

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

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Domination and Resistance in Liberal Settler
Colonialism: Palestinians in Israel between the
Homeland and the Transnational

A thesis submitted to the University of Warwick for the degree of
Ph.D.

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October 2016

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Acknowledgements

As a PhD student, you get tons of advice. But no-one warns you not to leave the acknowledgements to be written last, when you are too exhausted to think about important junctures and to remember all the people who have supported you in different and meaningful ways throughout this journey. For those whose names I have forgotten to mention, I offer my sincere apologies.

I want to begin by thanking all the amazing activists in Palestine who have generously contributed to this research by sharing their activism, their personal stories and their wisdom with me. Their contributions and their trust are not taken for granted and I am deeply grateful. I can only hope that I have succeeded in conveying their voices as accurately and authentically as possible. I also hope that this thesis will be an opportunity to further open the conversation about the resistance of Palestinians in Israel – not only academically, but also in ways that can benefit activism on the ground.

After years of working in NGOs in Palestine, this journey has been more than merely a PhD project. It has been entangled with so many meaningful changes in my life. Not least, this PhD has signified a new relationship with Palestine. As a friend once commented, the first casualty of pursuing an academic career is your activism. In many respects, this was the case for me. But this PhD also marked the ambivalent process of immigration, first to London and now to Australia (where for the first time, I am a settler). Palestine will forever be a home, but what home means is changing in both pleasant and painful ways. These transformations were inseparable from this project.

I am especially thankful to my fantastic supervisors, Dr Nicola Pratt and Professor Jan Aart Scholte. I was fortunate to have such a committed, supportive and accessible supervisory team. Their belief in my abilities has been invaluable in completing this project. I want to thank Dr Pratt for all the inspiring conversations discussing Palestine, gender, sexuality, settler colonialism, domination and resistance. I also want to thank Professor Scholte for remaining on the advisory team after he left the University of Warwick, seeing this project through with me. His commitment and approach prove that the struggle against neoliberal academia demands that, as academics, we do not subscribe to its commodifying logics.

This PhD would not have been possible without the generous support of the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick; British Friends of Hebrew University; the Palestinian-American Research Center; the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies; the Council for British Research in the Levant; Mada Al Carmel: Arab Centre for Applied Social Research; AVI Fellowships for PhD Studies; and the Anglo-Israel Association.

I would also like to thank the Franz Rosenzweig Minerva Research Center at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which hosted me as a Visiting Fellow and provided me with the space to rethink the making of Palestinian citizenship in Israel, and also to begin my next project. I would especially like to thank Professor Yfaat Weiss for her mentoring, support and friendship. I am also grateful to the Australian Human Rights Centre at the University of New South Wales, at which I am a Visiting Fellow, where I have been welcomed with great generosity. In particular, I am grateful to Professor Andrea Durbach.

I want to thank my dear friends for their support and love, and for being such wonderful companions: Zahiye Kundos, Natalie Levy, Adi Maoz, Shira Havkin, Alexander Bodin-Saphir, Rozeen Bisharat, Muhammad Jabali, Kristen Rundle and Ghada Jabbour. I am grateful as well to Victoria Pereya, my dear friend and my comrade at the University of Warwick. I am so happy that this PhD has brought us together. Haneen Naamnih has been a wonderful friend and an intellectual soul mate. Our conversations and her brilliance were moments of light.

My two amazing sisters, Duna and Adan, deserve my deepest thanks for all their love, support and, not least importantly, good humour. Despite the fact that we were living in different places around the globe – Duna in the United States, Adan in Palestine and me in London and then Australia – they visited, hosted and spoiled me and my family. I would also like to thank my wonderful parents, Amal and Misbah, for all their love and support. Living in a political home and being raised during the 1980s, when they were activists and students, was a memorable experience that has shaped much of who I am today.

Finally, I would like to thank the two greatest loves of my life, my partner, Noam, and my son, Neal. How can I even begin to describe how grateful I am for their love, support and sacrifice? My only hope is that Neal will grow up to live in a better world, with less misery, suffering, violence, war and racism.

Declaration

This thesis is entirely my own work. The thesis, and no portion of its, has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Abstract

This thesis explores native resistance to settler colonialism through its focus on the '48 Palestinians (also known as the Palestinian citizens of Israel). It innovatively brings together postcolonial theory and settler colonial studies to explore the racialised, ethnicised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial violence, how these shape native modalities of resistance and subordination, and the ways in which the transnational is imbricated within these processes. The thesis undertakes two case studies – on the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights and on the Palestinian queer movement – drawing upon archival research, other primary texts and ethnographic exploration. The case studies are interrogated in relation to the liberal-nationalist framework that dominates '48 Palestinian discourse and resistance.

The thesis radically critiques the frameworks of ethnocracy, ethnonationalism and minority studies that have been most prevalent in earlier research on '48 Palestinians. Instead, this study builds on an understanding of resistance as diagnostic of power (Abu-Lughod 1990). It argues that the resistance of Palestinians in Israel is diagnostic of the structure of Israel as a liberal settler state, and unfolds in relation to the liminal positionality of '48 Palestinians between (semi)liberal citizenship and colonial subjecthood. It further argues that the subjectivities and modalities of resistance of '48 Palestinians are shaped through the racialising logics of settler colonialism, and the intersectionalities of these logics with ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

Through the focus in the two case studies on indigeneity (and the fetishisation of the indigenous subject as premodern) and LGBT rights (and the folding of queer subjects into modernity), the thesis further suggests that the resistance of '48 Palestinians is also shaped in complex and ambivalent ways by their ongoing encounters with the liberal frameworks of multiculturalism and human rights. The case studies illuminate that while these frameworks can serve as vehicles for empowerment, they can also reproduce the racialising logics of settler colonialism and further its entrenchment. This means that '48 Palestinians constantly (re)negotiate their identities, their struggles and their political agendas within multiple circuits of power.

The ambivalence of the encounter with the liberal settler state, as inclusionary and exclusionary, and human rights, as empowering and oppressive, produces native resistance to settler colonialism to be shaped and reshaped by competing political projects and hybrid modalities of resistance that include practices of self-essentialising, Bhabian notions of resistance as subversion, and a Fanonian politics of rejection as both pedagogy and a political imperative. The thesis concludes that the mobilisation of a more radical vision of decolonisation requires transcendence of both liberal settler colonialism and the liberal politics of human rights.

List of Abbreviations

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
ACRI	Association of Civil Rights in Israel
BDS	The Boycott Divestments and Sanctions movement
CESCR	The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
DFPE	Democratic Front for Peace and Equality
GSS	General Security Service
HRA	Arab Association for Human Rights
HRC	Human Rights Committee
ILA	Israel Land Authority
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JNF	The Jewish National Fund
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
MK	Member of Knesset
NCALC	The High National Committee for the Heads of Arab Local Councils
NCDL	National Committee for the Defence of Arab Lands
NCF	Negev Coexistence Forum
NDA	The National Democratic Assembly
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
PACBI	Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PLP	The Progressive List for Peace
PNGOs	Palestinian Non-Governmental Organisations in Israel
PQBDS	Palestinian queers for Boycott Divestment and Sanctions
PQueer	Palestinian queer
RCUV	The Regional Council of the Unrecognised Villages
UNCERD	The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
UNDRIO	The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States

Glossary

'48 Palestine – a term used mostly (but not exclusively) by Palestinians to refer to what is now Israel.

'48 Palestinians – a term used to refer to the Palestinians in Israel.

'67 Palestinians – a term used to refer to Palestinians in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 (the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem). East Jerusalem Palestinians are often referred to as Makads (Jerusalemite Palestinians).

Ashkenazi Jews – Jews of European origin.

Dunam – an Ottoman unit for the measurement of land, commonly used in Israel/Palestine. One dunam equals 1,000 square metres, or about one-quarter of an acre.

First Intifada – a Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories which broke out in 1987 and ended with the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.

Green Line (also known as the '67 borders) – a demarcation line based on the 1948 Armistice Agreements. It is the internationally recognised demarcation line that defines the de facto borders of what constitutes 'proper' Israel.

Hasbara (literally, 'explanation' in Hebrew) – a form of propaganda, public diplomacy and public relations that aims to positively explain Israel and its actions, policies and missions. It targets international audiences (decision makers, opinion makers and the general public), particularly in the West. *Hasbara* is carried out by the State of Israel, lobby groups and non-governmental organisations.

Knesset – the Israeli Parliament.

Mizrahi Jews – Jews of Arab origin, also known as Oriental Jews.

Nakba (Catastrophe) – the term that Palestinians use to describe the events of the 1948 War that resulted in the ethnic cleansing of Palestine and the loss of their homeland.

Sabra – a native Israeli, a Jew rooted in the land of Palestine – like the indigenous sabra cactus.

Second intifada (also known as the Al-Aqsa intifada) – a Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories which broke out in 2000, following the visit of Ariel Sharon, then the head of the opposition to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. It followed the first intifada (1987–93).

Separation wall (also known as the separation barrier, security barrier and apartheid wall) – initiated by Israel in 2000, the wall was designed to separate Israel and the West Bank. While in principle it should be based on the 1967 Green Line, 85% of the wall is in West Bank territory. The International Court of Justice has found the wall to be a violation of international law.

Sumud (steadfastness) – a Palestinian term that describes Palestinian resistance to Zionist/Israel settler colonialism. It refers to the survival of Palestinians on their land under conditions of oppression, dispossession, occupation and erasure.

United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine (also known as the '47 Partition Plan) – a resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1947 for the partition of Palestine into two states. The resolution was based on the recommendation of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine.

Note on Language

In this thesis, the names of places are referred to mostly by their English translations. However, in response to the politics of naming that is embedded in the Zionist Judaisation and Hebrewisation of the space, I use the term ‘the Naqab’ (also known as the Negev). The insistence on using Arabic names is a political choice in response to the efforts of the Zionist settler project to erase the history and belonging of the Bedouin with regard to the land. It is also a mark of respect to the Palestinian Bedouin indigenous population and their inspiring resistance.

I use the terms ‘’48 Palestinians’ and ‘Palestinians in Israel’ interchangeably to refer to the people who are often known in the political discourse and in the academic literature as the ‘Palestinian citizens of Israel’. This choice reflects the approach in this thesis to Palestinian citizenship. My research is committed to problematising the very concept of Palestinian citizenship. By using the terms ‘’48 Palestinians’ and ‘Palestinians in Israel’, I seek to challenge the normalisation, naturalisation and neutralisation of the term ‘citizen’ to describe the Palestinians in Israel.

Throughout the thesis, I make use of the terms ‘natives’ and ‘indigenous’ interchangeably to describe the Palestinians in Israel and other native/indigenous populations who are subjected to settler colonialism. Neither of the terms is ideal, neither is neutral. Both are inventions and productions of imperialism, colonialism and settler colonialism. In Part III of the thesis, which focuses on the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land, however, the terms ‘indigeneity’ and ‘indigenous peoples’ are used to connote the international discourse, human rights framework and regime of indigenous rights.

All of the quotes from my fieldwork interviews that appear in this research have been translated by myself from Arabic to English. In doing so, I have paid particular attention to capturing the nuances of the cultural and political connotations and language choices of my interviewees.

Introduction

This thesis seeks to theorise native resistance to settler colonialism, through critically rethinking the resistance of '48 Palestinians (also known as the Palestinians in Israel) to the Zionist/Israeli settler project. It explores the racialised, ethnicised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial violence, considers how these shape colonial subjectivities and modalities of resistance, and identifies the ways in which the transnational is imbricated within these processes.

Building on an understanding of resistance as diagnostic of power (Abu-Lughod 1990), I argue that the resistance of Palestinians in Israel is diagnostic of the structure of Israel as a liberal settler state that is simultaneously inclusionary and exclusionary, and unfolds in relation to the liminal positionality of '48 Palestinians in the Israeli liberal settler state as both citizens and colonial subjects. '48 Palestinian modalities of resistance are further indicative of the ambivalent encounter of Palestinians in Israel with liberal frameworks of human rights as simultaneously empowering and oppressive. The subjugation, subjectivities and modalities of resistance of '48 Palestinians, I suggest, are shaped in complex ways by the racialising logics of liberal settler colonialism, which cannot be understood outside of the intersectionality of race with gender, sexuality and class, and the ways in which these racialising logics can be reproduced in the deployment of liberal discourses of human rights.

Palestinians in Israel have responded to their ambivalent encounters with the liberalism of the Israeli settler state and the liberal discourses of human rights by simultaneously adopting, adapting, appropriating, subverting and refusing particular modalities of liberal resistance. This ambivalence results in modalities of '48 Palestinian resistance to settler colonialism that are shaped and reshaped by competing political projects: accommodative, transformative and anti-colonial, and hybrid modalities of resistance that include practices of self-essentialising, Bhabian notions of resistance as subversion, and a Fanonian politics of rejection as both pedagogy and a political imperative. The experience of Palestinians in Israel demonstrates that the mobilisation of a more radical

vision of decolonisation requires the transcendence of both liberal settler colonialism and the liberal politics of human rights.

The exploration of Palestinian resistance to Israeli settler colonialism is advanced through two case studies of '48 Palestinian activism: the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights and the Palestinian queer (PQueer) movement. Special attention is paid to the transnational discourses and frameworks of indigeneity and gay rights. The two movements offer compelling case studies for investigating the racialised, ethnicised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of colonial domination and the complex modes of intersectional resistance to it, and for examining the engagement of '48 Palestinians with liberal human rights discourses.

The two case studies also enable to illuminate the ways in which the trans/international is imbricated in the shaping of colonial subjectivities and modalities of resistance. Each of the case studies, as this thesis shows, reflects the workings of particular racialising logics, shaped along the intersectionalities of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and illuminates the ways in which these racialising logics figure at the intersection between the local and the transnational. The focus on indigeneity, as based on the negation of modernity and the fetishisation of the traditional, and on LGBT rights, as based on the folding of queer subjects into modernity, enables us to unpack how both frameworks influence the production of particular colonial subjectivities, modalities of resistance (accommodative, subversive and rejectionist) and political projects of emancipation. The Palestinian Bedouin movement for land rights illuminates an ambivalent deployment of and engagement with liberal versions of the indigenous rights discourse and the international indigenous rights framework, and shows how the culturalisation of the Naqab Bedouin by the settler state is replicated in their mobilisation of indigenous rights. As opposed, while beginning its journey by attempting to rework liberal LGBT programs and discourses to the local context, the PQueer movement evolved into a movement that employs a rejectionist modality of resistance, refusing the liberal grammar of LGBT rights and agendas. The PQueer movement thus enable to illuminate the (im)possibilities of transcending the ambivalence of the liberal settler state and liberal human rights discourses.

The case studies in this thesis are juxtaposed against the prevalent framework that dominates '48 Palestinian political discourse and resistance in Israel, which I construe as liberal nationalism. Through this juxtaposition, I problematise the liberal ethno-national bias and the normative approach towards human rights and multiculturalism that dominates existing critical literature, and unravel the complex and ambivalent ways in which different groups of '48 Palestinians respond to and engage with the settler state and the politics of transnational civil society and human rights regimes. The case studies illuminate that the strategies of resistance employed by '48 Palestinians are shaped not only by their encounter with the liberal settler state, but also by their rich and multifaceted encounters with the hegemony of liberalism, identity politics and human rights, which can be emancipatory but also deeply limiting.

Although this thesis focuses specifically on Palestinian resistance to the Israeli settler state, it also bears relevance to other settler colonial contexts. Through this thesis, I endeavour to open up new spaces for engaging with the politics of resistance to settler colonialism. In this thesis, I build on the important distinction between settler colonialism and franchise colonialism. Though the two may overlap, each is guided by its own logics, its own discursive and material structures of domination, and its own regimes of racialisation. While franchise colonialism depends on the exploitation of native bodies and labour, settler colonialism is a land-centred project that depends on the elimination of native peoples in order for the settler polity to be established. Settler colonialism, as Patrick Wolfe describes, is a *structure* of elimination, not a once-off event (Wolfe 2006a, 338). It 'has both negative and positive dimensions' in that it strives for the dissolution of native societies, but at the same time elimination becomes its organising principle (Wolfe 2006a, 338).

The distinctive nature of settler colonialism has not been sufficiently acknowledged in postcolonial theory. As Wolfe suggests, 'for all the homage paid to difference, postcolonial theory in particular has largely failed to accommodate such basic structural distinctions' (Wolfe 1997, 418; see also Veracini 2010). The neglect of settler colonialism has also meant that theorisation of the colonial condition, colonial subjectivities, resistance and decolonisation has been largely confined to franchise colonialism and hybrid colonial contexts that can be conceptualised as colonialism *with*

settlers (such as Algeria and Libya, and to some extent also South Africa), which Lorenzo Veracini has identified as failed settler colonialism (Veracini 2013).

At the same time, the field of settler colonial studies remains confined, by and large, to a structural and historical analysis of settler colonialism. The question of resistance and decolonisation in settler colonial contexts has been marginalised also within settler colonial studies. As Veracini has noted:

There is yet no language of decolonisation pertaining to settler colonial contexts: when the focus is on decolonisation, settler colonialism remains off the radar; when settler colonialism as a specific colonial form is acknowledged, it is its decolonisation that is excised from the interpretative picture. (Veracini 2007)

The ambivalent and multiple ways in which indigenous peoples figure in – and engage with – settler colonialism as both citizens and colonial subjects has been largely overlooked. Addressing this gap, this thesis brings together postcolonial theory and settler colonial studies as a framework for theorising the racialised, ethnicised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of colonial domination and native resistance in the particular context of settler colonialism. I draw upon the rich postcolonial theorisation on colonial domination, colonial subjectivities, native resistance, and a problematisation of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality, and on an understanding of settler colonialism as a distinctive transnational phenomenon. I also draw on the work of anticolonial writers such as Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi; postcolonial scholars and theorists such as Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Mahmoud Mamdani and Partha Chatterjee; and settler colonial theorists, primarily Patrick Wolfe. I further draw on the work of transnational postcolonial feminist and queer scholars, as well as race theorists; studies on the politics of indigeneity, indigenous struggles and subaltern use of transnational human rights regimes; and critical studies on Palestine.

Finally, it is important to note that intersectionality, in this research, is understood in two ways. First, building on postcolonial and feminist and queer scholarship on the intersections inherent to subjugation and subjectification, intersectionality describes the complex and inseparable intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality. Second, intersectionality can also be understood as the convergence between structures and discourses of power – as they figure both locally and globally – and the position of

the colonised subject in relation to them. The two are interconnected and interrelated and they inform my analytical concern with colonial domination and resistance and the agency of the colonised.

1. Domination and Resistance in the Liberal Settler State

This thesis frames the relationship between Israel and its Palestinian subjects as a colonial relationship of settlers and natives, rather than relying on the prevailing framework of minority and majority relations. In doing so, the thesis moves beyond the current prevailing frameworks that privilege ethnicity, ethno-nationalism, multiculturalism and minority rights that dominate the literature on Palestinians in Israel (see Haklai 2011; Jamal 2002; Peled 2005b; Peleg and Waxman 2011; Rouhana and Ghanem 1998; Smootha 2002; Yiftachel 2006). I argue instead that we need to foreground settler colonialism and race as the key constitutive elements.

The thesis builds on Shira Robinson's important recent intervention. Robinson argues that the status and citizenship of Palestinians in Israel should be understood in light of the rise of Israel as a liberal settler state and the paradoxes of Israel's liberal and colonial aspirations (Robinson 2013). The liberal settler state traps Palestinians in Israel, like other indigenous peoples, in a bifurcated regime in which natives are granted political rights but denied civil rights (Mamdani 2015). As Mahmood Mamdani argues, 'like American Indians in reservations, Palestinian Israelis may have the right to vote or even to be elected to office, but they live under a state of exception that denies them constitutionally defensible civil rights' (Mamdani 2015, 16). This interplay between granting and denying rights renders '48 Palestinians neither full citizens nor full colonial subjects. As a result, '48 Palestinian subjectivities are constituted, in Bhabian terms, in the liminal space between the liberal ideal of citizenship and the reality of colonisation and dispossession (Bhabha 1994).

Extending on Robinson's work, I argue that the political discourses, visions and resistance of '48 Palestinians should be understood in light of Israel being a liberal settler state. It is the convergence and complicity of liberalism with Zionist settler colonialism that best explains the subjugation, subjectivities and modalities of resistance of '48

Palestinians. The liberal settler state produces an illusion of inclusion that works to entrap native struggles within its own institutions and the liberal grammar of rights (Corntassel 2012, 92). In the case of Palestinians in Israel, Rhoda Kanaaneh and Isis Nusair pointedly argue:

Israel offers its Palestinian citizens participation, but often at the token level, as it defines itself as a state of and for the Jews. They experience it as a contradiction, simultaneously exclusionary but with a promise of inclusion, a democracy and a colonial power, offering both possibilities and their foreclosures. They maneuver and strategize in different ways around the restrictions the state imposes on them. (Kanaaneh and Nusair 2010, 1)

The interplay between the reality of exclusion and the promise of inclusion makes Palestinian resistance ambiguous, ambivalent and contradictory. The paradoxes that are at the heart of liberal settler colonialism – and resistance to it – have imbued Palestinian politics and mobilisation with competing political visions and projects. This thesis, as is elaborated in Chapter 1, differentiates between three types of political projects: first, reformative projects (those seeking liberal forms of equality in the settler state without undermining its legitimacy); second, transformative projects (those seeking more fundamental transformation of the underlying political and material power structures by subverting the liberal ethos of the settler state); and third, antagonist anticolonial projects of decolonisation (the wholesale rejection of the settler state based on values of native sovereignty, freedom and self-determination). These three modes of mobilisation compete with, intersect, overlap, displace and complement one another simultaneously.

However, this thesis departs from Robinson's view that the liberal and colonial dimensions of the Israeli state are oxymoronic, a view that is also reproduced in the wider critical literature on Israel (see Ghanem 2002, 2009; Ghanem, Rouhana and Yiftachel 1998; Jamal 2002; Rouhana 2006; Yiftachel 2006). I argue that this view builds on a normative conceptualisation of liberalism as neutral ideal, against which the colonial aspirations of the settler state are measured. This thesis instead builds on the work of Edward Said, Joseph Massad and Nadia Abu El-Haj to demonstrate that Israel's liberalism and settler colonialism are in fact *convergent and interrelated*. Indeed, their work demonstrates that there is a long legacy of Zionist affinity with European orientalism and liberal racism. As Said argues, 'there was a willing identification between Western liberal discourse and Zionism ... for the Arab Palestinian the concrete meaning

of this hegemonic relationship was disastrous' (Said 1979a, 37). This affinity is deeply connected to a broader racialised, gendered and sexualised orientalist epistemology that sees Jews as racially and culturally superior to Arabs (Kanaaneh 2002; Nasasra et al 2015; Puar 2011a; Said 1979a). The case studies in this thesis contribute to illuminating the ways in which the affinity between Zionism and liberalism is produced, reproduced and sustained, and how this affinity can be disrupted (or, alternatively, reinforced) through the mobilisation of intersectional resistance.

Israel's formation and normative power is built, and continues to build, on the close identification between Zionism and Western liberalism (see Freeman-Maloy 2011; Massad 1993, 2016; Said 1978b, 1979a, 1979b, 1985). Zionism has relied on European racialised liberalism to seek support for its project to create a Jewish state in Palestine. Indeed, it is European racism that renders the destruction of Palestinian lives a legitimate price (Massad 2003, 2005; Said 1979a). Israel's establishment and ongoing performance as a liberal, modern and enlightened state has been fundamental to its endeavour to normalise its settler authority and claim to sovereignty (Robinson 2013). Challenges to Israel's liberal image are threats to the ability of the state to entrench its settlement projects, from both sides of the Green Line¹. Therefore, since its inception, Israel has expended great efforts in promoting and maintaining its liberal image internationally and reinforcing its alliance and identification with the West.

What is often missed in the literature on the Palestinians in Israel is the role of '48 Palestinians in this projection of Israel as a liberal state. As I discuss in Part I, since its founding Israel has appropriated Palestinians in its *hasbara* (propaganda)² and foreign policy as a trope to signify its commitment to democracy. The extension of citizenship and other political rights to Palestinians was inextricably tied to efforts to legitimise the Jewish state (Bäumli 2006; Cohen 2010; Robinson 2013). Palestinians in Israel have

¹ The Green Line a demarcation line based on the 1948 Armistice Agreements. It is the internationally recognised demarcation line that defines the de facto borders of what constitutes 'proper' Israel.

² Hasbara is a form of propaganda, public diplomacy and public relations that aims to positively explain Israel and its actions, policies and missions. It targets international audiences (decision makers, opinion makers and the general public), particularly in the West. *Hasbara* is carried out by the State of Israel, lobby groups and non-governmental organisations.

become an even more significant tool following the crises of legitimacy as a result of growing international attention to the prolonged and violent occupation of the 1967 Palestinian territories. For liberals who are simultaneously supportive yet critical of Israel, '48 Palestinians have come to represent the boundary between legitimate ('48 borders) and illegitimate ('67 borders) statehood.

I argue that this tactical appropriation of '48 Palestinians by the Israeli state is deeply racialised, gendered and sexualised. Critically, it feeds upon orientalist imaginaries and invokes women's rights and gay rights as markers of Israel's modernity and civility. Palestinians in Israel are understood in contradictory and ambivalent terms: they are semi-civilised by virtue of their proximity to the modern and democratic Western-Israeli civilisation, but they are also a racially inferior population to be controlled. This latter view has been intensified by the paradigm of the 'clash of civilisations' that dominates the post-9/11 securitised world, as well as Israel's investment in the production of Arabophobia and Islamophobia (Abu El-Haj 2005).

Israel's identification with Western liberalism has proven, however, to be a double-edged sword (Robinson 2013). As part of their resistance, Palestinians in Israel have cleverly challenged the state's assertions to be a liberal democracy and have sought to undermine its legitimacy among Western allies. Importantly, the '48 Palestinian national movement has taken the lead in subverting the Western gaze by drawing attention to Israel's illiberal and anti-democratic laws, policies and practices. These efforts of resistance and subversion employ – but are also confined within – a vocabulary of liberalism and multiculturalism. More recent movements have also sought to challenge the tactical appropriation of Palestinians by the state. These movements are part of the global advance of Palestinian solidarity and the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, as well as being informed by a wider agenda of decolonisation.

Significant challenges to Israel's liberal and democratic claims in recent years have been forged by grassroots mobilisations and what I characterise as intersectional subaltern resistance. This resistance is especially exemplified by the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights and the Palestinian queer movement, which I examine as the central case studies for this thesis. Bedouin activists have challenged Israel's claims that it is

modernising the Naqab Bedouin, and Palestinian queers have contested the state's very invocation of gay rights as an exemplar of its democracy and as an auxiliary justification for colonial violence. However, as I demonstrate, the significance of these movements also lies in their transformative potential to transcend the restraining structural logics of Israeli citizenship and statehood as an organising discourse and platform for action.

2. The Liberal Politics of Human Rights and Its Discontents

In order to understand contemporary '48 Palestinian mobilisation, we need to move beyond the dominant tendency to study Palestinian resistance in Israel as a localised phenomenon – that is, an issue that can be confined within the borders, logics and institutions of the Jewish state. This tendency misses the key ways in which Palestinian subjectivities and resistance practices have also developed through contact with the transnational, which has fomented both resistance and the continuation of colonial violence.

The struggle of Palestinians in Israel has been, by and large, confined by the liberal logic of citizenship. This is so even when activists have sought to expand the meaning of citizenship through advancing multicultural models of citizenship and governance. Divorced from the larger Palestinian national movement and consequently from its anticolonial revolutionary sentiments, '48 Palestinians have sought alternative frameworks to articulate their struggle and their demands. Most paradigmatically, they have capitalised on the rise of identity politics, multiculturalism, and minority and indigenous rights as a way to make their grievances legible within (neo)liberal and state-centric politics.

Being able to communicate grievances in the universal vocabulary of human rights is essential to contemporary subaltern resistance (Hafner-Burton 2008; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005). The deployment of a human rights vocabulary by the marginalised is often understood in terms of strategic essentialism. But it cannot be simply explained as a mere instrument employed strategically by activists in order to leverage political power. In other words, practices of strategic essentialism are not without implications. The utilisation of human rights produces powerful epistemological discourses that

constitute, circulate and reshape native identities and their political struggles. These discourses have been borne out and represent a particular liberal politics that is simultaneously progressive but conservative, and enabling but constraining. As Laleh Khalili points out, ‘transnational discourses are forged in particular places which are then borrowed, nurtured, translated, and transformed across borders’ (Khalili 2007, 11). The transnational discourses of multiculturalism and minority rights were appropriated by activists to form a ’48 Palestinian national movement, which is a subversive endeavour in itself. But doing so also foreclosed the possibility of more emancipatory visions outside of liberal logics.

This liberal bias has also left the violence of liberal human rights and multiculturalism – as well as their epistemological and ontological intrusions in reconfiguring native struggles and identities – unexamined in the literature on Palestinians in Israel. Rahul Rao argues that the political thinking and behaviour of actors is ‘underpinned by more complex spatial imaginaries of threat’ that originate from both the domestic and the transnational realms (Rao 2010, 8). The case studies of Bedouin and PQueer mobilisation demonstrate that these spatial imaginaries of threat derive not only from the liberal settler state, but also from the liberal politics of transnational civil society and international human rights regimes. The subjectivities, identities and resistance practices of ’48 Palestinians evolve and transform in light of their encounters with liberalism as the organising principle of the settler state and human rights regimes. As the case studies show, the racialising logics of settler colonialism can be reproduced in disturbing ways in the mobilisation of, and encounter with, the liberal politics of human rights. These convergences demand that ’48 Palestinians negotiate their identities and struggles in multiple circuits of power.

This thesis demonstrates that the emancipatory promise of universalised human rights is conditional, forcing marginalised peoples to assert their identities and frame their demands in ways that can also be oppressive. ’48 Palestinian resisters respond to the violence of the state and to the violence of liberal multiculturalism and human rights and the politics it produces in varying ways. Some practices of resistance are inspired by Fanonian universalist sensibilities and by a radical pedagogy of anticolonial struggle that is articulated in ‘a complete calling in question of the colonial situation’ (Fanon 1963,

37). Such resistances are characterised by a Fanonian politics of negation and rejection, the urgent and wholesale refusal of liberal and colonial gestures of inclusion. Total rejection functions both as pedagogy and as an ethical imperative of resistance. It is foundational to the project of decolonising both the self and society. Other resistance strategies are instead marked by hybridised practices of accommodation and rejection. This can encompass strategic essentialism, self-exoticising and self-orientalising, and the tactical performance of a ‘drama of suffering’ (Khalili 2007, 33) as political assets. These strategies seek to trouble settler sovereignty and challenge Western notions of modernity, thereby politicising, subverting and reworking the indigenous and LGBT frameworks.

3. Who Are the Palestinians in Israel?

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon reminds us of a common-sense truth that is often forgotten. As he writes, ‘it is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence’ (Fanon 1963, 36).

In 1947, between 850,000 and 900,000 Palestinians lived in Palestine. By the end of the 1948 War, Palestine had been ethnically cleansed of its Arab-Palestinian inhabitants (see Masalha 1992; Pappé 2006). Approximately 725,000 Palestinians were expelled and became refugees. More than 500 villages were destroyed (Kanaaneh 2002). The Nakba (catastrophe)³ has been a major rupture in the lives of Palestinians in Israel. The encounter with the Israeli state during the first decades was particularly painful, marked by an isolation from the Arab world and the Palestinian people, and an intensified process of dispossession and the Judaisation and de-Arabisation of the space (Falah 1989a, 2003; Yiftachel 1999).

Palestinian life was drastically transformed. From a majority population owning most of the land, Palestinians became a landless minority in their own homeland. They became citizens of a state constitutionally defined as a Jewish state and as a state of the Jewish people (not its citizens), as anchored in Israel’s Basic Law⁴ and the Declaration of

³ Nakba is the term that Palestinians use to describe the events of the 1948 War that resulted in the ethnic cleansing of Palestine and the loss of their homeland.

⁴ Article 1 of the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom (1992) states: ‘The purpose of this Basic Law

Independence.⁵ In Israel, nationalism (*le'um*) and citizenship (*izrahut*) are not congruent. It is race – not citizenship – that defines access to rights.

Today, there are an estimated 1,746,000 Palestinians in Israel, comprising 20.7% of the population (Aderet 2015). Palestinians are the most impoverished, marginalised and persecuted population in the state. The inequity is enshrined in state laws. The human rights Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) Adalah documents more than 50 laws that discriminate against Arabs ‘in all areas of life, including their rights to political participation, access to land, education, state budget resources, and criminal procedures’.⁶ According to a 2014 report by the Central Bureau of Statistics, the poverty rate among Arabs in Israel is 52.6%, compared with a national average of 22% (Gravé-Lazi 2015). Over two-thirds of Arab children live below the poverty line (Sikkuy 2014), and Arab towns and cities are among the poorest in Israel (Adalah 2011). The public investment per student in Arab schools is less than one-third of that in Jewish schools (Adalah 2011), and the average income of Palestinians is 30% less than that of Jews (IDI 2010).

Subjected to a different land regime, Palestinians now own just 3–3.5% of the land of Israel, compared with 48% in 1948. Moreover, they are deprived of access to 93% of the land, due to its legal classification as state and Jewish land that is administrated respectively by the Israel Land Authority and the Jewish National Fund (Adalah 2011).

Disparities between the Arab and Jewish populations are rooted in a rejection of the basic idea that Jews and Arabs are equal and therefore should be treated equally. As Fanon pointedly argues, ‘in the colonies the economic substructure is also a super-structure’ (Fanon 1963, 40). As such, discrimination is intrinsic to the state’s racial ideology, which sees Jews as superior to Arabs.

is to protect human dignity and liberty, in order to establish in a Basic Law the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.’ For the full text, see <http://www.israelawresourcecenter.org/israelaws/fulltext/basiclawhumandignity.htm>, accessed 20 July 2016.

⁵ Israel’s Declaration of Independence states: ‘We ... hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.’ For the full text, see <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/declaration%20of%20establishment%20of%20state%20of%20israel.aspx>, accessed 19 July 2016.

⁶ See Adalah’s website at <https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/7771>, accessed 11 October 2016.

Nearly seven decades after it was founded, Israel, Wolfe argues, remains at the frontier stage of settlement (Wolfe 2016a). The state is yet to make peace with the existence of Palestinians in Israel (and in the occupied Palestinian territories). The '48 Palestinians continue to be viewed as foreign to the land, a demographic threat and a fifth column. '48 Palestinians are treated as a problem to be solved – a population to be controlled, tamed and surveilled (Cohen 2010; Lustick 1980; Sa'adi 2013; Zureik 2011, 2015).

Palestinian lives are thus shaped by the violence of settler colonialism, manifested in Israel's continued project of settlement and Judaisation and its pursuit of Jewish settler privilege. The Nakba therefore is not only an event, but also a structure that continues to shape Palestinian life in Israel and also in the West Bank, in the Gaza Strip and in exile (Wolfe 2006a; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2015a).

4. The Lacuna in the Study of Palestinians in Israel

Scholarship on Palestinians in Israel tends to focus on the larger structures that shape subjugation, leaving Palestinian mobilisation, resistance and agency under-theorised (see Abdo 2011; Bäuml 2007; Haklai 2011; Kassem 2011; Lustick 1980; Pappé 2011; Peleg and Waxman 2011; Rouhana 1997). Research on Palestinian politics and mobilisation has been limited to the study of parliamentary activity and political behaviour (see Ghanem 1997, 2001; Louer 2007; Neuberger 1993; Smooha 1992; Suleiman 2002) and has been focused on the rise of '48 Palestinian nationalism to explain transformations in Palestinian identity and mobilisation (see Haklai 2011; Jamal 2011; Louer 2007).

Only a handful of studies have focused on '48 Palestinian civil society. These have been confined to the study of Palestinian NGOs in Israel (PNGOs) and litigation as a form of resistance (on PNGOs, see Haklai 2004; Jamal 2008a; Payes 2003, 2005; on women's PNGOs, see Marteu 2009; on Bedouin women's NGOs, see Marteu 2015; Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder 2007; on litigation, see Amara 2015; Jabareen 2010; Sallon 2009). A small number of studies have offered a critical ethnographic reading of the resistance and mobilisation of ordinary people (on Bedouin mobilisation, see Nasasra 2015b; Abu-Rabia Safa 2008; on Palestinian women, see Kassem 2010; Meari 2010; on Palestinian hip-hop

in Israel, see Equeiq 2010; Maira and Shihade 2012). Even fewer have considered how ordinary people experience the liberal grammar of human rights (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012; Shalhoub-Kevorkian et al 2014).

Furthermore, surprisingly enough, even though the everyday lives of '48 Palestinians continue to be shaped by the violence of Israeli settler colonialism, studies on Palestinians in Israel have been dominated by ethnic-centred paradigms, neglecting settler colonialism, postcolonial theory, and race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality in the analysis of subjugation and resistance (Ghanem, Rouhana and Yiftachel 1998; Haklai 2011; Jamal 2002, 2011; Peled 1992, 2005; Peleg and Waxman 2011; Rouhana 1997, 1998, 2006; Rouhana and Ghanem 1998; Sa'di 2000; Shafir and Peled 1998; Smooha 1990, 1997, 2002; Yiftachel 1992, 1998, 1999, 2006). The work of Elia Zureik has been exceptional in its insistence on the conceptualisation of Israel as a settler colonial project (Zureik 1979, 1981, 1993a).

This research contributes to the study of Palestinians in Israel by introducing settler colonialism and postcolonialism as a framework for analysing '48 Palestinian subjectivity, subjugation and resistance as shaped through the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and the interplay between the local and the transnational. As such, the research builds on a larger body of literature that theorises Zionism and the Israeli state as settler colonial projects (see Abdo and Yuval-Davis 1995; Collins 2011; Rodison 1973; Said 1979a, 1979b; Shafir 1989; Veracini 2006, 2013; Wolfe 2007; Zureik 1979, 2015).

It is also part of a small but significant wave of emerging scholarship on the Palestinians in Israel that acknowledges settler colonialism and internal colonialism as a framework of analysis (see Abu Saad 2008a; Kanaaneh 2002; Kanaaneh and Nusair 2010; Nasasra et al 2015; Robinson 2013; Rouhana 2015; Rouhana and Sabagh-Khoury 2015; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012; Shihade 2011, 2012; Yiftachel 2012). This body of work, however, has been, by and large, focused on domination and subjugation, rather than resistance.

4.1 Challenging Ethnic-Centred Paradigms in the Study of Palestinians in Israel

The question of how to conceptualise the Israeli regime has been central to the study of Palestinians in Israel and to the theorisation of '48 Palestinian subjugation, exclusion, citizenship, legal status, political mobilisation, and relations with the state.

The status of '48 Palestinians as inferior citizens in the Jewish state has undermined claims of mainstream scholarship that conceptualised Israel as a liberal democracy (see, for example, Gavison 1999; Sheffer 1996). Other scholars have argued that Israel does not neatly fit 'any known type of democracy, such as liberal, republican, multicultural or consociational', seeking instead alternative paradigms for conceptualising the Israeli regime (Peled 2016, 1). A significant example is Sammy Smooha's model of ethnic democracy (Smooha 1990, 1997, 2002). According to Smooha, ethnic democracy is 'located somewhere in the democratic section of the democracy–non-democracy continuum' (Smooha 1997, 234). It is characterised by the extension of individual political and civil rights, while institutionalising the rule of an ethnic majority. Ethnic democratic states, Smooha suggests, are 'identified with a "core ethnic nation", not with its citizens' (Smooha 1997, 199).

Smooha's model has been contested by critical scholars who argue that institutionalised ethnic privilege precludes a consideration of Israel as a democracy. They instead argue for the conceptualisation of Israel as an ethnic state (Sa'adi 2000; Ghanem, Rouhana and Yiftachel 1998; Jamal 2002; Rouhana 2006; Rouhana and Sultany 2003) and an ethnocracy (Yiftachel 1998, 1999, 2006). Ethnocratic regimes, Oren Yiftachel argues, are:

... neither totalitarian nor democratic. Such regimes are states which maintain a relatively open government, yet facilitate a non-democratic seizure of the country and polity by one ethnic group ... Ethnocracies, despite exhibiting several democratic features, lack a democratic structure. As such, they tend to breach key democratic tenets, such as equal citizenship, the existence of a territorial political community (the *demos*), universal suffrage, and protection against the tyranny of the majority. (Yiftachel 1999, 365)

Despite the major differences between the theorisations of Israel as an ethnic democracy and as an ethnocracy and ethnic state, both approaches focus on the question of ethnic privilege and are premised on the primacy of ethnicity and ethno-nationalism as theoretical frameworks for understanding the relationship between '48 Palestinians and the State of Israel. While Smootha sees Israel as a hybrid structure of democracy and non-democracy, arguing that ethnic privilege and democratic principles can co-exist, even if not comfortably, Yiftachel's argument suggests a reading of Israel's regime as a liminal configuration that is 'neither a democracy nor a non-democracy'.

The theorisation of Israel as an ethnic state and as an ethnocracy has been invaluable in unpacking the contradictions and paradoxes that spring from the definition of Israel as a 'Jewish and democratic' state. However, the focus on ethnocracy has also been premised, by and large, on the neglect of settler colonialism as the most significant factor that shapes the structural, political, legal, economic and cultural subjugation of '48 Palestinians (Abdo 2011). This neglect, argues Nira Yuval-Davis, has led scholars to overlook 'some epistemological and ontological aspects of the Israeli Palestinian conflict' (Yuval-Davis in Abdo 2011, 17). The favouring of ethnic-centred paradigms by scholars, Nahla Abdo further argues, is not the result of their theoretical validity, but rather because they 'provide softer, less politically charged concepts to describe what are basically racist policies and practices embedded in the Zionist ideology on which Israel has been – and continues to be – founded' (Abdo 2011, 17; for more on the rejection of the colonial paradigm in Israeli studies, see Ram 1993; Peled forthcoming).

The ethnic and multicultural bias has further suggested a dangerous slippage from ethnicity to culture, risking the invocation of ethnicity as a euphemism for cultural difference. Amal Jamal, for example, suggests that 'Israeli democracy has clear ethno-cultural characteristics' (Jamal 2002, 417), and that 'the institutionalization of collective rights and liberalisation of Israeli citizenship are necessary steps that have to be taken if one seeks to reduce the rising tensions of the multicultural conflict in Israel' (Jamal 2002, 431). Israel is thus conceptualised as a divided society and as a multi-ethnic state. Relations between Jews and Arabs are presented in terms of ethnic, national and cultural difference, framed as a relationship of minority–majority, rather than one premised on colonisation and racial hierarchies. The main concern therefore becomes how to manage

ethnic differences and schisms (Peled 1992, 32), not how to decolonise a racial settler colonial regime.

The loyalty of critical scholars to liberal multiculturalism as a theoretical prism and the urge to prove that Israel is not a liberal democracy have led them to miss the convergence between liberalism and settler colonialism as constitutive to contemporary forms of native subjugation and native governance. As this thesis shows, this convergence has been a central characteristic of the Israeli settler regime, shaping also the political behaviour and activism of Palestinians in Israel.

The failure to consider the liberal aspects of Israeli settler colonialism (and settler colonialism per se), I suggest, is rooted in the development of a critical Palestinian scholarship that is predicated on an antagonistic, albeit ‘dialogical’ and reactive, relationship with Israeli scholarship. As Blecher pointedly observes, ‘the strength of recent studies about Palestinians (seeing them as part of Israel) turns out to also be a weakness (seeing them as part of Israel)’ (Blecher 2005, 733). As a result, the imaginative, emancipatory and decolonising potential of this body of scholarship has been undermined. In this respect, critical scholarship has correlated the question of Palestinians in Israel with the Israeli question, rather than situating it as part of a larger concern with imperialism and settler colonialism.

Addressing these shortfalls, this research moves beyond the tendency to view the liberal and colonial characteristics of the state in polarising terms. As Nadia Abu El-Haj convincingly argues:

We don’t have to choose between analysing the Israeli state as a typical (if extreme version of the) ‘liberal state’ ... or as just another, Middle Eastern ‘mukhabarat’ (security/police) state ..., or any other kind of regime. It has both liberal and distinctly illiberal dimensions: it is a colonial state and, for its Jewish citizens, a liberal democracy; it is governed by the rule of law and it operates with a sustained suspension of that law, under the rubric of military rule and the guise of security requirements. The Israeli state is that complex multifaceted matrix of forms and tactics of rule. (Abu El-Haj 2010, 40, fn 34)

By conceptualising Israel as a liberal settler state, this research suggests that the convergence between liberalism (as a structure of opportunity, as well as one of violence

and racism) and settler colonialism has produced particular configurations of contemporary settler regimes and settler governance of native populations. In this thesis, liberalism is not treated as a normative framework or an ideal structure of governance, against which the non-democratic features of the settler state are measured. Instead, it is seen as an analytic for understanding the modern formation of the settler state, as well as native engagement with and resistance to it.

