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Abstract

This paper demonstrates that archaeological discourse and practice in Palestine/Israel is intertwined with a nation-making project of settler colonialism that contains both spatial and temporal dimensions. This project primarily serves to invent a link between the ancient Israelite past and the modern Israeli state, presenting colonization as "return" to "the homeland" through familiar narratives of frontier settlement. This article proposes that Israeli archaeological practices not only help to reproduce these narratives, but also participate in the inscription of the national territory as Jewish, and the consequent dispossession of the Palestinians

Excavating Zion: Archaeology and Nation-making in Palestine/Israel

Peige Desjarlais

In a recent article in *Time Magazine*, readers are encouraged to reformulate any negative conceptions they might have about Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank. The article's author insists that:

> "Sitting around their kitchen table, with grandchildren's plastic toys scattered on a deck beyond sliding-glass doors, the Katz family doesn't look or sound militant. Indeed, to American ears, their version of the national narrative sounds rather familiar...How did communities start out in the American West? With one log cabin. When we bought this land, it was a rocky hillside. Look what it looks like today" (Burleigh 2009:3).

The narrative is indeed familiar, conjuring images of the American nation-building frontier, and the resulting "civilization" of the wild, "empty" spaces of the American West (Tsing 2005). The two examples are also similar in what they erase, namely, the history and current occupancy of the land by other people.

The pioneer narrative of the "civilization" of frontier land is integrated into guided tours at the City of David Archaeological Park in occupied East Jerusalem, run by a militant settler organization by the name of Ir David (Emek Shaveh, n.d.). Last year, while travelling through Palestine with a friend, I joined one such tour through the Archaeological Park. The tour guide stopped on a hill overlooking the Palestinian houses of Silwan and pointed out Jewish biblical and historical sites to the group of mostly young, Jewish-American tourists. She praised Ir David for its work in re-populating the area with "Jewish neighborhoods" and "revitalizing" the landscape – a narrative of the redemption of the nation and its national territory. What she didn't mention is that the archaeological park and its "Jewish neighborhoods" were built on illegally occupied land in the center of the Palestinian town of Silwan where, for Palestinian residents, this "revitalization" equates to a process of continued colonization and dispossession. The guide's narrative erases, from both history and the landscape, the past and current existence of the Palestinian people and the violence of their displacement. However, archaeology in the "City of David" produces more than narratives of the "redemption" of territory assumed to be Jewish by Biblical right; it also participates in producing this territory as a material reality.

The City of David Archaeological Park is part of a larger nation-making project, which imagines its boundaries as Greater Israel – the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean. This territory we know today as Israel was built on the ruins of Arab Palestine during al-Nakba (the Catastrophe), the term used by Palestinians to describe the destruction of their society in 1948, when three-quarters of a million Palestinians were ethnically cleansed[1] from

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[1] Ethnic cleansing is a crime under international law, defined as the intention to create an ethnically homogenous territory through the expulsion of an ethnic or religious group. It is often related to, but not the same as, the crime of genocide. The United Nations defines acts of ethnic cleansing as the "separation of men from women, the detention of men, the explosion of houses" and repopulating homes with another ethnic group. Israeli historian Ilan Pappe (2006), like other members of the dubbed "new historians", counters the dominant Israeli narrative that the Palestinians fled voluntarily or under the orders of Arab leaders of surrounding countries. His study of Israeli military archives reveals a deliberate and systematic plan by the Zionist militias to ethnically cleanse the Arab population of Palestine by occupying villages and

their homeland and some 530 Arab villages were destroyed and depopulated along with other urban centers (Qumsiyeh 2004:). A society descended from people who settled the region as far back as the Canaanites (Qumsiyeh 2004) was destroyed in a matter of months in the process of making the borders of the Jewish state.

Indeed, the borders of Israel are made most obviously and violently through wars (in 1948 and 1967), conquest, and colonial settlement. However, nation-making projects also come into being through a variety of social, cultural, and institutional practices, like archaeology, which not only help to maintain the "imagined community" of the nation, but also participate in the production of the national landscape. It is my contention that it is within these practices of Jewish nation-making[2] that Israeli archaeology should be properly situated.

