunately, this assertion is rarely (if ever) made by postcolonial scholars, many of whom have written extensively on the meaning of the "post-" in "post-colonial," addressing common misinterpretations in which it is understood, simply, to mean "after." Post-colonial thought incorporates the detailed and rigorous interrogation of colonial policies, processes, and texts. It raises questions about culture, identity, and representation. It also explores themes of displacement, subjugation, and resistance.

Mbembe (2007) also articulates the ways in which Western discourse depicts the cultures of the colonized as barbaric and under-developed. The colonized *othe*r is portrayed as a brutal savage with an affinity for unrefined violence and as childlike creatures who must be protected (from themselves) through the imposition of colonial rule. Both of these representations function to reinforce the self-proclaimed identity of the West as the sole source of progress and modernity. Said's Orientalism addresses this problem of representation specifically in relation to the region now known as the Middle East. He addresses the collusion between imperialist policies, projects, and politics and Western knowledge production. Said demonstrates how the conflation of all Arabs and Muslims into a single, monolithic culture, irrationally attached to tradition and prone to violence and tyranny, is a result of Orientalist discourse.

Methodology

This study addresses the aforementioned issues by means of Foucauldian discourse analysis. Foucauldian discourse analysis is a genealogical approach to history that serves to displace the supra-historical meta-narratives through which history is usually constructed. The method of Foucauldian genealogy is especially useful and relevant in a study that seeks to destabilize and disrupt the circulation of Zionist mythologies for the following reasons. Foucault rejects the emphasis placed on origins within the (dominant) disciplinary traditions of both history and philosophy. Realities, according to Foucault, do not have such mystical origins, awaiting our discovery and revelation. His scholarship suggests that one dispense of this ideological and methodological imperative in our work, to re-think, re-envision, and re-member the present, as well as the past. Kendall and Wickham (1999) outline five steps in using Foucauldian discourse analysis: 1) recognition that discourse is a body of statements that are organized in a regular and systematic way; 2) how those statements are created; 3) what can be said (written) and what cannot; 4) how spaces in which new statements can be made are created; and 5) making practices material and discursive at the same time

Because the notion of a mystical, mythical past is itself a necessary component of Zionist mythology, which asks that we believe in an unbroken linear continuity through which the Israeli state, established in 1948, is rooted in Biblical antiquity. This elides thousands of years of Palestinian life and history, as well as a more recent history of quotidian Israeli violence against Palestinians, punctuated by such events as war, incursion, and massacre. It is necessary not only to excavate the details of these histories, but also to explicate the ways in which Israel, the JNF, and other Zionist entities deploy and disseminate the mythological claims on which this violence is predicated.

Sample and Data Collection

The sample, in this case, refers to the textual data selected for close reading and detailed discursive analysis. This data falls into two categories, the latter of which can also be divided in two. The categories are as follows:

1. Historical documents relevant to the founding of political Zionism and its early propagation amongst both Jews and Christians.

2. Primary source material regarding either (a) Blueprint Negev; or (b) the Prawer Plan.

The process of data selection was different for each of the categories listed above. I will now discuss each one in turn.

1. Historical documents relevant to the founding of political Zionism and its early propagation amongst both Jews and Christians

My previous work in the region, as an activist as well as a scholar, was especially useful in relation to the selection of specific texts from this category. Through this work, I had already developed a working familiarity with the dominant discourse of political Zionism and the various myths deployed by Israeli and U.S. Zionists to garner support for their cause, both historically and in the present. This work thus informed and enabled my selection of texts. It also played a role in determining both format and formulae regarding my interpretation and discursive analysis of these texts, which function both individually and collectively to shape, maintain, and continually inform the ideology of global Zionism.

The first step in this part of the research process, therefore, was to compose a list of prevalent Zionist myths, claims, and slogans, which I did by drawing on my own

knowledge base and that of the (scholarly and activist) communities with whom I have worked on this and similar issues in the past. Then, I traced the lineage of these myths either to a clear point of origin, in the cases where one does in fact exist, or to a plethora of originary and other critical moments which function(ed) together to produce various aspects of the Zionist mythos as such.

2.(a). Primary source material regarding Blueprint Negev

The first step in this sampling process was to conduct an initial survey and basic analysis of the promotional materials featured prominently on the JNF's Blueprint Negev web-page. I followed this with a more thorough search of their website, mining their blog and featured news articles for references to Blueprint Negev or to any of the Blueprint Negev settlements, noting all articles in which these references occurred. Articles with a significant amount of relevant content were flagged and put aside to be given a closer reading and examined through a more detailed critical lens at a later time. Then, I explored the websites of additional Blueprint Negev partner organizations such as the OR Movement. Throughout this initial survey, I was attentive to both written text and visual data, which included photos, maps, and other imagery, as well as several promotional videos, most of which were produced by the JNF for an English-speaking audience, specifically in relation to Blueprint Negev and the settlement known as Carmit. Through this initial survey, I was able to identify several of the myths deployed by the JNF and other institutions, including the Israeli government, in relation to this particular project.

2.(b). Primary source material regarding the Prawer Plan

This was the simplest category, comprised of the Prawer legislation itself, as well as the

Policy Brief published by a coalition of organizations including BIMKOM Planners for

Planning Rights; the Association for Civil Rights in Israel; and The Regional Council for

the Unrecognized Villages in the Negev (RCUV). I also reviewed the Alternative Master

Plan published by RCUV in collaboration with Sidreh- the Bedouin Arab Women's

Organization of the Negev, which provided a frame of reference through which the

Prawer legislation could be understood in relation to the actual problems at hand. The

decision to base this frame of reference on a document published and prepared by

indigenous residents of the Naqab is an intentional one, based on a political ethic of

solidarity as well as respect for the self-determination of all Peoples, including the people

of Palestine.

Data Analysis

Through this study, I have attempted to compose what Foucault calls a "history of the

present" CITE in relation to contemporary struggles over land, power, and resources in

the Naqab. Therefore, the first step was to conduct an in-depth inquiry into the material

realities of contemporary life for Bedouins in the Naqab, contextualizing these realities

within the context of a legal, political, and economic context, all of which themselves are

situated within specific cultural, social, and discursive frameworks. For this part of the

study, I examined various news sources such as newspapers and blogs from both Israeli

and Palestinian perspectives. I also looked to newsletters and other publications by non-

profit organizations, activist coalitions, and others actively involved in various legal and

political aspects of this issue and relevant struggles. Although these may be considered

biased, they provide details and personal testimony that is otherwise unavailable in

English. Due to constraints imposed by time and lack of resources, I was unable to visit

Palestine in order to conduct interviews of my own with residents of the Naqab; therefore, the interview testimony provided by organizations already involved in work of this kind was an important component of my research.

After examining much of the data obtained in the manner delineated above, the next step in my analytical process was to identify the various discursive frameworks that collaborate to enable Israel's egregious practices in the Naqab/Negev through strategies of truth production, subject formation, and the myth-making processes employed by the Israeli state and the Zionist movement, which is comprised of Jews and Christians alike, both within and outside of Israel's (current) borders. This process itself is actually quite similar to the process through which I initially selected the texts to be analyzed. However, in this case, I was equipped with more extensive research, enabling a more detailed, in-depth, and nuanced analysis of the relevant texts and the data contained therein. This accounts for the slight (though in some cases quite significant) variation between the thematic categories listed above (in the previous section) and those included in the Findings section of this paper.