4.2 The Neglect of Race

The focus on ethnicity and the neglect of settler colonialism have obscured race as constitutive to the Zionist settler colonial project and the working of the Israeli polity. Race is thus an absent category in the study of Palestinians in Israel, including in the recent work on '48 Palestinians that acknowledges Israeli-Zionist settler colonialism. As a result, the racialisation of difference, social stratification and citizenship is overlooked. These instead are understood and analysed in terms of ethnic difference, as opposed to being imbricated in a Zionist racial ideology that has its roots in a European conception of race.

This thesis suggests that Israel is a liberal settler colonial state, rooted in racial ideologies that position Jews as racially – not ethnically – superior to Arabs. This claim demands a clarification of the difference between ethnicity and race. However, this differentiation is not always easy to make. Referring to her own work, Abdo points out that ‘while I consider the distinction between “ethnic” and “racial” vital in catheterizing Zionism and the Israel settler-colonial state, I also find myself in some instances falling into the trap of using the concepts interchangeably’ (Abdo 2011, 20). The use of the two terms interchangeably is not arbitrary, but rather speaks to the ways that ethnicity is often invoked as a euphemism for race, dressed in discourses of cultural diversity that are rooted in the ideology of multiculturalism. As Pamela Perry shows in her work, ethnicity has come to function as an instrument for whiteness to construct otherness through cultural difference (Perry 2001). Nonetheless, in their groundbreaking work on settler colonialism as shaped through the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender and class, Daiva Stasiulis and Nira Yuval-Davis suggest that:

Ethnic discourse involves the construction of exclusionary and inclusionary boundaries which draws upon the myths of common origin and/or destiny, providing

individuals with a mode of interpreting the world based on shared cultural resources and/or collective positioning *vis-à-vis* other groups. Racial discourse involves modes of exclusion, inferiorization, subordination and exploitation. It constructs signifiers of collectivity boundaries as immutable and hereditary. (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995, 20)⁷

However, the use of ethnicity – rather than race – by critical scholars who study Palestinians in Israel does not suggest an implicit use of ethnicity as a euphemism for race. Rather, ethnicity is used as a descriptive concept to differentiate between Arabs and Jews and between the different groups that make up Israeli society. Israel, it is argued, is a regime that provides Jews as an ethnic group – not a race – with privilege. This approach does not acknowledge, as scholars have demonstrated, Israel as a racial regime that is grounded in Zionism’s adoption and internalisation of a European conception of race, which positions whites as racially superior to non-whites, and Jews as racially superior to Arabs (Massad 2003, 2005; Said 1979a; Wolfe 2016b).

This research also builds on Mamdani’s useful distinction on the use in colonial rule of race as biological and ethnicity as cultural (Mamdani 2001, 652). Race, he argues, has been an important category of difference that justified colonial rule through establishing a formal distinction between settlers and natives. Zionism, as discussed in the next chapter, is no different. Robinson notes ‘the near impossibility of Arab religious conversion to Judaism, which has made birth (that is, blood) the sole path to membership in the settler community’ (Robinson 2013, 9).

The distinction between race and ethnicity is important to our understanding of the settler racial regime and the exercise of indirect colonial rule. As Mamdani argues, ‘the colonial state has divided the population into two: races and ethnicities’ (Mamdani 2001, 654). Similarly, the Israeli regime is premised on the division of the population into two races – Jews and Arabs – and this difference is codified in state laws. As Robinson argues, ‘the juridical concept of nationality in Israel both complemented and reinforced a preexisting racial logic’ (Robinson 2013, 9). As with other colonial rules, ethnicity has been used by Israel to fragment the native population as part of its divide-and-rule policies. The

⁷ Nonetheless, in their book, they use race and ethnicity together to connote how settler colonialism works to produce difference (for example, ‘racial/ethnic divisions’) (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995).

Bedouin were produced as a separate ethnic group, Druze were designated a separate nationality, and Christians were ethnicised as a distinct group based on their religion and, recently, were also acknowledged as their own nationality.

To conclude, though the concepts of race and ethnicity can overlap, the analytical distinction between the two is neither rhetorical nor a matter of semantics. It speaks to the understanding of the Israeli settler colonial state and its racial regimes of governance.

5. The Politics of Indigenous Research and Knowledge Production

Indigenous research is a humble and humbling activity. (Smith 1999, 5)

This thesis is committed to the decolonisation of research and research methodologies and is embedded in frameworks and discourses that privilege indigenous presence (Smith 1999, 9). For the colonised, knowledge is never neutral or objective. As Linda T. Smith argues, ‘from the vantage point of the colonized ... the term “research” is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism’ (Smith 1999, 1). The economy of knowledge, Said argues, is constitutive to the production and operation of colonial domination. In the case of Zionism, knowledge production plays an important role in reconfiguring the history and geography of the space and in enhancing the process of settler indigenisation (Abu El-Haj 2001; Nasasra et al 2015; Shamir 1996). Research on Palestinians has been saturated in orientalist and essentialist imaginaries, building on a long legacy of epistemological and ontological distinctions made between the Occident and the Orient as its ‘other’ (Haidar and Zureik 1987; Sa’adi 1997; Said 1978a, 2; Zureik 1993a, 1993b).

Research methodologies have also been immersed in colonial domination and in the racialisation and ‘othering’ of indigenous people. Positivist-informed research has claimed objectivity and neutrality, treating indigenous people as objects of research. Historically, ethnographic anthropology was also deeply implicated in reproducing the epistemological assumptions that justified colonial domination (Smith 1999). With the rise of critical scholarship and indigenous scholarship, scholars called for approaches that

are not oppressive to both indigenous communities and researchers (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith 2008; Foley 2003; Marker 2003; Smith 1999).

A project of decolonising research and research methodologies emerged as a counter-hegemonic project of reclaiming knowledge, authority and self-representation. Indigenous standpoint theories – inspired by feminist standpoint theories – called for research to be centred on indigenous knowledge, philosophy, voice and experiences (Foley 2003). Research was articulated instead in ethical, normative and emancipatory terms. It was seen as community-driven and owned, and as a vehicle to advance social change, community resistance and wellbeing (Marker 2003).

A key issue for indigenous scholars is the assumption common to most research methodologies that the researcher is exogenous to the community that is being studied (Smith 1999). Different approaches may disagree on how to deal with the position of exteriority, but rarely on its existence. The limitations of most research methodologies in the indigenous context has often forced indigenous scholars to assert their experiences in inadequate and alienating terms. As result, indigenous scholars sought alternative frameworks to address ‘the long-term relationships which are established and extend beyond a research relationship to one involving families, communities, organisations and networks’ (Smith 1999, 15).

The politics of knowledge production often works to undermine indigenous research on the grounds of bias. This reproach is reserved for native scholars, while the neutrality and validity of white researchers is rarely questioned (see Zureik 1993a in the context of research on the Palestinians in Israel). Indigenous scholars find themselves burdened with the requirement of establishing their scholarly integrity and authoritative voice, as the attacks on Palestinian scholars demonstrate.⁸ When it comes to research on Israel/Palestinians, Palestinian scholars – and other critical scholars – still find

⁸ See, for example, the case of the Palestinian scholar Steven Salaita, who lost his professorship at the University of Illinois (Salaita 2015), and the case of the Palestinian scholar Nadia Abu El-Haj, who faced campaigns demanding that she be denied professorship at Columbia University (Arenson 2007). Furthermore, the attempt to silence critical scholars is also exemplified in the (at times successful) attempts to cancel conferences and talks perceived as anti-Israeli (Reisz 2015), and in the attacks on critical scholars (not necessarily Palestinians): see the recent case of Jasbir Puar (Puar 2016).

themselves struggling for ‘permission to narrate’ (Said 1984; see also Butler 2006; Salaita 2015). This should be understood as part of the larger struggle of Palestinians for visibility, voice and self-representation (Said in Dabashi 2006, 2).

5.1 Ethnographic Research Methodologies

This thesis employs qualitative ethnographic research methodologies based on interviews, participant observations, and interpretive and textual analysis.

While ethnography historically has been complicit in colonial domination, it has become a critical methodology that values and learns from local experiences and knowledge. Ethnography is about ‘*learning from people*’ (Spradley 2016, 3, emphasis in original). It can be conceptualised as a ‘methodology informed by a theory of social life as practice’ (O’Reilly 2012, 1). Social life is understood as the interaction between structure and agency (O’Reilly 2012, 6), which in this research is manifested in the focus on the interrelationship of settler colonialism and colonial domination and native resistance.

Ethnography as a reflexive and interpretative framework that draws on the experiences of ordinary people and communities has been most relevant to this research focus. It has enabled me to engage analytically with the ways in which ’48 Palestinian activists talk about their relations to the state, being citizens, and their engagement with Israeli institutions, as well as how they narrate their activism, locally and transnationally. Ethnographic attention to social references, word choices and body language was important in unpacking the hidden scripts of resistance (Scott 1990) and placing the narratives of the colonised at the heart of this research.

My experience of engaging with my community as an indigenous researcher has been shaped by my position as both an insider and an outsider. My identity and my work as an activist and as an NGO professional, my familiarity with the activist scene, and my close friendships with activists have rendered me at many levels as an insider, a member of the community. At the same time, the fact that I have lived outside of Israel/Palestine for the past 10 years has simultaneously made me an outsider.

My positionality has also been shaped in relation to Palestinian Bedouin activists and Palestinian queer activists. When it comes to the Palestinian Bedouin struggle, my own identity as a Palestinian and the charged history of the relationship of Palestinians in Israel with the Palestinian Bedouin community (in which the Bedouin were treated by Palestinians as oriental ‘others’) made my interviewees cautious in expressing their honest critiques of the Palestinian political leadership and PNGOs. My engagement with Palestinian queers was far less problematic because my personal friendships with queer activists and my politics made me a trustworthy interlocutor.

On a different note, as the next section demonstrates, despite my commitment to decolonising research methodologies, I was unable to avoid their polarising and technical vocabulary. Phrases such as ‘field research’ (it is a home, not a field of research), ‘data collection’, ‘interviews’, ‘participant observation’ and ‘ethnographic engagement with communities’ have forced a particular distancing and alienation that did not authentically capture my experience as an ‘outsider within’ (Hill-Collins 1986). When translated from theory to practice, the task of decolonising research methodologies has proven to be difficult.

5.1.1 Ethnographic Interviews

The ethnographic methodologies of this research have included interviews and participant observations of activists and protest activities. Between 2012 and 2015, during multiple trips to Israel/Palestine – each lasting between one and three months – I held over 40 interviews with prominent activists, NGO professionals, and a small number of indigenous and Israeli academics.

The interviews – or conversations, as I prefer to call them – took place in NGO offices, in cafés and bars, in private houses, and amid the rubble of villages that had just been demolished by the state. Interviews with activists followed an ethnographic approach, centred on people’s experiences and narratives (Spradley 2016). Narrative-based interviews have allowed me to engage with the ways in which activists, as social actors, construct their ‘social worlds’ (Miller and Glassner 1997, 100; see also Gill 2000). Some interviews, particularly with NGO professionals, were semi-structured, which allowed a degree of flexibility while following a set format (Gaskell 2000).

Given that I speak Arabic, Hebrew and English, I was able to converse with my interviewees in their own languages. Most interviews were conducted in Arabic and a small number in Hebrew or English, where interviewees were Israelis or foreigners. Most of the interviews have been recorded. Careful attention has been given to translating quotes to English. I have tried to capture the authenticity of phrasing, word choices, cultural references and language. Analysis of interviews took an interpretative, discursive and content-based approach.

Researchers are often advised to conduct interviews in a time-effective manner. If we take seriously the indigenous standpoint theory – which sees research as a formulation of collective knowledge that is owned by the community and is grounded in a normative quest for decolonisation and political change – then interviews must do more than enhance the researcher’s learning process. They must become a space in which activists can tell their stories, share their dilemmas, and reflect on their activism and experiences. Many of the activists interviewed for this research used our meetings as an opportunity to take some distance from day-to-day activism and to reflect. Conversations were reciprocal, stimulating and reflexive. Activists (and friends) shared their knowledge and insights with great generosity, and for that I am grateful. In analysing these interviews, I faced the heavy responsibility of acknowledging their voices and their wisdom.

5.1.2 Participant Observations

I have also engaged in participant observation of activist and protest activities. During the time I spent in Israel/Palestine, I attended a seminar of Palestinian activists that was held in Tal Al-Sabe’, a Bedouin township in the Naqab, and joined protests against the dispossession of the Bedouin from their lands that took place in the Naqab and in the Palestinian city of Jaffa. In addition, I joined numerous protest activities in solidarity with Palestinian political prisoners and the Palestinian refugees of Al-Yarmouk refugee camp in Syria. I also attended public talks by Palestinian queers in London. Observing – and participating in – the new wave of Palestinian protest in Israel allowed me to reflect analytically on deeper transformations in ’48 Palestinian identities and resistance.

My research also draws on unofficial conversations over beer with friends and activists. These informal engagements have been invaluable in developing my understanding of contemporary Palestinian politics in Israel, and in formulating my ideas and arguments. Joining the protests, and frequenting the three bars in which activists in Jaffa sit almost every night, I was fortunate to meet a new generation of activists who, in time, also became my friends. Spending time with highly politicised old and new friends, listening to activist gossip, and engaging in debates over questions such as what resistance should look like, what the next stage of protests should be, and when to escalate protest and in what ways, have been a learning experience.

5.1.3 Textual and Visual Sources

The research draws on extensive textual sources and analysis. These sources include NGO materials such as reports, press releases and statements; news items, op-eds, interviews, feature stories and blogs; social media (including Facebook); speeches by politicians and world leaders; and Israeli and pro-Israeli *hasbara* materials. I have drawn on films and audio sources of talks given by queer activists to foreign audiences. I have also made use of visual images, some of which have been incorporated into different chapters of this thesis. These sources have been central to the research task of analysing colonial discourses and representations as shaped by the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

5.1.4 Archival Research

This research also makes use of original archival research, most specifically surveying the discussions held by the Israeli Cabinet between 1948 and 1952. These materials are utilised in Part I of the thesis, in order to discuss the making of the 1952 Citizenship Law and to analyse the ways in which Palestinians in Israel have been invoked in the production of Israel as a liberal state.

6. Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1, ‘Conceptualising Domination, Resistance and Decolonisation in Settler Colonialism’, brings together postcolonial theory and settler colonial studies as a framework for theorising colonial domination and violence, resistance and decolonisation. This chapter reviews the relevant literature and draws on the work of anticolonial writers such as Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi; postcolonial scholars and theorists such as Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Mahmoud Mamdani and Partha Chatterjee; and settler colonial theorists, especially Patrick Wolfe. The combination of these different-yet-connected corpora of literature, this chapter demonstrates, opens a creative space for a rigorous and nuanced discussion of the ways in which colonial domination and the colonial encounter, as figured in multiple circuits (local, national and global), shape both colonial subjectivities and native resistance in the specific context of settler colonialism.

The thesis is then divided into three parts focusing specifically on Palestinian resistance. Part I provides a historical analysis of ’48 Palestinian subjugation and resistance in Israel. Parts II and III of the thesis focus, respectively, on the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights and the Palestinian queer movement, illuminating the racial, ethnic, gendered and sexualised dimensions that shape colonial violence and intersectional subaltern resistance.

Parts II and III consists of two chapters, the first focusing on theorising colonial domination and the second on theorising resistance to settler colonialism. The division into two chapters facilitates the reading of resistance as being inextricably related to domination. As Scott reminds us, ‘relations of domination are, at the same time, relations of resistance’ (Scott 1990, 45). The focus on domination is by no means an attempt to suggest that the colonised is passive in the face of repression. Rather, it is intended to keep the theorisation of resistance political, avoiding tendencies to romanticise and celebrate agency and resistance as disassociated from power. The treatment of domination and resistance as interconnected allows analytical engagement with resistance as diagnostic of power (Abu-Lughod 1990, 42).

Part I consists of Chapter 2, 'Palestinian Resistance and the Paradoxes of Liberal Settler Colonialism', which is divided broadly into two sections. The first section explores the nature of the colonial violence to which Palestinians in Israel are subjected. Based on original archival materials, this section builds on Shira Robinson's argument that Palestinian citizenship in Israel should be understood in light of the liberal character of the Israeli settler state and the ambivalent incorporation of '48 Palestinians as citizens. It further shows how Israel, from its founding in 1948 through to this day, has been appropriating Palestinians in Israel in order to legitimise its existence by producing itself as a modern and liberal nation state. The second section of the chapter provides an analysis of the historical development of Palestinian national resistance and struggle in Israel, focusing on both formal (parliamentary) and informal (extra-parliamentary, NGO and grassroots activism) politics and mobilisation. The '48 national movement and its political discourses and agendas, the chapter argues, have developed to be imbued in liberal and multicultural frameworks, centring the Palestinian struggle on demands for equality, meaningful citizenship and recognition. The chapter concludes by suggesting that the hegemony of Palestinian liberal nationalism is increasingly being challenged by a new wave of Palestinian protests and the rise of new movements that reject the liberal scripts of citizenship and recognition.

Part II of the thesis, 'The Burden of Culture in the Palestinian-Bedouin Struggle for Land', focuses on the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights and on the place of culture and culturalisation in shaping settler colonial domination and resistance. Chapter 3, 'Culturalisation as Dispossession', explores the racial, ethnic and gendered dimensions of colonial violence to which the Bedouin are subjected. It argues that culturalisation has been invoked as the central mechanism to justify the colonisation of Bedouin land. Culturalisation, it is suggested, is not only an exercise of symbolic, discursive and epistemic violence, it is also embroiled in the pursuit of land as a central commodity. Chapter 4, 'Culturalisation as Emancipation', focuses on Palestinian Bedouin resistance to settler colonialism and on the mobilisation of indigeneity as a central framework and discourse in the contemporary Bedouin struggle. This chapter argues that recognition of the Bedouin as indigenous has built on a culturalised conception of indigeneity that depends on the fetishisation of the indigenous as a premodern subject. Liberal multiculturalism, it is suggested, has transformed cultural difference from a colonial

reproach into a moral rationale for minority/indigenous claims and an asset that can be leveraged for political gain. The focus on cultural distinctiveness has subjected the Palestinian Bedouin to repressive demands of authenticity, forcing them to negotiate their struggle and identities in the face of multiple sites and practices of culturalisation. The chapter concludes by exploring the ways in which Bedouin activists respond to and challenge their racialisation, culturalisation and ethnicisation.

Part III of the thesis, 'The Politics of Refusal in the Palestinian Queer Movement', illuminates the gendered and sexualised dimensions (and the ways in which they are racialised) of colonial domination and resistance to settler colonialism. Chapter 5, 'Settler Homonationalism: Domination and Sexuality in Israel/Palestine', focuses on the entanglement of homonationalism and homocolonialism with orientalism, imperialism and settler colonialism to theorise the working of sexual politics in the context of Israel/Palestine, as it figures at the local and transnational levels. It examines the ambivalent place that the PQueers occupy in the metanarrative of Western sexual modernity and Western scripts of sexual liberation. Chapter 6, 'Refusal as Emancipation', explores the ways in which Palestinian queer protest sensibilities and modalities of resistance have developed in relation to the liberal violence of homonationalism and the Western LGBT rights agenda. It argues that the Palestinian queer encounter with the liberal and colonial violence of the settler state and the liberal and imperial violence of homonationalism, homocolonialism and pinkwashing have transformed the movement from one embedded in a Western conception of sexual identities to one grounded in anti-imperial and anticolonial cosmopolitan sensibilities marked by Fanonian politics of rejection and the emancipation of the self.

This thesis concludes by arguing that '48 Palestinian subjectivities and resistance are shaped, evolve and transform in relation to Israel as a liberal settler state and as a racial state. The implications of this argument are extended to the study of Palestinians in Israel and to native resistance to settler colonialism more generally. The concluding remarks elaborate and emphasise, through an integrative discussion of the case studies, how the particular racialising logics of settler colonialism – as informed by configurations of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality – shape both colonial domination and native resistance to it. Finally, the concluding remarks expound on the evidence that subaltern modalities of

resistance are shaped by the diverse ways in which different '48 Palestinian groups are incorporated into settler colonialism, as well as by their encounter with the liberal politics of human rights and the way in which this encounter can reinscribe race and entrench settler colonialism.

Chapter 1

Conceptualising Domination, Resistance and Decolonisation in Settler Colonialism

Introduction

This chapter presents the main analytical framework and concepts that will be employed in this thesis for the analysis of domination, resistance and decolonisation in the context of settler colonialism. It brings together postcolonial theory and settler colonial studies as a framework to examine the racialised, ethnicised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial violence, to explore how these shape colonial subjectivities and modalities of resistance, and to identify the ways in which the transnational is imbricated within these processes. The chapter deals with questions such as these: How can we conceptualise the settler colonial condition? In what ways is settler colonialism different from franchise colonialism? How can we conceptualise the different modalities of resistance to settler colonialism? And what political projects are produced in the encounter with liberal settler colonialism and the liberal politics of human rights?

This chapter – and, more broadly, this thesis – builds on an understanding of domination and resistance as interrelated. As James Scott reminds us, ‘relations of domination are, at the same time, relations of resistance. Once established, domination does not persist of its own momentum’ (Scott 1990, 45). Therefore, section 1 of this chapter focuses on the gap in the theoretical literature, section 2 focuses on the settler colonial condition and colonial domination, and section 3 focuses on resistance and decolonisation.

The first section establishes the existing gap in the theoretical literature, namely the under-theorisation of resistance and decolonisation in both postcolonial theory and settler colonial studies. Postcolonial studies have, by and large, neglected settler colonialism as a phenomenon that is distinct from franchise colonialism in that it guises particular racialising logics and rationales. Bringing together postcolonial and settler colonial

studies as a framework for analysis, I suggest, opens a productive analytical space to acknowledge the specificities of the settler colonial condition as a continued structure of colonisation, while at the same time building on postcolonial rich theorisation of domination, resistance and decolonisation.

The second section focuses on the nature of settler colonialism. Building on settler colonial studies, and primarily on Patrick Wolfe's theorisation of settler colonialism as premised in the logic of elimination, this section elaborates on the specific logics, rationales and racialisation regimes that shape settler colonialism as a distinct category of colonialism. It then proceeds to discuss the settler polity's extension of citizenship to natives. It argues that this has led the settler colonial condition to be characterised by particular forms of ambivalence, producing the natives as a hybrid configuration of citizens and colonial subjects.

Section 2 concludes in a discussion of settler colonialism in Palestine and the ways in which the logics of elimination and race have figured in the particular context of Zionism. It further argues that the occupation of the '67 territories should not be understood as a deviation from the settler colonial project, but rather as its continuation. Therefore, an analysis of Israeli/Zionist settler colonialism should account for the multiple regimes of sovereignty, citizenship and population control that Israel applies on its Palestinian subjects from both sides of the Green Line. I suggest that in its patterns of colonisation, Israel most resembles Anglo settler colonialism. However, in its prospects, scenarios and possibilities of decolonisation, Israel most resembles the South African model of decolonisation, including the challenges it faces in the deracialisation of the regime post-apartheid.

The third and final section focuses on resistance and decolonisation in the context of settler colonialism. Native resistance to settler colonialism, it is suggested, is informed both by the nature of the settler state as a *liberal* settler state and by the *liberal* politics of human rights. The liberal settler colonial condition informs different modalities of resistance. Some are accommodative and some are subversive, while others are more confrontational. More specifically, this section looks at Homi K. Bhabha's

conceptualisation of resistance as a subversion of colonial authority and considers a Fanonian theorisation of resistance as negation and recovery of the self.

Section 3 then moves to problematise the normative view of human rights as an emancipatory project. Building on critical scholarship, it shows how human rights can also be complicit with colonial domination and imperial projects. This section argues that human rights also work to reconfigure political projects along liberal lines, containing native struggles by defining the claims that natives can make and the limits of these claims.

The chapter concludes by arguing that the native encounter with the liberalism of the settler state (and the ambivalence it produces through its illusion of inclusion) and the dominance of human rights narratives have produced a native resistance to settler colonialism that is marked by competing political projects – reformative, transformative and anticolonial. These projects, it is argued, are emblematic of a larger problem that indigenous people face: that is, the difficulty of uniting behind a clear political project and a single vision of decolonisation. These debates and contestations are at the heart of native politics of resistance.

1. Postcolonial Theory and Settler Colonial Studies:

A Theoretical Framework

Postcolonial studies can be characterised as being ‘based in the “historical fact” of European colonialism’, its legacies and its continuations (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin [2000] 2007, 2). However, as Toni Morrison points out, ‘certain absences are so stressed, so ornate, so planned, they call attention to themselves’ (Morrison 1989, 136). The neglect of settler colonialism in postcolonial studies is such an absence.

The work of early anticolonial theorists – such as Aimé Césaire, Albert Memmi, Frantz Fanon and W. E. B. Du Bois – captured their own experiences under conditions of franchise colonialism and racial subjugation. The near absence of settler colonialism in later postcolonial writing, especially after the official outset of postcolonial studies in the

1980s, is particularly disturbing given that the field's most prominent theorists wrote from the very successful first settler colony, the United States.⁹

In his famous book *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Memmi makes a brief passing statement on Native Americans in the United States:

It has not been so long since Europe abandoned the idea of a possible total extermination of a colonized group. It has been said, half-seriously, with respect to Algeria: 'There are only nine Algerians for each Frenchman. All that would be necessary would be to give each Frenchman a gun and nine bullets.' The American example is also evoked; and it is undeniable that the famous national epic of the Far West greatly resembles systematic massacre. In any case, there is no longer much of an Indian problem in the United States. (Extermination saves colonization so little that it actually contradicts the colonial process.) Colonization is, above all, economic and political exploitation. If the colonized is eliminated, the colony becomes a country like any other, and who then will be exploited? Along with the colonized, colonization would disappear, and so would the colonizer. (Memmi [1965] 2003, 193)

Memmi's statement is symptomatic of a larger problematic that pertains to postcolonial studies – that is, the homogenisation of different typologies of colonialism and the failure to distinguish between franchise and settler colonialism as two distinct phenomena guided by different logics and different discursive and material structures of domination (Veracini 2011a; Wolfe 1997). As Patrick Wolfe notes, 'for all the homage paid to difference, postcolonial theory in particular has largely failed to accommodate such basic structural distinctions' (Wolfe 1997, 418).

As scholars have demonstrated, settler colonialism and franchise colonialism are not the same. While they may overlap, they are divergent. Both are rooted in the development and universalisation of capitalism and Western modernity (see Lloyd and Wolfe 2016). However, natives figure differently in each of the projects, producing essentially distinct phenomena that are guided by disparate rationales, racialising logics, political ends and projects of decolonisation. Likewise, according to Lorenzo Veracini, 'colonisers and settler colonisers want essentially different things' (Veracini 2011a, 1).

⁹ The work of Edward Said on Palestine is an exception (Said 1979a), as is the recent work of Mamdani on settler colonialism (Mamdani 2015).

Wolfe's theorisation of settler colonialism has been a particularly important intervention, providing the conceptual tools to differentiate between the two projects. While in franchise colonialism 'native labor is at a premium' (Wolfe 1997, 419), settler colonialism, Wolfe argues, is a land-centred project that relies on the removal of the native population in order to make land available for settlement. Unlike franchise colonialism, settler colonialism aspires to minimise its dependency on native labour (though this does not mean that settlers will not exploit native labour before they make natives vanish) (Veracini 2010; Wolfe 2006a).¹⁰

In other words, settler colonialism relies on the dispensability of the native, while franchise colonialism depends on the native body for its subsistence. Memmi's view of extermination and genocide as irrational deviations of the colonial process builds on the assumption that the main motive behind colonisation is native labour (Memmi [1965] 2003, 8). However, he misses the point that the desired commodity in settler colonialism is land, not native labour. Furthermore, writing in the second half of the 20th century, Memmi fails to see that the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism has not been made irrelevant. Rather, it has transformed from a genocidal logic to other mechanisms of elimination, such as ethnic cleansing, assimilation and cultural genocide. As Wolfe argues, settler colonialism is 'inherently eliminatory but not invariably genocidal' (Wolfe 2006a, 378).

The discursive turn in settler colonial studies during the 1980s (Jefferess 2008, 25) can serve as a partial explanation as to why settler colonialism is absent from postcolonial studies. The popularity in colonial discourse theory, scholars have argued, resulted in the neglect of the materiality of colonial domination, along with the economic structures that shape it (for Marxist critiques of postcolonial analysis, see Aijaz 1992; Dirlik 1994, 1999, 2002; Eagleton 1998; McClintock 1995; Parry 2004).

¹⁰ For example, in the attempt to reduce dependency on native labour, the United States imported black slaves from Africa, Australia imported white convicts from Great Britain, and Israel imported cheap Mizrahi labour (though Mizrahi Jews were brought to Israel primarily to increase the size of the Jewish population in Palestine, their labour was an added bonus).

As Fanon suggests, race and colonial configurations of economy are entangled.

According to Fanon:

... in the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich. This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to deal with the colonial problem. (Fanon 1963, 40)

Integrating race and political economy into the analysis, Wolfe's work has captured that while both franchise and settler colonialism are rooted in capitalism, their racialising material logics fundamentally differ and are rooted in disparate political ends and colonising endeavours.

The focus on the 'post' in postcolonial is an additional factor that explains the field's neglect of settler colonialism. Postcolonial scholars emphasise that 'post' should not be read literally as 'after' colonialism, but rather as 'anti' colonialism (Rao 2013, 271; see also Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin [2000] 2007). Critics, however, suggest that postcolonial studies have celebrated 'the end of colonialism, as if the only task left in the present is to abolish its ideological and cultural legacy' (Dirlik 1994, 343). The term itself, Anne McClintock has argued, produces a binary distinction between the 'colonial' and the 'postcolonial' along the axis of time (McClintock 1992, 85; see also Shohat 1992). This bias, she contends, risks overlooking the other formations of colonialism and the continuities of imperialism as manifested in contemporary American 'imperialism-without-colonies' (McClintock 1995, 13). In her words:

... the term postcolonialism is, in many cases, prematurely celebratory. Ireland may, at a pinch, be postcolonial but for the inhabitants of British-occupied Northern Ireland, not to mention the Palestinian inhabitants of the Israeli Occupied Territories and the West Bank, there may be nothing 'post' about colonialism at all. Is South Africa postcolonial? East Timor? Australia? Hawaii? Puerto Rico? By what fiat of historical amnesia can the United States of America, in particular, qualify as postcolonial ... ? (McClintock 1995, 12)

The neglect of settler colonialism has meant that postcolonial rich theorisation of the colonial condition, native resistance and decolonisation has been confined to the specific phenomena of franchise colonialism and colonialism *with* settlers (such as in Algeria). As Veracini notes, 'colonial studies and postcolonial literatures have developed interpretive categories that are not specifically suited for an appraisal of settler colonial

circumstances' (Veracini 2010, 2). This lacuna has prompted the emergence of settler colonial studies as a new field. This development has been important in the theorising of settler colonialism. However, resistance and decolonisation remain significantly under-theorised in settler colonial studies (Veracini 2007).

Joining together postcolonial theory and settler colonial studies as a theoretical framework opens a creative space to engage with the questions of resistance and decolonisation in the particular context of settler colonialism. It allows acknowledging the specificities of the settler colonial condition as a continued structure of colonisation, while building on postcolonial rich analysis of resistance and decolonisation.

I draw predominantly on Fanon's and Memmi's theorisations of resistance as an antagonistic project of liberation. I further draw on Edward Said's work on colonial discourses and representations as central to colonial domination, acknowledging their materiality (Said 1978a; see also Fanon 1963, 1967). Lastly, I build on Bhabha's notions of hybridity, ambivalence, liminality and in-betweenness (Bhabha [1991] 1994). Drawing on both anticolonial and postcolonial theory is designed to capitalise on the theoretical usefulness of Bhabian analysis in the context of liberal settler colonialism, while remaining committed to the radical anticolonial origins of postcolonial theory and to a political analysis of resistance as a diagnostic of power (Abu-Lughod 1990).

2. The Settler Colonial Condition: The Dynamics of Land, Race and Elimination

Settler colonialism is a transnational phenomenon with a global reach (Veracini 2010, 180). Rooted in the European history of imperialism, colonialism and capitalism, it is a project 'foundational to modernity' (Wolfe 2006a, 394). Significant parts of today's world – including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and Israel – are settler colonial formations.

Settler colonialism, Wolfe argues, is a land-centred project guided by the logic of elimination (Wolfe 2006a). Veracini suggests that settler colonialism involves 'processes

where an exogenous collective replaces an indigenous one' (Veracini 2013, 28). It is a project 'concerned with the making and unmaking of places' (Veracini 2010, 179). In settler colonialism, the settler's presence on the land establishes itself as a permanent and irreversible condition: 'Settler colonialism destroys to replace' (Wolfe 2006a, 388). Settlers eliminate, dispossess, destroy and uproot in order to make a space for a new settler sovereign polity to emerge. They replace native political order with settler political order. Settlers establish their presence not alongside the native, but *instead* of the native. In the words of Wolfe:

Settler colonialism has both negative and positive dimensions. Negatively, it strives for the dissolution of native societies. Positively, it erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base – as I put it, settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event. In its positive aspect, elimination is an organizing principal of settler-colonial society rather than a one-off (and superseded) occurrence. (Wolfe 2006a, 388)

Racialised as 'surplus populations' (Lloyd and Wolfe 2016), natives were made to disappear and their land was made empty for settlement and modernisation. In Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were racialised as dying inhabitants and the myth of the empty land was translated into the doctrine of terra nullius (Barta 1987). In Palestine, the Arab natives were racialised as a transferrable population (Masalha 1992) and the myth of the empty land was translated into the ethos of making the desert bloom.

Foundational to the project of replacement is settler indigenisation, a process of naturalising and normalising settler colonialism (Morgensen 2012a, 9). This process has been facilitated in international law by the recognition of settler claims to sovereignty under the doctrine of discovery and the rendering of indigenous peoples and their sovereignties as juridically invisible (Evans 2009).

Settler indigenisation also 'invokes any process that makes settlers and their polity appear to be proper to the land' (Morgensen 2012a, 9; see also Veracini 2010). It is about 'settler acquisition of entitlement as *indigenous*, and a corresponding indigenous loss of entitlement as such' (Veracini 2015, 61, emphasis in original). The process of indigenising settlers is not free of ambivalence and contradictions. Bhabha has suggested that "'otherness" ... is at once an object of desire and derision' (Bhabha [1991] 1994, 96). Scholars have shown that settler indigenisation has often been premised on this

dialectic. On the one hand, indigenous cultures were destined for erasure, considered inferior and mocked. On the other hand, they were desired and appropriated in order to authenticate settlers as natural and proper to the land (in the context of the United States, see Deloria 1998; in the context of Israel/Palestine, see Guez 2015; Mendel and Ranta 2016; on the difference in settler indigenisation between Israel and Australia, see Wolfe 2006a, 389).

Furthermore, as Veracini argues ‘settler colonialism operates autonomously in the context of developing colonial discourses and practices’ (Veracini 2010, 1). Settler discourses are embedded in the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism, working to portray the land as empty and to render indigenous populations invisible, dispensable and replaceable. Race have been central to the elimination of the natives. Through race, Europeans codified, internally and globally, which populations were to be enslaved, eliminated, and entitled to or denied rights and freedoms. As Du Bois remarked, race has been ‘made the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization’ (Du Bois 1998, 906). To make the native population redundant, their racialisation took the form of negating native humanity (Fanon 1967). As Arendt points out in the context of the Holocaust, ‘a condition of complete rightlessness was created before the right to live was challenged’ (Arendt [1951] 1986, 296).

While Anglophone settler colonialism emerged as a genocidal project, during the 20th century, and once the indigenous population had been reduced to a ‘manageable size’, Anglophone settler states incorporated the natives into the settler state and pursued assimilation as a method of elimination (Hopgood 2000). Zionism, as opposed, is ‘distinguished by its reluctance to assimilate’ (Wolfe 2007, 330; see also Wolfe 2016b).

Assimilation took the devastating form of removing indigenous children from their homes. Policies of assimilating indigenous children into whiteness were aimed at expediting the erasure of indigenous peoples and cultures within a few generations. In Canada, more than 150,000 children were placed in residential schools between 1887 and 1996 (TRCC 2015). In Australia, a rhetoric of child protection facilitated the removal of 100,000 Aboriginal children between the late 19th century and the 1960s, creating what came to be known as the Stolen Generations (AHRC 1997; Funston, Herring and

ACMAG 2016). These policies persist today. Statistics show that the rate of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care in Australia ‘is higher than the rate of removal during the *Stolen Generations*’, and Aboriginal children are 24 times more likely than non-Aboriginal children to be incarcerated (Funston, Herring and ACMAG 2016, 51, emphasis in original).

In Israel, the targeting of Palestinian children, though not for the purposes of assimilation, is evident in their high rate of incarceration – 10 times more than that of Jewish children (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2015b). Similar to Anglophone settler contexts, the removal of Palestinian children from their homes and communities is designed to create a generational gap and is joined by a rhetoric of rehabilitation. In his work on Palestinian child prisoners, Hedi Viterbo argues that Israel’s recent policies of separating Palestinian child political prisoners and Palestinian adult political prisoners, along with new policies of ‘rehabilitating’ Palestinian children, is part of a wider policy of divide and rule. These new reforms are a ‘structure of driving a generational wedge between Palestinians and potentially weakening their political ties, solidarity, and resistance’ (Viterbo 2016a, 1; see also Viterbo 2016b for a comparative perspective on generational segregation in North America, Australia and Israel/Palestine).

Settler colonialism, nationalism and state-building processes are also deeply gendered and sexualised (Morgensen 2011; Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995; Wolfe 1994; see also the discussion in Part III of this thesis). Settler women were perceived as ‘frontier women’ and as the breeders of the nation (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995, 16; see also Kanaaneh 2002 in the context of Israel/Palestine). Native gender and sexual orders were subjected to erasure, with settlers imposing patriarchal orders (Morgensen 2012a). In addition, policies of assimilation took the form of statistical genocide, with the settler state wielding the authority to determine who could be classified and counted as indigenous. Statistical genocide was deeply gendered. In the United States, Canada and Australia, indigenous women who had non-indigenous partners and whose children were therefore ‘mixed-race’ were denied recognition as indigenous under settler law (Wolfe 2001; Simpson 2007).

2.1 Settler Colonial Citizenship

Bhambra rightly points out that citizenship is neither natural nor neutral in the settler-colonial context (Bhambra 2015). It is often forgotten that native people did not choose to become citizens. They were forced into accepting settler citizenship after becoming minorities in their homelands following a loss of their communities and sovereignties. While we are accustomed to thinking of citizenship as a modern mechanism of inclusion, we often ‘fail to understand its beginnings as an institution fundamentally based on exclusion’ (Bhambra 2015, 5; see also Robinson 2013). The development of modern citizenship is closely tied to the historical formation of the settler state as one based on dispossession. Citizenship in settler colonialism is embedded in deeply racialised structures that encode the natives as invisible (Bhambra 2015). Such encoding is exemplified in the absence of natives from both the Australian and US constitutions (Chesterman and Galligan 1997; Mamdani 2015).

Extending citizenship to natives has become a viable option only after practices of physical genocide and ethnic cleansing have reduced native peoples to a small minority considered safe to settler sovereignty. In the United States, Native Americans were confirmed as citizens in 1924. In Australia, it was not until 1962 that the Electoral Act 1918 (Cth) was amended to ensure the unconditioned right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to vote in federal elections (Chappell, Chesterman and Hill 2009, ch 5). In both countries, the extension of citizenship and suffrage rights was closely tied to, and conditioned on, the assimilation of natives into whiteness and Western modernity – and, in the US case, into a protestant capitalist Americanism (Hopgood 2000). Emerging as a settler state only in the mid-20th century, Israel has been the only settler state to extend suffrage rights and citizenship to natives since its founding, and while at the height of its colonisation mission (Robinson 2013).

In his recent work on settler colonialism, Mahmood Mamdani suggests that native citizenship is premised on the bifurcation of political and civil rights. Native Americans in the United States, he argues, possess political rights – meaning the rights to vote and be elected – but not civil rights. Similar logic also applies to the Palestinians in Israel. As Mamdani states, ‘like American Indians in reservations, Palestinian Israelis may have the right to vote or even to be elected to office, but they live under a state of exception that

denies them constitutionally defensible civil rights’ (Mamdani 2015, 16). He further argues that citizenship laws in both Israel and the United States have rendered the natives naturalised citizens, but *not* citizens by birthright – a status reserved for the settlers (the making of Palestinian citizenship will be discussed in detail in Part I of this thesis).

With the folding of natives into citizens, the settler colonial condition – especially in the second half of the 20th century – became more ambivalent. While citizenship functions as a structure of exclusion, it is also characterised by a promise of inclusion. As long as native populations have faith in the possibility of citizenship, their containment is assured. This situation is pursued through confining the native struggle to the liberal logic of citizenship and, since the 1990s, to multicultural versions of citizenship. These work to naturalise natives as an internal issue of the settler state.

The ambivalence of the liberal settler condition blurs the classic dichotomies between occupier–occupied and oppressor–oppressed, binaries that are more prevailing in contexts of colonial occupation. Recognising the coloniality of the settler state demands moving beyond the view of citizenship as an opportunity structure (Jamal 2007a). It requires unpacking how the very institution of settler citizenship has been constituted as a mechanism for the control and governance of the remaining native population. Therefore, and as the discussion of the Palestinian queer movement in Part III of this thesis demonstrates, sustaining the dichotomy of settler versus native becomes an important political project that enables to transcend the liberal logic of citizenship and the illusion of inclusion that it produces.

2.2 Settler Colonialism in Palestine

Like other settler colonial projects, Zionism is based on the ‘systematic disavowal of indigenous presences’ (Veracini 2011b, 4). Arab Palestine was to be replaced with Jewish Israel. The project of building a Jewish state in Palestine, as Edward Said explains, is premised and conditioned on the destruction of Palestinian existence in Palestine (Said et al 1988). As Theodor Herzl, founding leader of Zionism, stated: ‘If I wish to substitute a new building for an old one, I must demolish before I construct’ (quoted in Wolfe 2006a, 388).

To establish a Jewish state, Zionism had to ensure Jewish demographic supremacy. Therefore, from its beginnings through to this day, Zionism has been concerned with transforming the population of Palestine by increasing Jewish immigration and reducing the number of Arabs. The statistics speak for themselves. Between 1922 and 1946, the Jewish population in Palestine was increasing at an average rate of 9% annually (Said 1979a, 17–18). By 1947, the ratio of Jews to Arabs was one to two. In the aftermath of the ethnic cleansing in 1948, only about 15% of the Arab population in Palestine would remain in what had become the State of Israel. This figure, it is argued, resembles the initial recommendation by the transfer committee that was appointed by David Ben-Gurion in 1948 (Kanaaneh 2002, 10).

The concern with demography was coupled with the pursuit of land. To that end, the Jewish National Fund was established in 1901 with a mandate to purchase land in Palestine for the exclusive use of the Jewish people. Zionist efforts to increase the Jewish population in Palestine were tremendously successful. However, at the end of 1947, Zionist ownership of land in Palestine was only 6.59% (Said 1979a, 98). This would dramatically change with the establishment of the State of Israel. Through law (most significantly, the enactment of the Absentees' Property Law in 1950), the state took over property belonging to Palestinian refugees and to the internally displaced Palestinian population. In its first decades, the state also expropriated the majority of land owned by the Arab population that remained in Israel. And, it continues to do so from both sides of the Green Line. Today, Palestinians in Israel have ownership of only 3–3.5% of the land (Adalah 2011).

Among settler colonial formations, Zionism is unique in being a transnational project of settlement that is designed to host and represent a particular group of people across territorial lines. Zionism sought the concentration of World Jewry, constructed as a diaspora population, in a Jewish state in Palestine. Though ideas of forming a Jewish state in South America and Africa were raised, these were quickly abandoned (Said 1979a). Palestine had special appeal because of Jewish history in the region.

Zionism constructed itself as a national–religious–racial colonial project. It framed settlement in theological terms of Jewish return to Zion and Jewish reclamation of ancestral lands (Wolfe 2016b). Zionism sought the transformation of the Jewish people from a religious group to a national one. At the same time, Zionist leaders were committed to the European conception (and myth) of secularity. From its inception, Zionism was tasked with managing the irreconcilable contradiction between nationalism based on religion and the pursuit of a national project rooted in Western modern secularism (Friedman 1989).