This paper will demonstrate that archaeological discourse and practice in Palestine/Israel is intertwined with a nation-making project of settler colonialism that contains both spatial and temporal dimensions. This project primarily serves to invent a link between the ancient Israeli past and the modern Israeli state, presenting colonization as a "return" to "the homeland" through familiar narratives of frontier

settlement. This article proposes that Israeli archaeological practices not only help to reproduce these narratives, but also participate in the inscription of the national territory as Jewish, and the consequent dispossession of the Palestinians. Israeli archaeological practice produces not just historical narratives but the "facts on the ground"[3] (Abu el-Haj 2002a, 6), which are vital to colonial expansion.

I will begin by demonstrating what I mean by a "nation-making project" and describing the particularities of the Jewish nation-making, or Zionist[4] project using tree-planting as an example of an "everyday" technology of nation-making. A second part will examine how Israeli archaeological practice participates in producing the "national territory" as Jewish, and in dispossessing the Palestinians, employing the examples of Zionist archaeology during the British mandatory period [5] and in East Jerusalem following the 1967 occupation.[6]

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driving out the population through either the threat of military force or the commission of massacres.
[2] In Israel citizenship and nationality are distinct. Israeli citizens do not have Israeli nationality but are instead defined through Israeli law as either Jewish, Arab or Druze. The state of Israel is not a state of its citizens (of which 20% are Palestinians who remained within the borders after the 1948 war) but of the "Jewish nation" consisting of all Jewish people regardless of whether they live outside the borders of the Israeli state. Access to land, housing, acquisition of citizenship and marriage, among other things, are defined by nationality and not citizenship.

[3] "Facts on the ground" is an expression used to refer to Israeli settlements in the West Bank which, though illegal under international law, by their very existence create a territorial foothold in the West Bank. Abu El-Haj (2002) argues that archaeological practices create similar "facts on the ground" in Israel and the West Bank.
[4] Zionism is a political ideology/movement initiated in late 19th century in Europe, aimed at the creation of a Jewish state.
[5] Following WWII the League of Nations divided the former Ottoman territories among European imperial powers as "mandates." Britain ruled in Palestine from 1917 until the end of the mandate on May 14, 1948.
[6] Following the 1967 war between Israel and neighboring countries, Israel began a military occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza where the government began building Jewish settlements.

Producing the "Nation"

Challenging conceptions of the nation as natural or primordial, scholars of nationalism like Eric Hosbawm (1990) and Benedict Anderson (1991) emphasize that nations are modern constructs, historical phenomenon, and not the expression of organic entities. Nations must be produced, brought into being, and then constantly reproduced through symbolic acts of nationhood. Anderson (1991:224) asserted that the rise of print-capitalism made possible the development of a monoglot[7] press, which fostered a sense of belonging to an "imagined community"; imagined because most of the members will never meet each other but "maintain in their minds the idea of their communion". In Europe, according to Anderson, print capitalism was one of the factors that contributed to the genesis of an imagined nation, helping to delineate its boundaries and expanse, represented by a territory and a sovereign-state.

Nations are also made through engagement with ideas, theories and knowledge produced outside the national boundaries, or what Tsing (2005:7) calls "knowledge that moves." Despite the appearance of bounded-ness, nation-states are never entirely national projects. The frontier is an example of "knowledge that moves" – it is not an indigenous or natural category but a "travelling theory" that arrives carrying visions of past frontiers, invoking the American Wild West or the "dark" Latin American frontier (Tsing 2005:30-31).

The Canadian nation-state, for example, was imagined and realized through engagement with the American nation-making frontier, which was said to "inspire

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[7] Monoglot refers to the spread or use of one dominant language

white men to democracy" (Tsing 2005:31). The idea of the frontier played an important role in the making of Vancouver's Stanley Park, where natural spaces were imagined as wild and empty, and made to reflect this image through the removal of indigenous inhabitants and the traces they left on the landscape (Mawani 2007). These natural spaces and the cold climate in general were said by Canadian politicians and public figures to produce a "hearty race of northern people", and a system of moderate laws and balanced government (Mawani 2007:718). Prior imaginings of the frontier were integrated into the Canadian context, and combined with racialized theories of climatic determinism and protectionist environmentalism. A national project was produced through articulations with travelling knowledge.