Based on these more nuanced frameworks, I returned to the primary source material from the JNF, OR Movement, and other sources, this time considering their content, as discourse, in relation to a variety of themes and trajectories present in both contemporary and historical Zionist texts. Although there are significant variations and divergences between and amongst these various texts, the mythic foundations upon which texts from both temporal categories both draw and rely provide the basis for a history, not of the land itself, nor of its people, but of the historical production of a particular discursive regime. This discursive regime, in turn, has produced and continued to enable

the structural violence of which Israel's conquest of the Naqab is only one example.

Protection of Human Subjects

Because this study did not involve contact with human subjects, it was not necessary to obtain permission from the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Limitations of the Study

The primary limitation of this study was the researcher's inability (due to lack of time and resources) to travel to Palestine to conduct ethnographic field research. Because of this, she was obliged to rely on ethnographic research conducted by others, and although she was able to find sources that were both rigorous and informative, they did not necessarily address the specific questions raised in this study.

Significance of the Study

Because it addresses the complex conditions of the present, this study is directly relevant not only to contemporary socio-political realities, but also to struggles for peace and justice, such as the movement for Palestinian freedom, rights, and self-determination. The interrogation of Zionist discourse, both in the past and in the present, provides insight into the contemporary mindset of policymakers, think tanks, and Zionist lobbies currently responsible for crafting, implementing, and generating governmental and popular support for Israel's apartheid regime. The emphasis this study placed on the role of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) in the ongoing Zionist colonization of Palestine makes it possible to implement its findings in the immediate present, as the JNF is currently the

target of an international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, which

seeks to revoke the charitable status enjoyed by the organization in over 50 countries,

including the United States. The discursive analysis encompassed in this study is also

relevant to the movement for BDS more broadly, as it addresses some of the core tenets

of Zionism, which are integral to the Zionists' ability to generate support for the settler-

colonial project in Western countries, especially those whose current political policies are

also informed by colonial histories and current imperialist endeavors.

Definition of Terms

Colonialism: "the practice of settling in colonies that evolved into the practice of the

ideology of imperialism …[and] involves the domination and subjugation of an

indigenous population by colonists or settlers who either maintain total distinction from

the indigenes or mix with them, as in the case of Spanish and Portuguese settlement in

Central and South America" (Yousseff, 2012, p. 14).

Development: The term development can carry either positive or negative connotations

(or both), depending on the context of its usage. Throughout the text here, the word

development is frequently placed within quote marks, to denote the skepticism warranted

by any application of the word that is less than critical, especially in relation to colonial

and postcolonial systems and scenarios. This is because "development" is "in fact the

outcome of the alliance between Western Enlightenment ideals and capital." As such, it is

systemically ensured that "[any] nationalist movement will remain a subordinate recipient

of 'progress' from the developed metropolis, and is left with the task of constantly trying

to catch up and adapt with the latest advances in the 'West' which renders it under the

hegemony of colonial powers" (Chatterjee, as cited in Yousseff, 2012, p.31).

Discourse: The term discourse is used here to denote "a 'systematic discipline' (Said) which has discursive consistency and 'economy' and is framed by a set of forces which serve to give it cohesion" (Yousseff, 2012, p.9).

Genealogy: Geneaology in the Foucauldian sense begins with an analysis of the present. The focus of Foucault's own genealogical inquiry is usually related to his own political analysis and his subsequent identification of those problems (he) considered to be the most pressing and problematic in his particular present. Once these problems have been identified, one is able to more precisely delineate the conventional ways in which the issue at hand is depicted, (re)presented, and discussed. After making this image available to the reader and juxtaposing it with a counter-image constructed through one's own re-interpretation of the issue at hand as it relates to the present, drawing on whatever alternative accounts of history are available either directly or through a more complex and in-depth reading of conventional texts. An example of this can be found in Edward Said's methodology of contrapuntal reading, where the focus of the reader is continually placed on the colonial dimensions of a text even when the text itself does not explicitly acknowledge colonialism as such. Here, the image of colonial society is presented to the reader as a fictional but historically accurate depiction of a particular time and place. The backdrop of colonialism is present, however, even when it is not immediately apparent, and through his analysis, Said raises questions about representation and alternative perspectives, primarily those of the colonized whose presence in the text is not

immediately apparent but is easily discernable through this particular mode of discursive

and textual analysis. Thus, Said provides an alternative image of the time in question,

primarily through the provision and explication of a perspectival positionality that is not

only alternative but in many cases materially opposed to that of the text itself and its

protagonists. Thus, through a juxtaposition of contradictory images, one is made aware

of a conflict in world views that one might otherwise have overlooked, assuming the

dominant interpretation, that which is accepted (consciously or subconsciously) and re-

presented by the author, to be the totality of truth. Like in Marx, this contradiction leads

to conflict, and this conflict opens up space for the construction of something entirely

new. In this case, however, the scale is much smaller. There are no plans to incite a

global uprising resulting in a total inversion of the power structure and the establishment

of a utopian society. Instead, in the case of Foucault, Said, and others engaged in

methodologically similar projects, the production and organization of a new world-view,

subjectivity, epistemology, and/or interpretation of historical and social facts is elicited as

a result of this strategic provocation of the space of possibility.

Zionism: Refers to a political movement and a colonial project, based on "a form of

ethnic nationalism that employs ethnic Jewish colonial settlement in Palestine as its

methodology to establish a state for the Jews." To do so, "Zionism 'invents a tradition'

by Hebraising Palestine … [and attempting to] erase the indigenous character, culture and

human geography of Palestine and replace it by a Jewish one that claims to own an

unbroken stretch back to times immemorial (Yousseff, 2012, p.43).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Much of the literature included in this review is best described as exemplary of activist-scholarship. Many of the articles that will be discussed have been included in the scholarly publications of activist groups, coalitions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The JNF eBook series is one example of this. In addition, several relatively recent issues of *Al Majdal*, the quarterly publication of the BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights have provided a number of useful articles, with one issue specifically organized around the JNF and its role in the historical (and ongoing) Zionist colonization of Palestine. Many of the authors whose contributions are featured in these publications are also involved in the more grassroots aspects of the struggles they discuss, sometimes from the perspective of an ally or solidarity activist, and in other instances, as members (and leaders) of the communities targeted by the policies that their articles discuss. This review of literature addresses two specific themes: a) Palestine's Southern Bedouin: Displacement, Dispossession, and Steadfast Resistance; b) The Role of the JNF in the Ongoing Colonization of Palestine; and c) Marketing Israeli Apartheid: A Brand, a Blueprint, and (other Examples of) Bio-political "Scrubbing". This chapter section concludes with a summary of the reviewed literature.