Settler indigenisation in Palestine took a different course from that in other settler contexts. Asserting that Jews were the only people indigenous to Palestine, Zionism constructed Arabs as latecomers and invaders. To this day, Israel refuses to recognise the indigeneity of Palestinians (as further discussed in Part II of this thesis). As a result, the Arab history in Palestine had to be erased. Palestine was then subjected to intensive processes of Judaisation and Hebrewisation. In the words of Moshe Dayan, the prominent Israeli military and political leader:

Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You don't even know the names of these Arab villages, and I don't blame you, because these geography books no longer exist. Not only do the books not exist, the Arab villages are not there either. Nahalal arose in the place of Mahlul, Gvat in the place of Jibta, Sarid in the place of Haneifa, and Kfar-Yehoshua in the place of Tel-Shaman. There is not one single place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population. (Quoted in Massad 2005, 7)

The emergence of the Zionist project and its subsequent success should be understood in light of both European anti-Semitism and orientalism. Zionism was a response to the Jewish experience of oppression, discrimination and violence in Europe. As scholars have pointed out, the European Jews were Europe's internal racialised oriental others (Seikaly and Ajl 2014). They were seen as foreign to Christian Europe and as a problem that needed to be solved (the same narrative dominates Israel's discourse on the Palestinians in Israel). Influenced by the Dreyfus trial, Herzl reached the conviction that there was no future for Jews in Europe. Christian Europe, he believed, would never consider Jews to be authentic to that continent. Jews in Europe were destined to be second-class citizens and a persecuted minority. What was needed, he claimed, was the formation of a national home for the Jewish European people. The Zionist solution to the Jewish question, Joseph

Massad observes, reproduced the anti-Semitic quest for ‘the removal of Jews from gentile societies’ (Massad 2010, 445; see also Wolfe 2016b). This removal of Jews, however, was not the removal of Europeanness. Unlike Anglophone settler colonialism – in which the settlers aspired to denounce and erase their European origins in the making of a new settler polity and nationalism – Zionism perceived itself as European.

Zionism internalised the European conception of race and reinforced the view of Jews as a race and a ‘volk’ (Massad 2005, 6; see also Abu El-Haj 2012; Wolfe 2016b). It was only outside of Europe that European Jews could finally establish themselves as a superior European white race that was equal to Christian civilisation. The original intention of Zionism was to establish a Jewish white–Ashkenazi–European state in Palestine¹¹. Oriental/Mizrahi/Arab Jews¹² were brought to Israel only reluctantly. The genocide of European Jews in the Holocaust had left Zionism with no choice but to rely on what Zionist leadership viewed as racially inferior and backward Jews in its pursuit of Jewish demographic dominance (Massad 1996; Shohat 1988). Mizrahi Jews were at once racialised as inferior Arabs and superior Jews. Their Arabness had to be erased. The aspiration to sustain white supremacy in Israel is still in play. During the 1990s, Israel encouraged a large immigration of Russians to Israel (today constituting over one million people), even though their Judaism was in question. Yet Israel continues to create obstacles to the immigration of a handful of Falash Mura Ethiopian Jews and works to restrict Ethiopian birth rates (Nesher 2012). Arguably, Israel’s policies towards African refugees and asylum seekers are driven by a similar racial aspiration (Yacobi 2011).

In its pursuit of Palestine as a national home, Zionism built on the European model of the racial nation state. It also drew from the European model of imperial territorial expansion. In fact, Zionism presented itself unashamedly as a ‘Jewish movement for colonial settlement in the Orient’ (Said 1979a, 69). A Jewish homeland, Zionist leaders emphasised, would be an extension of European imperialism. It would be a white, Western, enlightened, advanced, modern and civil enclave in a backward region. These arguments registered well with imperial Britain. In the 1917 Balfour Declaration, Britain

¹¹ Ashkenazi Jews refers to Jews of European origin.

¹² Mizrahi Jews are Jews of Arab origin, also known as Oriental Jews.

officially committed to building a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This achievement was facilitated by – and entrenched in – European orientalism.

The success of Zionism in recruiting European support for its settler colonial project must be understood in light of European orientalism (Said 1979a). Orientalism has three interconnected meanings. First, it is an academic discipline that includes ‘anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient’ (Said 1978a, 2). Second, it is ‘a style of thought based upon ontological and epistemological distinction made between “the Orient” and (most of the time) “the Occident”’ (Said 1978a, 2). Third, since the late 18th century, it has been a ‘corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’ (Said 1989a, 3). Conceptualising orientalism as a discourse is important in our understanding of the ways in which ‘European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively’ (Said 1978a, 3).

Zionism built on an orientalist view of Arabs and Muslims. It constructed Arabs not only as a movable population, but also one that was backward, uncivil, and unworthy and incapable of self-governance. This conception was intrinsic to the Zionist claim over Palestine. It was, in turn, used to construct Jewish European settlers as a superior European race that was entitled to sovereignty. Racial superiority was leveraged to justify the invisibility of Palestinians. Palestinian lives, history and belonging to the land could be erased in favour of a Jewish revival in Palestine. And the fate of Palestinians could be determined without their participation. Commenting on the Balfour Declaration, Said notes:

... the declaration was made (a) by a European power, (b) about a non-European territory, (c) in a flat disregard of both the presence and the wishes of the native majority resident in that territory, and (d) it took the form of a promise about this same territory to another foreign group, so that this foreign group might, quite literally, *make* this territory a national home for the Jewish people. (Said 1979a, 15–16)

If Zionism in its early days capitalised on an oriental view of Arabs and Islam, Israel today is a primary investor in, and a benefactor and reproducer of, orientalism and

Islamophobia. Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims are dehumanised, demonised and depicted in racist culturalist terms. Samuel P. Huntington's influential theory of the clash of civilisations – especially after 9/11 – has enhanced the production of Israel/Palestine as the collision of the civilised Israelis and the savage Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims. This view is embedded in a larger project of culturalising political identities and conflicts (Mamdani 2004). As Mamdani argues, 'it is no longer the market (capitalism), nor the state (democracy), but culture (modernity) that is said to be the dividing line between those in favour of a peaceful, civic existence and those inclined to terror' (Mamdani 2004, 18).

As Wolfe argues, Israel is a settler project at the frontier stage (Wolfe 2016a). The Nakba is a structure, as well as an event. Since 1967, Israel has exerted control over the whole of historic Palestine. It operates multiple sovereignty and citizenship regimes in its governance of Palestinians. Israel within the Green line is a liberal settler polity that extends citizenship to its Palestinian subjects. Israel's control of the '67 territories is one marked by occupation, while East Jerusalem occupies the liminal space between Israel's normalised sovereignty and its position as an occupying force.

Relying on the paradigm of occupation alone to conceptualise Israel's policies in the '67 territories is, however, problematic. Occupation assumes temporality. There is nothing temporal in Israel's occupation and colonisation of the West Bank (see Ben-Naftali, Gross and Michaeli 2007 on the problem of temporality in the context of Israel's occupation of the West Bank). The occupation should not be seen as a deviation from Israel's settler project. Israel's policies in the '48 and '67 territories may vary in their methodologies of domination and settler encroachment (though they also overlap), but not in the eliminatory and colonial aspirations that guide them.

Veracini argues that the '67 territories are a failed project of settler colonialism – one that reverts to classic forms of colonialism (Veracini 2013). However, evidence indicates that the West Bank and Gaza have come to more closely resemble reservations than the South African Bantustans. Furthermore, an analysis of Israel's colonial project reveals that while the colonisation of the West Bank appears at the moment to be a failed settler project, Israel's policies continue to be guided by the expropriation of as much territory

as possible, making Jewish settlement irreversible. These policies are currently manifested in ethnic cleansing of particular settler frontiers such as East Jerusalem, the Naqab, the South Hebron Hills, and the Jordan Valley and other parts of Area C.¹³ Israel is continually declaring Palestinian land in Area C as ‘state land’ (UNOCHA 2016). Recent plans advanced by Israeli ministers to annex Area C, which constitutes about half of the West Bank, demonstrate that establishing facts on the ground is still central to Israel’s policies (Booth 2016). As stated by the United Nations Secretary General, ‘the creation of new facts on the ground through demolitions and settlement building raises questions about whether Israel’s ultimate goal is, in fact, to drive Palestinians out of certain parts of the West Bank, thereby undermining any prospect of transition to a viable Palestinian state’ (quoted in UNOCHA 2016). The project of naturalising settlement from both sides of the Green Line is not without success, as evidenced by the international community’s recognition of creeping settlement ‘blocs’ (such as Givat Zeev and Ariel).

What are the prospects of decolonising Palestine? The death of the two-state solution and Israel’s ongoing colonisation policies make the political solution of one democratic state more relevant than ever before. Palestinians constitute a substantial minority within the Green Line, numbering about 1.74 million people (Aderet 2015). An additional 4.79 million Palestinians reside in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (UN),¹⁴ and over 7 million are refugees. There are 6.57 million Jews and 6.51 million Palestinians in historical Palestine. In some respects, the prospects of decolonisation in Israel resemble South Africa more than Anglophone settler colonialism, where indigenous people constitute a small minority.

At the same time, in terms of the nature of its colonisation, Israel is more like the settler colonialism of the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Zionist colonisation is premised on the logic of elimination and the removal of the native population, rather than on the exploitation of labour (as in South Africa). The Palestinians

¹³ According to the 1993 Oslo Accord, the West Bank territory has been divided into Areas A, B and C. Area A is supposed to be controlled by the Palestinian Authority, Area B by the Israeli military and the Palestinian Authority, and Area C by the Israeli military.

¹⁴ See <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=State%20of%20Palestine>, accessed 22 September 2016.

are dispensable. They have lost significant parts of their homeland. This loss is irreversible. The question is how much more of their homeland they are destined to lose.

3. Resistance and Decolonisation in the Context of Settler Colonialism

As discussed above, settler colonialism is a project of replacement, predicated on the erasure – rather than exploitation – of native populations. This requires us to rethink the postcolonial theorisation of resistance and decolonisation for the particular context of settler colonialism. As Veracini argues:

There is yet no language of decolonisation pertaining to settler colonial contexts: when the focus is on decolonisation, settler colonialism remains off the radar; when settler colonialism as a specific colonial form is acknowledged, it is its decolonisation that is excised from the interpretative picture. (Veracini 2007)

In settler colonial contexts, both natives and settlers are there to stay. The decolonisation model that Fanon and Memmi discuss, of driving the settler out, is not a feasible scenario – neither practically nor morally. This demands that we rethink how we can conceptualise native freedom, sovereignty, self-determination and decolonisation.

To understand the contemporary resistance of indigenous peoples, we must understand what is being resisted. And what is being resisted is liberal settler colonialism. In contemporary liberal settler colonial formations, especially since the second half of the 20th century, indigenous peoples have been subjected to projects of assimilation and, since the 1990s, to multicultural rhetoric and forms of governance. Israel, as has been mentioned, is a relatively recent settler colonial project and is still at the frontier stage (Wolfe 2016a). The extension of citizenship to native subjects has produced an ambivalent structure of governance. Natives are at once citizens and colonial subjects. Or, perhaps more accurately, natives are not quite citizens and not quite colonial subjects.

Liberal settler colonialism thus poses a particular challenge to the theorisation of the colonial condition as total and dichotomous. Bhabha's work has challenged the binaries of coloniser–colonised, settlers–natives, self–other, white–black and master–servant that have dominated postcolonial theory, primarily the work of Fanon and Said (Bhabha

[1991] 1994). Mbembe further argues that ‘these oppositions are not helpful; rather, they cloud our understanding of postcolonial relations’ (Mbembe 2001, 103). Bhabha’s theorisation of the representation of otherness as ambivalent is particularly relevant to liberal settler colonial contexts. Representations, he argues, are not coherent, total and consistent. While they work to establish regimes of truth, they fail to do so because of their inherent contradictions. In his words, ‘the colonial stereotype is a complex, ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive, and demands not only that we extend our critical and political objectives but that we change the object of analysis itself’ (Bhabha 1983, 22).

The ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism is manifested in practices of inclusion and exclusion: extending symbolic recognition to natives while denying them material recognition, ensuring political rights while limiting civil rights, and employing discourses of reconciliation and national healing while continuing practices of dispossession and erasure. The folding of the native into the settler polity is never complete; it is partial and fragmented. Colonial power not only facilitates domination, it also ‘forms subjects’ (Butler 1997, 18). The encounter with the liberalism of the settler state produces the subjectivities of the native as hybrid in Bhabian terms, and as disjointed and split in Fanonian terms (Bhabha [1991] 1994; Fanon 1967). This hybridity is inevitable. While natives often feel alienated from settler society and are antagonistic towards the settler state, their engagement with the state is also normalised by their daily encounter with it as citizens (even if inferior citizens). They often work with (mostly for) settlers who are either their colleagues or their bosses, and they commute on public transport alongside settlers. They engage with the settlers’ educational system, health providers, police, social services, courts, ministries and so on.

At the same time, the subjectivities of indigenous people have also been shaped through their experience of settler colonialism as one of fragmented temporalities. As Mbembe argues, ‘there is a close relationship between subjectivity and temporality – that, in some way, one can envisage subjectivity itself as temporality’ (Mbembe 2001, 15). Settler colonialism is a structure of domination shaped through the axis of time. The past is characterised by native presence and ruptured by settler invasion, while the present is marked by continued experiences of trauma and loss, and the irreversibility of settler

colonialism. To envision subjectivity as temporality takes on a literal meaning in settler colonialism. The entanglement of past, present and future becomes expressed in native anxiety. This anxiety is marked by the uncertainty of the future and by fears of dispossession, displacement and erasure.

Fanon and Memmi contend that the totality of colonialism produces decolonisation as a rejectionist and oppositional project of revolt, while for Bhabha its ambivalence produces resistance as subversion. The ambivalence and hybridity of settler colonialism, this thesis suggests, have produced diverse modalities of resistance. Some resistances are accommodative, some are subversive, some are rejectionist and some are hybrid, encompassing more than one modality. As the next chapters show, demarcating these modalities is not as straightforward as it appears. Sometimes they are in competition with one another, and sometimes they complement each other. Moreover, these modalities, this chapter further suggests, need to be examined in light of the political projects – reformative, transformative and anticolonial – that shape native politics, contestations and resistance.

3.1 Resistance as Subversion

The idea of resistance as subversion is rooted in colonial discourse theory. Put simply, it is the subversion of the colonial discourse and the ‘disruption or modification of colonial modes of knowledge and authority’ (Jefferess 2008, 20). Bhabha argues that agency is never in an exterior position to power. The ambivalent nature of the colonial discourse and its failure to be a total form of representation, suggests Bhabha, produce instabilities that open a space for resistance to challenge, subvert and disrupt colonial authority (Bhabha [1991] 1994).

Arguably, the seeming contradiction between the liberal and colonial aspirations of the settler state creates opportunities for native resistance. It is not uncommon to see native peoples challenging the settler state, shaming it, and highlighting its hypocrisy by emphasising the gap between the liberal rhetoric of equality, citizenship, inclusion and rights and the state’s policies of discrimination, dispossession and exclusion. As the next chapter shows, the Palestinians in Israel are no exception. They often tap into the liberal discourse to challenge Israel’s image as a liberal state and to expose its racial foundations.

Looking at resistance as subversion also allows us to identify ‘low profile forms of resistance’ (Scott 1990, 19) and to see that ‘the most severe conditions of powerlessness and dependency would be diagnostic’ (Scott 1990, x). The subaltern contestation of power takes the form of what Scott conceptualises as hidden transcripts of resistance, representing ‘a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant’ (Scott 1990, xii). Here, Bhabha’s theorisation of resistance as mimicry and mockery has particular relevance (Bhabha [1991] 1994). As will be discussed in Part II of this thesis, which focuses on the Bedouin struggle for land, mockery functions as a powerful hidden transcript of resistance. It allows the natives to subvert the colonial gaze and to challenge their culturalisation, especially when their agency is not intelligible to white audiences.

Mimicry, argues Bhabha, is ‘almost the same, but not quite’ (Bhabha [1991] 1994, 122). It is a product of ambivalence and hybridity. Native practices of mimicry create a “‘blurred copy” of the colonizer that can be quite threatening’ (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin [2000] 2007, 125). Resemblance has the power to destabilise the colonial production of binaries based on racial difference. Mimicry is subversive when it creates its own slippage, transmuting from resemblance to menace (Bhabha [1991] 1994, 122). It becomes particularly incendiary when it is transformed into mockery.

While Bhabha sees mimicry – and hybridity – as disruptive, for Fanon mimicry is both a political obscenity and a pathological outcome of the colonial encounter. Fanon, however, welcomes mockery as a healthy expression of resistance that is politically significant and mentally liberating. Both Bhabha and Fanon share an understanding of mockery as an important practice of subjecting Europe to the gaze of the native and revealing the hypocrisies of liberal values and the European mission of civilising the native. However, as opposed to Bhabha’s conceptualisation, mockery in Fanon’s work is a deeply political rejectionist–oppositional practice. In his words:

In the colonial context the settler only ends his work of breaking in the native when the latter admits loudly and intelligibly the supremacy of the white man’s values. In the period of decolonization, the colonized masses mock at these very values, insult them, and vomit them up. (Fanon 1963, 43)

In his fetishisation of hybridity and mimicry as disruptive, Bhabha discounts mimicry as a colonial pathology that often reflects the desire to change one's skin (Fanon 1963; Memmi [1965] 2003). Moreover, Loomba argues that 'the split, ambivalent, hybrid colonial subject projected in his work is in fact curiously universal and homogenous' (Loomba 1998, 178). The homogenisation of the colonial subject and the colonial condition also led to Bhabha's failure, as Ella Shohat argues, to 'discriminate between the diverse modalities of hybridity, for example, forced assimilation, internalized self-rejection, political co-optation, social conformism, cultural mimicry, and creative transcendence' (Shohat 1992, 110).

This has particular relevance in settler colonialism, where notions of hybridity and mimicry cannot be separated from the eliminatory logics of settler colonialism, and from policies of assimilation and cultural genocide. The ability of the native to 'pass as white' in settler colonialism often takes an eliminatory rather than disruptive form. As Sarah Maddison shows in her work on Aboriginal peoples in Australia, for many indigenous people light skin is a burden (Maddison 2009), not a force that is disruptive to the racial regime of settler colonialism. Light skin renders them not 'black' or 'authentic' enough, compromising their recognition as indigenous (Maddison 2009). It is also important to consider that in settler colonialism, as will be further discussed in Part II, mimicry functions as a two-way stream. The settler also mimics and appropriates native culture as part of settler indigenisation processes.

Bhabha has been critical of Said's totalising view of power, arguing that the relationship between discourse and politics is neither deterministic nor fixed (Bhabha [1991] 1994). In Said's *Orientalism*, Bhabha argues, 'colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the coloniser' (Bhabha [1991] 1994, 122). This view, he suggests, leaves little room for recognising the agency and resistance of the colonised and fails to capture those subtle moments that work to trouble, negotiate and subvert colonial power.

However, Bhabha's work understates the authority of colonial power and fails to consider how 'power adapts to the subversions its ambivalence allows' (Jefferess 2008, 35). Paradoxically, while his work insists on the agency of the colonised, this agency is limited to the ambivalence and subversion of the colonial discourse. Furthermore, Bhabha

underestimates the extent to which colonial discourses are effective in advancing colonial domination and reconfiguring colonial subjectivities. As Said suggests, ‘representations have purposes, they are effective much of the time, and they accomplish one or many tasks’ (Said 1978a, 273). Bhabha overlooks Said’s methodology of examining colonial discourses in light of their ‘discursive consistency’ (Said 1978a, 273). He instead overemphasises the potentialities of their ambivalence. He seems to be ‘more concerned with finding resisters and explaining resistance than with examining power’ (Abu-Lughod 1990, 41).

Critics have questioned the relevance of the notion of ambivalence, given that it failed to affect the durability of colonial domination (Parry 2004). Bhabha’s work, argues Massad, ‘appears committed to depoliticising deeply political questions’ (Massad 2004, 15). Benita Parry contends that Bhabha’s rejection of the colonial relationship as ‘antagonistic’ in favour of ‘agonistic’ premises ‘colonialism as a competition of peers rather than a hostile struggle between the subjugated and the oppressor’ (Parry 2004, 63). In Bhabha’s work, resistance is reduced to individual practices of resistance that do not require intentionality. It is disassociated from a conscious collective project of decolonisation. Bhabha is not interested in the actual possibilities of resistance leading to structural transformations (Jefferess 2008). His reading empties resistance of its political meanings and takes postcolonial theory away from its early revolutionary and radical origins.

Massad suggests that Bhabha ‘fails to understand that many among the colonized refuse his recipe of “mimicry”, no matter how “ambivalent”, as a liberationist strategy’ (Massad 2004, 17). In this respect, it could be argued, Bhabha’s theory is inadequate in capturing resistance that is driven by the politics of negation rather than negotiation, and resistance that is antagonistic rather than agonistic. Having said that, subversion can be potentially radical if it is grounded in or leading a radical project. As the case study of the Palestinian queer movement in Part III shows, subversion can be used in order to instigate a radical and antagonistic Fanonian project of decolonisation. In this respect, resistance as subversion can take multiple forms. It can be marked by accommodative politics, it can be manifested in everyday defiance, or it can be articulated in a collective project of anti-colonial resistance that is deeply political.

Ambivalence and hybridity as standalone theoretical insights are not novel. What make them interesting is their political articulations. As this thesis shows, ambivalence and hybridity are analytically important in terms of the political role they play and the political ends – and projects – they advance. Therefore, following Saidian methodology that insists on discursive consistency can inform an analysis of ambivalence that is political. Reading ambivalence and hybridity into the convergence between liberalism and settler colonialism – as they also manifest in the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality – allows us to unpack the ways in which the colonial project positions itself as morally superior, authoritative and sustainable. It can also help to identify those subtle moments, as Bhabha rightly notes, in which the colonial discourse is subjected to its own contradictions.

3.2 Resistance as Negation and Restructuring of the Self

While Bhabha reads the colonial condition as one marked by ambivalence, for Fanon ‘the colonial world is a world cut in two’ (Fanon 1963, 38). The violence of colonialism is total and inescapable. Therefore, for Fanon, ambivalence and hybridity can only be pathological outcomes of colonisation.

Decolonisation, argues Fanon, ‘is the meeting of two forces, opposed to each other by their very nature’ (Fanon 1963, 36). It can be defeated only by the refusal of the colonised to accept the condition of colonial domination. Mimicry and hybridity are antithetical to a project of liberation (Fanon 1963; Memmi [1965] 2003). Similarly, Memmi contends that ‘as long as he [the colonized] tolerates colonization, the only possible alternatives for the colonized are assimilation or petrification’ (Memmi [1965] 2003, 146). Resistance should therefore be conceptualised as an antagonistic project of decolonisation. Accommodative politics has no place. In Memmi’s words, ‘revolt is the only way out of the colonial situation, and the colonized realizes it sooner or later. His condition is absolute and cries for an absolute solution; a break and not a compromise’ (Memmi [1965] 2003, 171).

Decolonisation is understood in Fanon's work to be a process. The event of driving the settlers out is fundamental to this process. However, for decolonisation to be emancipatory, the colonised must refuse to mimic the European model. For Fanon, this refusal is essential in order to overcome the pitfalls of nationalism and to decolonise the self, the native society and the postcolonial state. In his concluding remarks in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon writes:

So, comrades, let us not pay tribute to Europe by creating states, institutions, and societies which draw their inspiration from her.

Humanity is waiting for something from us other than such an imitation, which would be almost an obscene caricature.

If we want to turn Africa into a new Europe, and America into a new Europe, then let us leave the destiny of our countries to Europeans. They will know how to do it better than the most gifted among us.

But if we want humanity to advance a step further, if we want to bring it up to a different level than that which Europe has shown it, then we must invent and we must make discoveries.

If we wish to live up to our peoples' expectations, we must seek the response elsewhere than in Europe.

Moreover, if we wish to reply to the expectations of the people of Europe, it is no good sending them back a reflection, even an ideal reflection, of their society and their thought with which from time to time they feel immeasurably sickened.

For Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man. (Fanon 1963, 315–16)

This revolutionary stance articulates decolonisation as a double project: a project of negating, refusing and displacing Europe, and a project of building an alternative (Fanon 1963). A politics of rejection functions as a pedagogy and as an ethical imperative of resistance that is foundational to a simultaneous project of decolonisation and recovery, of both the self and the nation (Fanon 1963). Decolonisation, Fanon states, is 'nothing short of the liberation of the man of color from himself' (Fanon 1967, 8). As the discussion of the case studies shows, rejecting colonial discourses and representations is intrinsic to resisting the very materiality of dispossession, challenging epistemic violence, and decolonising the self. Rejection also functions as an emancipatory process through which the colonised are able to assert their humanity and their subjecthood.

Rejection is not a standalone strategy; it is joined by a project of recovery of the self, a process of healing from the physical, epistemic and mental violence of colonialism.

Memmi elucidates this point:

... the colonized's liberation must be carried out through a recovery of self and of autonomous dignity. Attempts at imitating the colonizer required self-denial; the colonizer's rejection is the indispensable prelude to self-discovery. That accusing and annihilating image must be shaken off; oppression must be attacked boldly since it is impossible to go around it. After having been rejected for so long by the colonizer, the day has come when it is the colonized who must refuse the colonizer. (Memmi [1965] 2003, 172)

As the work of Partha Chatterjee shows, the project of rejection and of offering humanity something 'other than such an imitation' is not a simple task. Colonialism, Chatterjee argues, has taken our political imagination: 'even our imaginations must forever be colonised' (Chatterjee 1993, 5). In his lecture 'Our Modernity', Chatterjee further argues that colonialism has also precluded us from developing our own modernities. In his words:

Because of the way in which the history of our modernity has been intertwined with the history of colonialism, we have never quite been able to believe that there exists a universal domain of free discourse, unfettered by differences of race or nationalism. (Chatterjee 1997, 14)

Though our modernities are bound to be marked by the experience of colonisation, Chatterjee asserts that we must insist on a world marked by multiplicities of modernities, meaning that there 'might be modernities that are not ours' (Chatterjee 1997, 3). He stresses that Third World agency must mobilise the courage to reject 'modernities established by others', so that we can 'fashion the forms of our modernity' (Chatterjee 1997, 20). Dipesh Chakrabarty argues for a project of provincialising Europe. For him, this project is doomed to be impossible as long as 'the themes of citizenship and the nation state dominate our narratives of historical transition' (Chakrabarty 1992, 23).

This bears particular significance to indigenous pedagogies of resistance and visions of decolonisation, especially since 'citizenship is key to this process of rationalizing dispossession' (Simpson 2014, 25). When it comes to native resistance, Jeff Corntassel argues, liberalism produces an 'illusion of exclusion' that works to contain and appropriate indigenous struggles by binding them to 'state-centric terms' in order to

‘divert attention away from deep decolonizing movements and push us towards a state agenda of co-optation and assimilation’ (Corntassel 2012, 91). This illusion should be read as part of the politics of distraction, a ‘colonizing process of being kept busy by the colonizer, of always being on the “back-foot”, “responding”, “engaging”, “accounting”, “following” and “explaining”. These are typical strategies often used over indigenous people’ (Smith 2003). Responding to these liberal attempts of cooptation, indigenous resurgence must have ‘the courage and imagination to envision life beyond the state’ (Corntassel 2012, 89).

In her book *Mohawk Interruptus*, Audra Simpson invites us to think of refusal as an alternative modality of resistance. She argues that ‘there is a political alternative to “recognition”, the much sought-after and presumed “good” of multicultural politics. This alternative is “refusal”’ (Simpson 2014, 11). The politics of refusal formulates resistance as a practice that transcends the ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism and the containing effect of multiculturalism. It favours an anti-colonial project that refuses the normalisation and naturalisation of settler colonialism, a task complicated by the folding of natives into settler citizenship. This refusal can be articulated in acts of everyday resistance that reject assimilation, defy settler authority, and assert native sovereignty (for example, by native people staying on their own land). It can also be advanced by declarative acts such as repudiating the settler state’s passport, resisting being called American or Canadian (or Israeli), declining social services, abstaining from paying taxes (Simpson 2014), or seceding from the settler state and declaring native sovereignty (Brewster 2015).

The politics of refusal acknowledges the political imperative of understanding the settler colonial condition in terms of domination and submission, along with recognition of native agency. It insists on the articulation of the colonial relationship in binary terms of settlers–natives, coloniser–colonised and oppressor–oppressed. As Memmi states:

... the colonized reacts by rejecting all the colonizers *en bloc* ... In the eyes of the colonized, all Europeans in the colonies are *de facto* colonizers, and whether they want to be or not, they are colonizers in some ways. By their privileged economic position, by belonging to the political system of oppression, or by participating in an effectively negative complex toward the colonized, they are colonizers. (Memmi [1965] 2003, 174)

The act of marking the settlers as ‘settlers’ is a particularly important rejectionist and subversive act in settler colonial contexts, in which the presence of settlers is naturalised as part of the settler indigenisation process.

Rejection, this thesis suggests, is an important methodology in carving out a space for dealing with the hybridity that has come to colonise the native life and imagination. In this respect, the insistence on the political imperative of rejection as foundational to a liberation project does not reflect a nativist proposition, nor does it suggest that the legacies of colonialism can be erased as if they never existed. Instead, the rejectionist (and, in particular, Fanonian) position should be read as a guiding compass, a pedagogy and a normative goal of decolonisation.

3.3 The Liberal Politics of Human Rights

Contemporary native resistance has been shaped not only in relation to the liberal settler state, but also in relation to the liberal politics of human rights. Human rights have come to occupy the most significant – and hegemonic – emancipatory framework in today’s world. The human rights discourse and human rights law have become central to the mobilisation of the marginalised in the advancement of their struggles (Keck and Sikkink 1998). For oppressed minorities and indigenous peoples who are subjected to the violence of the sovereign nation state, human rights have provided an alternative normative framework for making claims, allowing them to bypass (to a limited extent) the restraining force of domestic law. The strategy of naming and shaming is mobilised to ‘enforce international human rights norms and laws’ (Hafner-Burton 2008, 659).

In the contemporary world order, human rights have become a triumphant ideal of Western modernity (Douzinas 2000). They have emerged as a powerful global narrative, closely tied to discourses of citizenship, the nation state and modernity. The consolidation of the international regime of human rights has also meant the universalisation of modern Western epistemological and ontological categories of rights and identities. In this respect, it is valuable to consider, as Costas Douzinas suggests, the historical processes and politics that make human rights ‘both creations and creators of modernity’ (Douzinas 2000, 19). As this thesis shows, this is particularly relevant with regard to the ways that

human rights have been complicit with – and producers of – the women and queer questions, as well as the culturalisation of indigenous peoples as premodern.

The genesis of the idea of rights can be correlated with the development of the European liberal tradition. But it should also be read in light of its exclusions and its entanglements with the history of empire and (settler) colonialism. The development of the modern human rights regime was marked by the paradoxes resulting from the contradictions – and divergences – between colonialism, liberalism and rights. Studying the wars of independence in Kenya and Algeria, Fabian Klose identifies two important parallel processes in the development of the modern human rights regime in the post-World War II period. He points to the leading role that Britain and France played in developing the human rights framework in the United Nations and Europe. This occurred while the two countries were violating the human rights of native peoples in their colonies. Both Britain and France, Klose argues, sought to create a ‘divided world’, pushing forward the idea of human rights while working ‘at all costs to prevent the spread of universal human rights to their overseas possessions’ (Klose 2009, 5). This creation of a ‘divided’ world continues to shape the involvement of Western countries in the evolution of the human rights regime. Despite their rhetorical commitment to human rights, Australia, the United States, Canada and New Zealand were the only four countries to vote against the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 (Merlan 2009).

Burke suggests that it is misleading to read the development of the international human rights regime as exclusively dominated by the West. Human rights – as both an ideal and a regime – change, expand and evolve through contestations that involve states, international and supranational institutions, academia and civil society organisations. In his work, Burke argues that Arab, African and Asian involvement was as significant as that of the West in formulating the human rights agenda. Similarly, indigenous people played an important role in developing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Merlan 2009; Peterson 2010). In this respect, the political agenda of decolonisation still figures in the making of the modern international human rights regime (Burke 2010; Merlan 2009). However, the contestations over what human rights mean and what they could mean, what kinds of rights they articulate, and what protections they

guarantee are still shaped by political compromises that are made under structural power imbalances.

Reading human rights merely as complicit with colonialism and imperialism can fail to capture the historical junctures at which human rights arguably functioned as a radical emancipatory discourse. For Malcolm X, the idea of human rights served to articulate his refusal of a liberation project centred on liberal demands for equality and inclusion in the racial state. In his words:

Civil rights means you're asking Uncle Sam to treat you right. Human rights are something you were born with. Human rights are your God-given rights. Human rights are the rights that are recognized by all nations of this earth. And any time any one violates your human rights, you can take them to the world court. (Malcolm X and Breitman 1965a, 35)

Struggles for the universalisation of rights – such as the women's suffrage movement, the anti-slavery movement, the anti-apartheid movement and decolonisation struggles – were first and foremost about expanding the category of humanity. As the work of Hanna Arendt shows, being recognised as human is a precondition to the right to have rights. In a study on the transnational anti-apartheid movement, Audie Klotz argues that 'anti-apartheid activists had to establish the global principle of racial equality before South Africa could be pressured, through shaming and more coercive sanctions measures, into abolishing white minority rule' (Klotz 2002, 52).

While human rights are not new, Samuel Moyn argues that it was only in the 1970s that they 'came to define people's hopes for the future as the foundation of an international movement and a utopia of international law' (Moyn 2010, 7). With the end of formal colonialism and the revolutionary project of decolonisation, along with the impasses of the Cold War, human rights emerged as the new utopia, a new emancipatory project with which people, especially Westerners, can identify. Human rights have essentially emerged as a conservative project, constituted as a liberal project for organising world order and international relations around international law (Charvet and Kaczynska-Nay 2008). This arguably delimits human rights as an emancipatory project.

The failures of human rights to ensure protection brought to the fore the growing alienation of ordinary people from human rights. With the transnationalisation of civil society, human rights have become an industry and a bureaucracy. What was once a potentially emancipatory discourse has become a technocratic industry that is associated with global capital and imperial/foreign interests. In her work on human rights in Palestine, Lori Allen argues that the failure of human rights to ensure protection has led to what she identifies as the growing cynicism of ordinary people towards the system (rather than the ideal) of human rights (Allen 2013). In Palestine, she argues, human rights have come to be associated with oppressive local political forces, bourgeois and corrupt local elites, global imperialism and capital, and discourses of state-building that contain the Palestinian struggle for liberation, dignity and sovereignty.

Scholars have argued that human rights have also been complicit with domination. Lila Abu-Lughod shows how human rights groups have contributed to the production of Muslim women as victims of Islam and as subjects in need of rescue. She argues that in the case of the War in Afghanistan, 'women's rights served as a respectable reason to support military intervention' (Abu-Lughod 2013, 54). In their recent intervention, Nicola Perugini and Neve Gordon suggest that international human rights can be mobilised by the powerful to justify domination and wars. Looking at Palestine, they show how human rights have become a framework that is used by settler organisations to rationalise encroachment and violence.

The contemporary paradoxes in which human rights are the vocabulary of both the oppressor and the oppressed demonstrate the ways in which human rights are losing their ethical and moral currency among the subordinated. Human rights are currently a space of contestation between those who appropriate human rights to legitimise domination, and those who insist on human rights as a political imperative with a utopian objective. The contemporary crises of human rights have led Douzinas to posit that we may be at the end of the age of human rights. He argues that 'the end of human rights comes when they lose their utopian end' (Douzinas 2000, 380).

Human rights remain significant to the marginalised. Despite alienation and cynicism, they are still invoked through the tactic of strategic essentialism. However, the question

remains whether the subaltern use of human rights leads to radicalising, reworking, negotiating and transforming the different meanings of human rights (in the coming chapters, I engage with the multiple ways in which human rights are being utilised, re-interpreted, re-signified and rejected within Palestinian resistance). Emerging movements such as Black Lives Matter, along with new movements in Palestine and among indigenous peoples, refuse the liberal and apolitical grammar of rights. They refrain from framing their struggle in human rights terms. Instead, they return to radical and revolutionary emancipatory projects of decolonisation and deracialisation. Whether these movements will initiate new projects that can displace the hegemony of human rights and become the new utopia is still an open question.

3.4 Decolonising Settler Colonialism

The ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism and the agendas of human rights inform and produce multiple political projects. As the next chapters of this thesis demonstrate, these projects evolve, transform, compete, coexist and displace one another all at the same time.

The projects can be broadly characterised as reformative, transformative and anticolonial. Reformative projects are based on liberal demands for civic equality. They accept the polity as is, but seek to reform it as inclusionary and equal. Transformative projects demand the structural transformation of the settler polity in ways that can accommodate the special status of the natives. These demands can include recognition, cultural autonomy, distributive justice, power-sharing and so on. Transformative projects are usually premised on the subversion of the liberal discourse of the settler state and often rely on a multicultural rhetoric of rights claims. Anticolonial projects are radical projects of decolonisation. These projects seek to dismantle the settler regime, insisting instead on native sovereignties. They can be characterised by a Fanonian understanding of decolonisation as ‘a complete calling in question of the colonial situation’ (Fanon 1963, 37).

These different political projects inform contestations within oppressed communities over the nature of the struggle and its political ends. The recent debate on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia exemplifies

some of the core dilemmas faced by indigenous resistance. Should indigenous people pursue recognition and inclusion? If so, what kind of recognition should be pursued? And what would recognition mean to historical indigenous demands for sovereignty? Similarly, leaders of the civil rights movement in the United States were divided along ideological lines. Representing the moderate and liberal agenda was Martin Luther King, who sought equality in and through the US political and legal system. He utilised – and subverted – the discourse of perfecting the American dream to make demands for de-racialisation. In contrast, Malcolm X and the Black Panther Party refused the liberal foundations of King’s approach, arguing that the racial underpinnings of the United States makes equality contingent on a white gesture (Bloom and Martin 2013; Tyner 2013). Instead, they advanced an agenda that called for the pursuit of bodily sovereignty and the forming of transnational anti-imperial and anti-racial alliances and solidarities (Bloom and Martin 2013; Tyner 2013).

After two decades marked by the hegemony of a multicultural transformative agenda, recent years have seen a growing indigenous critique of multiculturalism, questioning its emancipatory potential. The failure of multiculturalism to transform the colonial relationship has led scholars and activists to question paradigms of inclusion, recognition, reconciliation, transitional justice and the emancipatory promise of civil and human rights (Alfred 2005; see also Coulthard 2014; Povinelli 2002; Wolfe 1992). Liberal multiculturalism is increasingly acknowledged as ‘an ideology and practice of governance’ of indigenous people (Povinelli 2002, 5; see also Simpson 2014, 20) and the ‘latest stage in the colonial project’ (Short 2008). Instead, recent indigenous scholarship has argued for the resurgence of alternative indigenous emancipatory projects that re-centre sovereignty and self-determination (Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Simpson 2014).

‘Rootedness’ remains a key to the resistance of indigenous people (Nasasra 2012). ‘To get in the way of settler colonization, all the native has to do is stay at home’ (Wolfe 2006a, 388). The survival of indigenous people means that the settler project is never ultimately triumphant (Veracini 2011b, 4).

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the theoretical framework and concepts that will guide the analysis in the next chapters. It has suggested that in order to understand resistance, we need to understand what is being resisted: *liberal* settler colonialism. The liberal characteristics of liberal settler colonialism, along with the liberal politics of human rights and multiculturalism, are significant factors in shaping native modalities of resistance and political visions of decolonisation – reformative, transformative and anticolonial. In their resistance, native peoples employ a variety of strategies. Some are accommodative, some are subversive, and others are antagonistic and rejectionist.

The next chapters in this thesis focus on the resistance of '48 Palestinians to Israeli settler colonialism. They explore the racialised, ethnicised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial violence, consider how these shape colonial subjectivities and modalities of resistance, and identify the ways in which the transnational is imbricated within these processes. The case studies unravel the complex and ambivalent ways in which different groups of '48 Palestinians respond to and engage with the liberalism that animates the settler state and the politics of human rights. They shed light on how native people deploy, appropriate, subvert, rework and reject liberal frameworks in the process of intersectional resistance.

The next chapter, Chapter 2, provides a historical overview and an analysis of Palestinian subjugation and resistance in Israel. It focuses on the racialisation of Palestinian citizenship and examines how the nature of Israel as a liberal settler state has informed and shaped '48 Palestinian resistance and political visions.

PART I

Chapter 2

Palestinian Resistance and the Paradoxes of Liberal Settler Colonialism

Introduction

This chapter sets the foundation for the two case studies – the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights and the Palestinian queer movement – that will be discussed in Parts II and III, respectively. It explores the development of '48 Palestinian subjectivity and citizenship, and analyses the development of Palestinian politics and resistance in

Israel. The chapter also engages with the dominant scholarship, and the narratives it has produced, on Palestinian politics and activism.

The chapter moves beyond the prevailing scholarly conceptualisation of Palestinian citizenship in ethnic terms and the framing of Israel as an ethnic democracy (Smootha 1990, 1997, 2002; for more on ethnic democracy, see Peled 1992, 2005b; Shafir and Peled 1998), as an ethnic state (Ghanem, Rouhana and Yiftachel 1998; Jamal 2002; Rouhana 1997, 1998, 2006; Rouhana and Ghanem 1998; Rouhana 1998; Sa'di 2000; Yiftachel 1992) and as an ethnocracy (Yiftachel 1998, 1999, 2006). It further moves beyond the traditional analysis that conceptualises the trajectory of Palestinian struggle as a development from liberal to national politics (see Haklai 2011; Jamal 2011; Rekhess 2007) and from a politics of quiescence and accommodation to a politics of contention and challenge (Jamal 2007a; Rekhess 2007; Rouhana 1989) and a politics of radicalisation (Frisch 1997; Rekhess 2003).¹⁵

As such, this chapter offers an alternative reading of the dynamics that have shaped – and continue to shape – the Palestinian struggle in Israel. The chapter suggests that race and settler colonialism have been constitutive to the making of the citizenship regime in Israel and the shaping of '48 Palestinian politics and resistance. Both the subjugation and the resistance of '48 Palestinians, it is suggested, should be understood in light of the paradoxes that result from the emergence of Israel as a liberal settler state (Robinson 2013) and the affinity between Israel and Western liberalism (Freeman-Maloy 2011; Massad 1993, 2016; Said 1978b, 1979a, 1979b, 1985), as well as the ways in which Palestinians in Israel figure within these paradoxes.

Based on original archival research and secondary resources, the first two sections of the chapter focus on the nature of the settler colonial domination and violence to which Palestinians in Israel are subjected. The first section argues that Palestinian citizenship is best understood as a liminal construct between semi-liberal citizenship and colonial

¹⁵ For a detailed discussion on whether Palestinians in Israel have been radicalised, see Peleg and Waxman (2012 ch 3), Jamal (2007a) and Smootha (1989).

subjecthood, producing the '48 Palestinian as a dislocated subject. Palestinian existence in Israel, it is further argued, is still governed and shaped in relation to the continued working of the Zionist/Israeli settler colonial project as a structure of dispossession, elimination and erasure.

The second section examines the ways in which '48 Palestinians figure in the Israeli narrative. It argues that '48 Palestinians, from the very early days of the Jewish state, have been an important asset in the invention of Israel as a liberal and civilising force. At the same time, Israel's discriminatory policies towards the Palestinians in Israel have also come to pose a significant challenge to its image as a liberal democracy and to the powerful alliance between Zionism and Western liberalism.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 of this chapter look at the development of the Palestinian struggle in Israel. Section 3 provides a broad overview, focusing on both parliamentary activity and popular mobilisation. It shows the ways in which state suppression of Palestinian national movements has resulted in the struggle being imbued in a particular liberal discourse that is based on demands for civil equality, citizenship and inclusion.

Sections 4 and 5 focus on the emergence and consolidation of the '48 Palestinian national movement and Non-Governmental Organisations in Israel (NGOs) in the 1990s and early 2000s. This emergence, it is argued, has corresponded with the global revival in civil society and with the rise of the international minority rights regime and liberal multiculturalism. Consequently, the '48 Palestinian national movement in Israel has developed as a *liberal* national movement, and '48 Palestinian civil society has developed as a *liberal* construct. The Palestinian struggle in Israel has come to fetishise liberal multiculturalism. Demands for recognition as a national minority and demands for cultural autonomy have therefore become central discourses in the struggle of '48 Palestinians.