Like the Canadian example, other national projects involve particular combinations of nation-making techniques, determined in the specific historical context of each project. The next section will review the historical context in which Israel was produced as a nation-state in order to better understand the Jewish nation-making project, and the way this project engages with the "travelling theory" of the frontier.

Producing a settler-nation in Palestine

The roots of modern Israel lie not in the Middle East but in Europe. Zionism, a political movement aimed at the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, was born and developed in Europe in the late 19th century, and was supported by Europe's leading imperial power at the time: Britain. Through the Balfour Declaration of 1917 Britain promised to assist the Zionist movement in establishing a Jewish state in Palestine – where, at that time, a mostly Muslim and Christian Arab population co-existed with a small Jewish minority. (Engler 2010). When World War I ended

and Britain occupied Palestine under the guise of the League of Nations mandate system, the Zionist project was given the concrete support to begin colonization (Engler 2010). Throughout the British mandate, which lasted until 1948, the British government allowed hundreds of thousands of European Jews to settle in Palestine establish towns and cities, and lay down the military, economic, cultural and social institutions of their future state (Masalha 2012). Though immigration was at times limited to avoid Palestinian revolt, Britain was steadfast in its support for what it saw as a bastion of the British Empire in the Middle East (Finkelstein 2012).

Following the Second World War, Britain turned the "question of Palestine" over to the United Nations, which decided on a partition that was categorically unfavourable to the Palestinians, who collectively owned over 90% of the land (Engler 2010:26). In the months leading up to the expiration of the British mandate on May 14, 1948, Zionist militias systematically expelled a quarter of a million Palestinians (Pappe 2006:) and physically erased hundreds of their villages (Falah 1996). When Israeli statehood was declared on May 15, 1948 a war broke out between Zionist troops and surrounding Arab countries, during which the former occupied 78% of Palestine, a much larger area than allocated by the United Nations (Qumsiyeh 2004:). By that time at least 750,000 (Takkenberg 1998:) Palestinians had been expelled from the newly declared state of Israel with most becoming refugees in the remainder of historic Palestine (Gaza and the West Bank) and neighbouring countries (Feldman 2008).

When war broke out again between Israel and neighboring Arab countries in 1967, Israel occupied the remainder of historic Palestine along with other Arab territories (Syria's Golan Heights and Egypt's Sinai desert), expelled approximately 300,000 Palestinians (half of them refugees uprooted for the second time) and began a process of colonization that continues to the present (Qumsiyeh 2004). At present, approximately 501,856 Israeli settlers live in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem (B'Tselem 2011).

As evident in the historical record and numerous UN documents (United Nations, n.d.) the Israeli national territory was established through military force and settler colonialism, not only during 1948 and 1967 but through an ongoing process of land expropriation and displacement between and following these two historical junctures. Colonialist discourse was extolled through assertions about the "backwardness" and "treacherous nature" of the Arab, and through the idea and practice of "transfer" of the native population – all common tropes of European colonial discourse and practice (Said 1978:4-6). The idea of the unconquered frontier was integrated with Zionist national dreams to form the core slogan of the Zionist movement: "a land without a people, for a people without a land" (Said 1978:4). Palestine was described by early Zionist leaders as "empty" or "naked" land that "the Jews alone are capable of rebuilding" (Said 1978:5). European colonial discourse adapted to the particularities of the Zionist project (which claimed that colonization was simply "a return") and formed an important part of the discourse of nation-making.

Understanding how colonial discourse was adapted to the particularities of the Zionist project necessitates understating the specificities of Jewish nationalism. Like other nationalist movements, the Israeli national narrative seeks to construct a shared history (although only for its Jewish population), develop a

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myth of origin that traces the roots of the modern nation to noble forbearers, and describe the development of the nation's history in terms of a "golden age" and a "dark age" when the nation was ruled by foreigners (Coakley 2004:546-8). Coakley (2004) identifies a specific kind of nationalism of which Israel is a prime example: the myth of destiny of the national territory, the idea that the nation is entitled to re-establish the greatness of the golden age by re-conquering territory it once held. The violence and the subsequent settlement of the land that Palestinians had been expelled from could be justified not as an act of colonial brutality because, according to Zionist discourse, "in contrast to colonial projects elsewhere, this was simply a nation returning home" (Abu Al-Haj 2002b:34).