Palestine's Southern Bedouin: Displacement, Dispossession, and Steadfast Resistance

In "The Ongoing Judaisation of the Naqab," Mansour Nasasra (2012) highlighted Israel's demolition of Bedouin homes and villages functions not only to displace the Bedouin, forcing them into the siyaj zone, and to dispossess them of their property (including their land, which often functions as their only source of income/livelihood, as well as their housing/shelter) but also to erase the evidence of the Bedouins' historical attachment to the land. Nasasra explained the mechanisms used by the Israeli government, in the years immediately following the founding of the state in 1948, to displace the Bedouin and dispossess them of their homes/land in the Naqab. Many of them were terrorized (by Zionist militias and paramilitary troops, some of which were later absorbed into the Israeli army) into leaving their land on what was supposed to be a temporary basis. Soon, they were promised, they would be able to return; more than 60 years later, however, they are still waiting for this promise to be fulfilled. In other cases, Bedouin communities were evicted from their land (primarily in the western part of the Naqab), which was declared a "closed zone" (*al-mantiqa al-muharama*) for "security reasons" by the military government imposed on the Palestinian communities remaining within the borders of the incipient Israeli state (p.92). The military government functioned primarily to police and patrol the area, restrict/monitor movement, collect information, and generally control and contain the Bedouin population.

Publications such as *Indigenous (In)Justice: Human Rights Law and Bedouin Arabs in the Naqab/Negev* locate the displacement and dispossession of Palestine's southern Bedouin within a global context of historical and present colonial violence against indigenous peoples. This framework is useful in facilitating alliances between the Bedouin population of the Naqab and other indigenous groups engaged in struggles for justice. It also opens up various avenues for the pursuit of rights and justice within the arena of international law.

Ismael Abu-Saad, a Palestinian Bedouin activist-scholar, is another proponent of this framework, which he implements in his article "The Indigenous Palestinian Bedouin of the Naqab: Forced Urbanization and Denied Recognition." In this article, Abu-Saad (2008), points to some of the additional discriminatory and apartheid-style elements of Israeli policy relating to Palestine's indigenous Bedouin residing in the Naqab. For example, he notes that Bedouin towns are denied the right to elect representative authorities and local councils of their own. Instead, the Israeli state has established various agencies and other apparatuses for the purpose of governing and managing these towns and their populations. One of these agencies, the Bedouin Advancement Authority (BAA), is responsible for planning, policy-making, and policy implementation in the Bedouin townships, as well as the remaining unrecognized villages in the region, where BAA policy primarily consists of denying basic resources to residents.

The BAA, established (appropriately) in 1984, is a sub-division of the Israel Lands Administration (ILA). Other relevant agencies discussed by Abu-Saad (2008) include the Bedouin Education Authority (BEA) and the Green Patrol, a paramilitary unit that functions to "police, harass, and evict residents" of the unrecognized villages (p.

125). Abu-Saad then proceeded to link this historical context to current (2006) state (and parastatal, paramilitary) presence, practice, and policy in the region, where an enduring process/procession of Israeli violence continues to threaten the lives and livelihoods of Bedouin residents, especially those residing in villages unrecognized by the Israeli state.

Like many of the other authors whose works address the history of the Naqab Bedouin, Abu-Saad not only discusses the violent and discriminatory effects of Israeli policy on the land's indigenous people. He also points to a corresponding history of *sumud* (steadfast) resistance. As the Zionist colonization of Palestine continues in its relentless confiscation of Palestinian land, resulting in displacement and dispossession of the land's indigenous inhabitants, the steadfast resistance of these communities continues, as well.

Abu-Saad (2008) noted three forms of this resistance. Most significantly, there is the resolute refusal to comply with the development and urbanization that is mandated by the state. The resolve of the Bedouin to remain on their land is not broken by the violent and coercive tactics of the state. In addition, legal action based on "finding cracks in the Israeli legal system" (p. 126) has been taken by the Bedouin in many cases. The formation of alternative planning and administrative bodies such as the Regional Council of Unrecognized Villages (RCUV) is another example of Bedouin resistance. The RCUV has proposed various alternative plans to the Interior Ministry. The Adalah Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights has implemented similar strategies, including the proposal of an alternative to the Prawer Plan. Of course, it is not surprising that this proposal was not incorporated into official Israeli policy.

Other scholars whose works address similar histories and issues, appearing in many of the explicitly politicized publications mentioned throughout this review of literature, include Salman Abu Sitta, scholar-activist with the Palestine Land Society, and Hazem Jamjoum, editor-in-chief of *Al Majdal* and a graduate student at the American University of Beirut. The Adalah Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights, mentioned above, also publishes various reports, many of which have informed this study. *Nomads Against Their Will*, a 2011 publication about the attempted expulsion of the Bedouin residents of Atir-Umm al-Hieran, written by attorneys Suhad Bishara and Haneen Naamnih of Adalah's Land and Planning Unit, is one example of this. Each of these authors approaches the historical and present conditions of the Naqab through a particular lens and/or political perspective, but elaborating on each of these in its specificity is beyond the scope of this study. The historical and political context discussed by these authors is the component of their work that is most relevant to this review of literature.

Several articles by Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, pertaining to this section, have also informed this study in many significant ways. In "The Grammar of Rights in Colonial Contexts: The Case of Palestinian Women in Israel," Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2012) discussed the application and relevance of human rights activism to the lives of Palestinian Bedouin women residing in "unrecognized villages" in the Naqab (Negev). She assessed the advantages and the limitations of implementing a "human rights" framework in this context, and she explicates some of the ways in which human rights discourse has been associated with an ongoing legacy of Eurocentrism and Western dominance. However, she explicitly stated this was not her primary focus. The majority of her research or field work was comprised of participant observation and interviews

with ten Palestinian Bedouin women between the ages of 20 and 37. Based on these

interviews, she composes a critique of human rights activism based on its effects on the

lives of the colonized. She noted the historical violence that has taken place under the

guise of "helping," "democratizing," and "modernizing" Bedouin women (as well as

other non-Western populations). Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2012) insists that for human rights

activism to be effective and accountable in this context, activists must engage explicitly

with this history, actively challenging and rejecting the legacy that this historical legacy

has left behind. In addition to the specific information that she and her articles provide,

Shalhoub-Kevorkian's analysis and critique have been a crucial benchmark of

accountability and political ethics that the researcher has kept in mind consistently

throughout the process of the research for this study. Shalhoub-Kevorkian also asserted

that while it is necessary for scholars of political economy in the Naqab to prioritize the

stories, narratives, and testimony of Bedouin women in their analyses, this alone is not

sufficient. In her work, Palestinian Bedouin women are not only research subjects; they

are also included in the production of knowledge and analysis.