Section 6 concludes the chapter by suggesting that the hegemony of '48 Palestinian liberal nationalism is being challenged by the rise of new movements, led by a new generation of activists. These movements reject the liberal logics of recognition and

citizenship, advancing instead a radical project of decolonisation that demands the dismantling of the racial settler state.

1. The Production of the Palestinian Citizen-Subject

There needs to be a citizenship law, but not for Jews. When a Jew comes to settle – he is automatically a citizen, because he is guaranteed the right to be a citizen upfront/in advance. The differentiation that I make here is not concerned with the laws, but rather with the rights towards this land. Others [non-Jews] have the right to be here only by gesture (*B'Chesed*), but not the Jew. He is entitled (*Bi'zkhut*). That is my basic presumption. (David Ben Gurion, Cabinet Meeting, 9 January 1950, my translation from Hebrew)

This statement by David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of the State of Israel, was made during a debate in the Cabinet on the citizenship law. Ben Gurion strongly opposed the idea of a citizenship law, believing that it limited the ability of the new state to further reduce the number of Arabs within its territory. He was also ideologically opposed to the idea that Arabs and Jews would be naturalised and governed under the same citizenship law. Jews, Ben Gurion suggested, do not need a citizenship law, since ‘a Jew who came to Eretz Israel [the land of Israel] is anyway a citizen’ (Cabinet Meeting, 9 January 1950, my translation from Hebrew), adding that ‘every Jew that is settled in Eretz Israel is historically a citizen’ (Cabinet Meeting, 21 April 1949, my translation from Hebrew).¹⁶

To solve this conundrum, a compromise was reached. Two different laws were legislated to govern Jewish and Arab citizenship. The 1950 Law of Return¹⁷ regulates Jewish citizenship, while Palestinian citizenship is anchored in the 1952 Citizenship Law.¹⁸ The Law of Return constructs Jewish immigration as the fulfilment of the right of Jews to ‘return’ to their ancestral land, a right denied to Palestinian refugees. In contrast, the Citizenship Law requires Palestinian natives to be naturalised. Thus, according to these

¹⁶ An additional reason for Ben Gurion’s opposition to the naturalisation of Jews was the fear that asking Jewish immigrants to naturalise would lead to a backlash, as it required them to make a conscious and active decision to accept Israeli citizenship. As he stated, ‘we do not want to raise the question, whether you decline or do not decline [Israeli] citizenship, among the Jews’. He therefore suggested treating all Jews as citizens (see Cabinet Meeting Protocols, 21 April 1949, my translation from Hebrew).

¹⁷ The Law of Return 5710 (1950), accessed 18 August 2016, <http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/return.htm>.

¹⁸ Nationality Law 5712 (1952), accessed 18 August 2016, <http://www.israellawresourcecenter.org/israellaws/fulltext/nationalitylaw.htm>.

laws, Jewish citizenship is a historical and natural right, while Palestinian citizenship is an ahistorical right that is granted through the goodwill of the state. The Law of Return and the Citizenship Law are among the most significant symbolic and material embodiments of Zionist-settler indigenisation, simultaneously indigenising Jewish settlers while de-indigenising Palestinians. Race is thus constitutive to the making and operation of the citizenship regime in Israel.¹⁹

Citizenship for Palestinians did not emerge as an inclusionary system. Rather, it was conceived and constructed, Shira Robinson argues, as a structure of exclusion (Robinson 2013). While the extension of citizenship to Palestinians could be read as a divergence from Israel's colonial practices and a testament to the liberal conviction of the new leadership, the protocols of the Israeli Cabinet tell a different story. The Citizenship Law was not intended to include native Palestinians as fully entitled citizens. As Israeli Cabinet protocols reveal, its primary goal was to restrict, as much as possible, the number of Palestinians who would be entitled to citizenship under Israeli law (Cabinet Meetings, 21 April 1949; 7 June 1950; 15 February 1951; 26 June 1951).

The Citizenship Law was deemed necessary in Israel's 'war on infiltrators', amid fears of large waves of Palestinian returnees that could threaten the Jewish demographic superiority achieved in the aftermath of the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948 (Robinson 2013; for more on the war on infiltrators, see Cohen 2006). This was accomplished by legislating a set of cumulative conditions that Palestinians must meet in order to qualify as citizens (Kretzmer 1990, 37). These conditions were made as restrictive as possible, making it difficult for Palestinians to meet them. The Citizenship Law continues to be guided by the desire to minimise Palestinian presence. Recent amendments (upheld by Israel's Supreme Court) prevent family unification of Palestinian citizens of Israel with Palestinians from the Occupied Territories and Arab citizens of 'enemy' states (Zarchin 2012). Such amendments, as shown in the case study on the queer movement, are deeply racialised and gendered, governing the most intimate aspects of Palestinian family life.

¹⁹ Racialised citizenship regimes shape not only Palestinian citizenship, but also stratified regimes of citizenship and rights for Jews, along racial/ethnic lines (see Abdo 2011; Ben Porat and Turner 2011; Peled 2008; Peled and Shafir 1996; Mizrachi and Herzog 2012; Rajzman 2010; Shafir and Peled 2002).

Furthermore, the naturalisation of Palestinians was not as straightforward as it is often portrayed. In fact, in Israel's first census in November 1948, one-third of the Palestinians under Israel's control were not counted. Moreover, when the Citizenship Law came into force in 1952, only 63,000 of an estimated 160,000 Palestinians in Israel were entitled to citizenship (Bäumel 2006, 394; Blecher 2005, 735; Robinson 2013, 100). Between 1952 and 1955, only 309 Palestinians were granted citizenship out of 3,810 applications (Haklai 2011, 57).²⁰ In addition, the Naqab-Bedouin were still facing expulsion beyond Israel's (contested) borders until the United Nations intervened in 1959. They were naturalised only in the late 1950s (Jiryis 1976).

The gradual naturalisation of Palestinians, which was carried out up until the 1980s, was not coincidental. In fact, Ben Gurion maintained that Israel should not rush to regulate citizenship of the remaining Arabs as long as the question of borders remained open (Cabinet Meeting, 21 April 1949). He objected to extending citizenship to Arabs beyond those who were counted in the 1948 census. In his words, 'we do not need to rush to provide Arabs full rights and citizenship ... we do not know how things will unfold in the coming years' (Cabinet Meeting, 15 February 1951, my translation from Hebrew).²¹ In his important work, Bäumel shows that until the end of the 1950s, the Zionist leadership had surmised – or at least hoped – that the presence of Palestinians in Israel might be temporary (Bäumel 2007).²²

While, internationally, Israel celebrated the inclusion of Arabs as citizens, the '48 Palestinians were placed under military rule until 1966. During this period, the lives, communities, economies and very existence of Palestinians continued to be severely strained by Israel's colonisation policies, marked by ethnic cleansing and by the de-

²⁰ Even Palestinians who were granted suffrage rights during the first elections for the Constituent Assembly in 1949 and the Israeli legislative elections in 1951 were not issued with an Israeli passport (they were instead issued with a *Laissez-Passer*), as were Jewish citizens. See Cabinet Meeting Protocols, 27 June 1951, Israel State Archives, Jerusalem [Hebrew].

²¹ Furthermore, Ben Gurion's position on this issue has been consistent. As Robinson states, in 1947 Ben Gurion objected to the extension of citizenship to Arabs, because then it would be impossible to expel them (Robinson 2013, 24).

²² Some scholars have suggested that the massacre in 1956 was an attempt to create such conditions, similar to the effect that the Deir Yassin massacre had. However, no substantial historical evidence has yet been found to substantiate the claim (in Bäumel 2007).

Arabising and the Judaising of the space (on the policies of Judaisation, see Falah 2003; Marx 2011; Yiftachel 1999; Yiftachel and Yacobi 2003; on the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, see Masalha 1992; Pappé 2006). During the military rule period, Israel dramatically transformed the geographic and demographic landscape by demolishing abandoned Palestinian villages, erasing signifiers of Arab presence, and transforming the space by changing the names of cities, villages and historical monuments from Arabic to Hebrew (Benvenisti 1997; Peteet 2005).

Controlling the Palestinian minority militarily was intrinsic to the Zionist task of mass transfer of Palestinian land to Jewish and state ownership. In fact, the vast majority of Palestinian land and property was confiscated during the military rule. By 1962, the state had expropriated 75% of the land in the northern area of the country (Payes 2005, 54) and 60% of the land belonging to the Palestinian villages in Israel. By the early 1970s, Israel had secured control of 93% of the land (compared with only 8.5% Jewish-owned land in 1947) (Bäumel 2007). Today, only 3–3.5% of the land is owned by, or under the jurisdiction of, Palestinian local government (Adalah 2011).

Moreover, the mass expropriation of land and state incentives and investments in Jewish agriculture – as part of the Zionist agenda of redemption of the land (*Ge'ulat Ha-Adama* in Hebrew)²³ – have forced 72% of Palestinian farmers to abandon agriculture: ‘by 1961, more than half of the Arab workers were employed outside their local village, in occupations such as drivers, waiters, unskilled construction workers, or other low-skill jobs’ (Haklai 2011, 60).

The Arab population has thus undergone a massive proletarianisation process, becoming dependent on the Israeli labour market (Haklai 2011; Sultany 2012; Zureik 1979).

Furthermore, Palestinians were governed through an entrenched system of surveillance (Cohen 2006; Lustick 1980; Pappé 2011; Sa'di 2013). Israel was committed to erasing any national identity and sentiments among the remaining Palestinians and to remaking them as loyal, submissive and quiescent subjects (Cohen 2006; Shihade 2013). As part of these efforts, the state attempted to produce the ‘Israeli-Arab’, a dutiful Arab citizen. This

²³ See Shafir (1989) on the politics of land colonisation in Israel.

should not, however, be confused with an assimilatory policy. It was, rather, a policy intended to manufacture consent and support for the Zionist project (Jamal 2007a), while maintaining racial difference and hierarchies as constitutive to the operation of the Israeli regime.

In addition – and much like colonial practices of indirect rule elsewhere in the world (Mamdani 2012) – Israel pursued the fragmentation of the Palestinians in Israel along religious and ethnic lines (Cohen 2006; Shihade 2011). Divide and rule was the central pillar in Israel’s program to manage and control the Palestinian population. The Druze were recognised as a distinct nationality (*le’um*) and were conscripted into the army (Cohen 2006, 187–204; Louer 2007, 10–18). The Naqab-Bedouin were ethnicised as a separate group and classified as ‘good/loyal’ Arabs in order to create animosity between them and other Arab citizens. Christians were distinguished as being exceptionally civilised, unlike the Muslim Arab majority (Louer 2007, 14–16). Divide and rule remains at the core of Israel’s policy. In recent years, the state has promoted the conscription of the Christian Bedouin communities into the army (Jerusalem Post Staff 2016; Lazarus 2016) and, for the first time, the Ministry of Interior has afforded Palestinian Christians the option of being registered as Arameans instead of Arabs (Lis 2014b).

The historical conditions that framed Palestinian citizenship significantly differ from those of other settler colonial contexts. As Robinson pointedly observes, ‘Israel was not the first state in history to emerge from a settler-colony that extended citizenship and voting rights to its indigenous inhabitants, but it was the first to do so in the midst of its ongoing quest for their land’ (Robinson 2013, 9). Palestinian citizenship in Israel continues to be shaped, albeit in different ways, by these conditions and by the paradoxes they create. As Patrick Wolfe argues, Israel remains fully invested in the ‘frontier stage of dispossession’ (Wolfe 2013, 9). The Nakba is not only an event but also a structure, with the entire country still regarded as a settler colonial frontier awaiting settlement. Even though the state controls over 93% of the land within the Green Line, Palestinian lives continue to be ravaged by land dispossessions, house demolitions and evictions (Plonski 2016). Thus, colonisation trumps citizenship. This has informed a Palestinian citizenship that is fragile, transparent, partial and hollow (Algazi 2010; Jamal 2007b;

Molavi 2013; Rouhana and Sutlany 2003; Swirski 2008; Swirski and Hasson 2006; Yiftachel 2002).

Subjected to a frontier-stage settler colonialism and racialised citizenship, Palestinian lives in Israel are marked by anxiety and vulnerability. This state of stress builds on the memory and trauma of the 1948 Nakba, the present fact of dispossession, and the fear of future ethnic cleansing (Rabinowitz 1994, 28). Sixty-eight years after the establishment of Israel, the logic of elimination marked by the Judaisation of the space and by the practice of ethnic cleansing continues to dominate the state's policies towards the '48 Palestinians, who are still seen as a demographic and security threat – a fifth column. As stated by the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, 'If there is a demographic problem, and there is, it is with the Israeli Arabs who will remain Israeli citizens' (quoted in Alon and Benn 2003).

Moreover, the state and its Jewish citizens are yet to make peace with the existence of the Palestinian citizens within its (undefined) borders. A recent poll by Pew Research Center indicates that about half of the Israeli Jewish population supports the transfer or expulsion of Arabs (Aderet 2016), with other polls indicating that more than two-thirds of Israeli Jews support encouraging Palestinian citizens to emigrate (Blecher 2005, 738).

In addition, Israel's leaders actively pursue the making of geopolitical conditions that will allow the state to reduce the number of Palestinian citizens within its territory. Plans circulate for a population transfer (re-branded as a 'population/territorial exchange') of the Little Triangle and its estimated 300,000 Palestinian residents to the Palestinian state as part of a peace deal (Blecher 2005; Saban 2010, 2011). Such plans have been mainstreamed throughout the Israeli political landscape. Support, as Blecher shows, runs the gamut from Israel's right wing to its 'political centre' and the Zionist 'liberal-left' of the Labour Party (Blecher 2005).²⁴ Transfer plans are joined by efforts to make

²⁴ In fact, these plans are being further developed and are raised in international forums in order to mainstream them as viable and legitimate to a peace plan. In 2010, for example, Israel's then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Avigdor Lieberman, raised his plans for population exchange in a speech before the UN General Assembly (Shamir and Ravid 2010).

Palestinian citizenship contingent upon a loyalty declaration to Israel as a Jewish state and attempts to make it revocable based on security offences.

As Ahmad Tibi, a Palestinian member of the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament), stated, 'Israel is democratic for Jews, but Jewish for Arabs' (quoted in Lis 2009). The enfolding of '48 Palestinians into Israeli citizenry has created contradictions, paradoxes and ambivalences that shape the lives and struggles of Palestinians in Israel. These must be understood in light of the successes and failures of Israel's efforts to pursue, at the same time, both liberal values (or at least their performance) and colonial aspirations. In the words of Shira Robinson:

Israel's development as a liberal settler state was the outcome of the imperative to establish a colonial rule of difference within a liberal order imposed largely from the outside – to find a legal way to partition the population, and thus facilitate colonization for exclusive Jewish use. (Robinson 2013, 198)

With the lifting of the military rule in 1966, Palestinians in Israel have become figured at once as citizens and as colonial subjects – what can be characterised as citizen-subjects. The colonial encounter, marked by normalised sovereignty and its disavowal, renders Palestinian subjectivities hybrid in Bhabha terms and pathologically schizophrenic in Fanonian terms. To understand '48 Palestinian resistance, we must acknowledge the ways in which it has been forged by the encounter with Israel as a liberal settler state (as opposed to an ethnic state governed by an ethnocratic regime). This has shaped – and continues to shape – particular (and changing) modalities of resistance (which are heavily gendered, sexualised, classed and ethnicised) and competing political visions.

2. Legitimacy and Settler Sovereignty: Palestinians in Israel and the Production of Liberal Israel

Emerging as a settler colonial project in the 20th century, Israel, Robinson argues, has had a double task: to advance the colonisation of Palestine and to emerge as a liberal state (Robinson 2013). Born under conditions of contention and controversy, establishing its image as a Western liberal democracy was essential to Israel's leveraging of international recognition and legitimacy while continuing its territorial expansion and ethnic cleansing policies.

To further this agenda, Israel has invoked the '48 Palestinians as part of its foreign policy and propaganda efforts. The naturalisation of '48 Palestinians has allowed Israel to claim that it is upholding its international commitments, particularly as specified in the 1947 Partition Plan (Jabareen 2014; Robinson 2014)²⁵. Though seen as a demographic hurdle, the Palestinians in Israel proved also to be a diplomatic asset that enhanced Israel's larger efforts to assert itself as a liberal democratic state and a beacon of civility.

The fact that Arabs had the right to vote and be elected was conducive to Israel's attainment of international recognition and legitimacy. Israel's practices of capitalising on the inclusion of Palestinians as members of parliament can be traced to the first Knesset following the 1949 elections. With the world watching the newly established state, only two speeches were made during the opening session of the inaugural Knesset: the first by Chaim Weizmann, the first president of the State of Israel, and the second by Amin Jarjoura, an Arab member of the Knesset (MK) (Jabareen 2014). The presence of Arabs in the Knesset and the voting of some Arab MKs supporting the Israeli government's repressive decisions towards the remaining Palestinians, suggests Hillel Cohen, have allowed Israel to promote itself as a democratic state that is attentive to its minorities (Cohen 2006).

Israel's version of liberalism was exclusionary and premised on racial hierarchies. However, emerging during the rise of universal human rights, racialised liberalism posed particular problems for the new state. Israel was facing international pressures to adhere to some liberal democratic norms. Like other imperial and colonial powers, Israel used the rhetoric of modernising the natives to guise its colonising agenda. As the protocols of the Israeli Cabinet meetings show, Israel was sensitive to the (limited) interest of international media, the Catholic Church and foreign diplomats in the conditions of the '48 Palestinians (Cabinet Meetings, 20 March 1949; 5 July 1949; 20 July 1952; ISA, 69/20). Israel's vulnerability to its international image forced it to react. During a Cabinet

²⁵ The Partition Plan is a resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1947 for the partition of Palestine into two states. The resolution was based on the recommendation of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine.

meeting, Moshe Sharett, Israel's first Minister of Foreign Affairs, suggested that Israel respond to international concerns by using the Arabs in Israel as part of its *hasbara* efforts:

We need more *hasbara* in the world, also in pictures. We need to show that the Arabs who are settled in the State of Israel are settled on their lands, receiving education and health services and all that is needed from the state. It is not my intention that these pictures will be used as propaganda that will encourage Arabs to return, but to prove that Arabs are adequately settled in the State of Israel, as human beings. We need to show this time and again. (Cabinet Meeting, 20 January 1952, my translation from Hebrew)

Since the early days of the state, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has distributed pamphlets and booklets titled *The Arabs in Israel* (ISA, 5252/2).²⁶ It has also published a special Bulletin on the Christians in Israel (ISA, 5252/2). In addition, in 1958–59, a Minorities Hasbara Unit was formed as part of the Hasbara Centre at the Prime Minister's Office (Bäuml 2007, 98). Hasbara materials provided information showing how Israel's policies had improved the living standards of the Arabs in Israel (including with regard to agriculture, education, infrastructure, health and sanitary services, access to water, a building boom in Arab villages, and the promotion of Arab women),²⁷ especially when compared with those in other Arab countries. Pictures of Arabs enjoying modernity, voting, and celebrating Israel's Day of Independence were circulated as additional proof of the successful integration of Arabs (see images).

²⁶ These include *The Arabs in Israel* (1955) published by the government of Israel, and *The Arabs in Israel* (1958) published by Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jerusalem.

²⁷ See *The Arabs in Israel* (1955; 1958).



Members of all communities greet Independence Day parade



The Old Way: Threshing with donkeys

The New Way: Arab farmers with their tractor





Abdul Kader leaving his old house in Umm al-Fahm ...

... And, outside his new home, built by the Housing Division of the Ministry of Labour



(Pictures taken from *The Arabs in Israel*, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1958.)

The Arab women of Jaffa have organised this workshop where girls learn sewing, knitting and embroidery. The Ministry of Social Welfare helps with funds.



(Picture taken from *The Arabs in Israel*, published by the Government of Israel, 1955.)

The Zionist depiction of the Arabs in Israel as a backward people in need of civilisation and modernisation registered well in the West, building on a sound legacy of Western orientalism (Said 1978a). This identification, however, has also proven to be a double-edged sword. It is a source of Israel's weakness as much as its strength, for Israel's legitimacy has been – and still is – contingent upon its ability to maintain a convincing performance of liberal democracy.

Writing a decade after the occupation of the '67 territories, Said states in *The Question of Palestine* (1979a) that the 'new obstacle for Zionism-liberalism is the problem of the

occupation' (Said 1979a, 38). The Palestinians in Israel today pose an additional challenge to Zionism-liberalism. With the normalisation of the Occupation, '48 Palestinians increasingly function as a litmus test for Israel's democracy and thus for its legitimacy. Recent years have seen a growing concern among liberal-Zionists and their Western allies with the question of Palestinians in Israel. Israel's treatment of its Palestinian citizens is seen to undermine its stability as a 'Jewish and democratic' state (Peleg and Waxman 2011).

Ilan Peleg and Dov Waxman warn that ongoing deterioration in the relations between the Palestinians in Israel and the Jewish majority has 'put Arab-Jewish coexistence in Israel, the country's political stability, and the quality of its democracy seriously at risk' (Peleg and Waxman 2011, vii).²⁸ This view also extends to the foreign policy of European governments, the European Union (EU) and the United States. An EU secret paper has recommended that Israel's policies towards the Arab population be considered a 'core issue', adding that 'addressing inequality within Israel is integral to Israel's long-term stability' (quoted in Ravid 2011). The British embassy in Israel invests considerable effort in promoting the integration of Arabs in the Israeli economy, specifically the high-tech industry (Elis 2014). And, for the first time, the Obama administration 'has updated America's official vision of Israel's future to stress that the Jewish state must ensure equal rights for Israeli Arabs' (Benn 2010).

This challenge to Israel's liberal image is at once enabled and restricted by the ambivalent enfolding of '48 Palestinians as citizens. With the prolonged occupation, '48 Palestinians have become – as in the early days of the state – an even more important element in Israel's efforts to substantiate its image as a liberal democracy and a modernising force. Israel's oppressive policies domestically are significantly different from its rhetoric internationally. In the last legislative elections in 2015, Benjamin Netanyahu urged his

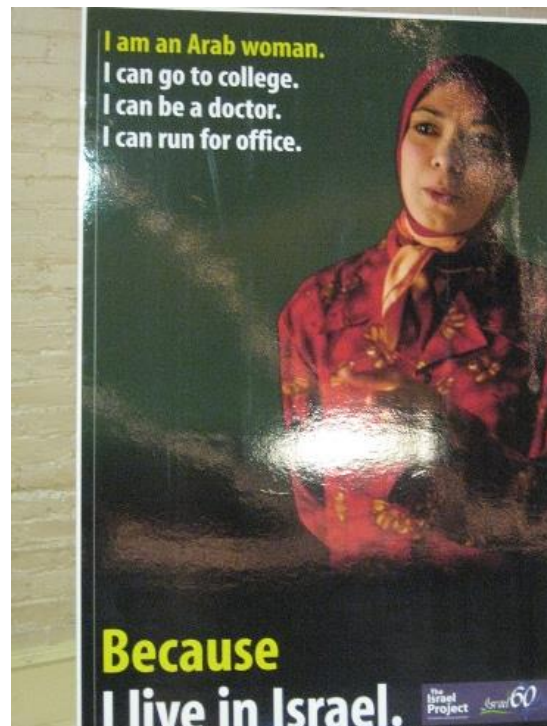
²⁸ In the last decade, the question of the Palestinians in Israel has begun to be of interest to many of Israel's liberal-Zionist supporters, especially among the world Jewry. For example, recent years have seen the establishment of special task forces that aim to increase the Jewish communities' awareness of the problems faced by Palestinians in Israel. Such task forces have been established in the United States and in the United Kingdom. For more information, see the websites of the US Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues at <http://www.iataskforce.org> and the UK Task-Force on Issues Relating to Arab Citizens of Israel at <http://uktaskforce.org>.

constituents to vote by warning that ‘Arab voters are heading to the polling stations in droves’ (quoted in Zonszein 2015). Yet, in his address to the US Congress, he stated:

Courageous Arab protesters are now struggling to secure these very same rights for their peoples, for their societies. We’re proud in Israel that over 1 million Arab citizens of Israel have been enjoying these rights for decades. (Applause.) Of the 300 million Arabs in the Middle East and North Africa, only Israel’s Arab citizens enjoy real democratic rights. (Applause.) Now, I want you to stop for a second and think about that. Of those 300 million Arabs, less than one-half of 1 percent are truly free, and they’re all citizens of Israel. (Applause.) This startling fact reveals a basic truth: Israel is not what is wrong about the Middle East; Israel is what’s right about the Middle East. (Applause.) (quoted in The Globe and Mail 2011)

The appropriation and co-optation of ’48 Palestinians in Israel’s *hasbara* efforts take different forms, and these are deeply racialised, gendered and sexualised discourses. Arab citizens are sent to tour United States and EU campuses and other forums in order to refute allegations of discrimination and apartheid (Goldklang 2016). Israeli *hasbara* also emphasises that Arabs in Israel (including women) enjoy political rights and individual freedoms. Arab MKs – who face persecution and attempts to disqualify them personally, as well as their parties, from running for the Knesset – are touted as evidence of the state’s democracy. Arab reality-show celebrities – winners of the Israeli versions of *Idol*, *MasterChef* or *The Voice* – are presented as Israeli success stories.





The appropriation of Palestinians in Israel should not be viewed merely as propaganda. It is intrinsic to the working of Israel as a liberal settler state. '48 Palestinians figure in both revealing the paradoxes that the liberalism of the settler state produces and concealing them. Moshe Arens, an old-school Zionist-Likud liberal and former Minister of Defence, has vocally opposed the efforts of the Knesset – led by his own party – to limit Arab representation in the legislature. Responding to the attempts to disqualify Haneen Zoabi, a Palestinian MK, Arens commented that:

MK Haneen Zoabi has a talent for raising the blood pressure of most Israelis. Some are almost driven out of their minds by her provocative statements accusing Israel of the most despicable crimes ... Once we have cooled down, we realize that she is actually an asset to Israel. Her outbursts in the Knesset are proof that Israel is a model democracy. That the slander that Israel is an apartheid state and is going down a slippery slope toward fascism, is belied by her very appearances in the Knesset. Proof that not only can the freedom of speech existing in Israel serve as example to other democracies, but that there probably are no other democracies where this kind of slander against the state would be permitted. It is hard to imagine such attacks on the state in the American Senate or House of Representatives, the British parliament or the French legislature. Only in Israel. (Arens 2016)

Palestinians in Israel remain a vital signifier used to demarcate legitimate democratic Israel (the '48 territories) and colonising Israel (the '67 territories). But they are also a significant force in challenging Israel's international image as a liberal democracy.

3. Palestinian Resistance: The Impasse of Resisting Liberal Settler Colonialism

'48 Palestinians have long resisted the Zionist settler colonial project. In contrast to the common misconception that they were passive and quiescent under the military rule (see, for example, the work of Lustick 1980; Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker 2005), studies have shown that – despite draconian restrictions on their movement and an entrenched system of control, surveillance and population management – '48 Palestinians did resist (Cohen 2006; Jiryis 1976; Nasasra 2015b; Shihade 2014). Their resistance during the military rule, argues Cohen, was no less significant in its volume and intensity than their resistance after the end of the military rule in 1966 (Cohen 2006).

During the military rule, resistance took the form of organised protests and explicit confrontation with authority, as well as everyday intransigence marked by the *sumud*²⁹ (steadfastness) of ordinary '48 Palestinians. '48 Palestinians employed different strategies to defy and undermine colonial authority. They protested the military rule, the expropriation of their land, and the building of Jewish settlements on the confiscated land. Demonstrations and confrontations with the Israeli authorities were also part of Palestinian resistance. Protestors and activists were regularly detained, arrested, interrogated and subjected to severe restrictions on their movement. '48 Palestinians also challenged Israel's attempts to expel them, hiding and sheltering tens of thousands of returnees (Cohen 2006; Nasasra 2015b; Robinson 2013). Policies of divide and rule were also resisted, as exemplified by the Druze resistance to forced conscription into the Israeli army (Cohen 2006).

²⁹ Sumud is a Palestinian term that describes Palestinian resistance to Zionist/Israel settler colonialism. It refers to the survival of Palestinians on their land under conditions of oppression, dispossession, occupation and erasure.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the analysis of resistance must not neglect the hidden transcripts of resistance – the ‘critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant’ (Scott 1990, xii). This is particularly relevant to extreme conditions of repression. Mockery is one such hidden transcript. By mocking state officials and collaborators and mocking Israel’s attempts to force ’48 Palestinians to enact a love for Israel (for example, by celebrating Israel’s Independence), ’48 Palestinians asserted their humanity. Cultural resistance has also played an important role. Palestinian poetry, for example, was a significant form of expression during this period (Ghanim 2009). Resistance was also conveyed in popular culture, such as wedding songs that celebrated Palestinian/Arab nationalism or expressed contempt for colonial authority (Nasasra 2015b).

Culture and memory continue to be important sites of resistance even today. ’48 Palestinians protect the Arab history of the space. They insist on using the Arabic names of villages and cities, challenging state efforts to Judaize and Hebrewise the land. The pre-1948 history is invoked not only as a nostalgic exercise, but also as a challenge to state/Zionist discourses that have framed Palestine as an empty land awaiting settlement. Invoking the Arab-Palestinian history fosters national pride, cross-generational memory and a culture of *sumud* (S. Aburabia 2015).

3.1 Formal and Informal Mobilisation

Parliamentary politics has been central to the mobilisation of ’48 Palestinians from the very early days of the state. In the first two decades (during Israel’s military rule of the remaining Palestinians), Mapai, then the ruling party in Israel,³⁰ formed Arab satellite parties and used a system of patronage to encourage Arabs to vote for Mapai-affiliated parties (Landau 1969). Palestinians in Israel voted in their masses: 79% voted in the 1949 elections and 90% in the 1955 elections (Louer 2007, 28). More than 60% of Arabs voted for Mapai-allied parties (Peled 1992).

A second important political force among the Palestinians in Israel was the Israeli communist party, known as Maki. Unlike Mapai’s allied parties, Maki was critical of the

³⁰ Mapai was formed in 1930 as a socialist-Zionist party. It served as Israel’s ruling party in the first of decades of the establishment of the State of Israel. In 1968, it merged with the Israeli Labor Party.

military rule. It called to ease the naturalisation of the Arabs in Israel. It was also the only Israeli party to include Arabs among its leadership, with two Arab MKs – Tawfiq Tubi and Emile Habibi, who became iconic figures in Palestinian politics in Israel – serving on its behalf. The Zionist establishment was tolerant of Maki because the party accepted the very legitimacy of Israel as a Jewish state. In fact, Meir Vilner, a leader of the party, was a signatory on its behalf to Israel's Declaration of Independence (Sa'di 2010).

Since its early days, Israel has been adamant in its efforts to suppress the rise of Pan-Arab and Palestinian nationalism among the remaining Arabs. Despite state repression, Al-Ard, a Palestinian national movement, was formed in 1959 by a group of young activists and intellectuals, who were influenced by the Pan-Nasserist ideology (Dallasheh 2010). The state responded by regarding the movement as a security threat. Al-Ard's newspaper was banned and its leaders were harassed, detained, arrested and subjected to severe restrictions on their movement. These repressive policies impeded Al-Ard's ability to mobilise its constituency and to survive as a political force.

Al-Ard is often portrayed in the literature as a radical movement that refused to 'recognise the legitimacy of the Israeli state and sought its abolition' (Haklai 2011, 86). Whether the movement did in fact recognise Israel remains debatable. However, as Dallasheh argues, the demands of Al-Ard:

... were made in the framework of demanding full citizenship ... while rejecting the Zionist nature of the state, the activists of Al-A'rd clearly made a conscious decision to act within the framework of the Israeli system, concentrating on legal struggle to gain legitimacy. (Dallasheh 2010, 24).

In 1965, Al-Ard decided to run in the Israeli legislative elections and so formed the Socialist Party. Facing state suppression of the movement, Al-Ard's leaders hoped that participation in the Knesset would provide much-needed parliamentary immunity and protection that would allow it to become a meaningful political force in '48 Palestinian politics. The party was banned from running for the Knesset (a decision upheld by the Israeli Supreme Court) and was outlawed in 1965 by the Minister of Defence using the 1945 British Emergency Regulation (Dallasheh 2010). The case of Al-Ard is important not only because it instigated a 'nationalist moment' in Palestinian politics in Israel, but also because it illuminates the paradoxes and the predicament that are at the heart of

Palestinian resistance in Israel. The simultaneous rejection of colonial authority and its normalisation seem to be an inescapable structural feature of native-citizen resistance to liberal settler colonialism.

In the same year that Al-Ard was banned, Tawfiq Tubi and Emile Habibi, together with a number of Jewish members of the party, split from Maki and formed the New Communist Party (Rakah), a Jewish-Arab party (Edelstein 1974). Rakah was permitted to register as a political party and it ran for the 1965 Knesset. The establishment of Rakah was a transformative moment in Arab politics in Israel.³¹ In 1977, the party united with other Jewish socialist forces (including the Black Panthers, a Mizrahi radical movement) and established the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE), also known as Hadash in Hebrew and Al-Jabha in Arabic. The party became the most significant political and mobilising force among the '48 Palestinians, shaping Arab politics through to the present day.

The rhetoric of Rakah and the DFPE focused on civic quality, inclusion, equal opportunity and redistributive justice. The party saw itself as the representative of Israel's disadvantaged population, regardless of ethnicity. It was – and remains – a strong advocate of a politics of alliance and the bringing together of disadvantaged social groups.³² The political discourse of the party – unlike that of many of its Arab supporters – was blind to nationalism and race as major factors shaping Jewish–Arab relations. Invocation of Palestinian nationalism was reserved for the question of the '67 occupied territories. Grievances of Palestinians in Israel, including land dispossession, were articulated along class lines and represented as class-based injustice (Haklai 2011). The party's animosity to nationalism, in addition to the fact that it was a joint Jewish–Arab party, helped protect it from state persecution. This experience stands in contrast to the experience of '48 Palestinian national movements that were crushed time and again.

³¹ The dominance of its Jewish members continues to be significant today, even though only a fraction of its voters are Jewish. Rakah changed its name to Maki in 1989.

³² In a debate before the 2015 legislative elections, Ayman Oden, the head of the Joint Arab List and a leader of Al Jabha, publicly approached Aryeh Deri, the leader of the ultra-Orthodox Shas, to form 'an alliance of the oppressed' (Ben Elul 2015).

Attempts to create a meaningful '48 Palestinian national movement continued to be thwarted by the state. The establishment of Abna'a Al-Balad (Sons of the Village) after the 1973 War marked another important benchmark in the history of the Palestinian national movement in Israel. Abna'a Al-Balad advocated the formation of one secular democratic state in historical Palestine (Haklai 2011) and called to radicalise the Palestinian struggle in Israel by basing it on more confrontational strategies and tactics (Louer 2007). It considered '48 Palestinians to be integral to the Palestinian national movement and people (Louer 2007). Abna'a Al-Balad recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, including the '48 Palestinians. To this day, Abna'a Al-Balad refuses to run for the Knesset, arguing that participation serves to legitimise the Israeli state.

The lifting of the military rule in 1966 had a major impact on Palestinian political organising. The next two decades witnessed the rise of a vibrant nationwide student movement and the resurgence of Palestinian national sentiments, influenced by the renewed connection with Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza in the aftermath of the 1967 occupation (Rouhana 1989). The 1970s and 1980s were also formative in the development of Palestinian NGOs in Israel (PNGOs). Led by the DFPE, a number of important representative bodies were formed during this period, including the National Committee for the Defence of Arab Lands (NCDL), the High National Committee for the Heads of Arab Local Councils (NCALC), the Arab Student Union, the Union for Arab High School Students, and the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Affairs, considered to be the representative body of Palestinians in Israel (Payes 2005).³³

The NCDL and the High Follow-Up Committee took a leading role in extra-parliamentary activity and in the mobilisation of the Palestinians in Israel. The two bodies organised nationwide strikes to protest the confiscation of land, discrimination against the Palestinians in Israel, and the occupation (Rouhana 1989). A milestone event occurred on 30 March 1976. Led by the NCDL, thousands of '48 Palestinians took to the streets to

³³ The High Follow Up Committee includes all Arab mayors, all Arab members of the Knesset, and representatives of dominant extra-parliamentary political movements. The state still refuses to recognise the Follow-Up Committee as the representative of Palestinians in Israel. For more on the Committee, see Jadal (2012).

protest the planned expropriation of thousands of square kilometres of land in the Galilee. They defied a curfew imposed by the state on '48 Palestinian villages in an attempt to stifle the planned protest (Yiftachel 1991). The protests were met with state violence, including live ammunition. Six demonstrators were shot dead by police. The events became known as Land Day and are commemorated annually by Palestinians in Israel, in the occupied territories and in exile.

Scholars argue that following the occupation of Palestinian territories in 1967, Arabs in Israel underwent a process of Palestinianisation (Rouhana 1997). According to Rouhana, the 'Arabs' collective identity became fully Palestinianized by the early 1980s' (Rouhana 1989, 48). However, Palestinianisation was limited to the not-insignificant symbolic realm of identity politics. The slogan 'two people, two states' best captures the ideological underpinnings of Palestinian nationalism in Israel during this period. The common belief was that the establishment of a Palestinian state would result in civil equality and integration. During the first intifada³⁴, mobilisation by Palestinians in Israel was limited to humanitarian aid and campaigns to end the occupation. Shany Payes is correct to argue that 'despite the solidarity felt by Palestinians in Israel, the Intifada enhanced the distinctions between Palestinians in Israel and those in Gaza and the West Bank' (Payes 2005, 91). Palestinians in Israel have seemed to make peace with their status as citizens in a Jewish state, limiting their claims to liberal notions of civil equality.

This view would significantly change with the rise of the Palestinian liberal national movement during the 1990s, and in the aftermath of the October 2000 events and the second intifada (Bishara 2001)³⁵. With the outbreak of the second intifada, thousands of '48 Palestinian protesters took to the streets to join the widespread protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territories following Ariel Sharon's visit to Al-Aqsa Mosque. The police responded with unrestrained violence, including firing rubber bullets and live ammunition. Thirteen Palestinian protestors were shot dead in what became known as the

³⁴ The first Intifada refers to the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, which broke out in 1987 and ended with the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.

³⁵ The second Intifada, also known as the Al-Aqsa intifada refers to a Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories which broke out in 2000, following the visit of Ariel Sharon, then the head of the opposition to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. It followed the first intifada (1987–93).

October 2000 events. An official inquiry, the Or Commission, was formed to investigate. However, despite evidence presented by the human rights organisation Adalah, not a single indictment has been issued for the killing of the 13 protestors.

The October 2000 events were a turning point in the relations between the state and its Palestinian citizen-subjects (Waxman 2012; M. Al-Haj 2005). They transformed the ways in which '48 Palestinians perceive themselves in relation to the state, Israeli society, the Palestinian liberation movement and the Palestinian people. The illusion of inclusion, which dominated their engagement with the state and shaped their political vision and activism, was shattered. It became clear that the structural subjugation of '48 Palestinians is rooted in the racial ideology of the state. Citizenship seemed hollower than ever (Jamal 2007b). Not only did it fail to provide equality and justice, it also failed to provide basic protection for the lives of '48 Palestinians.

4. The Rise of Liberal Nationalism

It was not until the 1990s that Palestinians in Israel saw the rise of a significant and durable national political force. The National Democratic Assembly (NDA), also known as Al-Tajammu and Balad, was formed in 1996 by Azmi Bishara (who left the DFPE during the 1980s), together with former members of Abna' a Al-Balad and the Progressive List for Peace (PLP, a Palestinian national party that ran for the Knesset in the 1980s) who were dismayed by the failure of the Palestinian national movement to become a leading representative force among '48 Palestinians. The signing of the 1993 Oslo Accord left the '48 Palestinians outside of the Palestinian question, officially fortifying their position as an internal issue of the Jewish state. Articulating a political strategy and vision was an urgent task. This crisis provided a fruitful ground for the emergence of the NDA. The rise of the NDA, this chapter argues, marks the rise of '48 Palestinian nationalism as a *liberal* national movement – a development that should be understood in light of the global rise of minority rights regimes and liberal multiculturalism.

Responding to the challenges of the post-Oslo Accord era, the agenda of the NDA involved organising the Arabs in Israel as a national minority. Strengthening the Palestinian identity, the party contended, was necessary in light of decades-long efforts

by the state to create the Arab-Israeli as a dislocated and ahistorical subject. As Edward Said notes, ‘even the assertion of Palestinian identity therefore takes on the form of a political challenge’ (Said 1979b, 14). The NDA was critical of the DFPE for its exclusive focus on class and for its narrow negative conception of equality as the lack of discrimination (Bishara 1993). The NDA instead argued that demands should be made on a collective rather than individual level.

The idea of a Jewish and democratic state, the NDA further argued, is an oxymoron. No equality is possible without questioning the structure of the state as a Jewish state. The NDA demanded the transformation of the State of Israel from a Jewish state to ‘a state of all its citizens’ that would recognise the national collective rights of both ’48 Palestinians and Israeli-Jews (as opposed to world Jewry). Under this framework, Palestinians in Israel would be recognised as a national minority and would be entitled to cultural autonomy as specified in international law (Haklai 2011).

The NDA’s political program and ideology were inspired – and influenced – by the global rise of the minority rights regime and liberal multicultural ideology. The new rhetoric employed – and idealised – Western liberal multiculturalism and international law. In his writings, Bishara invokes the Quebecois model of autonomy in Canada, the examples of Belgium and Switzerland, and the experience of the Basques in Spain (though ignoring the experiences of indigenous peoples in Anglophone settler colonialism) to justify claims for cultural autonomy and recognition (Bishara 1993). As Louer elaborates, ‘Tajammu [NDA] activists, explaining their goal, frequently drew attention to such multicultural societies as those of Britain and the United States, where ethnic groups enjoy *de facto* recognition’ (Louer 2007, 83, emphasis in original).

Relying on liberal and universal claims, the NDA challenged Israel’s claims to be a liberal democracy – the very premise of Israel’s legitimacy in the West. By exposing Israel’s refusal of the liberal demand to transform itself into ‘a state of all its citizens’, the NDA revealed the paradoxes at the heart of Israel’s claim to be a Jewish and democratic state. In Bhabha terms, the discourse of the NDA has subversively destabilised Israel’s identification with Western liberalism by reversing the gaze and positioning the

Palestinians in Israel as the carriers of the true commitment to democratic and liberal values.

Compared with the other Arab political parties, the NDA has taken a more confrontational approach towards the state. Its resistance as subversion has been antagonistic. Like the national movements that preceded it – such as Al-Ard, Abna’ a Al-Balad, and the PLP – the NDA faces fierce state opposition and its leaders are the targets of political persecution. Since 1999, there have been four attempts to disqualify the party from running for the Knesset (1999, 2003, 2006 and 2009), with the Supreme Court overturning those actions. In addition, efforts were made to disqualify Azmi Bishara (2003) and Haneen Zoabi (2012, 2015) from running for the Knesset. In 2007, Bishara fled the country amid charges of treason and espionage.³⁶

4.1 The Prospects of Palestinian Parliamentary Activity

In recent years, attempts to exclude Palestinian parties from participating in the Israeli elections have intensified. Before the 2015 legislative elections, the Knesset raised the electoral threshold from 2% to 3.25% in an effort to prevent Palestinian parties from being elected (Lis 2014a). As a result, for the first time in the history of the Palestinians in Israel, Palestinian parties formed an alliance (not unity) and established the Arab Joint List, which ran in the 2015 elections. This has been an important historical juncture in ’48 Palestinian politics, amid decades of fragmented leadership (Jamal 2006). The Joint List – an alliance of the DFPE, the NDP, the United Arab List and Ta’al – is the third-largest party in the Israeli Knesset.

³⁶ In 1999, an appeal was made to the Supreme Court to disqualify Al-Tajammu (*Erlich v Central Election Committee*). In 2003, the Central Election Committee decided to disqualify Al-Tajammu from running as a party and to disqualify Azmi Bishara personally and Ahmad Tibi (Ta’al party) personally. The Supreme Court overturned these decisions (in accordance with the Basic Law, the Knesset demands Supreme Court approval for any decision by the Committee to disqualify a party or a person from running for election). In 2006, the Committee rejected a request to disqualify Al-Tajammu. In 2009, the Committee decided to disqualify the Al-Tajammu and Ta’al parties from running. The Supreme Court overturned these two decisions. In 2012, the Committee decided to disqualify Hanin Zoabi from running. The Supreme Court overturned this decision. In 2015, the Committee decided to disqualify Hanin Zoabi from running, rejecting a request to disqualify the Joint Party. The Supreme Court overturned this decision.