While the expulsions during the 1948 and the 1967 war were key instruments in this (re)conquest of the "national territory" there were other practices of nation-making at work. Tree-planting offers one such example of how the Zionist project is enacted through everyday practices. Long (2008) examines the discourses and material practice of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) (an Israeli parastatal agency developed in 1901 to aid in the Zionist settlement of Palestine) arguing that the conceptual and physical landscapes that the JNF produces through aforestation work to demarcate an Israeli nation-space and dispossess the Palestinians.

The JNF website describes Palestine during the British mandate as "fallen", "empty", "godforsaken land", and as a "desolate place" containing only "barren hills and abandoned rocks" (quoted in Long 2008:65). The organization refers to early Zionists as "pioneers of the State" who were able to perform "agricultural and botanical miracles" and "triumph" over two millennia of "neglect" (quoted in Long: 2008:65). JNF

projects of "reversing soil conservation" and the restoration of "deteriorating, non-productive agricultural lands" are today focused on the Negev region (Jewish National Fund, n.d.), home to a significant Bedouin Arab population. The Negev, in the Zionist colonial narrative and imagery, is the new frontier of denigrated land, the cultivation of its "deteriorating" landscape another act of redemption that will solidify its position as part of the Jewish nation.

The planting, like direct land appropriation, was justified as an act of return, as the JNF claimed to be re-planting trees mentioned in the Bible and therefore restoring the landscape of an earlier Jewish presence on the land (Long 2008). Frontier myths in the Zionist context are not just about "empty land" but land seen as deteriorating under the care of other people, to be redeemed and restored to its original fecundity through its incorporation into the Jewish nation. This restoration was also seen to redeem human subjects, as the act of planting for new immigrants was tied to the restoration of the ancient Hebrew spirit of a citizen-planter who is fit, strong, and rooted in nature, and who stands in contrast to the passive, weak and spiritually degenerative exile (Long 2008).

Tree-planting also played a vital role in creating the "facts on the ground" that helped to determine the proposed boundaries between a Jewish and Arab state. Areas already developed and planted by the JNF were included as part of the Jewish state in these proposals, including the 1947 Partition Plan (Long 2008). Tree-planting as a practice of delineating a Jewish national geography continued after 1948, as forests planted on the ruins of Palestinian villages depopulated during the ethnic cleansing of 1947-8 prevented the return of refugees. In the occupied territories following the 1967 war, aforestation served to dispossess

Palestinians of both private and public land (Long 2008). One example is the construction of "Canada Park" (funded by the Jewish National Fund Canada through tax-deductible donations) on the ruins of the Palestinian villages of 'Imwas, Yalu, and Beit Nuba, whose residents were expelled during the 1967 war (Guttman 2005).

It is through these practices that the contours of the Jewish nation begin to emerge, and colonial settlement was facilitated and justified, cloaked in the seemingly innocuous practice of tree-planting and familiar frontier myths. Archaeological practice in Palestine/Israel is implicated in this project, employing similar discourses and techniques of dispossession.

Excavating the Jewish nation: archaeological practice and landscape transformation

It may seem counter-intuitive to imagine tree-planting and archaeology as belonging to the same category of "everyday practices of nation-making." In fact, Israeli archaeologist Ronny Reich recently insisted that the era of nationalist archaeology in Israel has ended, displaced by the power of the scientific method (in Yas 2000:). However, archaeology does not exist in a vacuum but is, in Lynn Meskell's (2002:2) words, "deeply imbricated with socio-political realities." Similar to JNF aforestation projects, archaeological practice produces both narrative of nationhood and inscribes the national territory as Jewish. Many scholars have documented the role of archaeology in constructing the "imagined community" of the nation and the "myth of a golden age" (for example Trigger 1984; Meskell 1998; Kohl 1998; Diaz-Andreau 2001), while Abu Al-Haj (1998) has explored the way that archaeology helps to produce new environments and new landscapes.