The Role of the JNF in the Ongoing Colonization of Palestine

The JNF eBook series explicates, illustrates, and explores the ways in which the

JNF has functioned both historically and in the present to engineer, implement, and

ensure the displacement, dispossession, and destruction of Palestinian communities

throughout the country. In its entirety, this compilation of essays, articles and other texts

functions as a call to action, and the authors/editors do not attempt to mask their

involvement in various aspects of political struggle, including the campaign to Stop the

JNF. The first volume of the series, *Introducing the Jewish National Fund*, does precisely

what the title suggests. It does so from a perspective that is not only critical, but explicitly

invested in Palestine's ongoing struggle for justice, freedom, self-determination, and

other essential human rights. Essays and articles by prominent scholars in the field, such

as Uri Davis, Ghada Karmi, and Ilan Pappe, are featured alongside press releases and

outreach materials from various activist campaigns, as well as a summary of "Previous

Challenges to the Registration of the JNF Charitable Trust," provided by the UK Charity

Commission in response to a Freedom of Information Request made by London-based

scholar-activist Mortaza Sahibzada, whose work is also featured in this volume. She is

also an assistant to the editor (Uri Davis) of JNF eBook Volume II, *Preparing for Legal*

Action, edited by Uri Davis, and comprised of a similar assortment of articles, activist

materials, official documents, and various correspondences between and amongst activist

groups and government agencies. As the subtitle of this volume (*Focus: Canada Park*)

suggests, its (strategic) emphasis is on the compilation of articles, expert testimony, and

other evidence that might be useful in an (eventual) legal struggle, to be staged before

Canada's Constitutional Court, demanding the revocation of the charitable status enjoyed

by the JNF in that country.

In the JNF issue of *Al Majdal*, quarterly publication of the BADIL Resource

Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, the authors elaborated on the role

played by the Jewish National Fund in the establishment and maintenance of Israel's

colonial apartheid regime in Palestine. This focus was a subtle, yet significant divergence

from much of the Stop the JNF campaign material, which is organized around the tactics

and techniques through which the JNF appeals to Jews (and others) in the Diaspora, i.e.,

outside of Israel's borders, as well as some of the ways in which it can be misinterpreted

with problematic implications). Of course, BADIL's location in Bethlehem, Palestine

may be the reason for this alternate focus; the JNF issue of *Al Majdal* was published in

2010, before an international coalition had formed to stop the JNF. Thus, the focus was

not yet as international in scale as it has become. After all, it was first necessary for those

whose lives are directly affected by the JNF and its violent, discriminatory practices to

call attention to the organization and its ongoing violation(s) of international law and

human rights, thus putting the JNF on the agenda (as a potential target) for those

organizing to promote the BDS Movement abroad. It is within this framework that the

coalition was convened and it is within this framework that the movement to stop the JNF

and revoke its charitable status continues to function.

The exact nature of the relationship between the JNF and the Israeli state is

confusing, and the confusion is not unintentional. The JNF functions to obfuscate the

explicitly discriminatory nature of this relationship and protect the state from any attempt

to hold the JNF accountable for its explicitly exclusionary policies, which, if enacted by a

nation-state, would be illegal according to international law. Many of the articles

discussed thus far have also included an explication of this relationship and how it

functions. Because of space limitations, that information is not included here.

Al Araqib is the Naqab village that has received the most international media

attention in relation to the recent escalation of Israel's attempts to coercively ensure the

relocation of Palestinian Bedouin who continue to reside in the "unrecognized" villages.

In *Israel's Denial of the Bedouin*, Farah Mihlar (2011) reminds us that residents of Al

Araqib have reported the involvement of JNF bulldozers in the demolition of their homes

and other buildings. In addition to the bulldozers, which are also featured on the JNF's

own Blueprint Negev Web page, the orgnization has its own trucks and tractors that also participate in the demolition process. There is also the Green Patrol, known amongst the Palestinian Bedouin population as the "Black Patrol," which is the paramilitary arm of the Jewish National Fund (Benjamin, 2012).

Another notable BADIL publication, *Ruling Palestine*, provides a detailed historical overview of Zionist land acquisition in Palestine, beginning in the pre-state period (before 1948) and continuing into the present. The study documents the key role played by the Jewish National Fund throughout this process.

Marketing Israeli Apartheid:

A Brand, a Blueprint, and (other Examples of) Bio-political "Scrubbing"

Carmit and Blueprint Negev are emblematic of Israel's re-branding initiative, which many scholars, including Jasbir Puar and Sarah Schulman, have discussed at length in relation to the Israeli practice of pinkwashing, which is a propaganda strategy similar to that of greenwashing, except in this case, the state and its proponents emphasize gay rights and/or a gay-friendly culture in their performance of progress, modernity, and democratic ideals (See Appendix B). Brand Israel is the strategy in which both pinkwashing and greenwashing are situated. Puar describes Brand Israel as a "campaign ... to counter [Israel's] growing reputation as a colonial power" (Puar, 2011. p. 137). Through various market research studies and expert inquiries into dominant perceptions of Israel in the West, not only as a nation-state but as a national(ist) brand, the Israeli state was disappointed to find that its popularity is waning. It is no longer afforded complete immunity; it can no longer expect entirely unconditional support. Although many Westerners, especially in the United States, continue to support Israel

ideologically as well as economically, this does not negate their perception of the Zionist state as militaristic, religious, and altogether unlike themselves. In *A Documentary Guide to Brand Israel and the Art of Pinkwashing*, Schulman (2011) relayed the words of David Sable, one of the marketing professionals involved in the campaign, who states that what consumers want to see is a "productive, vibrant, and cutting edge culture"[1]. And that is exactly what Blueprint Negev seeks to exemplify in the production and promotion of its first major settlement.

Summary

Aside from the difference in focus, much of the historical information provided in these publications is the same. The political framework(s) are similar, as well. It is unlikely that the repetition within and across these articles is merely an example of accidental redundancy; a more probably explanation is one of political strategy. After reading a variety of articles published throughout the JNF eBook series, as well as the BADIL publications with relevant and similar information, one comes away with a basic understanding of the situation and its historical production. This understanding makes it possible for the reader to become an advocate, capable of articulating her point of view and backing it up with historical, legal, and other forms of evidence.

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[1] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sarah-schulman/israel-pinkwashing_b_1132369.html?

CHAPTER III
FINDINGS

This section addresses the following three research questions:

1. What is the relationship between the Prawer Plan and Blueprint Negev—and how is this relationship obscured?

2. How are signifiers of modernity and progress deployed by the Jewish National Fund (JNF) in its promotion of Blueprint Negev?

3. How have these and other signifiers of civilization and productivity been deployed by the JNF in relation to its other endeavors, missions, and projects—and what is revealed/illuminated by a study of the (dis)continuities in the discursive tactics and strategies implemented by the JNF?

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the Prawer Plan and Blueprint Negev—and how is this relationship obscured?

Attention paid (publicly) to the relationship between the JNF's Blueprint Negev and the Israeli Prawer Plan has been surprisingly scant and sparse, despite the undeniable connection between these two projects. The most obvious link between the projects is their location. Their simultaneous implementation is another factor that accentuates the convenience of their concurrence for certain powerful forces involved: namely, the Israeli state and the more widespread (international) Zionist movement. In addition to these more obvious ligatures, both projects have been adorned in the discourse of "development," thus enabling their proponents to advocate for the displacement of indigenous peoples and otherwise advance the less than venerable cause of colonial expansion, in the name of "progress." Despite these fairly obvious similarities, however,

it is quite rare for the parallel development and simultaneous enactment of these two plans to be explicitly discussed by politicians, scholars, and even activists. This is not surprising, given the gravity of such a statement and its implications, if these are thoroughly explored, engaged, and understood. In addition to this, the controversy that exists regarding the application and applicability of the term "apartheid" to the context of Palestinian life—and the system and apparatus of Israeli governance—constitutes another obstacle to any explicitly open and honest discussion of both policies, especially in relation to one another. This is because such a discussion necessarily calls to mind the question of apartheid and makes the application of this controversial term extremely difficult to avoid. After all, how else can such a systemic and discriminatory bifurcation of political policy be described?