However, despite its significant electoral achievement, the party is marginalised, excluded and incited against. Arab MKs are seen as illegitimate and as a foreign element in the Knesset. Their presence in the Knesset, like their citizenship, is temporary, conditional, partial and vulnerable – an indulgence of the settler state. Recently, Palestinian MKs were accused by Jewish-Israeli MKs of being ‘agents of terror in the Knesset’ (Nahmias 2016), while the Prime Minister stated that ‘they don’t deserve to be MKs’ (quoted in Harkov 2016). Avi Dichter, a former head of the General Security Services and today an MK on behalf of the ruling Likud Party, contemplated ‘the merits of assassinating Mr Odeh [the head of the Joint List], before concluding it was not worth “wasting the ammunition”’ (Cook 2016).

The current political atmosphere is driving a serious debate among the Palestinians in Israel on whether they should continue to participate in the Israeli elections. Calls to boycott the elections and to transform the High Follow-Up Committee into a democratically elected representative body are gaining momentum. These calls have been prompted in light of Israel’s banning of the Islamic Movement Northern Branch (Ravid 2015) and its attempts to ban the NDP. Restrictions on Arab participation in the Knesset continue to be promoted. The Israeli government has recently approved a Bill that will enable the suspension of Arab MKs (Lis 2016). Passed on first reading, the Bill ‘grants powers to members of Knesset to suspend or depose serving MKs for political reasons’ (ACRI 2016). Under these conditions, the ability of Arab lawmakers to influence Israeli politics – let alone make significant achievements to benefit their constituency – is becoming even more limited.

The paradoxes that are at the heart of Palestinian parliamentary activity are best explained through an understanding of Israel as a liberal settler state (Robinson 2013) at the frontier stage of settlement (Wolfe 2013). As the history of ’48 Palestinian mobilisation shows, political movements have always been challenged, suppressed, restricted and surveilled by the state. However, paradoxically, participating in the Knesset has also provided some of the necessary conditions for Palestinian political organisation, and for the consolidation of the ’48 Palestinian national movement as a leading political force. The experiences of Al-Ard and Abna’a Al-Balad reveal the vulnerability inherent in operating outside Israeli parliamentary politics. At the same time, the history of participation in the

Knesset indicates a structural failure of parliamentary activity to secure equality, rights and basic protections.

5. Palestinian Civil Society in a Jewish State

The mushrooming of PNGOs in Israel has been shaped by local, regional and global processes (at both the state and minority levels). Hundreds of PNGOs were established during the 1980s, a surge similar to that of the Israeli NGO sector. It was a period that ‘saw the initial move to institutionalised and subject-specific’ PNGOs (Payes 2003, 69). Key to this growth was the 1980 Association Law, which eased the requirements to register as an NGO. As in other parts of the world, developing a third sector was part of the neoliberal turn (Peled 2005a). By engaging in service delivery, NGOs filled welfare roles previously performed by the state. These transformations did not bypass the Palestinian society in Israel, whose socio-economic disadvantage has worsened under Israel’s neoliberal policies.

Consequently, the 1980s saw the burgeoning of PNGOs dealing mainly with service provision and community development. Similar to other contexts in the Middle East, the Islamic movement in Israel flourished under conditions of economic neoliberal policies. Able to mobilise resources independently from state and Western sources, the movement became a major provider of social and welfare services across Arab towns and villages. It also became a major political force (see Louer 2007 on the rise of the Islamic movement in Israel).

Israeli and ’48 Palestinian civil societies are far from equal. Even though Palestinians in Israel are citizens of a developed state, the ratio of PNGOs per Palestinian citizen is 1:1000, compared with 1:192 for NGOs in the Jewish-Israeli society (Payes 2003). The former figure, argues Payes, resembles the average rate in the developing world. Payes argues that ‘exclusion has always been the underlying approach of the state towards Palestinian organizations’ (Payes 2003, 67). The Association Law was legislated with Arab organising in mind. It places significant power in the hands of the Registrar, who has the authority to approve or reject registrations. As a result, a significant number of Palestinian associations – including Al-Fanar and Mossawa – were denied registration and had to appeal (or threaten to appeal) to the courts in order to reverse the Registrar’s

decision. Furthermore, while Jewish NGOs receive significant state funding, PNGOs are denied similar support. Of the budget that the Ministry of Education allocates to NGOs, only 1% is delivered to PNGOs (Payes 2003, 69).

The Israeli third sector is a microcosm of the Israeli state. It is exclusionary, discriminatory and racist. Israeli civil society has been complicit with advancing Jewish privilege and deepening the socio-economic inequalities between the Jewish and Arab populations. Committed to promoting the rights and wellbeing of the Jewish population, and supported by the state and by Jewish philanthropy, Israeli civil society has helped to safeguard Jewish privilege. The philanthropy of world Jewry, estimated at over US\$2 billion per year (Blumenfeld 2012),³⁷ has served to deepen the socio-economic disparities between the Jewish and Arab populations. While PNGOs receive about US\$3 million per year from Jewish philanthropic bodies (Haklai 2008), this amount, alongside Western and Palestinian funding sources, remains a small fraction of the overall support that Israeli civil society enjoys. Furthermore, under a rhetoric of development, socio-economic empowerment, and developing the periphery, Jewish philanthropy and state funding of Jewish-Israeli NGOs have facilitated the Judaizing of the Galilee, the Naqab and mixed cities, as well as East Jerusalem and the West Bank (Blau 2015; Blau and Hasson 2016; Hasson 2010).

The relationship between the Palestinians in Israel and the progressive/liberal Israeli peace camp has been problematic, though in different ways. In the leftist-liberal Israeli circles, '48 Palestinians were treated with paternalism. They were viewed as subjects that needed to be protected from the discrimination of the state, and to be helped out of their backwardness. Ashkenazi-dominated groups sought to formulate the agenda of the Palestinian struggle in Israel as a liberal struggle for equality. Solidarity was thus racialised (Hooker 2009). Promoting the rights of Palestinian citizens was carried out alongside the normalisation of Jewish privilege and the entrenchment of Jewish sovereignty. Zionist-liberals sought to strengthen the democratic character of the state by promoting the equality of its Arab citizens without compromising the Jewishness of the state.

³⁷ This figure applies only to US donations. The overall number is estimated to be much higher (Blumenfeld 2012).

The work of the Association of Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), the oldest and largest civil rights organisation, on behalf of the Arabs in Israel exemplifies the ways in which solidarity and activism have been deeply racialised. ACRI was modelled on the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), an organisation that has been critiqued for its blindness to race. At the same time that ACRI petitioned the Israeli courts on behalf of Palestinians in Israel, it also petitioned for the recognition of same-sex partners by the Israeli military (ACRI 2009) and for the right of Israeli women to be combat pilots in the Israeli air force (NIF 2015). Under the liberal-colonial logic, the two are not contradictory. Instead, they are seen as part of the same agenda of promoting liberal notions of rights and equality for Arabs, gays, women and economically disadvantaged communities before the law. Following in the footsteps of the ACLU, ACRI supported, in the name of freedom of association, an application by extreme right-wing activists for permission to march in the '48 Palestinian village of Umm Al-Fahm. The activists were calling for the ethnic cleansing of the residents of the village (ACRI 2008; on the liberal blindness of Israeli courts in this case, see Triger 2009a). In its statement, ACRI explained:

Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democracy, and its most genuine test is in the facilitation of its most outrageous, extreme, and controversial forms. It is unacceptable to prohibit a demonstration because of fear of a violent reaction by those who oppose the demonstration; taking such a step would have dangerous implications. (ACRI 2008)

Being citizens of the Israeli state, '48 Palestinians are the casualties of liberal Zionist aspirations. They are expected to tolerate settler colonial violence in order to maintain the performance of liberal democracy.

5.1 The Liberalisation of Palestinian Civil Society

The experience of '48 Palestinians with – and working in – Israeli civil society organisations has led Palestinian leaders, intellectuals and activists to pursue the establishment of independent and autonomous '48 Palestinian civil society organisations. The global revival of civil society in the aftermath of the Cold War – together with the liberal celebration of NGOs as the magic bullet for development, empowerment and democratisation – resonated among the '48 Palestinian liberal national and intellectual elite, which was keen to enhance the minority's capacity for self-representation (Ghanem

2001). The creation of NGOs was seen by the Palestinian national movement in the 1990s as an opportunity to form national, autonomous and representative political and cultural institutions. To an extent, this goal was subversive. Investing in NGOs, it was argued, could help advance the recognition of '48 Palestinians as a national minority and could promote demands for cultural autonomy and power sharing.

Western investment in seeding civil societies globally provided opportunities and resources for the emergence of a new generation of PNGOs. The 2000s saw a wave of new PNGOs dealing with civil and human rights, land and planning rights, equal distribution of resources, women's rights and sexuality, education, knowledge production, cultural institutions, community development and empowerment, and capacity building – just to name a few (Payes 2005). This period saw the rise of some of the most prominent PNGOs, such as the Galilee Society, the Regional Council for Unrecognised Villages in the Negev, the Arab Center for Alternative Planning, Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, Mossawa – The Advocacy Centre for Arab Citizens in Israel, and the Arab Association for Human Rights. Think tanks such as Mada Al Carmel – The Arab Center for Applied Social Research, and Dirasat – The Arab Center for Law and Policy, were also established during this period. So were organisations that focus on reinforcing Arab and Palestinian culture and identity, such as the Arab Culture Association and Baladna, the Association for Arab Youth. In addition, feminist groups were formed, such as the Kayan Feminist Organisation, Muntada – The Arab Forum for Sexuality, Education and Health, Alnuhud: The Association for the Promotion of Bedouin Women's Education in the Negev, and Women against Violence. The queer groups Aswat: Palestinian Gay Women and Al-Qaws for Sexual & Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society also emerged during this time. The rise of PNGOs, argues Payes, has empowered the minority capacity for self-representation (Payes 2005). Amal Jamal goes so far as to argue that PNGOs have developed to play a counter-hegemonic role vis-à-vis the state (Jamal 2008a).

The disillusionment with parliamentary politics and a steady decline in Arab voter turnout – from 75% in 1999 to 56% in 2013 (Ben Solomon 2013)³⁸ – fostered the ascent of NGOs

³⁸ The number of Arab voters increased in 2015 with the forming of the Arab Joint List, reaching 63.5% (Ben Solomon 2015).

in the Palestinian struggle in Israel. Gradually, these organisations took a leading role in representing the Palestinian community both at the state level and internationally. Mastering the vocabulary of human rights, PNGOs grounded their demands for cultural autonomy and power sharing in international law. Their professionalisation and ‘apolitical’ character made them a credible source of information for diplomats, UN institutions and international organisations.

Political parties were largely sidelined, while PNGO activity was blooming. In 2005–06, PNGOs formulated and published what have become known as the Future Vision Documents. These documents specified the minority’s vision for state–minority relations and articulated the minority’s demands for principles of recognition, power sharing and distributive justice (Agbaria and Mustafa 2012; Jamal 2008b; Smooha 2009). The state responded by referring the matter to the General Security Service (GSS). Yuval Diskin, then head of the GSS, declared the documents to be ‘a strategic threat’ and reiterated the mandate of the GSS ‘to thwart the subversive activity of entities seeking to harm the character of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, even if their activity is conducted through democratic means, and this is by virtue of the principle of a “self-defending democracy”’ (quoted in Adalah 2007).

Arguably, the 1990s and early 2000s saw a process of NGO-isation of Palestinian resistance and a rise in professionalised forms of activism, such as monitoring and collecting data, producing reports, lobbying, litigating in courts, and advocating internationally. Influenced by the spirit of 1990s judicial activism in Israel and mimicking the practices of Israeli civil society organisations, Palestinian activists focused their efforts on the Israeli courts (Amara 2015; Jabareen 2010; Sallon 2009). Given the impasse in parliamentary activity, it was believed that advancing the equality and rights of Palestinians in Israel would best be pursued through the Israeli Supreme Court.³⁹

The overreliance on courts reinforced Israel’s image as a functioning liberal democracy, especially given the positive reputation of the Israeli Supreme Court internationally. It

³⁹ An exception is the work of the Arab Association for Human Rights (HRA). HRA refuses to engage in litigation and lobbying at the state level, instead working directly with the Palestinian community and advocating at the international level. Interview with Muhammad Zeidan, Director of HRA, 28 October 2013.

also extended the liberal discourse of multicultural recognition into an absurdity. Analysing Adalah and ACRI's joined petition to the Supreme Court against the 2011 Nakba Bill – which penalised local authorities and other state-funded bodies that mark the Nakba (Stoil 2011) – Haneen Naamnih demonstrates how legal activism has transformed the Nakba into a liberal question of freedom of speech and recognition. The Nakba was constructed as a site of contestation against which Israel's liberalism and democracy are measured (Naamnih 2013).

Despite their shortcomings, and amid growing disillusionment, PNGOs remain important actors in supporting the struggle of Palestinians in Israel – especially in light of the escalation in state violence. As Marlies Glasius and Armine Ishkanian (2015) show in their work on activism in Athens, Cairo, London and Yerevan, the relationship between NGOs and popular movements is far more complicated than appears. This is also the case for PNGOs. While PNGOs are not a mobilising or revolutionary force, they have an important function in supporting grassroots protest by providing technical support, monitoring and documenting human rights violations, and offering legal aid to protesters and to political parties and MKs.

6. Contemporary Palestinian Protest: A Challenge to Liberal Nationalism

Palestinian political discourse has been dominated thus far by liberal frameworks, some of which have been marked by classic liberal discourses of equality and civil rights, while others have been informed by multicultural frameworks of meaningful citizenship and recognition. Despite the differences between the two, both frameworks have centred citizenship as core to the Palestinian struggle. Recent years, however, have witnessed a new phase in Palestinian political discourse and mobilisation. This phase has been conceptualised by Nadim Rouhana and Areej Sabbagh-Khoury (2014) as a 'return of history'. It is characterised by a rising consciousness of the settler colonial condition and of the Nakba as a structure that continues to shape Palestinian lives (on the prominence of the discourse of the Nakba among the Palestinians in Israel, see also Rekhess 2014). Palestinians in Israel, Rouhana further argues, engage today in homeland nationalism, asserting historical Palestine as their homeland (Rouhana 2015, 2).

These developments, I argue, reflect a deeper process of challenging and rejecting the liberal rhetoric that has historically framed '48 Palestinian political discourse around liberal notions of recognition, inclusion and citizenship. New movements perceive these discourses as part of a politics that seeks to contain '48 Palestinian resistance within the logics and institutions of the liberal settler state and, in the process, normalise it. These movements see Israel as an illegitimate settler colonial enterprise. '48 Palestinians, it is argued, should not reform Israel (as articulated in the agenda of the DFPE) or transform it (as articulated in the agenda of the NDA). Instead, Israel is rejected *en bloc*. The focus is on decolonisation and the dismantling of the settler state. In other words, the new phase is indicative of a deeper transformation in the '48 Palestinian struggle, from liberal nationalism to a national political project that is articulated in anticolonial and antagonistic Fanonian sentiments.

New movements in grassroots '48 Palestinian activism have abandoned citizenship as an organising concept for Palestinian struggle and identity. For the very first time since 1948, citizenship is not seen as an opportunity structure (on citizenship as an opportunity structure, see Jamal 2007a). It is instead seen as a colonial construct and as a mechanism of taming, co-optation and containment. This reflects wider changes in attitudes towards citizenship. A poll among Palestinian in Israel indicates that 'only a small and declining minority feel that affiliation to Israeli citizenship, as compared to religion and Palestinian people, is their most important identity – dropping from 29.6% in 2003 to 12.2% in 2012' (Smooha 2013, 18).

Citizenship is thus perceived as a structure that ought to be transcended. In the words of Majd Kayyal, a Palestinian writer and activist, 'We, the Palestinians in Israel, are taking responsibility of our rights, our future and our self-determination ... not by the Israeli institutions but in the streets, not as Israeli citizens but as a united people beside [Palestinians in the] West Bank and Gaza' (quoted in Kestler-D'Amours 2013).⁴⁰ Contemporary protests are further guided by an anticolonial agenda that seeks to transgress colonial borders and the fragmentation of the Palestinian people. '48

⁴⁰ Similar sentiments were raised in my interviews with Yara Sa'adi (2012) and Lana Khaskia (2012).

Palestinian mobilisation is conceptualised as part of a larger Palestinian anticolonial movement, rather than as part of an Israeli movement against the occupation. Movements such as Hungry for Freedom (Nabulsi 2014), Revolt ('Thoury' in Arabic) and Al-Hirak Al-Shababi have made issues such as Palestinian political prisoners and the Palestinian right of return integral to the '48 Palestinian resistance. Similarly, the '48 Palestinian struggle for land rights has been framed as part of a broader struggle against the Israeli colonisation of Palestinian land in the whole of historical Palestine.

The Nakba, the right to the land, and the right of return are placed at the heart of the political discourse. Activists organise the annual March of Return to commemorate the Nakba day, asserting their commitment to the right of return (Rouhana 2015). These events are attended by tens of thousands of Palestinians, with the numbers increasing every year. In addition, a Return Youth Camp is organised annually, with Palestinian youths spending several days working to reconstruct destroyed Palestinian villages and learning about their history. Relatedly, descendants of the destroyed Palestinian village of Iqrith have defied state authority and returned to live in and rebuild the village (Esmeir 2014). Their action has come after the case of Iqrith has been litigated in the Israeli courts for decades, failing to deliver justice (Peled and Rouhana 2007). Iqrith, in particular, illuminates the new sensibilities of '48 Palestinian protest, its defiance of settler authority, and its assertion of native sovereignty.

The new movements, I suggest, have developed to reflect Fanonian sensibilities in their rejectionist and antagonistic spirit and in their mobilisation of rage as a cathartic, revolutionary and emancipatory force. The argument on the deployment of Fanonian rejectionist pedagogy of resistance will be further developed in the coming chapters.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the development of '48 Palestinian resistance. The trajectory of the Palestinian struggle in Israel illuminates the impasse and the contradictions that underpin native resistance to liberal settler colonialism. As has been shown, playing by the rules is bound to be marked by failure, while breaking the rules is met with oppression and violence. As Ahmad Sa'di pointedly argues, 'the Palestinians have been given the

right to participate in this system, however, without being allowed to challenge its fundamentals' (Sa'di 1996, 396–7). Nonetheless, despite Israel's repressive policies, '48 Palestinian resistance in its accommodative, subversive and antagonistic modalities challenges the fundamentals of the state. Even the basic liberal demand for equality is in defiance of the Israeli Zionist racial regime.

This chapter has argued that the political discourse and resistance of '48 Palestinians have been shaped in light of the structure of Israel as a liberal settler state. Drawing on the discussion in Chapter 1, this chapter has suggested that '48 Palestinian resistance has been marked by three political projects: the first is a reformative project that is grounded in a liberal demand for equality and civic inclusion. The second is transformative, based on demands for national recognition and the transformation of Israel from a Jewish state to a state of all its citizens. This project has been facilitated by the rise of the Palestinian national movement in Israel and of PNGOs during the 1990s. The third is an anti-colonial antagonistic project that refuses to recognise the settler state and instead seeks to dismantle it. It is a project of decolonising Palestine, not one of reforming or transforming Israel. '48 Palestinian politics in Israel is shaped by the contestation over these different projects and visions.

The next two parts of this thesis focus on the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land (Part II) and the Palestinian queer movement (Part III). These two case studies inform a broader understanding of the subjugation and resistance of Palestinians in Israel. They allow us to explore the racialised, ethnicised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial violence, to consider how these shape colonial subjectivities and modalities of resistance, and to identify the ways in which the transnational is imbricated within these processes.

Not least importantly, through the case studies of Palestinian Bedouin and queers, '48 Palestinian resistance is understood as diverse. The next chapters elaborate on whether, in what ways, and to what extent '48 Palestinian subaltern resistance fits within the typology of resistance presented in Chapters 1 and of 2 this thesis. The case studies reveal the multiple ways in which Palestinians in Israel conceptualise their identities, their citizenship and their relationship with the state. Through engaging with the transnational

discourses of indigenous and LGBT rights, the next chapters further unpack the ways in which Palestinian Bedouin and queers engage, employ, challenge and subvert – and are appropriated by – the liberal politics of human rights.

Finally, the Palestinian queer movement is a particularly informative case study. It allows us to expand our analysis of how the identification between Zionism and liberalism takes racialised, gendered and sexualised forms. As we will see, this affinity is reinforced through the intersections of settler racialisation regimes and the gendered and sexualised violence of orientalism, Islamophobia and imperialism, as they figure – and converge – between the local and the transnational.

PART II

The Burden of Culture in the Palestinian Bedouin Struggle for Land

Introduction to Part II

Part I of this thesis examined the development of Palestinian resistance in Israel. It argued that the Palestinian struggle has been embedded in liberal and multicultural political discourses, centred on notions of equality, inclusion, citizenship, minority rights and national recognition.

Part II of the thesis moves to explore the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights. It analyses the racialised and ethnic dimensions (and their gendering) of settler colonial violence and domination. This case study illuminates how the specific regimes of racialisation and the practices of ethnicisation to which Palestinian Bedouin are subjected inform particular modalities of resistance. By focusing on the ways in which culture and culturalisation figure simultaneously as a form of colonial violence and as a liberating force through the mobilisation of indigeneity, Part II contributes to unravelling the complex and ambivalent ways in which the Palestinian Bedouin respond to – and engage with – the liberalism that animates the liberal settler state and the liberal politics of indigenous rights.

More specifically, Part II is concerned with the place that culture and culturalisation occupy in shaping both colonial domination and Bedouin resistance to settler colonialism. To this end, Part II is divided into two chapters. Chapter 3, ‘Culturalisation as Dispossession’, explores the racial, ethnic and gendered dimensions of Zionist colonial domination, focusing on the dynamics between culturalisation and domination. It argues that the culturalisation of the Bedouin as a premodern nomad society has been invoked as a central mechanism to justify the dispossession of Bedouin land.

Chapter 4, 'Culturalisation as Emancipation', focuses on Bedouin resistance to settler colonialism and on the mobilisation of indigeneity as a central framework and discourse in the contemporary Bedouin struggle. The chapter explores the place that culture occupies in the transnational liberal-multicultural conception of indigeneity, and the ways in which it has informed the development of a culturalised discourse on Bedouin indigeneity. The juxtaposition of the two chapters helps to illuminate the ways in which state-led culturalisation of the Bedouin can intersect with a culturalised conception of indigeneity as a transnational human rights framework.

In recent years, indigeneity has become a salient discourse in the struggle of the Naqab Bedouin for land rights. Despite this prominence, very few studies have explored the development of the indigenous discourse among the Bedouin (see Abu-Saad and Amara 2012; Champagne 2012; HRW 2008; A. Kedar 2004; Meir, Roded and Ben-Israel 2016; NCF 2006; Roded and Tzfadia 2012; Stavenhagen and Amara 2012; Yiftachel 2010, 2012; Yiftachel, A. Kedar and Amara 2012; Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016; for studies that reject the recognition of the Bedouin as indigenous, see Frantzman, Yahel and Kark 2012; Yahel, Frantzman and Kark 2012). Furthermore, these studies have been confined to the application of international human rights law to the Bedouin case, debating whether the Naqab Bedouin qualify to be recognised as an indigenous population under international law.

Critical research on the Naqab Bedouin tends to employ a normative view of the human rights framework and the discourse of indigenous rights. It argues that indigenous rights empower the Naqab Bedouin by leveraging new opportunities and by providing an alternative framework for making claims. However, informed by a commitment to multiculturalism, these studies have overlooked how the transnational discourse and framework of indigeneity have also developed to be imbued in an essentialist conception of culture. Moreover, the focus of this scholarship on international indigenous rights law and liberal-multiculturalism has informed its complicity in the production of a culturalised and depoliticised discourse on Bedouin indigeneity. Despite good intentions,

the multicultural bias has led this body of work to look ‘for “culture” instead of sovereignty’ (Simpson 2014, 20).

To be clear, the thesis does not contest the recognition of the Bedouin as indigenous. Rather, it is troubled by the ways in which Bedouin culture and its authentic performance are increasingly forming the basis for the recognition of the Bedouin as indigenous and for making land claims. Against this background, Part II of the thesis makes an intervention in the existing literature on the Naqab Bedouin. It offers an original analysis by arguing that recognition of the Bedouin as indigenous has built on principles of cultural distinctiveness, non-dominance and the fetishisation of the indigenous as a premodern subject. The Naqab Bedouin, as a result, face the burden of repressive authenticity, which paradoxically intersects with the racialisation, culturalisation and ethnicisation practices of the state. Moving beyond international law, Chapter 4 of the thesis further engages with the ways in which the indigenous discourse and framework have been deployed, appropriated, subverted and reworked in the process of Bedouin resistance. It examines the ways in which Bedouin activists have been responding to and challenging their racialisation, culturalisation and ethnicisation, both at the state level and transnationally.

Methodologically, Part II of the thesis builds on ethnographic interviews with prominent Bedouin and non-Bedouin (’48 Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish) activists, academics and NGO professionals. The interviews inform an analysis of the different ways in which grassroots activists, NGOs and academics talk about Bedouin identity, struggle and indigeneity. They reveal the conflicting viewpoints from which the various actors perceive the indigenous discourse. Interviews with Bedouin grassroots activists and with residents of ‘unrecognised’ Bedouin villages have been particularly important in unpacking how culturalisation is experienced and responded to by the colonised themselves. I also draw on ethnographic participant observations. These have included joining solidarity delegations, visiting unrecognised villages, and taking part in protest activities. Textual resources – such as news items and NGO and UN reports, statements and press releases – are used to exemplify the multiple discourses and sites of culturalisation that the Naqab Bedouin face.

Chapter 3

Culturalisation as Dispossession

Introduction

Chapter 3 focuses on the racialised, ethnicised and gendered dimensions that shape the Zionist settler colonial violence to which the Naqab Bedouin are subjected.

Section 1 of the chapter provides a historical background to the Zionist colonisation of the Naqab. It argues that nearly seven decades into Israel's existence, the logic of elimination still guides state policies towards the Palestinian Bedouin. Consequently, Bedouin lives continue to be shaped by experiences of dispossession, displacement and de-development. Bedouin subjectivities, it is further suggested, have developed in light of state racialisation of the Bedouin as Arabs, their ethnicisation as Bedouin, and their erasure as Palestinians.

Sections 2 and 3 of the chapter focus on the interplay between culturalisation and dispossession, and between culturalisation and erasure. Section 2 argues that state-led culturalisation of the Bedouin has built on their production as a premodern and backward nomadic society in need of modernisation (understood in terms of resettlement). The 'women question' is invoked to indicate the backwardness of Bedouin society, and to justify the forced transfer of the Naqab Bedouin to state-planned townships through a discourse of liberating and empowering Bedouin women. Culturalisation, it is further suggested, is not only an exercise of symbolic, discursive and epistemic violence; it is also embroiled in the pursuit of land as a central commodity.

Section 3 concludes the chapter by examining the role that Bedouin culture has played in the making of the Israeli-settler national identity. More specifically, it explores the ways in which Bedouin culture has been reconfigured by the Israeli settler state in the

development of Bedouin ethnic tourism. It argues that Bedouin culture is located at the centre of settler ambivalence – at once desired, mimicked and appropriated, and also rejected, derided and erased.

1. Historical Background: Settler Colonialism and the Naqab Bedouin

No other imperial or colonial rule has had as devastating an impact on the Bedouin population in the Naqab as has the Zionist settler colonial project (Falah 1985; Goering 1979). Living for over four centuries under foreign Ottoman rule, followed by the British Mandate, the Bedouin population enjoyed relative autonomy and self-governance (Amara and Miller 2012).⁴¹ Though colonised, their belonging and rights to the land were not denied (Falah 1985; Goering 1979; Shamir 1996) and their local cultures, economies and indigenous forms of justice and customary law were also relatively acknowledged and respected (Jones 1975; Nasasra 2011).

The Zionist colonisation of Palestine would dramatically transform Bedouin existence and life in the Naqab. As it has for other settler colonial projects, land has been a desired commodity for the Zionist settler project (Wolfe 2007). From the early days of Zionism, the Naqab was signified as one of the most important settler frontiers. In a letter to his son written in 1937, David Ben Gurion wrote:

Negev land is reserved for Jewish citizens, whenever and where ever they want ... we must expel Arabs and take their places ... and if we have to use force, then we have force at our disposal not in order to dispossess the Arabs of the Negev, and transfer them, but in order to guarantee our own right to settle in those places. (David Ben Gurion in a letter to his son, Amos, 5 October 1937, quoted in Zuabi 2012)

Following the 1948 War, the Naqab was cleansed of the majority of its Palestinian Bedouin inhabitants. ‘From the indigenous, majority population of the Negev Desert prior to 1948, they became fringe dwellers of a growing, modernizing Beer Sheva metropolitan region’ (I. Abu-Saad, Lithwick and K. Abu-Saad 2004, 14). In 1947, the Naqab was home to between 75,000 and 90,000 Bedouin belonging to 95 tribes. The 1948 War constituted

⁴¹ For more on Bedouin life under the Ottoman and British rule, see Nasasra 2015a.

a rupture in the lives of the Naqab Bedouin (Falah 1985). They were dispossessed of their land, their native economies were destroyed, and their communities were shattered. About 85% of the Naqab Bedouin population were expelled; most became refugees in Jordan, Egypt, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Only 11,000 Bedouin belonging to 19 tribes remained in the Naqab. Bedouin land was confiscated, and 11 of the 19 tribes were forcibly transferred from the fertile southern and western lands of the Naqab to a closed and restricted area in the north-east, joining the eight remaining tribes (Falah 1985). This area, known in Hebrew as the Siyag (ghetto), constituted only 10% of the land originally inhabited by the Naqab Bedouin.

Like the rest of the Palestinian population who remained in Israel, the Naqab Bedouin were placed under military rule until 1966. However, state policies towards the Bedouin community(ies) took a harsher and more brutal form. As Sabri Jiryis has noted, ‘more than any other group, the Negev Bedouin suffered the full and unrestrained harness of military rule’ (Jiryis 1976, 122). The Naqab Bedouin faced severe restrictions on their freedom of movement and were governed by a colonial regime of permits (Robinson 2013). Furthermore, the expulsion of the Bedouin population from the Naqab continued for a decade after the establishment of Israel. According to a UN report, 7,000 Bedouin – half of whom belonged to the Azazme tribe – were expelled from the Naqab in 1953 (Jones 1975, 218). Expulsion beyond state borders stopped only in 1959, following an intervention by the United Nations (Jiryis 1976; Jones 1975).

Since the 1960s, the state has pursued an aggressive campaign to resettle the remaining Bedouin population in state-planned (semi-urban) townships – the Zionist equivalent of the reservation model. Ismael Abu-Saad has termed this process forced-urbanisation (Abu-Saad 2008a; 2008b; I. Abu-Saad, Lithwick and K. Abu-Saad 2004). These strategies resembled and were parallel in their development to the policies of forced urbanisation to which indigenous people in Canada and the United States were subjected (Abu-Saad 2008a; Champagne 2012). Between 1968 and 1990, seven state-planned townships⁴² were built with the aim of concentrating the Naqab Bedouin on as little land

⁴² The seven towns are Tal a Sabi’ (established in 1968); Rahat (1972); Ara’ra Al-Naqab (1981); Kseife (1982); Shaqeb A-Salaam (1984); Hura (1989); and Laqiya (1990): Abu-Saad and Creamer 2012.

as possible. Like reservations in other places, the townships became the most distressed towns in Israel, suffering the highest rates of poverty and unemployment (Abu-Saad 2008a).⁴³

Almost seven decades after the establishment of the state, the Naqab remains one of the most significant internal settlement frontiers within the Green Line. Bedouin existence in the Naqab is viewed as a threat to Jewish sovereignty and territorial integrity. The mission of Judaizing the Naqab and the view of the Naqab as ‘a giant desert’ that ‘is waiting to bloom’ (Margalit 2013) still guide state policies towards the Bedouin population. As Israel’s current Minister of Defence, Avigdor Lieberman, has stated, ‘nothing has changed since the Tower and Stockade days [the 1920s–30s mandate period of Zionist settlement]. We are fighting for the lands of the Jewish people and there are those who intentionally try to rob and seize them’ (quoted in Weiss 2013). Israel’s Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, further echoed this sentiment during a governmental meeting, asserting that ‘the goal of this historical decision is to end the reality of the last 65 years in which the state has lost its control over the Negev lands’ (quoted in Eidelman et al 2013, my translation from Hebrew). Similarly, Doron Almog, the former head of the Prime Minister’s special office for the implementation of the Praver-Begin Plan, has claimed:

The Bedouins who object to the [resettlement] plan believe that every tin shack needs to be fought over, not in order to preserve the Bedouin society, but in order to ensure territorial sequence between Hebron and Gaza. (Quoted in Ben-Amos 2013, my translation from Hebrew)

Bedouin citizenship has thus been structured as inferior (Swirski and Hasson 2006, 5), transparent (Swirski 2008, 25), partial and vulnerable (Algazi 2010, 234). The state remains occupied with ‘solving’ the ‘Bedouin problem’, as addressed in the official state discourse (Abu-Saad 2008a).⁴⁴ Between August 1996 and August 1999, seven ministerial and inter-ministerial committees were formed to find a ‘solution’ to the problem (Amara 2013). In 2005, the government endorsed the 2015 Negev Development Plan. It has since

⁴³ According to Israel’s socio-economic index ranking of local authorities, the townships occupy the lowest level in the country (for more statistics, see I. Abu-Saad, Lithwick and K. Abu-Saad 2004, 21–31, 98–108). See also Swirski 2007.

⁴⁴ The treatment of indigenous people as a problem that needs to be solved is not unique to Israel. See, for example, Sarah Maddison (2009) on Australia’s treatment of Aboriginals.

formed the Goldberg Committee (2007), adopted the Praver Plan (2011), approved the Begin recommendations and the amended Praver Bill (2013), scrapped the Praver Bill (2013) and approved Shamir's proposal (2014). The Minister of Agriculture, Uri Ariel of the Jewish Home party, has now been handed the Bedouin portfolio (Lewis 2015).

The Bedouin population is the *only* population in Israel that is governed and managed by special agencies and bodies. These agencies include the Bedouin Authority, the Green Petrol, the Bedouin Education Authority and, most recently, the notorious Yoav Unit, which was formed to manage the affairs of the Bedouin population and implement state plans for the transfer of the Naqab Bedouin into townships (Abu Saad and Creamer 2012; Swirski 2008). The agencies operate 'independently of and largely in isolation from other government bodies' (Swirski 2008, 36), 'setting [the Naqab Bedouin] apart from the rest of Israeli citizenry' and also from the rest of the Arab population in Israel (Swirski 2008, 25). Israel, like other colonial powers, has worked to divide the 'native population into two: race and ethnicities' in the exercise of indirect rule (Mamdani 2001, 654). Since its inception, the state has racialised the Bedouin as Arabs, ethnicised them as Bedouin, and erased them as Palestinians, seeking to widen the divide between the Bedouin population and the rest of the Arab population (see Jakubowska 1992; Stavenhagen and Amara 2012; Yonah, Abu-Saad and Kaplan 2004 on the ethnicisation of the Naqab Bedouin).

The state has also invested in the production of the Naqab Bedouin as a loyal population – as good Arabs who serve in the Israeli army (even though the number of Naqab Bedouin in the army is minimal, estimated as 280 in 2016) (Abu Kweder 2016). This has increased the animosity between the Bedouin population and the rest of the Palestinian population in Israel. Policies of divide and rule were also applied to the Bedouin community itself, using the tribal structure of Bedouin society to deepen tribal rivalries and 'weaken opposition' (Yiftachel 2009, 252).

Today, about 230,000 Bedouin reside in the Naqab (NCF 2016), constituting 33% of its overall population (Amara and Miller 2012). They live on no more than 3% of its lands (R. Abu-Rabia 2013). Despite decades of state harassment – including the demolition of houses, the annihilation of entire villages, the destruction of crops, the confiscation of

flocks, and the state's refusal to deliver basic services – only about 70% of the Bedouin population have transferred to the townships. The rest of the Bedouin population continue to live in about 40 villages (NCF website),⁴⁵ which have come to be known as the 'unrecognised' villages. Some of these villages are still on their original ancestral land. Others are on land to which Bedouin tribes were forcibly transferred by the state after being expelled from their own land.

Considered illegal under Israeli law, the 'unrecognised' villages consist of tin and wooden shacks or tents, along with some stone houses. They are deprived of basic services, such as access to water and electricity, health services, sanitary services, paved roads, public transportation and schools.⁴⁶ The Naqab Bedouin today claim today about 5%, or 800,000 dunams,⁴⁷ of the Naqab's land – a fraction of what they once owned (Nasasra 2015a). According to the state's plans, the Naqab Bedouin are to be dispossessed of the 800,000 dunams of land, the unrecognised villages are to be demolished, and about 70,000 people are to be displaced and transferred to the seven townships. New Jewish settlements and military bases are planned for the land now inhabited and owned by the Bedouin (Reuters 2013; Reed 2013; Roth 2015).

1.1 Orderly Dispossession: Israeli Law as a Settler Colonial Frontier

Before 1948, Zionist agencies and individuals secured land in the Naqab by purchasing it from its Palestinian Bedouin owners. With the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, Zionism was no longer required to secure Bedouin land in this way. Over the next several years, land was colonised through a combination of military power, colonial law and the exertion of state sovereignty (Algazi 2013). Instead of buying land from its Bedouin

⁴⁵ For a full list, see the NCF website at <http://www.dukium.org/transcription/>, accessed 18 August 2016.

⁴⁶ In 1999, the state recognised 11 Bedouin villages. Ten of these villages are still not connected to electricity and none are connected to water and sewerage services. Basic infrastructure (such as roads) has not been developed, and municipal plans are yet to be formulated, resulting in the continued criminalisation of the Bedouin population and mass home demolitions. Recognition alone, therefore, has not improved the daily lives of the Naqab Bedouin. The state is still guided by de-development policies and it continues to make the lives of the Naqab Bedouin unbearable. See NCF report (2015).

⁴⁷ Dunam is an Ottoman unit for the measurement of land, commonly used in Israel/Palestine. One dunam equals 1,000 square metres, or about one-quarter of an acre.

owners, the state would seize Bedouin land in the Naqab and transfer its ownership to the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and later to the Israel Land Administration (ILA).

Under Ottoman and British legislation, the Naqab Bedouin were able to claim ownership of the land, particularly by proving that it had been cultivated by them. Both the Ottomans and the British acknowledged and respected Bedouin regimes of property ownership, even though they sought the regulation of land ownership through registration and the introduction of modern property regimes in Palestine. It is important to note that by the end of the Ottoman rule, only 5% of the land was officially registered, with Bedouin land in the Naqab remaining unregistered (Amara 2013).

The British Mandate, therefore, sought to accomplish the orderly registration of the land in Palestine. A significant hindrance to this task was the failure of the British to establish the relevant offices that would handle systematic registration. Consequently, the British efforts to register the land, having begun in the north in Palestine, had not reached the Naqab by the time the State of Israel was established (Yiftachel, A. Kedar and Amara 2012). Nonetheless, during the British Mandate, the Naqab Bedouin employed a mixture of tribal property regimes alongside Western property regimes. They often registered their land when it was sold and purchased, but the vast majority of Bedouin land remained unregistered.

The Israeli settler state, like other settler polities, endorsed a mimetic Western regime of private property, based on the negation of indigenous property systems and customary law (Blomley 2003). The fact that the majority of Bedouin land was not registered made the Bedouin, who were already perceived as savage nomads, particularly vulnerable to land confiscation by the Israeli state. The state ignored the legacy of Ottoman and British recognition of particular dimensions of tribal property regimes and native land title (though both the Ottomans and the British instilled law provisions that aimed to increase their hold of public lands, and registration aimed to facilitate these efforts).

Israel also systematically ignored – and still ignores – the fact that the British never completed the registration of Bedouin land in the Naqab. Instead, Israel used this gap to

exercise a manipulative interpretation of the 1858 Ottoman Land Code and the 1921 *Mawat* Land Ordinance (*Mawat* is, literally, ‘dead lands’ or ‘wasteland’ – the Israeli version of the Australian terra nullius). Through forcibly transferring the Bedouin from their land and preventing them from cultivating it, the state declared a significant portion of land owned by the remaining Bedouin in the Naqab as *Mawat*, effectively rendering the land as public land and hence Jewish and state land (Amara 2013; Yiftachel, A. Kedar and Amara 2012).

Bedouin land was colonised through a sophisticated colonial legal system, based on a mixture of colonial law inherited from the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate (as mentioned above), and the enactment of new laws by the Israeli government that enabled the confiscation of Palestinian property (see, for example, the 1950 Absentee Property Law and the 1953 Land Acquisition Law) (Amara 2013). The expropriated land was classified as state and Jewish land and administered by the Israel Land Authority (ILA) and the Jewish National Fund (JNF), respectively.

During the 1970s – shortly after the end of the military rule – the state declared the northern part of the Naqab an area subject to land settlement. As a result, the Naqab Bedouin filed 3,220 land claims relating to the ownership of more than 900,000 dunams. In 1975, the state formed the Albeck Committee. The Committee was mandated to make recommendations on the status of the Naqab land (Amara 2008, 2013; Swirski 2008). The Committee made the legal case for considering Bedouin lands as *mawat*, basing its recommendations on the 1858 Ottoman Land Code and the 1921 British *Mawat* Land Ordinance – though Bedouin title had been recognised by both of those laws (see Kram 2012; Mihlar 2011; Yiftachel, A. Kedar and Amara 2012).

The hope that Israeli courts would deliver justice was shattered with the 1984 Supreme Court verdict in the Al-Hawashleh case. In that case, the Bedouin-Hawashleh tribe challenged the confiscation of their land in order to build the Jewish settlement of Dimona. As Shlomo Swirski points out, the ruling ‘brought to a definitive end the possibility of state recognition of Bedouin habitation on the Siyag lands’ (Swirski 2008, 33). The Supreme Court confirmed the position of the executive and legislative branches,

solidifying in the judiciary the colonial narrative of the Bedouin as nomads and the doctrine of the ‘dead Negev’ (A. Kedar 2016).

The narrative of nomadism produced the Naqab Bedouin as ‘invisible to the law’ and as ‘movable objects – a property that allows the state to freely move them in space’ (Shamir 1996, 237). In the thousands of land rights cases brought by the Naqab Bedouin, the Israeli courts have consistently ignored the ways in which the state has compelled the Bedouin population to be ‘nomads against their will’ (Bishara and Naamnih 2011). They have overlooked decades of state policies of forcibly transferring the Bedouin population from one area of the Naqab to another in the effort to prevent them from acquiring rights to the land (see Pfeffer 2014).⁴⁸

In 2004, the state began to submit counterclaims against the Naqab Bedouin, insisting that they had settled on state land. While only 12% of the claims filed by the Naqab Bedouin have been settled (Amara 2013), the courts have been swift in dealing with the counterclaims. So far, hundreds of cases have been decided – and in 100% of those cases the court has ruled in favour of the state, dispossessing the Bedouin of more land (Yiftachel, A. Kedar and Amara 2012). In Israel – as in other liberal settler colonial contexts – the law has functioned as a settler colonial frontier, a vehicle in the spatial and demographic rearrangement of the Naqab (Evans 2009). As further argued by Alexandre Kedar:

... settlers’ law and courts attribute to the new land system an aura of necessity and naturalness that protects the new status quo and prevents future redistribution. Formalistic legal tools play a meaningful role in such legitimization. Courts apply ‘linguistic semantics, rhetorical strategies and other devices’ to disenfranchise Indigenous peoples. (A. Kedar 2003, 415)

By requiring the Naqab Bedouin to submit claims for land ownership, and at the same time instituting legal methods of denying them land ownership in the Naqab, the liberal

⁴⁸ In 1972, Sharon ordered the expulsion of 3,000 Bedouin. It is worth noting that, for a brief period, Moshe Dayan pursued a policy of transferring Bedouin communities from the Naqab into ‘mixed’ cities. Four thousand Bedouin were transferred to Lod and Ramla. However, this policy was always marginal and it was quickly abandoned in favour of the township/urbanisation model. See Yiftachel 2003, 35.

settler state has sought to produce dispossession as a neutral and apolitical act of law and order.