I will explore the role of Israeli archaeology in the production of these new national environments, and of narratives that attempt to connect the modern landscape with the biblical one, using two examples. The first involves archaeological discourse and practice during the development of Zionist archaeology in the pre-state or mandatory period, and the other in post-1967 occupied East Jerusalem. These two examples were chosen to argue that archaeology has been consistently complicit with the Zionist project, and that the increasing power of the Israeli state allowed for archaeology to take a much more overtly settler-nationalist role. During the mandate period Zionist archaeology had to contend with British rule and was limited in scope and in its ability to create new places and objects. However, this power increased greatly in the period between 1948 and 1967. Post-1967 archaeology in Israeli occupied East Jerusalem offers the most dramatic example of the confluence of settler-colonial nationalism and archaeological discourse and practice.

Re-signifying the landscape during the British Mandate

Beginning in the 1920s the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society began holding public lectures on archaeology, sponsoring field trips, and conducting several small excavations (Silberman 1999). By the end of the decade they excavated tombs in Jerusalem's Hinnom Valley, some in partnership with the Hebrew University and the Palestine Department of Antiquities (Silberman 2001). In later periods, the Society excavated Galilean Jewish cities such as Tiberius, Bet She'arim, Bet Yerah, and a number of synagogues (Abu Al-Haj 2002b). Archaeology during the British mandate was not just an academic pursuit, but a popular "national-cultural" one as well (Abu Al-Haj 2002b:36). It was seen by Jewish archaeologists as part of a project of

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land "redemption" which must involve recovering the "roots" of a Jewish past in Palestine (Abu Al-Haj 2002b:37).

Besides the public lectures and field trips, the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society also recruited Jewish volunteers to help with digs due to both lack of funds and the national significance of involving the public in archaeological practices (Abu Al-Haj 2002b). It was not only the land that could be redeemed but the volunteers as well, much like the transformation of Jewish settler subjectivities through the act of tree-planting. Ben-Zvi of the Palestine Exploration Society explained that the volunteer program was a way that "each Jew" could become acquainted with "the homeland" and learn to value history and historical objects (in Abu Al-Haj 2002b:36).

One site that gained extensive significance in the recovery of "roots" and nationalist subjectivities was the Masada where, according to the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius, 960 Jewish men and women committed suicide in 74 C.E. rather than submit to the invading Roman armies (Silberman 1999). Under the British Mandate, British scholars focused on the Roman history of the site (Silberman 1999), integrating the Masada into the larger scale of a past empire whose "great civilization" was continued in the British Empire. The Masada was a site of competing territorial visions. However the significance of the Masada for the Zionist movement increased as the mandate progressed. In the late 1920s the Masada became a site visited by Zionist youth groups, rising in the coming years to a site of communal ritual. In the 1940s the Palmach (a military elite unit or striking force in the Haganah, the predecessor of the Israeli Defense Force), under sponsorship of

the kibbutz movement[8] and elements of the Zionist Labour movement, made the ascent to the top of the Masada the culmination of a military initiation ritual, with the symbolic importance of the site only increasing after the formation of the state of Israel in 1948 (Silberman 1999).

It is through these early archaeological excavations (and nationalist rituals like climbing the Masada), that material culture was reconfigured into objects of national significance and landscapes emerged as "historical locales" through which particular historical narratives of Palestine as the "land of Israel" were made visible (Abu Al-Haj 2002b:40). Thus archaeology was one of the means through which the nation began to emerge in concrete form, saturating the Palestinian landscape with symbols of Jewish-ness. It was not the individual archaeological sites in isolation that helped to realize the goals of the national discourse, but the way the sites together mapped the Jewish homeland onto the landscape as a whole, creating a "spatial biography" of Jewish past and future presence (Abu al-Haj 2002b:51).

This mapping of a Jewish homeland was aided by the fact that during this time archaeology became an academic discipline and a legitimate scientific pursuit (Kohl 1998). In this context, the process of place-naming in Palestine was presented as a scientific endeavour, as a historical collection of "correct" names and not an ideological practice. Developing place-names took the form of fact collecting, the recording of the locations and details of archaeological sites of Jewish significance which would appear like so many dots marking sites of ancient Jewish presence. Greater Israel appeared through the

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[8] A Kibbutz is a collective agricultural community usually based on Zionist and socialist ideals.

connecting of these dots through both time and space, part of a cartographic project of map-making or nation-making (Abu Al-Haj 2002b). The most comprehensive project of archaeological involvement in naming places was the cooperation between the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society and the British government in generating a list of Hebrew place names for settlements and villages in Palestine (Abu Al-Haj 2002b). The naming committee headed by Ben-Zvi insisted that these Hebrew names must be "scientifically" and "historically" accurate, based on the work of Jewish historians and archaeologists who had discovered the names that "belonged to the old country". This scientific rhetoric of an "epistemological commitment to facts" was crucial to presenting Jewish settlement in Palestine as simply a process of national return (Abu al-Haj 2002b:54).