In sum, there are two separate plans for the so-called "development" of the Naqab/Negev region, one for the Bedouin (read: Palestinian Arab) population and another for the Jews. Thus, to determine the relationship between The Prawer Plan and Blueprint Negev, one need only (a) ask what the "development" comprised in each of these policies will mean for the population for whom it is intended, (b) compare and contrast, and (c) proceed to draw one's own conclusions. This is what has been attempted throughout the majority of this study and the conclusions reached should at this point be clear to the reader. Not only does the combination of the Prawer Plan and Blueprint Negev constitute apartheid development, but the policies themselves also lead to the further development of an overall apartheid system of governance upon which the Israeli state shall continue to be based unless the resistance (Palestinian and other) succeeds in turning the tide of history, either in the present or the very near future.

Research Question 2: How are signifiers of modernity and progress deployed by the

Jewish National Fund (JNF) in its promotion of Blueprint Negev?

Carmit, the first of the Blueprint Negev settlements, is described in one of the JNF's promotional pamphlets as "modern, diverse, and progressive," emblematic of a "new model of modern Israeli living" (see Appendix C, Figures 1, 2, and 3). The portrayal of Carmit as a luxurious and liberal "community" is intended to differentiate this "new model" from the majority of West Bank settlements, which are now widely perceived as a place for religious zealotry and heated political "conflict." These attributes are considered antiquated in the neo-liberal present; neither may be considered an effective marketing technique. Blueprint Negev is a plan devised by the Jewish National Fund (JNF) to extricate the Israeli state from this predicament. Although the construction of Carmit is not yet complete, it has already garnered a great deal of interest and financial support from its target demographic: wealthy, young, entrepreneurial North American Jews.

In the same pamphlet, Carmit is described as a "new community…in the heart of Israel's Negev Desert, just 15 minutes outside Beer Sheva." Already, so much is communicated. Potential residents (settlers) are repeatedly ensured, through language and image alike, that this settlement is "new." This is more than a literal fact regarding the settlement's recent/ongoing construction. It is a multi-layered promise. First, potential settlers are told that they have the opportunity to participate in something new, significant, and historical. Second, they are implicitly reassured that this town will not be like those ultra-religious settlements which have garnered such a negative reputation in the news.

Next, the reader/recruit is told that Blueprint Negev is a "far-reaching and visionary" plan. The JNF and their allies may appear to be engaged in a pre-emptive celebration of their own success and what they seem to perceive as their own historic brilliance. In fact, however, this too is a strategic statement, and this too suggests at least an allusion to a kind of promise and a claim to possess the powers of prophecy. A survey of earlier Zionist claims, however, in light of all that has unfolded since their vision of colonial statecraft began to take root, reveals that foretelling the future has never been their goal. Instead, they seek a blank and empty canvas upon which they might paint their utopian dreams at the expense of whomever and whatever they believe must be destroyed, sacrificed, for the sake of their other master plan: that of political Zionism itself.

In the following paragraph, the subtle allusions to Israeli national mythology and the strategic deployment of classic Zionist tropes become significantly more explicit with the following quote: "David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, believed that the Negev was the future of Israel….it is in the Negev that the creativity and pioneer vigor of Israel shall be tested." Before moving on to discuss the historical and contemporary significance of Ben Gurion's use of the "pioneer" terminology in this instance, the invocation of this famous forefather must itself be acknowledged as one more strategic decision intended to elicit an emotional, affective response from the reader/recruit, and to reinforce his/her identification with Ben-Gurion, his legacy, and his nation-state. The function of this call to action is also, in part, to entreat Israeli and North American Jews to follow in Ben Gurion's footsteps and carry out the legacy he lived, enacting the future he predicted in his honour. It is precisely this allusion to the powers of prophecy,

however, that recall Ben Gurion's earlier (1960) attempt to provide the world with a new and insightful interpretation of the Biblical story of Exodus, which Ben Gurion told the press was all his own. He said that he had only been able to reach this enlightened conclusion as a result of the illuminating events of 1947-1948 and the subsequent years of early Israeli statehood. Unsurprisingly, Biblical scholars of the period pointed out that in fact, Ben Gurion's interpretation was not nearly as innovative or original as the Zionist Minister claimed; in fact it was one that had been a discussion amongst Biblical scholars and others for quite some time when Ben Gurion stood before the press and attempted to (pro)claim it as his own. The specific content of this debate is not especially relevant to this analysis. What is relevant is Ben Gurion's attempt to (a) stake a claim on a Biblical myth by re-telling it according to his own agenda, and (b) use that claim to reinforce the notion of an inherent relationship between the Jews and the land of Palestine, the Biblical tales of Antiquity and the drama of post-1948 Israeli statehood.

In the present age of secular post-modernity, however, the proponents of Zionism cannot rely on myth alone. Thus they provide the reader/recruit with a brief litany of their plans, all of which are both ambiguous and grandiose and all of which function as well to further reinforce the same key components of Zionist mythology that have already been discussed in this and other sections, this time with a scientific, pseudo-environmentalist twist. They are "developing water solutions for the arid environment" (read: "we are making the desert bloom, saving this barren and impoverished land from itself; left to its own devices, the nature of the land poses a threat to the very environment, but this is something we, the pioneers, are here to solve"). They are also "creating employment opportunities" and "transforming the Negev into a strong and prosperous region of

Israel." This too is more than simply self-congratulatory. It is also a promise. It is also a claim. The promise to the reader/recruit is that he/she too will become strong and prosperous upon moving to this wondrous and transformed/transformational community. The other transformation to which they allude, of course, becomes clearer if one omits just several words from the middle of this sentence, making it a claim to be "transforming the Negev into a…region of Israel." It is this component of Blueprint Negev that is necessarily reliant on government policies such as the Prawer Plan for its own realization, whether those policies take the form of official legislation and/or covert operations, outsourced to para-military organizations like the Green Patrol and para-statal organizations like the JNF itself.

Carmit also has its own website which can be found at www.carmit.org.il (and the English-language version at www.carmit.org.il/english). The purpose of this website, as well as its intended audience, differs from that of the JNF-KKL website, which promotes Carmit (and Blueprint Negev more broadly) primarily for the purpose of raising funds to continue their work of colonial expansion in the southern region of Historic Palestine. In contrast, Carmit's own website appears to be designed for potential settlers. The OR Movement, one of the primary partners of the JNF in the ongoing design and implementation of Blueprint Negev, is similarly structured and focused, with much of its material directed towards those with an interest in either moving to the Naqab/Negev region or visiting the region for purposes of tourism.