1.2 Colonisation as De-Development

Historically, the Bedouin economy and Bedouin livelihoods have relied on land for agriculture and animal husbandry. As part of Israel's pursuit of Bedouin land, Bedouin local economies were targeted by the state (Marx 2000; Falah 1989b; Dinero 1996). During the military rule, the Naqab Bedouin were prevented from cultivating their land. They were thereby unable to sustain their economy and secure their ownership rights under colonial law. Additionally, The Naqab Bedouin were denied access to the Israeli job market, due to a fear that cheap (and more efficient) Bedouin labour would replace Jewish labour. Until 1958, only 3.5% of Bedouin male residents were given permits to work outside the Siyag area (Robinson 2013, 39). This amounted to fewer than one hundred individual permits. By 1962, the figure had risen only to 13% (Goering 1979).

Israel's attempts to destroy the Bedouin economy continued after the military rule had ended. A special statute – the 'black goat' law – came into force in 1977, forbidding 'the grazing of goats in most parts of the Negev because they are presumed to cause ecological damage' (Ginguld, Perevolotsky and Ungar 1997, 572). Harassment, fines and confiscation of livestock led eventually to the erasure of the livestock economy. In the early 2000s, the state also began ploughing tens of thousands of dunams of cultivated land annually (Adalah website; HRA 2004; Silverstein 2015; Yoaz 2005).⁴⁹

The loss of land has led to the proletarianisation of the Naqab Bedouin and their transformation from landowners and self-sufficient producers into cheap labour for the Jewish economy (Swirski and Hasson 2006). The new townships have only furthered the

⁴⁹ In 2002, the ILA began the aerial spraying of Bedouin fields with the herbicide Roundup (a banned material) in order to destroy Bedouin crops. In 2004, Adalah petitioned the Israeli Supreme Court to stop the aerial spraying of Bedouin cultivated land, arguing that 'the spraying of crops endangers the life and health of human beings and animals, as well as their environment'. In 2007, the Court prohibited the ILA from spraying Bedouin crops. However, this verdict was a short-lived victory. The state instead began ploughing fields cultivated by the Naqab Bedouin, as well as fields used for grazing livestock. See the Adalah website at <http://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/6646>, last accessed 18 August 2016.

economic marginality of the Naqab Bedouin. No land was allocated for cultivation and livestock. At the same time, the state did not develop alternative economic infrastructure to serve the Bedouin residents of the townships. This has resulted in chronic conditions of unemployment, poverty, impoverishment and de-development (Abu-Bader and Gottlieb 2008, 2009; A. Abu-Rabia 2000).⁵⁰

The destruction of the self-sufficient Bedouin economy has also had devastating gendered outcomes. The confiscation of lands, according to Nora Gottlieb, ‘has led to rapid socioeconomic transition and loss of livelihoods. This has stripped Bedouin-Arab women of their previous productive roles in herding and agriculture, and thus also of their economic powers’ (Gottlieb 2008, 53; see also Al-Krenawi and Graham 2004; Degen 2003). Bedouin women ‘became unemployed in their own domestic sphere’ (Abu-Rabia-Queder 2007, 73), with their role ‘largely restricted to the fulfilment of responsibilities in the household, as a mother and caretaker of the family’s well-being’ (Gottlieb 2008, 53–4). This has resulted in the entrenchment of patriarchy and the undermining of women’s power and agency within their communities (Abu-Rabia-Queder 2006; Gottlieb 2008; Karplus and Meir 2015; Meir 1997). Moreover, the state fails to fulfil its obligation to ensure access to education for Bedouin girls (R. Abu-Rabia 2015), at the same time arguing that it is the Bedouin patriarchal culture that denies them this right (Abu-Rabia-Queder 2006). With the Naqab Bedouin dispossessed of their land, Bedouin girls and women have found themselves simultaneously deprived of an education and excluded from their social-economic communal roles.

⁵⁰ According to Abu-Bader and Gottlieb: ‘Most Bedouin-Arab men work in the Jewish labor market. In 2004, about 55% of the employed Bedouin-Arab males were working in a Jewish town, mostly in the same region where they live ... Among these, 80.3% were employed in the low-tech sector with low-paying jobs: 21% worked in transportation, 9% in construction services and 22% in other non-professional jobs (the remainder worked in low-paying professional jobs). Less than 40% of employed men work in the same village where they live or in a nearby Bedouin-Arab village. As in the case of females, most locally employed males work in the education sector, while a small fraction of them work in jobs provided by local councils.’ (Abu-Bader and Gottlieb 2008, 133).

2. Culturalisation and Dispossession: Settler Modernity and Its Bedouin Other

Dispossessing the Naqab Bedouin of their land has taken a different form and a different logic from the confiscation of land in the rest of Palestine, where private ownership of land was recognised – though not respected. In the case of the Naqab, the state has systematically refused to recognise Bedouin ownership of the land.⁵¹ So far, the state has been persistent in its claims that the Naqab Bedouin are a nomadic population that has no history in or rights to the land. Nomadism has been produced as ‘an essentialist ahistorical category’ (Shamir 1996, 236) and a paramount discourse in the justification and advancement of Zionist colonisation of the Naqab. As Ronen Shamir argues:

One aspect of this official story emphasizes the emptiness of Al Naqab, while another aspect discovers the Bedouin nomads as part of nature. Both aspects ultimately converge into a single trajectory: an empty space that awaits Jewish liberation, and a nomadic culture that awaits civilization. (Shamir 1996, 236)

The different treatment of the Naqab Bedouin is neither coincidental nor arbitrary. Rather, it speaks to the particular racial logic that underpins Zionist/Israeli governance of Bedouin life, history and identities.

So far, the vast majority of critical scholarship on the Naqab Bedouin has tended to focus on the inheritance of Ottoman and British land laws and Israeli colonial laws to explain land dispossession. Scholars have shown how Israel manipulated the interpretation of Ottoman and British law to produce the Naqab as an empty land (see, for example, Amara 2013; Kram 2012; A. Kedar and Yiftachel 2006; Yiftachel, A. Kedar and Amara 2012). Little attention has been given to the role that culturalisation has played in justifying land dispossession and settler violence. An exception is a pioneering article by Shamir that examines how colonial law reconfigures time and space through the narrative of Bedouin nomadism (Shamir 1996). While the law is a central mechanism in what Povinelli conceptualises as the governance of the prior (Povinelli 2011; see Naamneh 2016 in the

⁵¹ The only cases in which the state did recognise Bedouin ownership rights were those in which members of the Bedouin community sold land to Zionist individuals or institutions before the establishment of the state.

context of Palestine), the focus on colonial law alone, I suggest, misses the particular racialising logics that shape the state's differential treatment of the Bedouin population.

Building on Chapter 1 of this thesis, I move beyond legal explanations and argue that state/Zionist culturalisation of the Naqab Bedouin as rootless premodern nomads has been the most significant colonial mechanism in the exercise of internal colonialism and the governance of the Bedouin native population. The cultural, social and economic distinctiveness of the Naqab Bedouin has been invoked by the state to produce them as ontologically distinct from the rest of the Palestinian population and epistemologically distinct from the Zionist settlers. The law has been a mechanism for translating the culturalisation of the Bedouin natives into a legal narrative – and infrastructure – that facilitates the orderly dispossession of land.

Like other indigenous groups, the Naqab Bedouin are produced as antithetical to modernity, 'in a different temporal zone' (P. J. Deloria 1998, 106). Bedouin settlement on their own land has been represented as a result of premodernity. Therefore, their transfer to state-planned townships has been justified through a discourse of modernising and civilising the natives. Land dispossession has thus been translated into a project of urbanisation that was designed to serve two goals. First, the state has aimed to facilitate the appropriation of the remaining Bedouin land. Second, perceiving Bedouin culture as a threat to state/Jewish sovereignty in the Naqab, the state has sought through urbanisation to erase Bedouin culture in a process of 'de-Bedouinisation' (Dinero 2012, 495). As Moshe Dayan, a prominent military and political figure in the history of Israel, famously stated:

We should transform the Bedouins into an urban proletariat – in industry, services, construction, and agriculture. 88% of the Israeli population are not farmers, let the Bedouins be like them. Indeed, this will be a radical move which means that the Bedouin would not live on his land with his herds, but would become an urban person who comes home in the afternoon and puts his slippers on. His children would be accustomed to a father who wears trousers, does not carry a Shabaria [the traditional Bedouin knife] and does not search for vermin in public. The children would go to school with their hair properly combed. This would be a revolution, but it may be fixed within two generations. Without coercion but with governmental direction ... this phenomenon of the Bedouins will disappear. (Quoted in Shamir 1996, 231)

Fifty years after this statement, modernising (read as urbanising) the Naqab Bedouin continues to dominate the state's approach. In the words of Moshe Arens, former Minister of Defence, 'only a process of Westernization, or in this case Israelization, can bring normality to Bedouin society' (Arens 2013a).

'Cultural talk' (Mamdani 2004) is implored to explain political contention between the Naqab Bedouin and the state in terms of cultural difference. Culturalisation, Brown argues, builds on the logic of "'we" have culture while culture has "them"; or we have culture while they are a culture' (Brown 2006, 151). It differentiates between 'us' (modern, civil) and 'them' (premodern, uncivil). Culturalisation of the Bedouin population is expressed in their treatment *as* a culture represented in pathological and racialised terms. As Moshe Shochat, the head of the Bedouin Education Authority, stated in an interview:

Blood-thirsty Bedouins who commit polygamy, have 30 children and continue to expand their illegal settlements, taking over state land ... In their culture they take care of their needs outdoors. They don't even know how to flush a toilet. (Quoted in Abu-Saad 2008a)

The refusal of the Naqab Bedouin to willingly urbanise is used by the state to portray them as an 'unruly' society guided by an irrational desire to 'remain backward by choice'. 'Savageness' and 'wildness' are invoked as indicators of Bedouin racial inferiority. The existence of the native Bedouin on their own land is stripped of its historical and political terms and is presented instead in a vocabulary of criminality. These discourses are then used to justify the production of the Naqab Bedouin as a population governed by lawlessness that ought to be controlled and tamed. As Havatzelet Yahel, the department director and head of the Land Title Settlement Unit in the Negev, stated:

Many residents of the Negev sometimes feel that they live on a different planet from the rest of Israel. No wonder it is sometimes referred to as the 'Wild South'. The 'wildness' is manifest above all in the illegal construction and the invasion of state lands by some Bedouin ...

... In other words, thousands of Bedouin are breaking the law. (Yahel 2006, 4–5)

The culturalisation of the settler–native relationship is part of a larger project marked by the 'politics of distraction' that renders the politics of land dispossession invisible (Smith

2003). Hubert Law-Yone argues that ‘there is perhaps no sector in society in Israel in which the clash of cultures has been as profound as in Bedouin society subjected to Zionist planning’ (Law-Yone 2003, 179). Mordechai Kedar goes so far as to suggest that:

... the truth of the matter is that the problem is not only an issue of the land and the Bedouins’ illegal settlement on state lands, but is both wider and deeper. Wider – because there are still serious problems between the state and the Bedouins, and deeper – because all of these differences stem from the tremendous gaps between the Bedouin culture and a state culture. (M. Kedar 2013)

The culturalisation of the Naqab Bedouin has strong gendered dimensions (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012; Shalhoub-Kevorkian et al 2014). Bedouin women are located at the centre of settler ambivalence. They are represented at once as a menace and as a vulnerable population in need of saving. On the one hand, the Bedouin birth rate is the highest in the country and one of the highest in the world. Thus, in their reproductive roles, Bedouin women pose a threat to Jewish sovereignty and to Jewish demographic superiority. At the same time, they are seen as victims of Bedouin-Arab-Muslim men. Tapping into orientalist discourse, the saving of Bedouin women is invoked to justify state interventionist policies and to advance state plans of forced urbanisation and displacement. Doron Almog, who was formerly in charge of implementing the Prawer-Begin Plan, has argued that the plan would benefit ‘many Bedouin women [who] are tired of oppression and of being the third and fourth wife. The young and the women want education, employment, progress and modern settlements’ (Karov 2013, my translation from Hebrew).

The gendered dimensions of culturalisation should further be understood in the invocation of polygamy, by the state, as a cultural category. Polygamy has been used in recent years (by the state, by liberal Zionists and by some non-Bedouin Palestinians) as a signifier of the poor condition of Bedouin women’s rights and the backwardness of Bedouin society. It is estimated that polygamy exists in more than 33% of Bedouin households (Dinero 2012) and that the numbers are on the rise (Deniro 2012). Racist concerns with the high Bedouin birth rate have led the state to declare war on polygamy. As stated by Mordechai Kedar, ‘the Bedouin problem is not land but polygamy’ (M. Kedar 2013). Former Agriculture Minister Yair Shamir, who was also the head of the ministerial committee on Bedouin resettlement arrangements, declared that Israel should

‘deal with the phenomenon of multiple wives to reduce the birthrate and raise the standard of living’, adding that ‘only a suicidal country doesn’t recognize the Bedouin problem’ (quoted in Seidler 2014). Recently, the Justice Minister, Ayelet Shaked, announced that the state would begin enforcing the law against polygamy. Polygamy, according to Shaked and Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein, ‘undermines the foundations of public order in an enlightened society’ (quoted in Hovel and Seidler 2015).

Rawia Abu Rabia argues that ‘polygamy in the Arab Bedouin society is not a phenomenon that occurs in a vacuum. It operates in the intersection of colonial power and patriarchal power’ (R. Abu-Rabia 2011, 461). Israel’s obsession with polygamy has made it part of the politics of the Bedouin struggle for land, resulting in the reinforcing of patriarchal power. As Albert Memmi has argued, the aspects of native lives that have been denounced by the coloniser become central to the colonised’s ‘identity and to his [or her] resistance’ (Memmi [1965] 2003, 176). Polygamy – much like the veil in the ongoing struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism – is increasingly leveraged as a symbol of the Bedouin struggle against colonisation and the erasure of Bedouin culture. Bedouin women and their bodies have thus become a site and a symbol of colonial contention. Bedouin feminist groups that have long worked to combat polygamy are labelled as native informants.

3. Bedouin Culture and the Project of Settler Indigenisation

Native people and their culture are located at the centre of settler ambivalence (P. J. Deloria 1998, 3; see also Guez 2015; Mendel and Ranta 2016). As Homi K. Bhabha reminds us, otherness is ‘at once an object of desire and derision’ (Bhabha [1991] 1994, 96). This has particular relevance in settler colonialism, where indigenous culture is, on the one hand, mocked, racialised and targeted for elimination, and, on the other hand, desired, mimicked and appropriated.

In his book *Playing Indian*, Philip Deloria argues that American nationalism and identity were not only constituted in relation to the Indians as others, but also in light of and through the imaginative figure of the Indian and Indian culture as authentic to the space.

It is through playing Indian that the new European settlers were able to shake off their Europeaness in favour of a new form of Americanism and American nationalism. Similarly, Yonatan Mendel and Ronald Ranta argue that Israeli identity and nationalism have been constituted both in relation to the figure of the Arab as ‘other’ and through the appropriation of Arab culture. They argue that Arab-Palestinian culture has been treated with ambivalence, being both imitated and disdained (Ranta and Mendel 2014; Mendel and Ranta 2016). Examining orientalist photographs of the Zionists of the early *aliyot* (Jewish immigration), Dor Guez shows that Zionists dressed up like Arabs (thus playing Arabs) in order to orient(alise) themselves and to appear proper and authentic to the space (Guez 2015). The appropriation of the Arab-native culture, Guez argues, is the appropriation of nativeness – of indigeneity (Guez 2015).

In this respect, it is important to recognise that mimicry is not only a practice of the colonised imitating the coloniser (whether in order to trouble colonial authority, as suggested by Bhabha, or as a pathological outcome of the colonial encounter, as suggested by Fanon) (Bhabha [1991] 1994; Fanon 1967). It is also a practice of the coloniser mimicking the native. In the specific context of settler colonialism, settler mimicry of the native facilitates the process of settler indigenisation and the making of the settler as authentic to the space. However, while the American settlers sought a complete erasure of their European culture and origins, the Zionist settlers pursued indigenisation while maintaining their Europeanised identity. After all, it was only in Palestine that the European Jew could finally become a master.

Bedouin culture has also been treated with ambivalence: feared, rejected, ‘othered’, mocked, desired, mimicked, appropriated, adapted, oriented, fetishised and exoticised. In his book *The Sabra*, Oz Almog demonstrates the ways in which the Bedouin have acted as a model for the creation of the new Jew, the *Sabra* (a native Israeli, a Jew rooted in the land of Palestine – like the indigenous sabra cactus) (Almog 2010). The Bedouin were represented in ambivalent way. They were portrayed as savage, primitive, cruel and bloodthirsty, while at the same time were viewed as embodying an authentic and desired image of the native – though the Bedouin, and Arabs more generally, were simulatenously viewed as invaders and foreigners to the land (Almog 2000).

The Naqab Bedouin embodied many qualities that Zionists desired. They were rooted in the land, resilient and ‘represented a role model to the new Jew: assertive, independent, pure, simple and brave’ (Mendel and Ranta 2016, 111). Similarly to the Native Americans, who were believed to speak the ‘spirit of the continent’ (P. J. Deloria 1998, 3), the Bedouin were believed to speak the mystical spirit of the Naqab desert. The special place that the Bedouin occupied in inventing Israeli national identity should also be understood in light of the mystification of the desert in the Zionist settler ethos of state building. As Ben Gurion stated in his famous speech ‘The Meaning of the Negev’:

It is in the Negev that the creativity and pioneer vigor of Israel will be tested, and this will be a crucial test ...

It is in the Negev that the youth will be tested – its pioneer strength, vigor of spirit, and creative and conquering initiative ...

It is in the Negev that the people of Israel will be tested – For only with a united effort of a volunteering people and a planning and implementing State will we accomplish the great mission of populating the wilderness and bringing it to flourish. This effort will determine the fate of the State of Israel and the standing of our people in the history of mankind. (Ben Gurion, ‘The Meaning of the Negev’, 17 January 1955)

To appear proper to the land, Jewish settlers have engaged in different forms of playing Bedouin. They have adopted Bedouin desert wear (the *kufiya* and sandals), claimed resilience by producing Jewish settlers as brave pioneers who were taming the wild desert, and appropriated symbols associated with Bedouin life in the desert (such as the tent, Bedouin hospitality and the camel). However, this form of mimicry and appropriation was rooted in a particular formation of the Zionist settler indigenisation process of reclaiming and reviving an ancient Jewish/Hebrew identity in Palestine. Almog argues that for the early generations of the Jewish settlers,

Bedouin culture resembled ancient Israelite culture, so they drew on the Orient as a source of symbols for the ancient Hebrew nation ... Like the ancient Israelites, the Bedouin herded sheep, used beasts of burden to plow and winnow, pressed olives for oil, ground wheat with millstones, baked bread over a fire, lived in tents sewn from goatskins, wore robes, practiced hospitality, and belonged to a tribal community that lived near sources of water. (Almog 2000, 185)

Thus, in the process of appropriation, these symbols have been de-Bedouinised and Israelised. This interplay between appropriation and settler indigenisation continues to be seen in the contemporary encounter between current generations of Israeli settlers and

Bedouin culture. The following description of a Jewish-owned camel ranch demonstrates the current working of this narrative of settler indigenisation:

The ranch cares for and raises riding camels and it offers camel tours, desert hospitality and lodging. We aim to provide a unique desert experience, along with the opportunity to enjoy the calm and serenity of the biblical landscape surrounding our home – the Negev. We make sure to protect the environment, natural sites, monuments in all our activities and care for the welfare of our precious camels. (The Negev Camel Ranch website)⁵²

At the same time, the erasure of Bedouin culture has been coupled with a seemingly contradictory – yet complementary – process of preservation. This has been articulated in the state-driven development of a Bedouin-ethnic tourism industry. Since the early 1970s, the state has actively encouraged the Bedouin to develop authentic ‘Bedouin tourism in the Naqab, to capitalize on the exotic’ (Jakubowska 1992, 100; see also Dinero 2002; Stein 1998). These efforts had limited success during the 1970s, 80s and 90s (Jakubowska 1992). The strategy is not unique to the Bedouin case. Neoliberal settler states have been encouraging the commodification of the indigenous as part of the tourism industry (Furniss 1998; Gilbert 2013; see also R. Butler and Hinch 2007, pt 4).

During the 2000s, Israel renewed its efforts to develop Bedouin tourism as part of a larger plan to develop the Naqab as a prime tourist destination. A new master plan was developed in the mid-2000s under the auspices of the Negev Development Authority and the Jewish agency. Its goal was:

... to develop ethnic tourism that emphasises the unique characteristics of the population and the environment, and to preserve the Bedouin heritage, as part of a process of preservation of ethnic heritage in Israel and worldwide ... People will want to come to enjoy Bedouin hospitality, spend a night in a community because it’s interesting, and the next day hike in the Judean Desert with a local guide ... [An additional] important goal, says Meninger [a consultant on environmental and tourism issues], is to turn the Bedouin into guardians of the environment, as opposed to the situation at present. The areas around the Bedouin communities have become garbage dumps. Overgrazing and unsupervised hunting are systematically destroying flora and fauna. Meninger is convinced that, as elsewhere in the world, turning nature into a financial and existential resource will bring about a change in attitudes toward nature among the Bedouin. (Rinat 2005)

⁵² See <http://www.cameland.co.il/the-negev-camel-ranch>, accessed 6 September 2016.

In 2014, the state initiated the Desert Magic Festival, an annual event that aims to encourage thousands of tourists to visit Bedouin communities in the Naqab. As reported in the *Jerusalem Post*, ‘the concept is to draw tourists to the Bedouin community and allow the local people to *lift the veil* on their products and traditions’ (Frantzman 2015, emphasis added). These initiatives often reduce Bedouin culture to oriental signifiers of Bedouin hospitality: the tent, the camel, Bedouin coffee and tea, Bedouin flatbread and Bedouin embroidery. With exotic names – such as the Ya-Hala [Welcome] Bedouin Hospitality Tent, Touring with Salem, and the Sheikh’s Castle – a host of Bedouin small initiatives, mostly ‘Bedouin hospitality tents’, offer the orientalist fantasy of the desert experience. For example, Salima’s Dream Tent and Desert Embroidery presents the ‘feminist’ Bedouin experience, where tourists can imagine a Bedouin tent that ‘provides women with equal space as men’,⁵³ buy crafts made by women, and gaze on Bedouin women (for more on the neoliberal agenda of empowering Bedouin women, see Shalhoub-Kevorkian et al 2014).

In the ‘development’ of the Naqab, the Bedouin population are assigned a single role: to be authentic Bedouin. Bedouin culture is to be performed on the terms of the settler and represented in ahistorical and apolitical terms. Through an ‘ethnic’ tourism industry, the state regulates and governs Bedouin identity. The state ‘preserves’ Bedouin traditions, while also defining what constitutes Bedouin heritage, identity and culture. The aspects of culture that are deemed worthy of preservation are the oriental imaginaries of Bedouin culture that reinforce the narrative of the Bedouin as nomads. For example, ‘conceived as a nonsettlement’ (Shamir 1996, 240), the tent is celebrated and fetishised by the state, while the long history of Bedouin settlement in the Naqab is ignored.

The engagement of the Naqab Bedouin in the tourism industry illuminates the ‘economic organization of indigeneity’ (Cattelino 2010, 235), in which culture – and the performance of culture – is invoked as a practice of economic survival. Some argue that indigenous tourism can be seen as a positive form of self/strategic essentialism that allows indigenous communities to humanise themselves, maintain their culture, and make

⁵³ See <http://www.gonegev.co.il/%D7%AA%D7%99%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%91%D7%93%D7%95%D7%90%D7%99%D7%AA.html>, accessed 20 February 2015.

themselves visible (Furniss 1998; Gilbert 2013). However, I suggest that indigenous tourism must be understood in light of economic exclusion and colonial erasure of native economies. In other words, indigenous people are forced into practices of self-essentialising as a means of economic survival. Self-culturalisation, self-exoticisation and the commodification of native culture should be read as intrinsic to colonial structural violence.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the particular racialising logics to which the Bedouin are subjected, and the ways in which these are deeply ethnicised and gendered. State invocation of Bedouin cultural distinctiveness, it has been demonstrated, has been the main mechanism in shaping Israel's discursive, epistemic and material violence towards the Naqab Bedouin. Racialisation, ethnicisation and culturalisation have been constitutive to Zionist settler colonialism as a land-centred project. These strategies have shaped the structures, discourses and forms of colonial violence that govern Bedouin life. At the same time, as the next chapter shows, they have also played an important role in shaping Bedouin modalities of resistance.

As the discussion of Bedouin indigeneity in the next chapter shows, state culturalisation of the Naqab Bedouin as premodern subjects can intersect with the liberal human rights discourse on indigeneity. The culturalisation of the Bedouin natives is thereby reproduced – only this time simultaneously as a repressive structure and as a potentially emancipatory force.

Chapter 4

Culturalisation as Emancipation

Introduction

The previous chapter has focused on the ways in which culture – along with culturalisation – figures as a structure, discourse and mechanism of domination by the Zionist settler state, setting the ground for this chapter's focus on the ways in which culture figures in Bedouin resistance to settler colonialism. This chapter argues that for the Naqab Bedouin, there is no escape from culturalisation. Culture and culturalisation figure simultaneously as a structure of domination and as a force of emancipation. International recognition of Naqab Bedouin as indigenous has been grounded in an orientalist and culturalised view of them, and has built on the mobilisation of a culturalised conception of indigeneity. Paradoxically, the culturalisation of the Bedouin population at the state level is mirrored in the discourse on Bedouin indigeneity. Consequently, in their resistance, Bedouin activists face the burden of culture. This demands that the Naqab Bedouin negotiate their identities, struggles and political agendas in multiple circuits of power, as they operate at the intersection of the local and the global.

The first section of the chapter provides a historical overview of Bedouin resistance to the Zionist settler project. It argues that since the early days of Zionism in Palestine, the Naqab Bedouin have been agents of resistance, adopting a range of strategies, discourses and practices in their struggle for land rights. The section suggests that recent years have seen the development of two new trends in the Bedouin struggle. The first is characterised by the Palestinianisation of the Bedouin struggle. The second is marked by the transnationalisation of the struggle and the rise of the indigenous discourse as central to Bedouin resistance. The latter is the main focus of the chapter.

The second section reviews the rise of the global indigenous movement and the development of the international indigenous human rights regime. It examines the ways

in which indigeneity, as a reclaimed political identity and rights framework, has, on the one hand, empowered indigenous struggles and claim making, and how it has, on the other hand, also functioned as a containment mechanism by re-enshrining settler sovereignty and framing indigenous struggles in state-centric and liberal terms. Indigeneity, this section suggests, should be understood not only as a legal category, but also as a political, economic and cultural construct, a liberal/oriental/settler fantasy, and a site of contestation.

The third section discusses the development of the discourse on Bedouin indigeneity. It suggests that critical scholars and friendly NGOs have predicated their arguments in favour of the relevance of the indigeneity framework to the Bedouin case on principles of cultural distinctiveness, non-dominance and the perpetual practice of traditional culture – thereby reproducing the colonial gaze on culture. This focus has produced a culturalist and essentialist discourse on Bedouin indigeneity that builds on the fetishisation of the Bedouin natives as premodern subjects and on a dangerous entwinement of land rights and cultural authenticity.

The fourth section argues that predicating Bedouin indigeneity on cultural distinctiveness has subjected Bedouin activists – and Bedouin communities more broadly – to identity inspection regimes and repressive structures of expectation that require them to prove their authenticity by conforming to orientalist imaginaries of Bedouinness. The Naqab Bedouin, it is argued, face a double bind. They are recognised as indigenous because they are perceived to confirm the cultural tenets of indigeneity and the view of the indigenous as victim in need of rescue. However, any signs of modernity and expressions of agency risk compromising their claim of indigeneity.

The concluding fifth and sixth sections of the chapter focus on the different strategies that the Naqab Bedouin employ in their efforts to subvert, contest and refuse their racialisation, culturalisation and ethnicisation. It is argued that cultural expectations do not go unchallenged. While the Naqab Bedouin build on their culturalisation in order to gain access to new audiences and to leverage new opportunities and spaces for mobilisation, they simultaneously subvert the culturalist interest in the Bedouin case and

mobilise the powerful spectacle of suffering in order to expose Israel as a racially driven regime. Moreover, the younger generation of Bedouin activists refuses the text of premodernity by insisting on hybrid articulations of Bedouin identities that bring together traditionalism and modernity. They also challenge the conditionality of land rights on cultural authenticity by employing a discourse that insists on the right of the Naqab Bedouin to choose their own lifestyle. Despite the challenge to culturalisation, the question of whether Bedouin expressions of agency are intelligible to outside supporters persists.

1. Bedouin Resistance to Settler Colonialism: A Historical Background

The Naqab Bedouin have a long history of resistance to foreign colonisation, including the Ottoman rule, the British Mandate and Zionist settler colonialism (Nasasra 2011, 2015a). Furthermore, as the work of Mansour Nasasra shows, the Naqab Bedouin have long seen themselves as part of the Palestinian people. Like other Palestinians, the native Bedouin advocated that the British restrict Zionist immigration and prohibit the sale of land to Jewish settlers. They also took an active role in Palestinian resistance and revolts (Nasasra 2011).

Resistance to Zionist colonisation persisted after the Nakba. Despite the severe restrictions imposed by the military rule, the Naqab Bedouin continued to assert their right to the land and struggled to ensure their cultural, social and economic survival. During the period of the military rule, Nasasra argues, Naqab Bedouin:

... adopted non-violent, political and cultural methods of resistance to circumvent the military rule system, including campaigning for land rights, seeking unification with fellow Bedouin who had been expelled or left across borders, gaining their rights as refugees and Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs), and pursuing claims to their lands and confiscated properties. (Nasasra 2015b, 123)

In the decades that followed the end of the military rule, Bedouin struggles were largely domesticated. The Naqab Bedouin resisted dispossession and settler encroachment from within state institutions, focusing on litigation and lobbying. In addition, the mushrooming of NGOs in Israel during the 1990s did not bypass the Naqab Bedouin.

Dozens of Bedouin NGOs were formed to enhance the community's capacity for self-representation and to empower and professionalise the Bedouin struggle. These NGOs focused on issues such as land rights, gender inequality and women's empowerment, welfare, education, sustainable economic development, litigation, advocacy, community empowerment, lobbying and international advocacy. Most significant was the establishment in 1997 of the Regional Council of the Unrecognised Villages (RCUV), a democratically elected body formed to act as the legitimate representative of the unrecognised villages (Meir 2005). The RCUV was at the forefront of developing alternatives to state plans and advocating the recognition of Bedouin villages based on 'rural settlement models' (Abu-Saad 2008b, 16). The state refuses to recognise and negotiate with the RCUV.

Given the state's sweeping refusal to recognise Bedouin rights to the land, litigation became a central strategy of resistance. Palestinian Bedouin thus sought to use the law as an anti-colonial tool (Amara 2015). However, despite submitting thousands of land claims since the 1970s, not a single case of land ownership has been won in the Israeli courts (Amara and Miller 2012).⁵⁴ As a result, during the 1990s, the Naqab Bedouin, with the support of NGOs, adopted 'proactive legal action that aims to find the cracks in the Israeli legal structure in order to oppose its one-sided policy of Judaization and control' (Yiftachel 2003, 40). Instead of seeking land ownership, litigation focused on demands that the state build schools and health clinics and deliver basic services, such as access to water and electricity (Amara and Miller 2012). This strategy has been a subversive attempt to secure 'creeping recognition' of Bedouin villages (Amara 2015, 182). While the strategy did result in some achievements during the 1990s, since 2000 the courts have

⁵⁴ Furthermore, courts have legitimised the eviction of entire villages. See, for example, the case of Um Al-Hiran. In May 2015, the Supreme Court allowed the state to evict and demolish the entire Bedouin village of Um Al-Hiran in order to replace it with a new Jewish settlement, which will be called Hiran. The Bedouin residents had been forcibly settled on the land in 1956, on the order of the Israeli military rule, after being evacuated from their own land. Before 1948, the tribe of Abu Alkiyan had lived in Khirbet Zubaleh, on land that is now occupied by the Jewish Kibbutz Shuval. Dispossessed of that land, the tribe was resettled on 7,000 dunams of land now known as Um Al-Hiran. The court effectively argued that the residents have acquired no rights over the land and that the land remains state-owned, ignoring the dispossession of the Um Al-Hiran Bedouin from their original land and the fact that they had been forcibly settled on the land by the state itself (see Seidler 2015). Even in the exceptional case of the village of Al-Sire, in which the court (temporarily) ordered the state not to evacuate the village, the court refused to discuss the ownership rights to the land of the Al-Sire Bedouin residents (Rotem 2014).

been less willing to intervene in favour of the Bedouin citizens in civil rights cases (Interview, Suhad Bishara 2013).

The experience of the Naqab Bedouin in colonial courts invites us to ponder the extent to which the law can serve as an anti-colonial tool for resistance, given that the Israeli legal system is integral to the colonial infrastructure of dispossession. Phrased differently, can the master's tool dismantle the master's house? (Lorde 1984). The use of colonial courts by the colonised, I suggest, should be conceptualised as more than an opportunity structure. It should be understood as part of the structural violence of the liberal settler state. The Naqab Bedouin are forced to engage with the very legal system that dispossesses them and, in doing so, legitimise it. Given their status as citizen-subjects, it is almost impossible for Palestinian Bedouin to avoid the colonial legal system. As Khalil Alamour, an activist of the Bedouin village of Al-Sire and a staff member of the NGO Adalah, states: 'I don't believe that law will free us, or that through law we will win back our land. Do you see the eviction order on my house? I have no choice but to go to the same court that issued it, knowing I will probably lose' (Interview, Khalil Alamour 2012).

Yet, the relationship between the colonised and the settler colonial legal systems is one of ambivalence. The judiciary functions at once as a form of state-sanctioned colonial violence and as an illusionary opportunity structure for achieving justice. As Awad Abu-Freih, a Bedouin activist from the village of Al-Arakib, says: 'The Supreme Court is a dangerous institution. We keep believing that we can get our rights there, but we can't' (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013). This illusion must be understood in light of the nature of the liberal settler state and its fetishisation of law and order. Courts also have a pacifying effect by containing native struggles within state institutions and the liberal logic of citizenship and the rule of law.

The heart of Bedouin resistance, however, remains *sumud* (roughly translated as 'steadfastness'). *Sumud* – surviving on one's own land – is articulated in the refusal of the Naqab Bedouin to leave their land and on their defiance of state authority and settler sovereignty. It is the centring of the Bedouin body as a site of resistance. As Patrick Wolfe reminds us, 'to get in the way of settler colonization, all the native has to do is stay at

home' (Wolfe 2006a, 388). Staying at home, however, is neither a simple nor a passive act. It is surviving under conditions of personal and collective suffering. In the words of Awad Abu-Freih:

The primary strategy which we, the Naqab Arabs, master is the *sumud*. It is the *sumud* against harsh physical and geographic living conditions of desert or semi-desert conditions characterised by strong wind, very hot weather during the summer, and floods in the winter. We have no water and no electricity. We tolerate these conditions because we love our land, because of our relationship to the land. *Sumud* is our daily struggle against the expulsion and transfer policies of the state, against state efforts to erase our identity. It is a *sumud* against our de-development, impoverishment, starvation, ghettoisation and illiteracy. People are still willing to pay the price of the *sumud*, also in the price of suffering. You are isolated, far from schools, far from other cultures. The price is heavy and we are paying it on a daily basis. But as long as we have *sumud*, we will triumph. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)

Bedouin *sumud*, Oren Yiftachel argues, has been 'translated from a general national ideal to the art of surviving in the criminalized zone of planning illegality, and to a set of tactics for developing the villages, bit by bit, to meet basic needs such as water, electricity, mobility, education and health' (Yiftachel 2009, 250). By building mosques, football courts and self-delivering basic services – such as water, electricity, gas and even the internet – the Naqab Bedouin seek to reinforce the permanence of their presence (Abu-Saad 2008a; Interview, Khalil Alamour 2012). House demolitions and crop destructions have been met with a strategy of rebuilding and replanting. In the words of Aziz Al-Touri, a resident of the Bedouin village of Al-Arakib (which has so far been destroyed over one hundred times):

We have *sumud* on our side. They destroy our village, we rebuild every time. They destroy crops every year and we cultivate and replant once again. We are determined to stay on our land. We will continue to rebuild our houses and cultivate our land, no matter what. (Interview, Aziz Al-Touri 2013)

Through rebuilding and replanting, the Naqab Bedouin reclaim indigenous sovereignty and assert the principles of self-determination. The visibility of Bedouin villages in the space, even if as a grey zone (Yiftachel 2009), disrupts the colonial temporal and spatial logics that seek a pure Jewish landscape. Women play a central role in Bedouin *sumud*. As suggested by Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, it is the women who 'carry the burden of rebuilding a new house/home, and cope with all the incontinences of moving, with the entire economic, social and psychological load it entails' (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2007).

Another important feature of Bedouin resistance – both in townships and in unrecognised villages – is the cross-generational transfer of Bedouin history, culture and identity (S. Abu-Rabia 2008, 2015). Families regularly visit their historical lands and older Bedouin share their stories and their indigenous knowledge with the younger generation. Furthermore, Palestinian Bedouin identify according to their ancestral lands, rather than the current location of their residence. In their insistence on an exile positionality (S. Abu-Rabia 2015) and the right of return, the Naqab Bedouin trouble settler indigenisation and transform remembrance, history and cultural survival into sites of resistance. In the words of Awad Abu-Freih:

We plan to stay on our lands. Our children know our story, our history, our culture. My children know the borders of our village and our land, the name and location of each and every well, the names of our medicines. They know the location of the homes of their grandfathers and great grandfathers. They know who our neighbours were and when and from whom we bought the land. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)

1.1 New Frontiers in the Bedouin Struggle: Palestinianisation, Indigeneity and the Transnationalisation of Bedouin Resistance

We can identify two significant transformations in the Bedouin struggle in recent years. The first is the resurgence of Palestinian Bedouin identity and the renewed identification of the Bedouin struggle with the Palestinian national struggle. The second, which is the main focus of this chapter, is the rise of the indigenous discourse among the Naqab Bedouin and the transnationalisation of the Bedouin struggle. The two processes are taking place concurrently, though more often as parallel rather than intersecting trends.

The first development follows decades of state ethnicisation of the Bedouin, producing them as a separate ethnic group that is disassociated from the Palestinian community in Israel and from the Palestinian people more generally (Parizot 2001). Today, it is not

uncommon to see the Palestinian flag in demonstrations in the Naqab⁵⁵ and to hear Bedouin identify as Palestinian Bedouin.⁵⁶

Moreover, the Bedouin struggle also figures prominently in the larger Palestinian struggle in Israel (Nasasra 2012). In 2011, the High Follow-Up Committee declared a one-day general strike to protest the confiscation of Bedouin land (Nasasra 2012). In the last few years, Al-Hirak Al-Shababi, a grassroots movement, has declared three Days of Rage and organised dozens of demonstrations across '48 Palestinian cities and towns (within and across the Green Line), including nationwide protests against the Praver Plan that took place in Hura and Haifa (Activestills and +972 Magazine 2013). In addition, the first act of the Joint List after the 2015 elections was a four-day march – beginning at the Bedouin village of Wadi Al-Na'am and moving across the Naqab to Jerusalem – to convey the party's commitment to advancing the Bedouin struggle for land rights (Deger 2015). Bedouin activists have been actively connecting with and supporting other Palestinian struggles for land and housing rights – such as in the Palestinian cities of Lydd and Ramla and in the Galilee – as well as standing in solidarity with political prisoners across Palestine.

As for the second development, indigeneity has become a prominent discourse and rights framework in the contemporary Bedouin struggle. The failure to achieve justice through Israeli courts, the limited opportunity structure at the state level, and the escalation in state policies and violence have led NGOs and Bedouin activists to transnationalise their struggle and to adopt indigeneity as an alternative framework to advance their cause (Interview, Haia Noach 2012). Since the mid-2000s, local NGOs – led by the Negev Coexistence Forum (NCF, a Jewish-Arab-Bedouin organisation) – and a host of critical scholars have been promoting the recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as an indigenous group under international law (see Abu-Saad and Amara 2012; Champagne 2012; HRW

⁵⁵ On 12 December 2012, I attended a demonstration against the Praver Plan in the city of Beer Al-Sabe'a. Palestinian flags were an integral part of the demonstration, which was organised by the Bedouin community. The flags were raised mostly by members of the younger generation of Bedouin.

⁵⁶ This has been apparent in my interviews with Bedouin activists who identified as Palestinians. They discussed the need to resist state policies of divide and rule, along with the need to reconnect the Bedouin struggle and the Bedouin people with the Palestinian national struggle and the Palestinian people. See interviews with Amir Abu-Kweder (2014); Awad Abu-Freih (2013); Huda Abu-Obaid (2014); Khalil Al-Amour (2012); and Rawia Abu-Rabia (2012).

2008; A. Kedar 2004; Meir, Roded and Ben-Israel 2016; NCF 2006; Roded and Tzfadia 2012; Stavenhagen and Amara 2012; Yiftachel 2010, 2012; Yiftachel, Kedar and Amara 2012; Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016). The volume of transnational activity – both institutionalised and grassroots mobilisation – among the Naqab Bedouin, Nasasra argues, has ‘put the Naqab Bedouin case on the international map’ (Nasasra 2012, 80).

The lobbying efforts have been remarkably successful. The Naqab Bedouin have been recognised internationally as an indigenous people – an achievement unique among the Palestinian population – including by the European Parliament (Adalah 2012b), UN human rights bodies, and international human rights NGOs such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Minority Rights Group, the International Federation for Human Rights, and the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network. The most significant achievement was the recognition of the Bedouin as an indigenous people by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and the former Special Rapporteur on indigenous people, James Anaya. In addition, over the last few years, Bedouin activists have regularly travelled overseas in order to raise international awareness of their cause. Hundreds of delegations – including diplomats, European members of parliament, international NGOs and solidarity groups – have visited Bedouin villages. Transnational mobilisation has also resulted in significant transnational grassroots support. For example, on 30 November 2013 – which Al Hirak Al Shababi declared a Day of Rage – more than 40 protests were organised in dozens of locations worldwide, calling on the Israeli government to ‘Stop the Praver Plan’.⁵⁷

Bedouin claims to indigeneity have been met by Israel with a sweeping refusal to afford recognition. This refusal stands in stark contrast to the official positions of Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand – all of which recognise indigenous populations within their territories. Israel’s position also differs from that of African governments, which deny the existence of indigenous peoples within their territories based on the argument that ‘we are all indigenous’ (Saul 2016). Unlike Anglophone settler colonialism, the main contention over claims of indigeneity takes on a particular

⁵⁷ Protests took place in the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Turkey and Morocco, to name just a few. For a full list, see <http://abirkoptu.wordpress.com/2013/11/24/schedule-of-actions-worldwide-to-stop-praver-on-nov-30th-day-of-rage/>, accessed 2 September 2016.

political significance in the context of Israel/Palestine. Israel's refusal to recognise the Bedouin as the indigenous population of the Naqab is rooted in the theological ethos of Zionism, which considers Jews (and, more broadly, world Jewry) to be the only population indigenous to the land.

Settlement has been conceptualised in terms of Jewish return to – and redemption of – ancestral land and has been justified by theological/biblical narratives. Claims of indigeneity by the Naqab Bedouin and other Palestinians are perceived as questioning the legitimacy of the Zionist settler project and Israel's sovereignty. Israel's official position maintains that the Bedouin population cannot be said to have inhabited the Naqab from 'time immemorial'. Even more so, the Bedouin are constructed as invaders: 'If anything, the Bedouins have more in common with the European settlers who migrated to other lands, coming into contact with existing populations with often unfortunate results for the latter' (Yahel, Frantzman and Kark 2012, 13–14). As Nicola Perugini and Neve Gordon (2015) have demonstrated in their recent work, human rights frameworks are not only an instrument of the oppressed. They can also be leveraged by the powerful to facilitate and justify domination. Indeed, Zionist scholars have recently invoked the indigeneity framework to claim recognition of Jews as indigenous:

The Jews have always considered the Land of Israel their national homeland, have lived in it as a sovereign nation in historical times, maintained at least a toehold there despite persecution, and returned to it time and again after being exiled. This spiritual relationship is also expressed in both Jewish daily prayers and Israel's Declaration of Independence. If the parameters and preconditions for indigenesness are made more flexible to include arrivistes like the Bedouin, surely Jews can also raise a claim to be the indigenous people in Israel, a land which they called home thousands of years before the Negev Bedouin. (Yahel, Frantzman and Kark 2012, 14)⁵⁸

Nonetheless, despite the state's refusal to recognise them as indigenous, the Naqab Bedouin are increasingly mobilising indigeneity to negotiate their rights and their relationship with the state.