Moreover, Jewish archaeology, including the generation of place-names, involved a process of "bringing the past into the present" and creating a bond of continuity (Cohen and Kliot 1992:659). An Israeli archaeologist interviewed by Nadia Abu Al-Haj (2002b:33) said of Jewish Israelis: "they wanted to know about their heritage...about each and every stone...An artifact, an inscription had the power to bridge thousands of years". Thus, archaeology was constitutive of the processes of realizing settler-nationhood, by inventing a bridge between the golden age and the modern redemption of the land with biblical names and archaeological sites, and in the process obfuscating everything that came before and in between. This compression of past and present is what Abu Al-Haj (2002b:51) refers to as making the "ancient-modern homeland".

The institutional power of Zionists to make an "ancient-modern homeland" was limited during the British mandate, when the landscape was the site of contested spatial and temporal visions. However, with the creation of the Israeli state in 1948, the institutional, material and ideological power to re-signify the landscape grew exponentially. The effects of this new power can be observed in East Jerusalem following the Israeli occupation of 1967.

Archaeology in East Jerusalem

Jerusalem was occupied in two wars, the western part became part of Israel during the 1948 war, and the eastern part was occupied during the 1967 war. In recent years, East Jerusalem has become the focus of the Israeli 1967 occupation and its territorial claims (Silberman 2001). Israel claims that Jerusalem is the "eternal capital of the Jewish people" (Ir David, n.d.), though its historical and religious significance is shared by Christians, and Muslims. The most contentious area, known to Jews and Israelis as the Temple Mount and to Muslims as Haram al-Sharif, contains the ruins of former Jewish temples and the revered Dome of Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque.

When Israel occupied the West Bank it illegally annexed East Jerusalem, including the revered holy sites (Abu al-Haj 1998). Israel calls this process the "unification" of Jerusalem (Greenburg 2009:39), while the United Nations has affirmed in dozens of resolutions that East Jerusalem is in fact illegally occupied and annexed by Israel (United Nations, n.d.). Shortly after the occupation of East Jerusalem the Israeli state began carrying out archaeological excavations on the newly occupied land, capturing the Palestine Archaeological Museum and all its artifacts and eventually making the site the headquarters of the Israeli Antiquities Association (Silberman 2001).

These archaeological excavations, along with current archaeological practice,

involve the interrelated processes of developing a national mythology of a "golden age" ending in a destruction righted by the modern rebirth of the nation, and physically recreating the landscape, resurrecting the past as a tool to realizing the colonial project of the present. Nowhere is the construction of a Jewish golden age destroyed and "rightly restored" by the Israeli conquest of Jerusalem more explicit than in the archaeological practices in the "City of David." The "City of David" was, and is, the home to the urban area known to Palestinians as Wadi Hilwe, or the village of Silwan, an area where 90% of the population is Palestinian (Greenburg 2009). Visited by Rabin in 1996, and later by Prime Ministers Begin and Netanyahu, the area was named a national archaeological park and was marked as an important national symbol. The Jerusalem 3000 celebrations opened on the site by Rabin in 1996 referred to the 3000 years since King David's reign, asserting the continuity of the site's Jewish character (Yas 2000).

The use of the biblical epithet "City of David" is attributed to archaeologist Raymond Weill in 1920, though the term was virtually unused before being resurrected by Israeli archaeologists from the Hebrew University who were conducting excavations in East Jerusalem from 1978 to 1985 (Greenburg 2009:38). These excavations were only possible because of a massive re-signification of the landscape following the 1967 war, when 12 areas of Jerusalem covering a total of four thousand square meters were declared state lands and slated for excavation (Pullman and Gwiazda 2009). The parcels of land were cast as important sites of the Jewish past, despite the contemporary Palestinian villages that existed on those sites.