The Gallery page (of Carmit's website) features a surprising number of photographs in which a JNF-KKL bulldozer is the primary focus of the image (see Appendix D for examples). Those that do not feature freshly paved roads leading through

the Naqab/Negev desert, inviting whomever is visiting this website (as long as they are of Jewish descent) to take the wheel and drive a vehicle of their own not only into the desert, but into the future, a blank canvas replete with possibility. In fact, of a total of 12 photographs featured, eight of those include at least one bulldozer and three feature a road as their primary focal point. There is another one which features a small, bright green sapling in the central foreground. With one exception, each of these images is set against a backdrop of flat, smooth desert sands. This backdrop reiterates the notion of an empty land, ripe and ready for conquest. This is true whether one reads these images as indicative of a land that is already empty or interprets the combination of a bulldozer and empty, sweeping sands as a visual portrayal of the success of said conquest thus far.

In one photograph, the featured bulldozer is adorned with several flags: two Israeli flags, two flags of the JNF-KKL, and perhaps a few others which are not sufficiently visible in the photograph for their purpose and affiliation to be determined. The Israeli flags are placed parallel behind the driver's cabin. One of the JNF-KKL flags appears to be attached to the actual digging implement of the bulldozer (illuminating the extent to which this photograph design was premeditated) and the other flies atop the hood of the vehicle, blowing in the wind so that the JNF-KKL logo is clearly visible against the backdrop of a bright blue sky. This flag is distinctly larger than the others and it is the only one that appears to be blowing in the alleged winds, suggesting, again, that this photograph was carefully staged to make a particular statement and/or induce a particular state of mind in its viewer. What is this statement and/or state of mind that the JNF and its partners in the building of Carmit are hoping to make and/or induce? This can be discerned through an interpretation of the image attentive to the subtle details that one's

conscious mind is unlikely to perceive unless involved in a close and critical analysis of

the photo. While the other photographs feature soft, smooth, and sweeping sands, this

image clearly portrays a plethora of bulldozer tracks in the foreground, suggesting that

this bulldozer has worked to achieve its mission, battling the forces of nature and

trampling whatever inconvenience or disturbance was previously in the way or underfoot.

As indicated by the victorious flag as it flies in the (alleged) wind, the bulldozer was

successful in accomplishing this feat and the land itself has been claimed as well as

tamed by the JNF-KKL, all with the (discursive, rhetorical, political, and even financial)

backing of the Israeli state itself.

Research Question 3: How have these and other signifiers of civilization and

productivity been deployed by the JNF in relation to its other endeavors, missions,

and projects—and what is revealed/illuminated by a study of the (dis)continuities in

the discursive tactics and strategies implemented by the JNF?

The (ongoing) Zionist colonization of Palestine is perpetuated in part through the

(carefully calculated) international dissemination of Israel's national mythology, an

allegedly historical account of prophetic proclamations, sacred covenants, and chosen

people capable of performing miraculous feats (such as making the desert bloom),

through a combination of superior technology, sheer will/determination, and divine

intervention. The JNF is central to ensuring the ongoing production and perpetuation of

this mythology, just as it was central to its initial configuration and proliferation in the

early days of the Zionist movement. For example, Zionist discourse is predicated on the

notion that the land of Palestine belongs exclusively to the "the Jewish people," a core

tenet of the Zionist movement and an integral component of the JNF's official mission

statement. This exclusionary premise is based primarily on Biblical lore, despite the self-proclaimed secularity of the Zionist movement, as well as the self-proclaimed democratic nature of the Jewish (Israeli) state. Further examples of this will be discussed in the following section, "Discussions." These examples include (a) the trope of *terra nullius* (empty land) and (b) past and present assertions of Zionist belonging with/in the West.

CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

Zionist discourse is predicated on the notion that the land of Palestine belongs

exclusively to the "the Jewish people," a core tenet of the Zionist movement and an

integral component of the JNF's official mission statement. This exclusionary premise is

based primarily on Biblical lore, despite the self-proclaimed secularity of the Zionist

movement, as well as the self-proclaimed democratic nature of the Jewish (Israeli) state.

The section that follows, regarding the "trope of *terra nullius*" (empty land) is one of

many examples of this. Others may be found throughout the literature discussed in the

"literature review" section of this paper. Some of this is discussed further in the

Appendices as well.

The Trope of Terra Nullius

The classic colonial trope of *terra nullius* is a central tenet of Zionist ideology,

and is frequently invoked to justify the (ongoing) colonization of Palestine. This notion

also functions as the premise for another fundamental Zionist assertion: the claim to have

"made the desert bloom," through the implementation of innovative (Western)

technologies and "modern" agricultural techniques. The trope of the blooming desert

remains prevalent in Zionist discourse today, and is often understood both as a testament

to the settlers' superior technology and agricultural skills (implicitly rendering the Jews a

"superior" people) and also as evidence of an intimate and authentic relationship between

the Jewish settlers and their new, unfamiliar, foreign (to them) "home." The Israeli state's

refusal to recognize the presence of Palestine's indigenous population—a refusal that also

informs the absurdly contradictory status of "present absentees" and "unrecognized

villages"—dates back to the earliest days of Zionist colonialism, when the Bedouin were seen more as an extension of the land than as a population of human beings. As such, they would either be transformed into useful mechanisms of productivity, or they would be displaced, their present existence relegated to the realm of "the past," as the Europeans imagined it.

Past and Present Assertions of Zionist Belonging With/In the West

Although the Israeli state was not established until 1948, the Zionist movement began much earlier, when the significance and centrality of the nation-state in global politics and governance was still on the rise and when the majority of European nation-states were competing for colonies in other regions, throughout the Global South. In 1896, Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, established the World Zionist Movement and published a brief text entitled *The Jewish State*, in which he expressed his belief that Jews could only attain protection from persecution if they were granted sovereignty over a nation-state of their own. According to Herzl (1988), this could only be accomplished with European support. Thus, political Zionism, from its inception, has been (necessarily) closely aligned with the European colonial elites. In return, Herzl promised that the Zionist state would "form a portion of a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism" (p. 35-36). Thus we can see that the Zionist project, even before the establishment of the Israeli state as a settler-colonial society in Palestine, has asserted its alliance and alignment with "the West," both as an abstract entity representative of "civilization" and "modernity," and in the form of particular nation-states to which Zionists have turned for political, economic, and military support. Blueprint Negev is a contemporary version of this strategy.

Blueprint Negev, the latest JNF project, is directed toward young, Western (especially U.S.), relatively affluent Jews, implementing language that invokes the U.S. notion of Manifest Destiny and Westward expansion. It endeavors to inspire hundreds of thousands of Anglo-Jews to move to "desert developments." On one of their promotional flyers, the JNF proclaims "Carmit will be a modern, diverse, and progressive community." However, the JNF has functioned for more than a century to facilitate, enact, and maintain the Zionist colonization of Palestine, and Carmit is no exception. What, in this context, is the meaning of "diverse and progressive"? When, why, and how did these terms come to be associated with "modernity" in this context? Proponents of Carmit suggest as well that the settlement has been "successfully" de-politicized, that it is "free" of the political tension and "conflict" that characterizes most West Bank settlements. Its patrons also talk about "sustainable living" and upscale housing, with an organic foods grocery store down the road and several art galleries nearby. Carmit promises prospective settlers the chance to live the "pioneering" life in luxury.