⁵⁸ For more studies on the indigeneity of the Jewish people, see Hertz 2011.

2. Global Indigenism

Recent decades have seen the rise of a global indigenous movement and the international indigenous rights regime, pioneered primarily by indigenous peoples in the Americas and Australia. The word ‘indigenous’ has its roots in the encounter between colonials and natives, and between whiteness and the racialised ‘other’. Early anthropological research reinforced the association of indigeneity with primitivism – including among those empathetic to indigenous people. For example, Survival International, a prominent international organisation working on behalf of indigenous people, began as the Primitive People’s Fund (Kuper 2003, 389).

However, especially since the 1970s, indigeneity has increasingly become a powerful normative concept and a legal framework that seeks to empower and protect indigenous peoples who are subjected to an ongoing colonial history of dispossession and domination. Benedict Kingsbury argues that

‘the concept of “indigenous peoples”, or its local cognates, has become an important unifying connection in transnational activist networks, linking groups that were hitherto marginal and politically unorganized to transnational sources of ideas, information, support, legitimacy and money’ (Kingsbury 1998, 416–7).

The first international indigenous NGOs were formed during the 1950s. In 1957, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted Convention No 107, the Convention concerning the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Other Tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent Countries. The establishment of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in 1975 marked another important juncture in promoting indigenous issues in the international arena and connecting indigenous struggles within a global framework (Kemner 2011). The indigenous discourse gained more currency in 1982 with the establishment of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which was tasked with drafting a declaration on the rights of indigenous people. In 1989, the ILO adopted Convention No 169, the Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. In 1990, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 1993 the International Year of the World’s Indigenous People. In 1993, the UN proclaimed the First International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People (1995–2004), which was

followed by a Second International Decade (2005–14).⁵⁹ Benchmark achievements were the establishment of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2000, the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples in 2001, the establishment of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, and the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) also in 2007.

While it is often claimed that the concept of indigeneity remains vague and contested, the UN did produce a common working definition and an official discourse to determine who can be considered indigenous under international indigenous rights law (Muehlebach 2001). The definition is largely based on a comprehensive study, known as the Martínez Cobo report. The report was submitted to the UN in 1982 by the former Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, José Martínez Cobo. It states that:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems. (Cobo 1986/87, 1)

Building on Cobo's definition, in 1996 the Working Group on Indigenous Populations developed a set of guiding principles to determine what constitutes indigeneity. Criteria include priority in time; voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness; self-identification as indigenous; and experience of subjugation, marginalisation, dispossession, exclusion or discrimination (Daes 1996, para 69).⁶⁰ Spiritual connection

⁵⁹ See <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/Pages/InternationalDecade.aspx>, accessed 20 August 2016.

⁶⁰ See also the UN Resource Kit on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, which further elaborates criteria for being recognised as indigenous. These criteria include that the peoples 'identify themselves as indigenous peoples and are, at the individual level, accepted as members by their community'; 'have historical continuity or association with a given region or part of a given region prior to colonization or annexation'; 'have strong links to territories and surrounding natural resources'; 'maintain, at least in part, distinct social, economic and political systems'; 'maintain, at least in part, distinct languages, cultures, beliefs and knowledge systems'; 'are resolved to maintain and further develop their identity and distinct social, economic, cultural and political institutions as distinct peoples and communities'; and 'form non-dominant sectors of society' (UN Resource Kit on Indigenous Peoples 2008, 8).

to the land is another feature of indigenous lives and cultures. As Cobo suggests: ‘It is essential to know and understand the deeply spiritual special relationship between indigenous peoples and their land as basic to their existence as such and to all their beliefs, customs, traditions and culture’ (Cobo 1986, para 196). Similarly, Daes emphasises that ‘a profound relationship exists between indigenous peoples and their lands, territories and resources’, and that ‘this relationship has various social, cultural, spiritual, economic and political dimensions and responsibilities’ (Daes 2001, 9). Spiritual connection to the land is further acknowledged in Article 13 of ILO Convention No 169 and in Article 25 of the UNDRIP.⁶¹

The indigenous rights regime has challenged the view of indigenous peoples as ‘subjects of exclusive domestic jurisdiction of the settler state regime that invaded their territories’ (Williams 1990, 664), visibilising indigenous issues and making them an international concern. It also disrupted the ‘totalizing views of “nation” and the “nation-state”’ (Kingsbury 1998, 422). The indigenous rights regime has become an important avenue for indigenous people to seek rights and legitimacy beyond the confines of the sovereign settler state and its institutions; to bypass the restraining force of colonial law; and to assert a semi-sovereign status at the international level. It has also become an important opportunity structure that enables indigenous people to exert pressure from the outside – an example of what Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink call ‘the boomerang effect’ (Keck and Sikkink 1998).

The 2007 UNDRIP, however, was the result of a political compromise between states and indigenous people made in extreme conditions of unequal power structures. The issues of autonomy, sovereignty and self-determination, it is argued, remain vague and contentious in the current indigenous rights regime (Niezen 2005). Some have argued that the UNDRIP reaffirms a respect for settler sovereignty and authority over indigenous peoples (Engle 2011). More generally, Jeff Corntassel has argued that the centrality of

⁶¹ See also Article 25 of the UNDRIP: ‘Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources’. Article 13 of ILO Convention 169 states that parties shall respect ‘the special importance for the cultures and spiritual values of the peoples concerned of their relationship with the lands or territories, or both as applicable, which they occupy or otherwise use, and in particular the collective aspects of this relationship’.

the rights discourse has resulted in the co-optation of indigenous struggles by defining their limits and boundaries, the NGO-ising of indigenous struggles, and the undermining of grassroots and community-based resistance (Corntassel 2007).

Finally, it is important to consider the multiple ways in which indigeneity as a concept registers among indigenous people. As recent ethnographic studies have suggested, the word ‘indigenous’ is perceived by many indigenous people to be foreign – a ‘white people’s word’ (quoted in Glauser 2011, 26). It is further seen as a homogenising word that lumps all native people under a single category, erasing their rich and diverse experiences, identities, cultures and histories. As Mateo, an Ayoreo leader, has commented: ‘I do have an origin, a name ... it is “Ayoreo”’ (quoted in Glauser 2011, 26).

Scholars have argued that ‘the Bedouins living in Israel/Palestine also identify themselves as an indigenous people’ (Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016, 12) and that ‘the Bedouins of the Naqab have grown increasingly aware of their own “indigeneity”’ (Stavenhagen and Amara 2012, 165). However, while the concept of indigeneity can be leveraged as a form of strategic essentialism (Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016), the question of whether it registers as an authentic component of Bedouin identity is different. Evidence from my fieldwork demonstrates that, like other indigenous populations, the Naqab Bedouin conceive of indigeneity as an inauthentic foreign concept, imported by NGOs and sympathetic academics. As Amir Abu Kweder, a Bedouin activist of the unrecognised village of Al-Zarnouk, states:

One of the big problems we have in the Naqab is that those who formulate the discourse of our struggle are friendly leftist forces. The discourse of indigenous people did not develop from within the Arab-Bedouin society in the Naqab. It came most dominantly from Jewish experts. They imported theoretical frameworks and applied them on us. (Interview, Amir Abu Kweder 2014)

In the interviews I conducted, it was only NGO professionals and academics who used the word ‘indigeneity’. Most grassroots Bedouin activists identified themselves as ‘Bedouin Palestinians’, ‘Arab Al-Naqab’ or ‘Naqab Bedouin’, or in relation to the specific tribe, community or village to which they belong (see also Nasasra 2012). The gap between NGOs and the community is not unique to the Bedouin case. For example,

in her study of highlanders in Thailand, Katharine McKinnon has documented the debates between NGOs, which advocated indigeneity as a framework for leveraging political power, and the local villagers, who insisted on choosing terms not ‘defined and called by others’ (McKinnon 2011, 167). To be clear, this does not mean that Bedouin do not consider themselves as indigenous to the land: they do, and they always have. For them, indigeneity is articulated in local terms and through the simple assertion of ‘we were here before the state’.

Indigeneity should be understood as more than an opportunity structure or as a legal category. Indigeneity, not least importantly, is also a political construct (Thuen 2006, 24), an economic relationship, a cultural category, an identity, a settler and liberal fantasy (Cattelino 2010), and an expectation and anomaly (P. J. Deloria 2004). As such, indigeneity is a site of contestation (Merlan 2009; Wolfe 2006b) in which the identities – and rights – of native people are negotiated (and imposed) (Alfred and Corntassel 2005).

3. Indigeneity as a Cultural Category

Contemporary discourses and the human rights regime on indigeneity are imbued in a highly essentialised conception of culture and indigenous people. Cultural distinctiveness has become a paramount principle in the conceptualisation of indigeneity (Saul 2016, 14) and in the recognition and governance of indigenous peoples (Cattelino 2010; Povinelli 1998; Sylvain 2002). The focus on the cultural characteristics of indigeneity is also enshrined in international law, as demonstrated by the inclusion of cultural distinctiveness, non-dominance, spiritual connection to the land, and continued performance of indigenous culture in the definitions of Cobo and Daes, the ILO conventions and the UNDRIP.

In her work on the San/Bushman, Renée Sylvain shows that the consolidation of indigeneity as a cultural category has forced indigenous people ‘to choose between being excluded from the debate and asserting themselves in essentialist and primordialist vocabulary’ (Sylvain 2002, 1074; on the centrality of culture in San/Bushman struggles, see also Guenther 2006). Similarly, reviewing the discussions within the UN Working

Group on Indigenous Populations between 1982 and 1999, Andrea Muehlebach has shown how the failure of morally based arguments prompted indigenous people to invoke culturalist arguments and mobilise a politics of culture in order to ‘make place’ for indigenous claims (Muehlebach 2001). This has resulted, she argues, in a ‘highly fetishized discourse on indigeneity voiced by both indigenous and nonindigenous actors’ (Muehlebach 2001, 417).

The use of indigeneity in the Bedouin context was pioneered in the early 1990s by Professor Ismael Abu-Saad, a prominent Bedouin scholar (Interview, Ismael Abu-Saad 2013; see also Frantzman, Yahel and Kark 2012 on the development of the indigenous discourse in the Bedouin case). Influenced by his studies in the United States, Abu-Saad identified similarities between the colonisation faced by Native Americans and by the Naqab Bedouin (Interview, Ismael Abu-Saad 2013). His approach to indigeneity has been deeply political, placing the settler colonial condition at the heart of the analysis (see Abu-Saad 2008a; for a similar use of Bedouin indigeneity as a political concept, see also Nasasra 2012). Since the mid-2000s, critical scholars and NGOs have further developed the applicability of the framework of indigeneity in the Bedouin context, focusing on advancing an argument in favour of the recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous under international law.

To promote the recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous, activists and scholars have built on culturalist arguments to substantiate the claim that the Bedouin population meet the international criteria for indigeneity, using the common principles as defined in the Cobo report and by the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in 1996. They have based their arguments on the following principles: The Naqab Bedouin predate the establishment of the State of Israel; they are culturally distinct from both the Jewish majority and the Palestinian minority in Israel; they maintain and continue to practise a distinct indigenous culture, customs, traditions and language; they are a tribal society; they express a unique spiritual connection to the land; they rely on the land as a source of livelihood and as the basis for their cultural life; they have historically enjoyed a relative form of autonomy and self-rule; they have been subjected to marginalisation, dispossession and exclusion; and they self-identify as indigenous (see Champagne 2012;

HRW 2008; A. Kedar 2004; Meir, Roded and Ben-Israel 2016; NCF 2006; Roded and Tzfadia 2012; Stavenhagen and Amara 2012; Yiftachel 2010, 2012; Yiftachel, A. Kedar and Amara 2012; Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016).

Transnational lobbying efforts have been remarkably successful, resulting in the international recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous, as well as their rights to the land. In 2007, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD) called on Israel to search for alternatives to the relocation of the Bedouin population from their own lands (UNCERD 2007). In 2012, the UNCERD urged Israel to ‘withdraw the 2012 discriminatory proposed Law for the Regulation of the Bedouin Settlement in the Negev, which would legalise the ongoing policy of home demolitions and forced displacement of the indigenous Bedouin communities’ (UNCERD 2012). In the same year, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on Israel to stop the Praver displacement plan, stating that ‘Arab Bedouins are indigenous people leading a sedentary and traditionally agricultural life on their ancestral lands and are seeking formal and permanent recognition of their unique situation and status’ (2012/2694(rsp)). In 2010, the Human Rights Committee (HRC) stated that it was ‘concerned at allegations of forced evictions of the Bedouin population ... and of inadequate consideration of traditional needs of the population in the State party’s planning efforts for the development of the Negev, in particular the fact that agriculture is part of the livelihood and tradition of the Bedouin population’ (HRC 2010). In 2011, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) stated in its Concluding Observations that ‘the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the implementation of the Plan does not result in the forceful eviction of Bedouins’ (CESCR 2011). And in 2012, the HRC asked the State of Israel to report on the measures taken to ‘recognize and promote the Bedouin population’s right to ancestral land and traditional livelihood’ (HRC 2012).⁶²

However, looking at the development of discourse on Bedouin indigeneity suggests that we can identify what Edward Said conceptualised as ‘discursive consistency’ (Said 1978a, 273). This consistency is marked by the consolidation of indigeneity as a legal-cultural category, rather than a political one. Recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as

⁶² See the NCF website at <http://www.dukium.org/reports/>, accessed 9 September 2016.

indigenous, I argue, has been imbued in an essentialised conception of culture that is reliant on Bedouin cultural distinctiveness (and vulnerability) and the fetishisation of the native Bedouin as premodern subjects. The focus on principles of cultural distinctiveness and non-dominance, I further suggest, has produced Bedouin indigeneity as a depoliticised cultural category and has dangerously tied land rights claims to repressive demands for cultural authenticity.

The culturalised conception of Bedouin indigeneity intersects with the culturalisation of indigeneity as a powerful transnational discourse and rights framework. The production of global indigenism and Bedouin indigenism as a cultural category, rather than a political one, should be understood against a background in which ‘the international movement of indigenous peoples is part of a general transformation in the politics of culture’ (Niezen 2005, 591). The rise of liberal multiculturalism – premised on the governance of cultural difference – has further entrenched the view of indigenous rights as sourced in cultural membership (Danley 1991; see also the work of Kymlicka 1989, 2007). The entitlement of indigenous peoples to rights has thus been conditioned upon cultural distinctiveness and vulnerability, rather than on the history and persistence of settler colonialism. As Danley argues, for Kymlicka, ‘the only relevant difference [between aboriginal and other minorities] is that aboriginal cultures are more vulnerable and hence require more drastic measures for their protection’ (Danley 1991, 169). Multiculturalism has thus mirrored the colonial gaze on culture. If in the colonial discourse culturalisation is invoked to justify colonial violence, the multicultural conception of indigeneity has transformed culture into a justification regime for claiming rights and – even more troubling – for claiming land rights.

3.1 The Principle of Cultural Distinctiveness

The recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous people has been predicated, first and foremost, on establishing their cultural distinctiveness. This has meant that the Naqab Bedouin have had to be produced not only as distinct from the dominant Jewish-Israeli population, but also – and equally importantly – as distinct from the Palestinian population in Israel and from the Palestinian people more generally. As stated in a report submitted to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues by the Negev Coexistence

Forum (NCF), a joint Bedouin–Israeli NGO and a leader in promoting the recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous:

The Bedouins have retained their language (a Bedouin dialect of Arabic), their religion (Islam), and their social, cultural, economic and political characteristics. They are ethnically distinct from the Jewish majority and socially distinct from the Palestinian Arab minority living in Israel. (NCF 2006, 8)

The Palestinians are a heterogeneous people who include diverse religious and ethnic groups such as Druze, Christians and Bedouin. To be clear, I am not trying to erase difference, or to undermine the various ways in which different Palestinian communities experience state violence along the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality. The Naqab Bedouin are a distinctive group subjected to a particular form of colonial violence (as has been elaborated on in Chapter 3). This difference ought not be erased in the name of national unity or any other cause. However, we should ask what it is that makes the Bedouin indigenous. Is it cultural distinctiveness, or is it the structure of settler colonialism?

I suggest that there is a particular oriental and exotic imaginary of Bedouinness, without which the recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous would not have been possible. In other words, what makes possible the recognition of the indigeneity of Naqab Bedouin, as opposed to that of other groups of Palestinians, is the view that they conform to the cultural tenets of indigeneity. As Awad Abu-Freih states:

It is easy to recognise us [the Naqab Bedouin] as indigenous because we maintained our culture. And it is an indigenous culture, a desert culture and a very ancient one. They [foreigners] see a very simple life, living in the desert, in a tent, with your sheep and goats, far from urbanism. They don't see that in Palestinians. When they see a Palestinian from Haifa, they do not see an indigenous way of living. I used to argue with them on these issues, but could not convince them that all Palestinians are indigenous to the land. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)

Cultural distinctiveness, non-dominance and marginalisation are principles without which recognition of the Naqab Bedouin as indigenous cannot be established. The UNDRIP 'accommodates situations where colonisation did not occur, as in parts of Asia and Africa' (Saul 2016, 29). Therefore, as in the Bedouin case, recognition can be premised merely on a combination of principles of cultural distinctiveness, non-

dominance, and an experience of systemic marginalisation and discrimination. The grievances of the Naqab Bedouin are thus explained in relation to cultural difference and extreme conditions of cultural vulnerability, and they alone can justify recognition. Rodolfo Stavenhagen and Ahmad Amara exemplify this culturalist bias:

The Bedouins' cultural distinctiveness from the Israeli Jewish majority and the ongoing marginalization and discrimination that the Bedouins suffer as a distinct collective are more than sufficient to grant them protection as an indigenous group under international law. (Stavenhagen and Amara 2012, 181)

The focus on Bedouin cultural distinctiveness builds on the scholarly commitment to multiculturalism. This bias should be understood in light of a context in which Bedouin cultural distinctiveness has been figured, at the state level, in only one way: a justification for dispossession, as discussed in Chapter 3. This is in contrast to the situations in Australia and Canada, where indigenous cultural distinctiveness at the state level operates in an ambivalent way, both as a structure of domination and as a 'quality' to be mobilised in securing (limited) recognition of land rights.

The focus on culturalist arguments and on cultural distinctiveness evokes the dangers of essentialism (Muehlebach 2001; Sylvain 2002). In this respect, it is important to address the only article on Bedouin indigeneity that addresses the relationship between indigeneity and essentialism. In this article, Oren Yiftachel, Batia Roded and Alexandre Kedar argue that:

... our approach to the concept of indigeneity is relational, historical and political, and has issue with the essentialist approach to the subject. In other words, *we do not claim that it is a single system which formally and permanently defines groups with an indigenous identity around the world, and that the Bedouin group has characteristics that permanently and eternally assign it to the indigenous category.* (Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016, 4, emphasis added)

However, their argument fails to escape an essentialised and de-politicised conception of indigeneity. In fact, the article continues by justifying Bedouin indigeneity on the grounds of cultural distinctiveness and non-dominance. The argument constructs indigeneity merely as an opportunity structure rather than as an antagonistic political category, implying that at this temporal moment the Naqab Bedouin exhibit cultural characteristics that make indigeneity a suitable framework. This is why it is possible to 'imagine later

stages in their struggle when indigeneity may become superfluous or taken-for-granted, and perhaps be replaced by other categories of struggle and resistance' (Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016, 5). The authors fail to acknowledge that a political approach to indigeneity must acknowledge that it is the settler who has brought the indigenous into existence and who perpetuates this existence (Fanon 1963, 36). As long as settler colonialism exists and as long as the logic of elimination continues to govern native lives, indigeneity as a political category remains relevant.

Failing to escape the yoke of an essentialised conception of indigeneity, the authors argue for strategic essentialism. However, native engagement in strategic essentialism does not necessarily eliminate the dangers of essentialism (see Spivak in Milevska 2003, 30). Furthermore, self-essentialising practices are embedded in histories and relations of extreme inequalities and imbalances of power (Sylvain 2002). This means that dire conditions of marginalisation and the need to expand opportunity structures can force indigenous peoples to engage in practices of self-essentialism in order to gain access to the human rights discourse in order to advance their cause.

3.2 Indigeneity as Premodernity

In the hegemonic discourse on indigeneity, the focus on cultural distinctiveness is closely associated with the production of indigeneity as premodernity. The term 'indigenous', argues Ronald Niezen, 'invokes the idea of a community or society pursuing a timeless way of life, the first occupants of remote, wild territories living simply with the use of basic technology' (Niezen 2005, 587). The term continues to be dominated by the view of indigenous people as located outside of modernity, building on orientalist and exotic imaginaries of a fetishised premodern subject (P. J. Deloria 2004). Centring cultural difference, Sylvain argues, has meant that 'the criteria for indigenous status tend to become ontologically saturated with essentialist and primordialist conceptions of culture' (Sylvain 2002, 1075). While, in principle, the indigenous rights framework does recognise that indigenous cultures and societies do transform (Saul 2016), the very focus on cultural difference that renders the depiction of indigenous cultures as static and frozen in time is inescapable. As Brenna Bhandar argues:

While we can acknowledge that cultural identities are fluid, hybrid, and always changing, the moment that we make a rights claim based on these partial and

contingent identities, it becomes necessary – at least momentarily – to represent this cultural identity in a complete, bounded form. It becomes necessary to represent the cultural community as possessing an essential difference that makes it distinct – because it is that distinctiveness that forms the basis of the rights claim. (Bhandar 2007, 129–30, fn 23)

Premodernity has been constituted as a core element to authenticate claims to Bedouin cultural difference. Bedouin culture has been fetishised as a culture that ought to be preserved and protected because of its premodern uniqueness. Scholars and NGOs have played the card of premodernity by emphasising the ‘traditional’ characteristics of Bedouin culture. For example, in the 32 pages of the Negev Coexistence Forum’s first report to the UN, the words ‘tradition’, ‘culture’ and ‘customs’ appear about 60 times – almost as frequently as ‘land’ (NCF 2006). Another tendency in the writing on Bedouin indigeneity is to attach the word ‘traditional’ when describing different aspects of Bedouin lives: ‘traditional semi-nomadic people’, ‘traditional lands’, ‘traditional homeland’, ‘traditional territories’, ‘traditional culture’, ‘traditional way of life’, ‘traditional agriculture’, ‘traditional economy’, ‘traditional livelihood’, ‘traditional ownership’ and ‘traditional tribal laws’ (see Amara and Stavenhagen 2012; Champagne 2012, 13; Roded and Tzfadia 2012; Sheehan 2012). Similarly, Bedouin indigenous property laws and indigenous regimes of justice are labelled as ‘traditional’ property regimes and ‘traditional’ law – a deviation from modernity – and are conceptualised in cultural rather than historical and political terms.

Rather than seeking its troubling, the conceptualisation of indigeneity that is promoted remains trapped in a Western epistemology of modernity. Though well intentioned, the contemporary discourse on Bedouin indigeneity reproduces and is premised on a dichotomy between traditionalism and modernity. It is mired in a colonial and orientalist epistemology that places culture at the heart of settler–native relations.

The preoccupation with indigenous cultural authenticity builds not only on a colonial exotic imaginary, but also on a settler anxiety and the ambivalent location that indigenous people occupy in relation to settler sovereignty and national identities. By focusing on cultural authenticity, whether under a (racialised) rhetoric of liberal multiculturalism (as in Australia and Canada) or an explicit colonial rhetoric (as in Israel), settler polities

monitor, govern, regulate and reconfigure indigenous identities in ways that reaffirm racial hierarchies.

3.3 Governing Indigenous Land Claims: The Entwinement of Culture and Land Rights

The multicultural logic that underpins the dominant understanding of indigeneity has culture as the source of land rights. Culture and land are juxtaposed as equal and interwoven elements of indigeneity. Under international law, the continued practice of traditional culture is an important criterion in the definition of what constitutes indigenous people. Entitlement to land rights is thus contingent upon cultural authenticity and the place that land occupies in contemporary formations of indigenous cultures, identities and economies.

The literature on Bedouin indigeneity demonstrates a disturbing impulse to juxtapose culture and land rights as inextricable and equally constitutive elements of indigeneity. This entwinement has produced a rhetoric in which claims for land rights are justified through claims for cultural survival and spiritual connection to the land. For example, Stavenhagen and Amara argue that:

Israel should respect, protect, and fulfil the rights held by the Bedouin people, particularly the right to their traditional Naqab lands and the right to adequate housing in a manner that permits them to *maintain their traditional way of life*. (Stavenhagen and Amara 2012, 186, emphasis added)

The NCF report to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues takes a similar approach:

As with other indigenous minorities, the Bedouins are struggling for equality, recognition, and *preservation of their culture and way of life*. Dispossessed of the lands they had lived on for centuries, the Bedouins have lost their established means of livelihood and have consequently experienced a *disruption of their traditional social and economic structures*. (NCF 2006, 5, emphasis added)

Similarly, in an expert position paper prepared in support of the Al-Okbi case, a Bedouin tribal land ownership claim that was litigated in Israeli courts, Yiftachel writes that ‘land is the most important axis in the struggle of indigenous struggles. It is because *land has*

the most significant importance to indigenous culture' (Yiftachel 2010, 3, my translation from Hebrew, emphasis added). Oren Yiftachel, Batya Roded and Alexandre Kedar also invoke culture to stress the importance of land to Bedouin life: 'the Bedouin are distinct in their culture, customs and laws, as well as their notion of identity, and *this uniqueness is also articulated in the importance they ascribe to land ownership*' (Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016, 18, emphasis added). And the former Special Rapporteur on indigenous people, James Anaya, states:

... the Bedouin people share in the characteristics of indigenous peoples worldwide, including a *connection to lands and the maintenance of cultural traditions* that are distinct from those of majority populations. Further, the grievances of the Bedouins, *stemming from their distinct cultural identities and their connection to their traditional lands*, can be identified as representing the types of problems to which the international human rights regime related to indigenous peoples has been designed to respond. (Anaya, UN report, 2011, 30, para 25, emphasis added)

These justifications reconfigure Bedouin land claims as a matter of lifestyle preservation (see Abu-Saad and Creamer 2012; Stavenhagen and Amara 2012). The modern settler state is tasked with accommodating and recognising indigenous culture – not as a burden, but as part of a multicultural governance of difference. As stated by Stavenhagen and Amara, 'the Israeli state should be responsive to the distinctive culture and lifestyle of Bedouins as an indigenous people' (Stavenhagen and Amara, 185).

The scholarship on Bedouin indigeneity has idealised multiculturalism, as exemplified in its repeated reference to the Australian jurisprudence on Aboriginal land rights and Australian multiculturalism as a model (see Sheehan 2012; Yiftachel 2012). As a result, it fails to engage with the complicity of multiculturalism in the continued governance of indigenous people and their right to the land. In her book *The Cunning of Recognition*, Elizabeth Povinelli unpacks the ways in which Australian liberal multiculturalism has produced particular forms of governance and domination that centre narratives of respect and tolerance of cultural difference, replacing colonial policies of assimilation. This shift, she suggests, has reinforced a liberal understanding of difference that is embedded in the production, perpetuation and celebration of an imaginary of Australia along a progressive multicultural ethos of nation-building, in which the tolerance of indigenous cultures – as long as they are not repugnant – plays a constitutive role (Povinelli 2002). Liberal multiculturalism, Povinelli further suggests, functions not only as a form of governance,

but also as a mechanism and a structure of domination that relies on coercing ‘subaltern and minority subjects to identify with the impossible object of an authentic self-identity’ (Povinelli 2002, 6).

Offering a further critique of the paradigm of liberal multiculturalism, Wolfe posits that the adoption of multiculturalism by the settler state has been a response to indigenous resistance. Through multiculturalism, he argues, ‘settler states have sought to depoliticise Indigenous difference by reducing it to the toxified arena of cultural variety, a sovereignty-free zone’ (Wolfe 2016b, 271). The focus on recognition of multicultural identities, Bhandar further argues, leaves ‘existing political and economic structures intact, and does not push the boundaries of existing social relations past the point of “tolerance” of cultural differences’ (Bhandar 2007, 20).

Multicultural domination extends beyond the symbolic realm and is translated also into jurisprudence on land cases. The experiences of indigenous people in Canada and Australia are exemplary of how multicultural governance of cultural difference has in itself become a structure of domination that can enhance indigenous dispossession and the denial of indigenous entitlement to the land. Jurisprudence in land entitlement cases in both Australia and Canada reveals that cultural authenticity has become a legal principle for defining whether indigenous people have retained their rights to the land. In Canada, Bhandar argues, courts have conditioned indigenous rights to the land on the ability of indigenous people to demonstrate their continued practice of customs and traditions (Bhandar 2011). Focusing on Australia, Elizabeth Povinelli shows that even in the celebrated 1992 Mabo case, ‘the court found that Aboriginal Australians retained their native title interests in land *if* they retained the traditional customs, beliefs, and practices that created the substance of their difference’ (Povinelli 1998, 587, emphasis in original). Consequently, ‘indigenous performances of cultural difference must conform generally to the imaginary of Aboriginal traditions and more specifically to the legal definition of “traditional Aboriginal owner”’ (Povinelli 1998, 590; for more on the conditioning of land rights on cultural authenticity in Australia, see Maddison 2009, ch 6).

Such forms of conditionality make multicultural conceptions of indigeneity complicit in the erasures of settler colonialism. As the case of the Palestinians shows, where indigenous groups are no longer seen to meet the cultural tenets of indigeneity, or where they do not exhibit such characteristics to begin with (for example, urban Palestinians), indigeneity can be questioned and even denied. Mohammad Zeidan, the executive director of the Arab Association for Human Rights, explains:

How much can we speak of the inhabitants of Nazareth as indigenous? If we want to follow the strict academic definitions or the definitions of the UNDRIP, we can only speak of the Bedouin as indigenous – a traditional society that lives on and is attached to the land. This does not apply to Nazareth or Um Al Fahem. It is not our problem, it's the UNDRIP. It is so limited. It was easier to define the Palestinians as indigenous decades ago. The signifiers of the relationship with the land were much clearer. (Interview, Mohammad Zeidan 2013)

Playing the 'culture card' to claim land rights can leverage opportunities in the short term, but it is a risky proposition in the long term (S. Deloria 2002, 58). As long as indigenous claims to land are articulated and justified on grounds of culture, indigenous people risk losing or undermining their claims to land. As Sam Deloria pointedly argues:

... if we stake out a position that says that our right to self-government is tied to our dedication, our adherence to culture, don't you see what that does to us in the legal and political arena? That is, we are saying for the first time, *we* are saying, it's conditional. (Deloria 2002, 58, emphasis added)

The Naqab Bedouin face a similar risk. The political implications of focusing the gaze on culture could be grave in the long term. Paraphrasing Deloria, this means that, for the first time, the Naqab Bedouin risk saying *it's conditional*.

3.4 Indigeneity: An Anti-Politics Machine

The Naqab Bedouin have mobilised indigeneity in their challenge of state racialisation, culturalisation and ethnicisation. However, the discourse and framework of indigeneity have paradoxically also reinforced the gaze on culture and resulted in perpetuating the fragmentation of the Palestinian people along ethnic and religious lines. As stated by Awad Abu-Freih:

I feel the indigenous discourse is dangerously disconnecting us from our Palestinian identity and belonging. If I say I am indigenous, we start talking of a separate people who are distinct from the rest of the Palestinian population. I am not interested in

divide and rule. At the same time, we are indigenous. Why should I deny my indigeneity? (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)⁶³

The development of Bedouin indigeneity along culturalist lines has framed the Bedouin struggle as a multicultural accommodative political project centred on frameworks of citizenship, recognition, reconciliation and transitional justice. This approach has further rested on the normalisation of the settler state, its authority and its sovereignty. In their work on Bedouin indigeneity, Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar suggest that:

... rather than forming a bone of contention, indigeneity can be used as an historical opening. It presents an opportunity for redressing the colonial relations existing in the Negev since the late 1940s. This is because under certain circumstances, the indigenous concept enables (mutual) recognition and flexibility. Indigeneity and customary traditions, rather than the strict letter of the law, are open to mediation and mutual adjustment, instead of the current reliance on rigid legalities or violent dictates. In such a process, recognition can progress mutually, enabling the transformation ... of Israeli Jews from a settler, to a non-colonizing, homeland group. We therefore suggest thinking about indigeneity as an opportunity to give substance to Bedouin-Palestinian citizenship, based on the UNDRIP principles outlined above. This will enable the reconciliation of rivaling cultures brought together by fate of history and geography, whose futures are intertwined in the Negev/Naqab. To do so, the ruling forces must shift their paradigm and transform their treatment of indigenous Bedouins *from oppression and denials to recognition and rights* – the sooner, the better. (Yiftachel, Roded and A. Kedar 2016, 25–6, emphasis in original)

Their approach exemplifies Glen Sean Coulthard's argument that 'the purportedly diversity-affirming forms of state recognition and accommodation defended by some proponents of contemporary liberal recognition politics can subtly reproduce nonmutual and unfree relations rather than free and mutual ones' (Coulthard 2014, 17; for additional critique on the politics of recognition, see Bhandar 2011 and, in the context of Australian multiculturalism, Povinelli 2002).

Framing indigeneity as a multicultural project of recognition had led some grassroots Palestinian Bedouin activists – particularly (but not limited to) the youngest generation – to favour resistance grounded in Palestinian nationalism (not liberal nationalism). The agenda of these new movements among the Naqab Bedouin have come to favour an

⁶³ Similar concern was raised in my interviews with Amir Abu-Kweder (2014); Awad Abu-Freih (2013); Huda Abu-Obaid (2014); Mohammad Zeidan (2013); and Nabila Espanioly (2013).

antagonistic project of decolonisation framed around demands for self-determination, sovereignty and the dismantling of the settler colonial regime. As Huda Abu Obaid, a Bedouin activist, explains:

I am not with the use of the term indigenous people. When you use this phrase, you effectively legitimise the existence of the occupier. You accept the reality as it is. But here the Zionist existence is illegitimate, not acceptable. I instead use the term of the Palestinian Bedouin society in the Naqab. I don't want to legitimise the Zionist ideology, which is built on the takeover of our land. (Interview, Huda Abu Obaid 2014)

Suhad Bishara, a land rights lawyer in Adalah, also argues that the indigenous framework is based on the normalisation of the settler polity and the naturalisation of settler sovereignty:

For me, the issue of the utility of indigeneity is whether this framework is suitable to our historical and political context. In the context of the indigenous framework, you already have certain experiences in the US, Australia – states that emerged as colonial. The discourse there makes peace with the colonial system that already exists. There is no talk about dismantling the settler state. Do we want to find a way that we can live with the settler state and the colonial system as indigenous? I think this is the main consideration. Is this framework compatible with our political vision and desire? Some might answer this question with a 'yes, we want equality and to find a way to live within the system'. Others tell you, 'this is my homeland, and I want it back'. Using the indigeneity framework in the context of occupation is very problematic. (Interview, Suhad Bishara 2013)

Nonetheless, as in other cases of indigenous struggles, Bedouin activists appropriate 'the universal "indigenous" label when engaging strategically with laws, institutions and social movements' (Saul 2016, 24). As Amir Abu Kweder states:

To an extent, we have internalised the use of this indigenous discourse, especially when we advocate foreign audiences. We use it since it gives us access to the UN and other international forums. I personally try to avoid this discourse as much as possible. But sometimes, I use indigeneity as an instrumental tool, but not as an ideological one. Nonetheless, the Palestinianisation of our society is much stronger than any parallel process of trying to distort our identity and transform it into a folklorised and exoticised form of identity. (Interview, Amir Abu Kweder 2014)

4. Repressive Authenticity and the Double Bind of Culturally Based Rights

Indigeneity, as Wolfe pointedly reminds us, 'is not just a matter of native self-ascription. It is also, among other things, a matter of settler imposition' (Wolfe 2006b, 26). In his

important book *Indians in Unexpected Places*, Philip Deloria illuminates how cultural expectations have become constitutive to the representation and governing of indigenous people in the United States (P. J. Deloria 2004). Expectations, he suggests, are ‘the dense economies of meaning, representation, and act that have inflicted both American culture writ large and individuals, both Indian and non-Indian’ (P. J. Deloria 2004, 11).

The focus on cultural distinctiveness has subjected the Naqab Bedouin to a particular structure of expectations that is entrenched in racial stereotypes and oriental imaginaries of Bedouin culture. To continue to be recognised as indigenous, the Naqab Bedouin are expected to demonstrate ‘an archaic lifestyle’ (Thuen 2006, 24). As a result, they are subjected to the violence of ‘repressive authenticity’ (Wolfe 1994), based on the expectation that they continue to obey the cultural tenets of indigeneity by playing authentic Bedouin.

Repressive demands for indigenous authenticity are not limited to the symbolic realm; they also have significant implications to the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions that shape indigenous lives and entitlement to rights. In her work on native gaming wealth in the United States, Jessica Cattelino argues that the sovereignty of Native Americans hinges on a settler imaginary of indigenous people as poor. Native Americans, she argues, face a double bind of need-based sovereignty: ‘American Indian tribes can undertake gaming only because of their sovereignty, and yet gaming wealth threatens to undermine that very sovereignty’ (Cattelino 2010, 237). Indigenous wealth renders non-poor Indians as no longer being ‘real’ Indians, compromising their sovereignty.

The Naqab Bedouin also face a double bind. They are recognised as indigenous because they are seen to conform to the cultural tenets of indigeneity. However, any deviation from premodernity – any sign of ‘modernisation’, ‘urbanisation’ and ‘progress’ – compromises their claims for indigeneity. The argument made by Law-Yone exemplifies this double bind: ‘since almost all the true nomadic population in Israel have become sedentarized, it is technically incorrect to call them Bedouins’ (Law-Yone 2003, 183). In their efforts to undermine Bedouin claims of indigeneity, some Zionist scholars have argued that the Naqab Bedouin have been urbanised and no longer exhibit the nomadic

lifestyle and the characteristics of tribal society that are used to justify their claims for indigeneity (Yahel, Frantzman and Kark 2012).

Repressive demands for authenticity also extend to sympathisers and supporters. As Niezen suggests, solidarity often:

... comes with a price because, to succeed, indigenous leaders must, to some extent, tailor their forms of cultural expression and exercise of power to the tastes and inclinations of their outside sympathizers. The politics of embarrassment brings with it the risk of collective self-stereotyping in conformity with broadly accepted ideals of indigenous authenticity. The consumers of indigenous identity are intolerant of economic and political strategies that are inconsistent with their image of what an Indian society, in its many iterations, should entail. (Niezen 2005, 593–4)

Recent years have seen hundreds of delegations of diplomats, international organisations and solidarity activists (Israeli and international) visit unrecognised Bedouin villages. These villages are often in dire condition after decades of state refusal to deliver basic services. In some cases, particularly in villages that have been subjected to repeated house demolitions, families live in tents or shacks. The spectacle of suffering is inescapable. Supporters, however, can also see this suffering as a manifestation of ‘simplicity’. Simplicity becomes fetishised as an authentic expression of Bedouin premodern culture, ignoring the underlying state policies of dispossession, de-development and impoverishment. As Awad Abu-Freih explains:

Some people who visit us are in love with our simplicity, the connection to the land, living in harmony with nature, etc. Multiculturalism today has become a trend. Some of the people are in solidarity with us because they value our culture and think it deserves to be preserved. They want us to stay this way, preserve our simplicity. They want us to maintain our way of life, not to surrender to modernity. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)⁶⁴

The Palestinian Bedouin are also often seen as victims awaiting rescue. As such, the Naqab Bedouin feel the burden of performing a ‘drama of suffering’ (Khalili 2007, 33) in their mobilisation of support and solidarity. As Khalil Al-Amour asserts: ‘I am tired of playing the role of the victim. We are not just victims. We build, we cultivate, we educate, we self-deliver services, and we resist’ (Interview, Khalil Al-Amour 2012).

⁶⁴ This view is echoed in my interviews with Huda Abu Obaid (2014) and Amir Abu-Kweder (2014).

The Naqab Bedouin are also subjected to inspection regimes that regulate Bedouin identities. Solidarity is thus racialised, meaning that the ‘social fact of race shapes the practice of solidarity and the challenges this poses to the project of achieving racial justice’ (Hooker 2009, 4). Racialised solidarity renders expressions of Bedouin agency and modernity as unexpected and even as anomalous (P. J. Deloria 2004). This is not unique to the Bedouin case. Urban Aboriginals in Australia, Maddison argues, are subjected to inspection regimes and are scrutinised over ‘the authenticity of their indigeneity’ (Maddison 2013, 288; see also Maddison 2003). Urban Aboriginals, she argues, live a ‘racialised paradox ... they are not black enough to be “authentic”, but too black to be safely urban’ (Maddison 2013, 295–6). The Naqab Bedouin live a similar racialised paradox. Bedouin who refuse to adhere to a narrative of victimhood and suffering, and those who appear to be too modern, are scrutinised over their inauthenticity and challenged over their claim to indigeneity. Awad Abu-Freih describes his encounters with supporters as follows:

You should see the surprise on people’s faces when I say that I am a doctor of chemistry. How can you be both? As if education and science are incompatible with Bedouin culture and life. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)

Amir Abu Kweder recalls similar encounters:

Foreigners have expectations, it is something that repeats itself in tours and talks. Let me tell you a secret. I never rode a camel. Does that make me less of a Bedouin? A while ago I led a tour of a group from the Jewish community in Australia. We were at Wadi Al-Na’am [an unrecognised village]. They asked me later, ‘How come people here have cutlery, plates, etc? How do they have water?’ [Access to water is not provided by the state, it is self-delivered by the residents.] They argued that the residents of the village seem just fine. They then attacked me personally, saying ‘You are an educated man, wearing jeans. You [Bedouins] need to stop playing the victim role.’ I was too modern for them to be a victim. (Interview, Amir Abu Kweder 2014)

The Bedouin struggle is thus marked by the burden of culture. For the Naqab Bedouin, the yoke of culture is inescapable. This is not only because Israel continues to culturalise the Naqab Bedouin as central to the colonial machinery of domination, or because the native Bedouin are subjected to practices of cultural genocide and have legitimate claims for cultural rights. It is also – and not least importantly – because essentialised conceptions of culture continue to dominate the conversation on indigenous people and

on Bedouin indigeneity. The two – culturalisation by the state, and culturalisation through the liberal discourse on indigeneity – intersect in ways that reinscribe race and power structures between whiteness and indigenous people.

5. Resistance and the Ineligibility of Bedouin Agency

Culture occupies a central – and an ambivalent – place in Bedouin resistance. On the one hand, it is a source of power that can be leveraged for political gains and recognition, especially at the transnational level. On the other hand, the discourse on Bedouin indigeneity is marked by a repressive culturalist gaze that can intersect with the long colonial epistemological production of indigenous people as a primitive non-modern population. This requires Bedouin activists to challenge the colonial/culturalist discourses not only vis-à-vis opponents, but also among the most committed of supporters. As Abu-Freih explains:

Before meeting us, all that our supporters have heard of us is that we want to live in neither a village nor a city. That we want to practise a nomadic life wherever we want, to live in tents, and to take over hundreds of thousands of dunams wherever we want. That we do not want our daughters to study, that we are primitive people who refuse state efforts to urbanise and modernise us. We constantly need to counter this view and explain why we do not accept the state's 'generous' offer to resettle and urbanise us. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)⁶⁵

The Naqab Bedouin capitalise on – and subvert – the indigenous discourse in order to make their struggle visible, both locally and internationally. They build on the oriental interest in their cause and mobilise the spectacle of suffering in order to recruit support and sympathy. As Thabet Abu-Ras, former director of the Naqab Office in Adalah, explains, 'we do not have to say much to explain the state's oppressive policies to diplomats and other delegations, the reality speaks for itself' (Interview, Thabet Abu-Ras 2012). However, once they have ensured access to the 'transnational' and to new audiences, Bedouin activists centre the racial politics of Israel and its policies of dispossession and challenge the state's image as a democracy. In their talks, the Naqab Bedouin tell of their long habitation of the Naqab, the history of their community/tribe/village, and how the State of Israel has been pursuing the destruction of

⁶⁵ The need to challenge state discourses and their circulation transnationally was also raised in my interviews with Aziz Al-Touri (2013) and Amir Abu-Kweder (2014).

Bedouin life in the Naqab. They share their experiences of being subjected to a systemic policy of house demolitions, de-development, harassment and oppression.