The excavations involved clearing out 448-meters of the "Western Wall tunnels" which ran underneath of the property of the Supreme Muslim Council of Jerusalem. Evidence of cultural diversity and archaeological layers of non-Jewish history was systematically ignored. Instead archaeological evidence that favored a Jewish presence was produced and presented to tourists and Israelis who toured the newly-dug tunnels (Silberman 2001); tunnels which were constructed beneath the houses of Palestinian residents of Silwan, who have suffered damage to their homes and a local mosque as a result (Hassan 2011). In 1996 Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that the tunnels represented "the bedrock of our national existence" and ordered that the northern entrance, lying in the Muslim quarter, be opened to allow for tourists to pass more freely. In the violence that ensued when clashes broke out between Israeli and Palestinians, hundreds were injured and many killed (Silberman 2001:500).

This violence ushered in a new era of explicit religious-nationalism in archaeological practice in the village of Silwan, which Israelis refer to as the City of David Archaeological Park. At this time Ir David, an ultranationalist settler organization "with the explicit goal of settling Jews in Silwan" took over the management of the park (Pullman and Gwiazda 2009:32). Ir David's website tells visitors the story of its founder, David Be'eri (David'le), the "undercover commander of an elite military unit" who visited the site in the mid 1980's and was "inspired by the historical record of archaeological discoveries made in the City of David in recent years, and by the longing of the Jewish people to return to Zion" (Ir David, n.d.). The website goes on to inform visitors that "today hundreds of Jewish residents live in the City of David and help form the inspiring mosaic of the return of the Jewish People to their homeland and eternal capital

– Jerusalem" (Ir David, n.d.). The organization advertises tours on its website promising visitors who travel to the underground tunnels of the city will "relive King David's conquest of the Jebusite city as described in the 2nd Book of Samuel" ending their tour at Gihon Spring, "the major water source for Jerusalem for over 1,000 years and where, according to the Book of Kings, Solomon was anointed Kings" (Ir David, n.d.).

This narrative is propagated on mass to the tourists and Israelis who visit the archaeological park, a number that has skyrocketed from 25,000 in 2001 to 350,000 in 2007 (Pullman and Gwiazda 2009). The site has become a sort of rite of passage for Israeli youth (Yas 2000) and the park organizes Israeli army-sponsored tours for just under 20,000 soldiers a year. According to an Ir David spokesman, the tour is essential for the soldiers as they "suddenly understand why they are here, what they are fighting for" (quoted in Emek Shaveh, n.d.). The tours arouse nationalistic sentiments among the general public in Israel as well. Archaeologist Jeffery Yas took a tour through the archaeological park, led by an Ir David armed religious settler, which ended in the Siloam tunnel where the impassioned tour group broke into a chorus of "Yerushaleym shel zahav" (Jerusalem of Gold). It was then, Yas remarks, that he "realized the potential power of such a viscerally exhilarating tourist itinerary" (Yas 2000:22).

The construction of the history of the nation, the imagined Jewish community, is used to arouse nationalist passions in Israelis, validate the increasing settlement of occupied East Jerusalem, and as the Ir David spokesman reveals, to sanctify the violence of the occupying army by showing them "what they are fighting for." Ir David archaeological practice also participates in

the Judaization[9] of the landscape (making the demographic and physical landscape Jewish), turning nationalist images into material reality. Laws that designate archaeologically significant areas as heritage sites provide the legal cover necessary for Ir David to expand Jewish settlements (Yas 2000).

This settlement expansion, and the expansion and excavations of the associated archaeological park, has dramatically transformed the landscape in an area of Silwan known to Palestinians as Wadi Hilwe, with a population of around 16,000 Palestinians and 400 Jewish settlers. The site has been transformed from a series of scattered excavation pits into an archaeological park, a settlement, and an important national monument that attracts a high volume of tourists (Pullman and Gwiazda 2009). The transformation of a Palestinian village into the archaeological park called the "City of David" involved the eviction of Palestinians, the demolitions of Palestinian homes in the Wadi Hilwe and Bustan neighborhoods, the building of Jewish settlements, violence by Israeli settlers, soldiers, and Ir David security guards against the Palestinian population (B'Tselem 2010a) and an alarming number of arrests of Palestinian minors in Silwan by Israeli soldiers and Ir David security

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[9] The Israeli government has pursued a policy of Judaization in Jerusalem, which involves manipulating the demographic and physical landscape in order to turn Jerusalem into a Jewish City – culturally, demographically and politically. This project is similar to those pursued by the Israeli government within its borders following the expulsions of Palestinians in 1948. In the Galilee, the area with the highest concentration of Palestinians inside of Israel, the government implemented a project with the official name "Judaization of the Galilee", involving both the demolition of Palestinians homes and significant subsidies for Jewish immigrants buying houses in the area.