Of course, the "diverse" community of Carmit is actually located in the northern Naqab (Negev), where it is surrounded by Bedouin villages. Even the JNF has acknowledged that there are 160,000 Bedouin currently residing in the region, half of them in villages "unrecognized" by Israel. Recently, the JNF and the ILA have been trying to (coercively) facilitate the transfer of these communities into the cities designed for them, allegedly for the purpose of "development." This has led to an increase in the number of home demolitions that have taken place in the region in recent years, especially over the last several months. It has also led to an increase in police and

paramilitary activity in the region.

Israel's "rebranding" initiative, then, is an assertion of "similarity" or "sameness" between Israel and other Western states. Many of the researchers and policy experts commissioned by the Israeli state have repeatedly asserted that the creation of a new "image" is not enough. Israeli politics must begin to shift as well. For the most part, however, Israeli officials have dismissed this as unnecessary and chosen to focus instead on the fabrication another national mythology, another narrative through which they will seek Western support, not only in the form of military aid and/or economic investment, but also as recognition, acceptance, and legitimacy.

Conclusions

The Zionist Project has always been organized around the promise of "return" to a past that never really was. Carmit, too, is replete with impossible and contradictory promises. The only return that actually takes place in this context is the return of many of the romanticized notions and glorified tropes that were also implemented by the early Zionists when they first arrived in Palestine and for a long time afterwards. Again, we are told, there is an empty land, one that is barren and desolate. Perhaps, in this case, the claim is not completely untrue. The Naqab is not empty, but it has been (and continues to be) emptied, as the indigenous Bedouin are forcibly displaced. The land itself was not always barren, but, like the homes of the Bedouin farmers, it too has been bulldozed. Those bulldozers (and those who gave them the orders) brought fictional history to life through the dissemination of violence and death. Thus, material reality aligns with national mythology only as a result of state policy.

Recommendations

In terms of educational praxis, it may be useful to develop a curriculum to introduce the topics and issues discussed herein, with a wide variety of students, both within and outside of academic institutions. Especially useful would be the development of a "teach-in" style curriculum to be implemented in settings and spaces already populated primarily by activists who do not yet have a thorough understanding of the issues at hand. In addition, it would be useful to devise a curriculum and/or another strategic method through which this analysis could be communicated to self-identified "liberals" within the United States, including both Jews and non-Jews. This is because of the decision by the JNF to focus specifically on liberal Americans when devising and disseminating their own outreach and propaganda.

In terms of further research, if a research team were to be assembled, including speakers of Hebrew and Arabic as well as English, this would enable a more in-depth, critical and comparative study of the various outreach and propaganda materials directed at each of these groups by the Israeli state and other Zionist institutions. It is also necessary for further research to be conducted into the resistance against the Prawer Plan—especially that organized and enacted by the Palestinian Bedouin residents of the Naqab—and for this to be analyzed, interpreted and applied to future struggles for social justice, self-determination, freedom, and human rights in Palestine (and elsewhere in the region).

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Images created by a joint planning team comprised of members of The Regional Council

for the Unrecognized Villages in the Negev (RCUV) and BIMKOM (Planners for
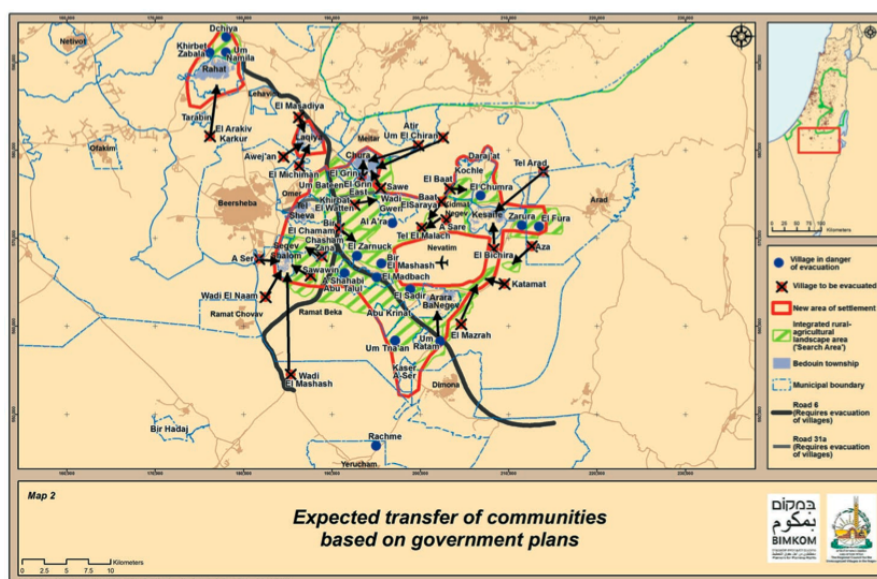
Planning Rights)

Figure 1 Map of Expected transfer of communities in the Naqab based on government

plans for Bedouin resettlement. Each red dot with an "X" over it represents a village

threatened with forced "evacuation." The key in the lower left-hand corner of the map

informs the reader that each of the roads depicted (Road 6, Road 31a) require the

evacuation of several Bedouin villages if they are to be constructed according to plan.

These are likely the very same roads depicted repeatedly as symbols of hope, promise,

and possibility in the promotional literature about Blueprint Negev and its settlements.

Source: Alternative Master Plan for the Unrecognized Bedouin Villages in the Negev,

Abridged Version, 2012

Population Size in 2010	Status in the Beersheba Metropolitan Plan	Name of Village
Table 2		
Effects of the Beersheba Metropolitan Plan on the Villages		
Approx. 25,000	Possibility (unclear and uncertain) of recognition in current location – the Integrated Rural-Agricultural Landscape	El A'ra, El Chumra, Bir El-Chamam, Bir El-Mashash, Zarnuck, Zarura, Rachme, Um Othnan, Dchiya, Um Namila, Khirbet Zabala
Approx. 17,000	Transfer of entire village, each to a different place.	A Sare, El Mazrah, Katamat, Aza, El Madbach, Wadi El-Mashash, Wadi Naam, A Ser, Sawe
Approx. 11,000	Relocation of part of the village to The Integrated Rural-Agricultural Landscape area, while the other part remains in place (uncertain).	Baat El Saraya Um Ratam, El Baat, Tel El-Malach, Khirbet El Watten, Chasham Zana
Approx. 11,000	Evacuation of the entire village and its transfer to a Bedouin township.	El Masadiya, El Michiman, Awej'an, Tawil Abu Jarawal, Abu Sulav, El Bichira, Atir/Um El Chiran, Tel Arad
Approx 4,000	Evacuation of the entire village with no stated solution.	El Arakiv/Karkur, El Grin (El Ukbi), Sawawin

Figure 2 A table representing the effects of the Beersheba Metropolitan Plan on a number of Bedouin villages. This plan provided much of the context for the Prawer-Begin legislation and the detrimental consequences of its implementation are provided here as evidence in support of the assertion that the government's (then) current proposal, in the form of the Prawer-Begin Bill, would have similar effects and thus could by no (valid) means be considered a "solution."