(B'Tselem 2010a). The Israeli authorities also use the Kidron Valley of Silwan as a sewage and waste drain basin for the Israeli settlements that overlook it from the ridge above, literally draining the negative externalities of the settlements and tourist centre into the neighbouring Palestinian villages, which like other East Jerusalem villages suffer from minimal public services, such as garbage pick-up, and neglect of infrastructure (Yas 2000).

The irony of the imagery this neglect and waste dumping creates - that of an unhygienic town strewn with trash heaps - is that Israel uses the very wasteland it creates to justify its land acquisition. Ir David's website insists that "when David Be'eri (David'le) first visited the City of David in the mid-1980's, the city was in such a state of disrepair and neglect that the former excavations that had once been conducted were once again concealed beneath garbage and waste" (Ir David, n.d.). This is reminiscent of early Zionist designations of Arabs as unfit to exploit the land to its full potential, such as Reinhold Niebuhr's 1946 article in *the Spectator* in which he described the Arab population as "miserable masses…in abject poverty" who would have incurred great benefits from the "technical and dynamic civilization which Jews would have helped to introduce" were it not for the ungratefulness the Palestinians showed in return for being colonized (quoted in Said 1978:6). Similar to JNF descriptions of neglected or denigrated land, Ir David spins a narrative of the redemption of the uncultivated frontier as justification for the confiscation of Palestinian land and the expansion of Jewish settlements.

The settlements themselves are built in physical overlap with the archaeological sites, designed in a neo-Biblical vernacular, and often built as close as possible to material remains. Pullman and Gwiazda note

how "the insertion of carefully selected and exposed archaeological finds is used as a means of authentication, a form of restoration simultaneously embodying preservation and restoration of the original and immutable meaning of a primordial relationship to the land established in the Biblical era" (Pullman and Gwiazda 2009:33). It is a national, biblical narrative told not only in stories or through material remains, but in spatial terms as well, a space in whose construction Israeli archaeology is complicit. Not only was the site renamed the City of David, but archaeological practice helped to physically resurrect it, to produce the Jewish national territory.

Conclusion

By examining archaeological discourse and practice in Palestine during the British mandate and in Palestine/Israel in the post-1967 occupied East Jerusalem, I have revealed how archaeology is complicit in the Zionist settler-national project. I argued that archaeological practice in Palestine/Israel is part of a spatial and temporal project that serves to produce a continuous link between the ancient Israelite past and the modern Israeli nation-state, justifying the creation of the Israeli state by reference to the past and through familiar frontier myths. I also revealed how archaeological practice participates in the constitution of the national landscape and the consequent dispossession of the Palestinians.

The role of archaeology in the "City of David" is especially relevant, as new demolition orders were recently issued for several Palestinian houses in Silwan (Wadi Hilwe Information Center 2013), and plans are underway to demolish dozens of homes in the al-Bustan neighborhood in order to expand the archaeological park (B'Tselem 2010b). Archaeology in Silwan is, as Nicolas Dirks (1992:7) has suggested,

"transforming domination into a variety of effects that masks both conquest and rule."

However, not everyone is taken in by this masking. The Israeli archaeological organization Emek Shaveh has partnered with the Palestinian Wadi Hilwe Information Center, located only a few hundred meters from the park entrance, to offer a counter-narrative to the "City of David", and alternative tours of Silwan. The Wadi Hilwe Center's extensive collection of information booklets, maps, photographs, and spent weapons casings used by Israeli soldiers and Ir David security against Palestinians, exposes the way the violence of dispossession is carried out through everyday practices of nation-making like archaeology. This type of challenge to archaeological practices shows us that that varied techniques of domination and nation-making also open up new sites of resistance, and new ways of resisting.

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