APPENDIX B

Recent Developments in the Official Status

and Practical Implementation of the Prawer Legislation

Recent Developments in the Legislation of the Prawer Plan as well as its Implementation

on the Ground in the Naqab are as follows:

On December 12, at an official press conference held at the Defense Ministry

headquarters in Tel Aviv, Benny Begin (co-author of the Prawer-Begin Bill) stood before

a podium adorned with the insignia of the Prime Minister's office and announced that the

Prawer Legislation had been shelved. Activists immediately began to celebrate, despite

the fact that many remained skeptical as to what this victory would mean on the ground

in the Naqab. This moment of celebration, however, was extremely short-lived, as

Begin's announcement was followed by a contradictory assertion by retired General

Doron Almog whose role in the original Prawer Committee was to oversee the actual

implementation of the plan. Almog insisted that he had not received an official order to

stop the legislative process or to halt whatever implementation of the plan had already

begun; he explicitly refuted Begin's declaration of the bill's retirement and pledged to

continue working on the bill. Shortly thereafter, Israel radio reported that the Israeli

Knesset Internal Affairs Committee had convened the same day to determine how they

would move forward with the bill. Prime Minister Netanyahu was deceptively vague in

his response to questions and quandaries regarding the status of the bill after these two

contradictory statements had been made, both from seemingly official channels. Rather

than provide any substantive answers, he simply insisted that a workable "solution" must

(and would) be found. It is at this point that government discussion of the Prawer Plan

seems to subside and even disappear, especially from the perspective of the English-language (international) media. Unfortunately, reports from Bedouin (and other Palestinian) activists working and living in the region also reinforce the perspective of General Almog rather than that of Benny Begin. It appears that despite an official press conference in which one of the co-authors of the Prawer-Begin Bill announced its cessation, there has been no shift in the regularized violence the bill sought (and ultimately failed) to legislate. This raises various questions about the efficacy of such international campaigns and how to avoid such bittersweet "victories" in the future, but unfortunately, a thorough discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of the present study.

APPENDIX C

Examples of the Promotional Material for Carmit and Blueprint Negev

produced by the Jewish National Fund and analyzed as part of this study

Carmit
Redefining the Negev

JNF, for
ISRAEL
forever.

Carmit will be a modern, diverse and progressive community.

Background

Carmit is a new community being developed in the heart of Israel's Negev Desert, just 15 minutes outside of Be'er Sheva. Founded through a partnership between Jewish National Fund (JNF), the OR Movement, and the government of Israel, it is planned as a modern, diverse, and progressive community that will play a central role in redefining the image of Israel's southern region.

The development of Carmit is part of JNF's *Blueprint Negev* campaign, a far-reaching and visionary plan to transform the Negev—which represents 60% of Israel's land mass but houses only 8% of its population—into an attractive place for a new generation of Israelis to call home. Communities like Carmit are being created to offer an alternative to Israel's crowded and expensive center, while existing Negev cities that have suffered from high unemployment and stagnant population growth for decades are being revitalized.

David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, believed that the Negev was the future of Israel and one of its most important resources, famously stating, "It is in the Negev that the creativity and pioneer vigor of Israel shall be tested." *Blueprint Negev* has breathed new life into this vision by attracting modern-day pioneers to the desert; leveraging government and private investment; developing water solutions for the arid environment; creating employment opportunities; and transforming the Negev into a strong and prosperous region of Israel.

Figure 1, Appendix B, Jewish National Fund Promotional Flyer Entitled *Carmit: Redefining the Negev* (front)

Carmit will be a model of modern Israeli living, offering housing options, upscale amenities, and recreational facilities.

A New Model of Modern Israel

Carmit has been designed to attract and integrate new immigrants from English-speaking countries with veteran Israelis, a crucial component in enhancing the Negev's image both in Israel and abroad. These residents will help strengthen the economic fabric of the Negev by bringing investment, business and other important resources to the region.

Carmit will be a model of modern Israeli living, offering an array of housing options, upscale amenities, and state-of-the-art recreational facilities. It is located in the midst of a network of growing communities such as Meitar, Lehavim, Givot Bar and Omer that will challenge even the most established and prestigious residential regions of Israel.

A total of 2,650 houses will be built; the first neighborhood will consist of 738 units. A group of 50 families, mainly from Chicago and New York, is currently preparing to make aliyah and move to Carmit.

Community Buildings Complex

The public facilities complex planned for Carmit incorporates a number of buildings totaling 30,000 square feet and spread over nearly 1.5 acres. It will be located between two green areas, connecting the first neighborhood with other parts of the community to be developed at a later stage.

Facilities will include:

· Daycare center and pre-school
· Synagogue and mikveh (Jewish ritual bath)
· Youth club
· Library
· Fitness center

For more information, visit www.jnf.org or contact your local office at 888-JNF-0099.

Figure 2, Appendix B, Jewish National Fund Promotional Flyer Entitled *Carmit:*

Redefining the Negev (back)

Carmit will be a model of modern Israeli living, offering various housing options, amenities, and recreational facilities.

The road leading into Carmit

A New Model of Modern Israel

Carmit has been designed to attract and integrate new immigrants from English-speaking countries with veteran Israelis, a crucial component in enhancing the Negev's image both in Israel and abroad. These residents will help strengthen the economic fabric of the Negev by bringing investment, business and other important resources to the region.

Carmit will be a model of modern Israeli living, with an array of housing options, amenities, and state-of-the-art recreational facilities. It is located in the midst of a network of growing communities such as Meitar, Lehavim, Givot Bar and Omer that offer an alternative to the most established residential regions of Israel.

A total of 2,650 houses will be built in Carmit over the next decade; the first neighborhood will consist of 235 families.

MEDITERRANEAN SEA — Route 4 — Route 1 — REHOVOT — JERUSALEM — Route 6 — ASHKELON — DEAD SEA — SANSANA — Route 60 — GIVOT BAR — Route 31 — Route 25 — LEHAVIM — CARMIT — MEITAR — BE'ER SHEVA — Route 40 — Route 25 — To Eilat

Easily Accessible

Carmit is located at the intersection of Routes 60 and 31, about 10 miles northeast of Be'er Sheva. It is less than an hour's drive from Tel Aviv and just over one hour from Jerusalem.

It is easily accessible via major highways as well as the Israel Railways via the nearby Lehavim Railway Station. When a second track is laid, residents of Carmit will be able to travel to the Tel Aviv area within 45 minutes. In the coming years, Carmit will be connected to Route 6, the super-efficient toll road, making the community even more accessible.

Figure 3, Appendix B, Jewish National Fund Promotional Flyer Entitled *Carmit: Redefining the Negev* (alternate version). Note the "road leading into Carmit" above and recall that the construction of at least two new roads in the Naqab require the "evacuation" of a multitude of Bedouin villages.

APPENDIX D

Sample Images from the Official Website of Carmit Settlement

Figure 1, Appendix D, Carmit's (Online) "Welcome Home" Banner

Figure 2, Image from Carmit's Online Gallery depicting *both* a bulldozer and a winding road.

Figure 3, Appendix D, Image from Carmit's Online Gallery depicting a bulldozer against a backdrop of (empty, bulldozed) desert sand and sky, flying the JNF-KKL flag alongside several Israeli flags in a scene suggestive of staking a claim and/or victorious, successful conquest.