No doubt, Bedouin activists use different a range of strategies to challenge their culturalisation, both at the level of the settler state and in the discourse on Bedouin indigeneity. However, as Cattelino points out, structures of expectations are inescapable. In 2013, I joined a solidarity visit by a committed group of radical anti-Zionist Israeli activists to the Bedouin village of Al-Arakib, just a few days after it had been demolished by the state. We decided to leave the city of Jaffa early in the morning, so as to avoid traffic and reach Al-Arakib by 9am. We were welcomed by local activists, who talked us through the most recent of the demolitions that they had endured. They generously and patiently shared with us the history of the village and their experience of state/JNF policies of dispossession, erasure and Judaisation. After two hours, our hosts hinted that the visit had exhausted itself. They exchanged looks and tried to fill the awkwardness in a conversation that clearly had ended. Another Palestinian activist and myself suggested that maybe we should consider leaving before noon, so as not to burden our hosts with having to provide lunch. The other activists replied that ‘it would be rude to leave. They expect to feed us. It is part of their culture’ and that ‘our presence here empowers them’.

A host of stereotypes was at play, ranging from the Bedouin culture of hospitality, to the Bedouin conception of time, to Bedouin victimhood. Guided by a respect to an imagined Bedouin culture, the activists failed to read the subtle-yet-notable hints of our hosts. And, as lunchtime arrived, our hosts were forced to perform the role of good Bedouin. Days after their village was demolished by the state, the men were burdened with shopping for ingredients and preparing the tent, while the women were tasked with cooking and cleaning. As we left (it was already around 3pm), our exhausted hosts moved to welcome the next group of solidarity activists. Against their will, the Bedouin activists had performed the role of authentic Bedouin. Their challenge to their oriental image had gone unnoticed.

This example illuminates that performative indigeneity is not only (or necessarily) a practice of strategic essentialism, but also a practice that is deeply entrenched in the

duress of cultural expectations. It exemplifies the disciplining effect that expectations can have. Expectations can impose themselves even when indigenous people try to challenge and refuse them. The violence of repressive authenticity, argues Cattelino, demands that indigenous peoples refuse and reorganise cultural expectations (Cattelino 2010, 252). We often see Bedouin resistance articulated in the management, negotiation, subversion and rejection of these expectations. Importantly, the question is not whether the Naqab Bedouin can talk or challenge their culturalisation (they can and do), but rather ‘whether their utterances are intelligible in relationships of power’ (Rao 2013, 279).

These relationships of power make the hidden transcripts of resistance (Scott 1990) particularly relevant in the assertion of native agency. The fact that the Bedouin activists ended up offering lunch is subverted as a testament to the inferiority of Israeli culture and the novelty of Bedouin culture. This subversion is articulated through the practice of mockery as a practice that subjects the coloniser to the gaze of the colonised. Through mockery, Bedouin activists challenge their culturalisation and reaffirm their agency.

We can see the centrality of mockery also in the Bedouin response to the Israeli appropriation of their culture. As Aziz Al-Touri has commented: ‘What do they know about the camel, about hospitality? Their culture is a culture of taking. We welcome everyone. Our guests are always treated with respect’ (Interview, Aziz Al-Touri 2013). Mockery facilitates a process of inversion in which Bedouin culture is produced as morally superior to Jewish-Israeli culture, with the latter represented as an individualist society dominated by the greed, emptiness and hollowness of capitalism.

Mockery is further invoked to reveal the hypocrisy in the discourse that produces the Naqab-Bedouin as premodern: ‘If living a modern life is being connected to nature and growing organic food, then we are the gods of modernity’ (Interview, Aziz Al-Touri 2013). It is further mobilised to refuse inspection regimes and the regulation of Bedouin identity along an orientalist imaginary. As Amir Abu-Kweder’s asks: ‘I never rode a camel. Does that make me a less of a Bedouin?’ (Interview, Amir Abu-Kweder 2014). Mockery is also evident when Awad Abu-Freih adds: ‘No, I do not ride a camel to

commute anymore. I use a car to get to my work at university as a professor of chemistry' (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013).

Finally, with the transnationalisation of their struggle, the Naqab-Bedouin are increasingly represented as victims in need of rescue. This view has compromised Bedouin agency and undermined the centrality of resistance-as-*sumud*, a practice that emphasises the 'possibility of political praxis outside the space of normalized forms of politics' (Meari 2014, 549). Through mockery, Bedouin activists undermine the white/liberal saviour complex and question 'whether a human rights activism operating in a colonial context can be an emancipating force' (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012, 106). As Nawal, a Bedouin woman resident of an unrecognised village, proclaims 'human rights organizations need our help, not the other way around' (Nawal in Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012, 126). Aziz Al-Touri adds, 'those who can make a difference are only the land owners, the people who struggle every day for justice, those in *sumud*' (Interview, Aziz Al-Touri 2013).

While a human rights vocabulary can be strategically invoked in order to communicate grievances in a universal language, the Naqab Bedouin insist on reclaiming their agency by positioning the *sumud* of ordinary Bedouin at the centre of their discourse. *Sumud* is seen as an authentic form of resistance that is disassociated from the discourses of capital and of privileged civil society to which many of the marginalised have no autonomous unmediated access. By emphasising *sumud* and mocking the rescue narrative, activists reassert Bedouin agency and challenge the liberal grammar of human rights.

6. Hybrid Identities and the Decoupling of Land Rights and Culture

Indigeneity is not only a discursive field defined by others. It is also a discursive field shaped by indigenous people themselves, bringing their own meanings, concepts and interpretations (Wolfe 2006b). As Khalili argues:

... the local adoption of the language of rights and development can intrude upon the transnational depoliticizing logic, and can modify the meaning and intent of the language through domesticating it. (Khalili 2007, 38)

This is also the case for the Palestinian Bedouin. Some modalities and discourses of resistance (mobilised particularly by the younger generation of Bedouin activists) reveal innovative imaginaries that challenge the repressive demands for authenticity and conceptions of indigeneity that are premised on the principle of cultural distinctiveness and the fetishisation of premodernity.

Bedouin activists refuse to be subjected to a polarised discourse of traditionalism and modernity. Similarly to other indigenous people, the Naqab Bedouin ‘seem to share a desire to create collective futures for themselves that do not succumb to either side of the oppositional structures they face: to be Indigenous or to be modern’ (Shaw 2008, 5). Challenging the view of Bedouinness and modernity as incompatible, activists assert a hybridised conception of Bedouin identity that brings modernity and traditionalism together. Being Bedouin, they argue, does not require the rejection of science, technology, modern agriculture, education and Western medicine. It is not about keeping Bedouin culture isolated and intact. It is, rather, about developing Bedouin life and culture on their own terms, not on terms imposed by others:

We [the Naqab Bedouin] are prevented from having a modern desert life. We are only given two options: either super-fast urbanism or that I die in the desert. I want neither. We are indigenous and we have the right to develop and progress. I want a rural life with scientific progress, under the condition that I maintain my own land and identity. I live multiculturalism. It enriches me. I take what I want from other cultures and keep what I want from my own culture. What I take from the West, however, cannot compromise my identity, belonging and culture. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)

Bedouin activists tap into – and subvert – the liberal discourse and ethos of the freedom to assert autonomy and sovereignty by arguing for the right of the Naqab Bedouin to choose which lifestyle they wish to follow. Amir Abu-Kweder articulates the idea of freedom to choose as being core to the Bedouin struggle:

The issue here is about choosing to lead the life that you want to lead. It is about the right to shape your own life and to choose how to exercise your identity. I want people to be able to choose the life they want to lead, to live in dignity – a cliché, but important. My vision is prospering villages. Some people will have olive trees, others will raise sheep and goats. Others will be bourgeoisie like me, smoking a cigar on their balcony and reading a stupid book on self-improvement. Some villagers and villagers will rely on agriculture, others will also have high-tech. Some will work in

the village, others outside of it. It will be a place where people can live in dignity, dream, raise their children. (Amir Abu Kweder 2014)

Awad Abu-Freih adds:

I am today a doctor in chemistry. I want my land. It does not matter if I want to build a house, to build a tent, or to build whatever. The bottom line is that we want to keep our land. We love our land. Let us keep our land and we will make the choice. (Interview, Awad Abu-Freih 2013)

This liberal discourse enables activists to challenge the state discourse on modernising the Naqab Bedouin through urbanisation. The state's refusal to allow Bedouin to choose their own way of life – a right exclusively reserved for (Ashkenazi) Israeli-Jews – is used by activists to expose Zionism's racial logics, policies and structures.

Not least importantly, this discourse allows activists to counter the narrative on Bedouin indigeneity that conditions land rights on cultural authenticity, performativity and distinctiveness. The right of the Naqab Bedouin to retain their historical lands and to live their chosen lifestyle is premised on an understanding of indigeneity as a political identity. The decoupling of land rights from principles of cultural difference reflects how Bedouin activists politicise, subvert, rearticulate and rework the indigeneity framework.

Insisting on the freedom to choose articulates indigeneity as a simple – yet radical – criterion of 'prior presence of indigenous peoples before the arrival of new settlers' (Nasasra 2012, 86). The politics of indigeneity, as Wolfe reminds us, is 'first and foremost a politics of land' (Wolfe 2006b, 26). Instead of asking the Naqab-indigenous Bedouin to prove their indigeneity along culturalised lines, we must refocus our scholarly (and activist) gaze on the racial-colonial rationales, policies and structures of Zionism that have governed Bedouin lives for almost seven decades. Decoupling land rights from the principle of cultural distinctiveness is an opportunity to reclaim indigeneity as an antagonist political category, rather than a negotiated identity. In other words, it is an opportunity to insist that Bedouin rights to the land are *not* conditional. After all, it is the continued Zionist pursuit of native land – not a fetishised authentic premodern culture – that renders land central to the struggle of the indigenous Bedouin.

Conclusion

Part II of this thesis has illuminated the racial and ethnic dimensions (and their gendering) of settler colonial violence and resistance to it. More specifically, it has focused on exploring the ways in which culture – and culturalisation – figures in shaping both the subjugation and the resistance of the Palestinian Bedouin to Israeli settler colonialism, demonstrating how culture has been constituted simultaneously as a dominating and an emancipating force.

Chapters 3 and 4 have suggested that we need to understand the subjugation and resistance of the Palestinian Bedouin in light of the particular racialising logic of the Israeli state as a liberal settler state. Critically, they have demonstrated that these logics cannot be understood outside of the intersectionality of race with ethnicity and gender.

The racialisation and ethnicisation of the Bedouin by the state have been central to the dispossession of their land. The Naqab Bedouin have been produced as a culturally distinct and premodern society in need of modernisation (understood as urbanisation). For decades, the Naqab Bedouin have resisted through litigation and from within state institutions. Failing to achieve justice, the Naqab-Bedouin have mobilised indigeneity as an alternative framework for making land claims.

The international indigenous rights regime plays an important role in empowering indigenous struggles and claims, and the Bedouin case is no exception. However, the recognition of Naqab Bedouin as indigenous has been grounded in a culturalised conception of indigeneity and the fetishisation of the indigenous as premodern. Recognition has been justified through principles of cultural distinctiveness and non-dominance. Through the mobilisation of indigeneity, the Naqab Bedouin and the organisations working on their behalf have transformed Bedouin cultural difference from a technology of colonial domination into a moral justification for rights. The culturalised discourse on Bedouin indigeneity has thus converged in disturbing ways with the racialisation, ethnicisation and culturalisation of the Bedouin by the liberal settler state, reproducing epistemological assumptions that locate the Bedouin population outside of

modernity. This intersection is best explained as a result of the liberalism that underlies both the settler state and the indigenous discourse and rights regime.

The Naqab Bedouin face the burden of culture and the violence of repressive authenticity. Activists have responded to the violence of repressive authenticity with hybridised modalities of resistance. Some are accommodative, some are antagonistic and rejectionist, and others are subversive. Facing systematic marginalisation, exclusion and dispossession, the Naqab Bedouin play the culture card. They capitalise on the indigenous discourse and rights framework to leverage access to new audiences and to expand opportunities for resistance. To this end, native Bedouin engage in self-essentialising and self-exoticising practices. They also mobilise a drama of suffering as a political asset (Khalili 2007, 33). These strategies have been joined by practices and discourses that refuse the logic that conditions entitlement to land rights on cultural authenticity and the dichotomy between traditionalism and modernity, thereby politicising, subverting and reworking the indigenous framework. Importantly, Bedouin resistance continues to be premised on an antagonistic and rejectionist modality of resistance that centres defiance of settler sovereignty. This is achieved mainly through the everyday practice of *sumud*.

The Naqab Bedouin have thus responded to the discourse of indigeneity with ambivalence. This ambivalence is articulated in a simultaneous deployment and refusal of indigenous rights. Threats of further dispossession of land and mass displacement of Bedouin communities mean that the ability to unequivocally and antagonistically refuse indigeneity is often a matter of privilege. The mobilisation of indigeneity as a form of strategic essentialism should be understood as the outcome of extreme structural conditions of marginality shaped by the violence of settler colonialism and its racialising regimes.

PART III

The Politics of Refusal in the Palestinian Queer Movement

Introduction to Part III

Part III moves to focus on the struggle of the Palestinian queer (PQueer) movement. It explores the racialised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial violence and domination, considers how these shape PQueer subjectivities and modalities of resistance, and identifies the ways in which the transnational is imbricated within these processes. While Part II focused on the ways in which Palestinian Bedouin resistance has been shaped in light of the culturalisation and fetishisation of the Naqab Bedouin as premodern subjects, this part explores the PQueer movement in light of the transnational LGBT discourse that builds on the ambivalent folding of racialised queers into modernity.

More specifically, Part III considers the ways in which the PQueer movement is situated between different discourses, representations and circuits of power that operate on local, national and transnational registers. It explores how PQueer protest sensibilities and modalities of resistance have developed in relation to the particularities of sexual politics in Israel/Palestine, Palestinian nationalism, Western sexual liberalism and the epistemic violence that underscores them.

Part III comprises two chapters. Chapter 5, 'Settler Homonationalism: Domination and Sexuality in Israel/Palestine', investigates the gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial domination, while Chapter 6, 'Refusal as Emancipation', is concerned with PQueer organising and mobilisation. More specifically, Chapter 5 focuses on the entanglement of homonationalism and homocolonialism with orientalism, imperialism and settler colonialism to theorise the working of sexual politics in the context of Israel/Palestine. It further examines the ambivalent place that PQueers occupy in the metanarrative of Western sexual modernity and the script of sexual liberation.

Chapter 6 considers the complex and ambivalent ways in which PQueers have responded to – and engaged with – the liberal violence of the settler state and the liberal politics of global LGBT rights. It focuses on the ways in which PQueer subjectivities, protest sensibilities and modalities of resistance have developed in relation to – and against – the encounter with the Israeli LGBT community, homonationalism, the homocolonial practice of pinkwashing, and the Gay International. Lastly, the chapter explores the dilemmas that PQueers face in their mobilisation and the strategies that they employ in their challenge of both cultural imperialism and settler colonial domination.

PQueer organising began in the early 2000s with the formation of two LGBT groups: Aswat: Palestinian Gay Women, and AIQaws for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society. The PQueer movement, therefore, has only recently begun to draw scholarly attention. The (limited) study of the PQueer movement, moreover, has been confined to postcolonial transnational queer studies (see Amireh 2010; Darwich and Maikey 2014; Elia 2012; Hochberg et al 2010; Maikey and Stelder 2015; Ritchie 2010, 2014, 2015; Schulman 2012).

Similar to the struggles of other groups, PQueer organising has been ignored in the wider study of Palestinian resistance in Israel. This thesis brings the PQueer movement (along with the Palestinian Bedouin struggle) into the study of Palestinian resistance and politics in Israel in order to understand the broader dynamics that shape settler colonial domination and modalities of resistance and how these are informed by the liberal and colonial violence of the liberal settler state and by human rights discourses.

Aswat and AIQaws emerged as part of the mushrooming of Palestinian NGOs (PNGOs) in Israel and the consolidation of autonomous Palestinian civil society. However, with time, AIQaws and the PQueer movement against Israeli settler colonialism – marked most specifically by the establishment of Palestinian Queers for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (PQBDS) in 2010 – have developed to represent PQueers from both sides of the Separation Wall⁶⁶, defying colonial borders and the fragmentation of the Palestinian

⁶⁶ The Separation Wall is also known as the separation barrier, security barrier and apartheid wall. The Wall was initiated by Israel in 2000, the wall was designed to separate Israel and the West

people. To be clear, I do not seek to appropriate the PQueer movement as a movement of '48 Palestinians. However, its transformation from an organisation that emerged as part of an Israeli and '48 Palestinian civil society into a Palestinian movement is a unique trajectory that is a particularly telling case study for broader questions involving Palestinian resistance in Israel. This experience illuminates a different modality of resistance and a different political project, one that is rooted in a radical and uncompromising anticolonial and anti-imperial agenda that refuses, on the one hand, the ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism and, on the other hand, the imperial vocabulary and emancipatory promise of the Western liberal gay agenda.

Part III argues that the particular racialising logics to which PQueers are subjected have played an important role in shaping their resistance. PQueer resistance, it is argued, has developed from one based on accommodative and liberal LGBT politics to an antagonistic anticolonial and anti-imperial movement. This transformation has been informed by a Fanonian reading of the colonial condition as dichotomous and total and by a Fanonian politics of rejection/refusal/negation and the restructuring of the self. Refusal is articulated in the rejection of the cultural imperialism of the Gay International, its models of sexual emancipation, and the liberal quest to modernise and 'save' PQueers. It is also articulated in an *en bloc* rejection of the colonial settler state and a rejection of political projects that centre citizenship, recognition and inclusion. Refusal is leveraged as a political imperative and a pedagogy of resistance. It is also constituted as part of a larger project of recovering PQueer subjectivity under powerful structures of erasure.

Methodologically, Part III is based on interviews with prominent PQueer activists, most of whom are associated with Aswat, AIQaws and PQBDS. To expand the engagement with PQueer voices, I make use of blogs and cultural and political writings in diverse online platforms published in both Arabic and English. In addition, I build on participant observation, my experiences attending talks by PQueers, and online videos of public talks, workshops and conferences that feature PQueers. I also make use of textual sources,

Bank. While in principle it should be based on the 1967 Green Line, 85% of the wall is in West Bank territory. The International Court of Justice has found the wall to be a violation of international law.

including NGO materials, newspaper articles, feature stories, op-eds, speeches by global and Israeli leaders, Israeli *hasbara* materials, films and visual images. Finally, some of the interviewees quoted in this part of the thesis have requested anonymity; therefore, their names have been changed.

Chapter 5

Settler Homonationalism, Domination and Sexuality in Israel/Palestine

Introduction

This chapter focuses on theorising sexual politics in Israel/Palestine, illuminating the racialised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of Zionist settler colonial domination. The chapter also introduces the theoretical framework and concepts that guide the discussion of PQueer resistance in Chapter 6. It builds on Jasbir Puar's theorisation of homonationalism (Puar 2007), Momin Rahman's concept of homocolonialism (Rahman 2014), and Joseph Massad's work on the Gay International and the universalisation of a Western sexual epistemology and ontology (Massad 2007).

The chapter is composed of three sections. Building on postcolonial feminist and queer studies, the first section focuses on the particular workings of homonationalism in shaping sexual politics in Israel/Palestine. It proposes that sexual politics in Israel and the state's relatively progressive position on gay rights cannot be disassociated from the larger Zionist project of settler encroachment and ethnic cleansing, along with its racialising logics. Sexual politics in Israel/Palestine need to be understood in light of Israel's broader policies that regulate Palestinian family life and reproductive rights, as well as the state's anti-miscegenation policies. These, I suggest, are embedded in racialised sexual regimes that work to tame Palestinian desire, safeguard Jewish racial purity, and bolster Jewish demographic superiority.

The second section begins by looking at the ways in which the consolidation of the 'queer question' has been translated into new forms of neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism. It discusses the particular ways in which Islam has figured in Western homonational and homocolonial discourses, and how these representations have reinforced and reproduced xenophobia, Islamophobia and Arabophobia. The section then moves to discuss Israel's

homocolonial practice of pinkwashing – the invocation of gay rights in order to divert attention from and to justify its occupation of Palestine. I suggest that pinkwashing should be understood as part of the longer history of Zionist investment in aligning itself with Western liberalism. Pinkwashing, I argue, should be conceptualised as being intrinsic to a process of naturalising Israel’s sovereignty and its claims to the land of Palestine.

The third and final section explores the place that PQueers occupy in liberal LGBT politics, focusing specifically on their framing as victims in need of rescue and the view of queerness and Palestinianness as being incompatible. I suggest a reading of the rescue paradigm as a gendered and sexualised manifestation of settler indigenisation processes that naturalise settlers as proper to the land.

1. Homonationalism and Sexual Politics in Israel/Palestine

It is important to note that homonationalism has scalar movement between local, national, and transnational sites; from the internal contradictions that homonationalism produces within Israel, to the production of Israel as liberal and progressive in relation to the homophobia of Palestine, to the level of global transnational organising where homonationalism translates – within a liberal telos of progress – onto this register as well. (Puar 2011a, 138)

Sexual politics in Israel/Palestine should be understood within the broader history – and contemporary workings – of imperialism, colonialism and settler colonialism as deeply racialised, gendered and sexualised phenomena (for sexual dimensions of settler colonialism, see Morgensen 2011, 2012a; Smith 2010). As postcolonial and transnational feminist and queer studies have shown, imperial and settler colonial forces have long invoked the mission of saving native women in order to justify colonial domination and imperial expansion and to produce whiteness as racially superior. Examples include British efforts to abolish the practice of *sati* in India (Spivak 1988), the French mission to modernise and unveil Muslim women in Algeria (Fanon 1965), and the recent US endeavour to liberate Muslim women in Iraq and Afghanistan (Abu-Lughod 2002). The recent French banning of the *burkini* – and the images of armed police on a beach in Nice forcing a Muslim woman to remove her clothes (Quinn 2016) – further demonstrates how Muslim women’s bodies have become a site of imperial/colonial contestation. Israel is no different from other colonial powers that have sought to justify their violence through

a gendered civilisation mission. As shown in Part I, since its early days Israel has been appropriating '48 Palestinian women in Israel to present itself as a modern, civilising and liberating force.

The consolidation and internationalisation of women's rights, Lila Abu-Lughod argues, have been marked by a 'new common sense' of going to war in the name of women's rights (Abu-Lughod 2013). Gradually, this mindset was expanded to include gay rights, with the treatment of gays becoming 'a barometer by which the right to and capacity for national sovereignty is evaluated' (Puar 2013a, 336). For example, in the discourse on Iran – especially before the nuclear deal – gay rights were used to rationalise the potential infringement of Iran's sovereignty (Puar 2007). More recently, the treatment by ISIS of gay men was invoked to justify intervention (Cowburn 2016). The case of ISIS was discussed even by the UN Security Council – the first time in its history that it has addressed LGBT issues (Segalov 2015).

Jasbir Puar argues that 'the "Woman Question" is now being supplemented with the "Homosexual Question"', meaning that 'the question of "how do you treat your women?" as a determining factor of a nation's capacity for sovereignty has now been appended with the barometer of "how well do you treat your homosexuals?"' (Puar 2011a, 139).

The queer question has become the new marker for modernity and civility, by which states and nations – and civilisations – are divided (gay-friendly and non-gay-friendly nations/cultures/peoples); otherness is devised (not only in relation to the West and the Rest, but also in relation to internal racialised others); and imperial interventions are justified ('have you seen how they treat their gays?') (Puar 2013a, 2013b; Rahman 2014).

Building on Lisa Duggan's concept of homonormativity (Duggan 2002),⁶⁷ Puar develops the concept of homonationalism – a portmanteau for national homosexuality – to explain how the homosexual question has come to occupy such a central place in national and

⁶⁷ According to Duggan, homonormativity is:

... a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions – such as marriage, and its call for monogamy and reproduction – but upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption. (Duggan 2002, 179)

international politics. Homonationalism, Puar suggests, is a process of inclusion of some homonormative gay subjects (predominantly white) as legitimate members of the national body. It is the rise of the patriot gay subject as a participant in, and reinforcer and (re)producer of, nationalism, racial hierarchies, imperialism and settler colonialism (Puar 2006). In the words of Puar, homonationalism is a:

... facet of modernity and a historical shift marked by the entrance of (some) homosexual bodies as worthy of protection by nation-states, a constitutive and fundamental reorientation of the relationship between the state, capitalism, and sexuality. (Puar 2013a, 337)

Recent years have seen an increased international commitment to LGBT rights and to the recognition of gay rights as human rights. In her speech on Human Rights Day in 2011, Hillary Clinton, then Secretary of State, confirmed the US commitment to promoting LGBTQ rights, both nationally and globally, and called other nations to join the United States and ‘be on the right side of history’ (quoted in Huffington Post 2011).⁶⁸ In ‘The Time Has Come’, his historic speech to the Human Rights Council in 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon confirmed the UN’s commitment to advancing gay rights. Ban called on states to decriminalise same-sex conduct, respect gay rights, and promote LGBT equality (quoted in Huff-Hannon 2012). The following year, the United Kingdom enacted the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. In the United States, the military’s ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ policy was repealed in 2011 and the Supreme Court ruled in 2015 that state bans on same-sex marriage were unconstitutional.⁶⁹ International financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have also incorporated commitment to gay rights into their agendas (Rao 2015).

Importantly, the recognition of sexual citizenship by the nation-state, Puar argues, has been paralleled by a deprivation – and even a retraction – of rights both from non-homonormative sexual others and from racialised others (poor, non-white immigrant, black, Muslim and indigenous communities). Understood along the registers of class and race and as an assemblage, homonationalism, argues Puar, is marked by:

... the concomitant rise in the legal, consumer and representative recognition of LGBTQ subjects and the curtailing of welfare provisions, in migrant rights and the

⁶⁸ For more information on the Obama administration’s promotion of gay rights, see https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/lgbt_record.pdf, accessed 10 September 2016.

⁶⁹ *Obergefell v Hodges*, 576 US __ (2015).

expansion of state power to engage in surveillance, detention and deportation. The narrative of progress for gay rights is thus built on the backs of racialised and sexualised others, for whom such progress was either once achieved but is now backsliding or has yet to arrive. (Puar 2013b, 25)

An example of the interplay between extending rights to gays and retracting rights from racialised minorities is exemplified in two US Supreme Court decisions released in the same week of June 2013. The first decision nullified section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which provided federal government oversight of the states in order to protect the voting rights of African-American citizens.⁷⁰ The second decision led to recognition by the federal government of same-sex marriage.⁷¹ The timing of the two verdicts and their outcomes – extending civil rights to gays while retracting civil and political rights from African-Americans – is indicative of these homonationalist times and the hierarchisation of bodies. In the words of Irene Monroe, an African-American lesbian activist, ‘the Supreme Court’s rulings force LGBTQ people of color, like me, to reside a bifurcated reality in terms of full civil rights protections’ (Monroe 2013). The production of gay rights as the barometer of modernity is used to reaffirm American exceptionalism and to bolster the fantasy of the United States as a post-racial society.

The incorporation of gays into the nation-state did not bypass Israel. The 1990s (also known as the ‘gay rights decade’) were an important period in the folding of Israeli queers as legitimate members of the Israeli-Jewish nation-state and nationalism. Israeli gays secured significant rights through litigation in the Supreme Court. These achievements included the abolition of discrimination in the Israeli army; the provision to same-sex partners of equal rights to workplace benefits; the realisation of parental rights, especially for lesbian couples; and the recognition of marital status for same-sex couples (Gross 2000, 2013; Kadish 2005; Ziv 2010).

The Israeli gay movement has embraced the racialised logics of settler citizenship by placing Zionism at the centre of its politics and naturalising the Israeli state as a ‘horizon of freedom’ (Morgensen 2012b, 170). By focusing on the integration of queers into the nation and its military apparatus and on the right of lesbians to parenthood, Israeli gays

⁷⁰ *Shelby County v Holder*, 570 US __ (2013).

⁷¹ *United States v Windsor*, 570 US __ (2013).

did not undermine the (re)productive roles that Zionism has designated to men and women (Kadish in Gross 2013a). Furthermore, as Anat Lieber rightly argues, Israeli gays ‘challenged neither the venues to inclusion in the Israeli regime of citizenship, nor the boundaries of the national collective’ (Lieber in Ziv 2010, 540). An example is a recent ruling by the Ministry of Interior, which determined that the Law of Return should be extended to Jews in same-sex marriages who decide to immigrate to Israel, even if the partner is not Jewish (Baruch and Dvorin 2014).

As Scott Morgensen argues, settler homonationalism takes place whenever settler colonialism is naturalised in queer politics (Morgensen 2010, 107). The Israeli LGBT struggle has been based on demands to be equal contributors to, and equal benefactors of, the settler colonial project and on the right to enjoy equal access to settler privilege and Jewish racial supremacy. In pursuing sexual citizenship, Israeli queers have reinscribed Zionism’s racial national and civic boundaries.

Israel’s sexual politics and its relatively progressive gay rights record cannot be disengaged from the larger Zionist project of ethnic cleansing. Israeli gays were being incorporated into the nation as productive and reproductive citizens just as Palestinians were being deprived of their freedom and denied their national and human rights. As Stein argues:

... during the 1990s Israel’s gay communities were being recognized in unprecedented ways in Israeli legal spheres, while changing Israeli policies vis-à-vis the occupied territories were creating new forms of unrecognition for its Palestinian population; gay communities were enjoying new forms of social mobility within the nation-state while the literal mobility of Palestinians from the occupied territories was being increasingly curtailed. (Stein 2010, 521)

While bestowing rights to parenthood and family life on Israeli gays, the state has inflicted even more draconian policies on Palestinians that limit their right to family life and further restrict family reunification and freedom of movement. For example, an amendment to the Citizenship Law, which was upheld by the Supreme Court, ‘prevents spouses of Palestinian citizens of Israel, who are from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and countries deemed “enemy states” by Israel, from living together in Israel’ (Adalah 2013; see also Jabareen and Zaher 2012). In another measure, Palestinians in East Jerusalem – illegally annexed by Israel – are prevented from residing there with their West Bank or

Gaza spouses. If they want to live with their spouses, they must relinquish their East Jerusalem residence and move to the West Bank or the Gaza Strip (Society of St. Yves 2013). Similarly, Israel prohibits family unification of Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank who wish to live in the West Bank unless they move to sieged Gaza (Gisha 2015). These policies are embedded in the eliminatory racial grammar of demography that lies at the heart of the Israeli settler colonial project.

Furthermore, the logic of settler colonialism renders the division between Israeli queer life and Palestinian death intrinsic to the working of Israeli sovereignty (Ritchie 2014). While Israeli gays have been folded into the nation as bodies worthy of life, Palestinians are doomed to occupation, violence, ghettoisation, racial discrimination, bombardment, siege and death. The incorporation of Israeli gays into the nation runs parallel to the colonial creation of death worlds, meaning the ‘new and unique forms of social existence’ in which Palestinians are ‘subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of *living dead*’ (Mbembe 2003, 40, emphasis in original).

To understand Israel’s racial sexual politics, we must turn to its reproductive policies. These, Rhoda Kanaaneh argues, are driven by the desire to fortify Jewish demographic superiority. Israel’s pronatal policies are underpinned by a racialised logic that incentivises childbearing in Jewish families while actively working to reduce Palestinian procreation (Kanaaneh 2002). As my discussion of Bedouin subjugation in Israel has shown, Israel’s campaign against polygamy is premised on a desire to limit the Bedouin birth rate rather than a concern for the well-being of Bedouin women and children. The racialisation of reproductive policies is not limited to Palestinians; it also targets Jewish racialised others. As revealed by the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, Israel had injected, by deception and against their will, ‘women of Ethiopian origin with the long-acting contraceptive Depo-Provera’ (Nesher 2013). The program resulted in a ‘50-percent decline over the past 10 years in the birth rate of Israel’s Ethiopian community’ (Nesher 2013).

Israel’s sexual order further includes the regulation of interracial sexual relations, as manifested in the state’s anti-miscegenation policies. The absence of civil marriage as an option in Israel effectively prohibits intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews (though civil marriages conducted overseas are recognised by the state). Commenting on the racial underpinning of this prohibition, Hanna Arendt observed that ‘there certainly was something breathtaking in the naiveté with which the prosecution [in the Eichmann trial] denounced the infamous Nuremberg Laws of 1935, which had prohibited intermarriage and sexual intercourse between Jews and Germans’ (Arendt [1963] 2006, 7).

Israel's anti-miscegenation law, Zvi Triger argues, should be read as the desire to protect Jewish women from hypersexualised Arab men (Triger 2009b). In efforts to prevent sexual relations between Arabs and Jews, Israel also directly funds groups such as Lehava, which works to 'save' Jewish women from Arab men (Blau and Greenberg 2011; Crowcroft 2014). In addition, the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women and Gender Equality convened a special meeting on the prevention of sexual relations between Jewish women and Arab men (Atali 2011). Even the 'liberal' municipality of Tel Aviv has launched a program, run by its welfare department, for preventing relationships between Arab men and Jewish women (Ben-Yosef 2010).

Where possible, the Israeli state seeks to manage – and discipline – deviations from the racial sexual order, as the case of Sabbar Kashur demonstrates. In 2010, an Israeli Court convicted Kashur, an Arab, of rape by deception for concealing his Arab identity from a Jewish woman, with whom he had consensual sex while allegedly pretending to be a Jew. Kashur, Aeyal Gross argues, was punished 'for "passing" for a Jew' and for 'being an Arab man who had sexual relations with a Jewish woman' (Gross 2015, 32). The court has assumed the task of protecting Jewish women and racial boundaries by delimiting what constitutes normative sexual relations.

Israel's record on gay rights and its simultaneous policies of denying rights to Palestinians and regulating a racialised sexual order, I suggest, are not anomalous or inherently contradictory. They are constitutive of the liberal racism of the settler state, and to the particular racialising structures and logics of Zionism.

2. Homocolonialism, Pinkwashing and the Gay

International

The commitment of the West to the universalisation of gay rights has taken neo-colonial forms, with gay rights being the latest innovation – and neoliberal commodity – to be exported as part of an imperial civilisation mission. In 2011, while serving as Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, declared that 'the Obama Administration defends the human rights of LGBT people as part of our comprehensive human rights policy and as a priority

of our foreign policy’ (quoted in Huffington Post 2011).⁷² Similarly, with the enactment of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 in the United Kingdom, then Prime Minister David Cameron stated:

I want to export gay marriage around the world ...

Many other countries are going to want to copy this. And, as you know, I talk about the global race, about how we’ve got to export more and sell more so I’m going to export the bill team. I think they can be part of this global race and take it around the world. (Quoted in Hope 2013)

The neo-colonial deployment of gay rights has been conceptualised by Rahman as homocolonialism, a product and a manifestation of homonationalism. Homocolonialism, according to Rahman, is ‘the deployment of LGBTIQ rights and visibility to stigmatize non-Western cultures and conversely reassert the supremacy of the Western nations and civilization’ (Rahman 2014, 6–7). It is a continuation of a larger project of culturalising and racialising non-Western societies, thereby asserting Western exceptionalism and superiority. Homocolonialism is also expressed in the missionary task of ‘white homosexuals saving brown homosexuals from brown homophobes’ (Rao 2014, 5), paraphrasing Spivak’s famous statement about ‘white men saving brown women from brown men’ (Spivak 1988). Massad has termed ‘these missionary tasks, the discourse that produces them, and the organizations that represent them ... the *Gay International*’ (Massad 2002, 362). As scholars have argued and as elaborated in the earlier discussion of Israeli LGBT groups, gay rights groups in the West have been complicit with – and producers of – homonationalism and homocolonialism, following a similar path to that of Western colonial feminism (Massad 2002, 361; Mikdashi 2011; Spade 2015).

Nations and societies that share a similar record on gay rights to that of the West are labelled as backward and needing help in making the journey towards modernity. David Cameron remarked that ‘these countries [with a poor record on gay rights] are all on a journey and it’s up to us to try and help them along that journey, and that’s exactly what we do’ (quoted in Marr 2011). This ‘help’ has taken the form of aid conditionality, tying the provision of aid to state performance on gay rights issues (Rao 2012). While the

⁷² For policies and measures taken to promote gay rights internationally as part of US foreign policy, see Gross forthcoming.

United Kingdom has been a pioneer in gay conditionality,⁷³ international financial institutions have recently followed suit by imposing sanctions on countries that fail to protect gay rights (Gross forthcoming; Rao 2012, 2015). African countries such as Uganda, Malawi and Nigeria have been particularly vulnerable to aid conditionality.⁷⁴ Aid conditionality, advocated by the Gay International, has reinforced the perception that homosexuality is a foreign Western import, further forcing non-Western queer activists to ‘manoeuvre between powerful interlocutors in the cosmopolitan Gay International on one side, and communitarian homophobic opponents at home on the other’ (Rao 2010, 189).

The Gay International, Massad argues, ‘has reserved a special place for the Muslim world in both its discourse and its advocacy’ (Massad 2002, 362). Homonationalism and homocolonialism are embedded in an orientalist discourse that presents Islam as antithetical to homosexuality and therefore to Western modernity as well. In the words of Rahman:

... we are living within a discourse of Islamic otherness that positions Islam against homosexuality because homosexuality has become deployed as *the* marker of the superiority of Western modernity. (Rahman 2014, 2, emphasis in original)

Homophobia is seen to be a cultural pathology of Islam. In this discourse, Muslims are represented as not only premodern, but also anti-modern. As Mahmood Mamdani explains, ‘whereas the former [premodern] conception encourages relations based on philanthropy, the latter [anti-modern] notion is productive of fear and pre-emptive police or military action’ (Mamdani 2004, 18).

This invocation of the queer question to demonstrate the incompatibility of Islam and Western modernity is also applied to Muslims living in the West, subjecting them to particular forms of liberal racism and exclusions. The discourse is used to justify restrictions on Muslim immigration to the West. For example, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump justified his call to halt Muslim immigration to the United States

⁷³ In an interview, Cameron stated: ‘Britain is now one of the premier aid givers in the world – saying that our aid, actually we want to see countries that receive our aid adhering to proper human rights, and that includes how people treat gay and lesbian people.’ (Marr 2011).

⁷⁴ Uganda and Malawi, for example, have had some of their funds in donations and loans cut (see Gross forthcoming).

by charging that Islam oppresses and kills gays and women (Grindley 2016). In Germany and Canada, Islamophobic anti-immigration and anti-refugee groups and liberal LGBT groups have invoked the women and queer questions to call on their governments to refuse Syrian refugees (Levant 2015; Porter 2016). The Netherlands went so far as adopting policies of ‘pink-testing’ Muslims as part of a ‘test on Dutch citizenship’ (Hekma and Duyvendak 2011, 626), conditioning the right to citizenship on sexual visibility as a pretext for modernity (Butler 2008).⁷⁵ In the context of the Netherlands, Paul Mepschen, Jan Duyvendak and Evelien Tonkens argue:

Gay rights discourses have thus offered a language for the critique of Islam and multiculturalism – an idiom that underscores an Orientalist discourse that renders Muslim citizens knowable and produces them as objects of critique. Sexuality offers a prism through which cultural contrast comes to be perceived, temporally, as the difference between modernity and tradition. (Mepschen, Duyvendak and Tonkens 2010, 970)

Through the queer question, Muslim immigrants, argues Rahman, are characterised ‘as bearers of a “traditionalism”’, subjects that are ‘yet to fully experience or embrace modernity’ (Rahman 2014, 277). Islam, Judith Butler further argues, is conceived to be ‘not of *this* time or *our* time, but as *another* time, one that only anachronistically emerged in this time’ (Butler 2008, 7, emphasis in original). Muslims, as a result, are presented as a threat to Western freedom and modernity – one from which the West ought to be protected.

2.1 Pinkwashing: The Question of Palestine in Homonationalist

Times

Puar argues argue that ‘the United States and Israel are the largest benefactors of homonationalism in the current geopolitical configuration’ (Puar 2013a, 338). Israel has capitalised on homonationalism largely through the homocolonialist strategy of pinkwashing. As Rahman states, “‘pinkwashing’ is the most cynical expression of this assumption of sexuality as Western exceptionalism’ (Rahman 2014, 139).

⁷⁵ For more examples on the ways in which Islamophobia has shaped European policies (in the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark) towards citizenship, see Fekete 2006, 2–6.

The term 'pinkwashing' was coined in 2010 by Ali Abunimah (Schulman 2012). It describes Israel's use of gay rights to rebrand its image from occupying force to modern civil liberal state in order to divert attention from – and to justify – the occupation and the violation of the rights of Palestinians. As stated by Michael Oren, Israel's former ambassador to the United States, gay rights have been mobilised to challenge the image of Israel as 'a nation of conflict' (quoted in Goldman 2014). Pinkwashing, as Puar points out, is 'Israel's promotion of a LGTBQ-friendly image to reframe the occupation of Palestine in terms of civilizational narratives measured by (sexual) modernity' (Puar 2013a, 337). Through gay rights, Israel is produced as modern, in contrast to Palestinian/Arab/Muslim backwardness and barbarity.

Gross traces Israel's pinkwashing efforts back to Benjamin Netanyahu's first government in 1999, when the Prime Minister sent a letter to the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organisations drawing their attention to a homophobic statement made by a Palestinian Minister. But it was only in 2005, with the launch of the Brand Israel campaign, that pinkwashing became a central foreign policy strategy. Brand Israel is a well-funded campaign that aims to promote Israel as a civil, modern and liberal state in light of its deteriorating international image, given the prolonged occupation of Palestinian territories and gross violations of human rights (Elia 2012).⁷⁶ Gay rights, argues Gross, have 'essentially become a public relations tool' (Gross in Schulman 2011), serving as a fig leaf for Israeli democracy (Gross 2013a, 108).

As part of the pinkwashing efforts, Israel's foreign office and pro-Israeli/Zionist lobby groups have introduced campaigns to highlight Israel's progressive record on gay rights in order to 'sell Israel to tourists and cultural consumers' (Schulman 2012, 24). Organisations, campaigns and projects such as Stand with Us, iPride, Israel21c, Stand for Israel, the Israel Project and Hillel have taken leading roles in expanding pinkwashing efforts internationally, seeking to mobilise the support of liberals in the West (Elia 2012; Spade 2015). Israeli embassies and consulates have sponsored international gay film festivals, pride parades and other major events to publicise Israel's gay rights record, with Israeli LGBT groups actively participating in these propaganda efforts.

Through pinkwashing, Israel seeks to reinforce the identification of Israel/Zionism with the liberal West by positioning itself as a global pioneer in gay rights. For example, following the repeal of the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy in the United States, Israeli propaganda emphasised that gays in Israel have long been enjoying equality in the Israeli army (see images 1 and 2⁷⁷). In addition, Israel is portrayed as a gay-friendly nation. Israel's tourism ministry and the Tel-Aviv municipality promote that city as a prime gay

⁷⁶ Israel's rebranding efforts are not confined to gay rights (though gay rights are central to them). They also include highlighting Israel as a high-tech nation, showcasing Israel's green technologies, and marketing Israel and the Israeli army as vegan-friendly (Gross 2013b; Kadushin 2015; Spade 2015; Steinberg 2015).

⁷⁷ This image is part of Israel's propaganda program. Though it was proven to be a fabrication, it shows Israel's investment in publicising gay equality in the army as an indication of Israel's modernity and its progressive record on gay rights.

tourism destination (Schulman 2011) and a testament to Israel as a force for modernisation (see images 3 and 4).



Image 1

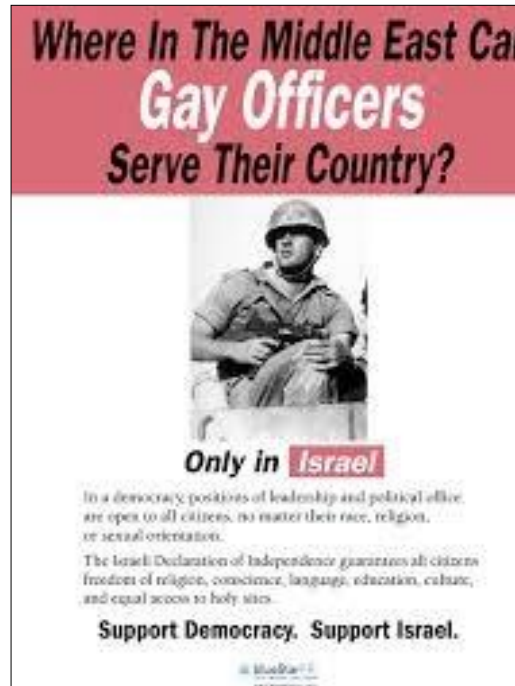


Image 2



Image 3



Image 4

Embedded in an orientalist epistemology, pinkwashing, argues Puar, ‘reinforces ideologies of the clash of cultures and the “cultural difference” of Palestinian homophobia’ (Puar 2013b, 34). Pinkwashing, Mikdashi further points out, ‘only makes

sense as a political strategy within a discourse of Islamophobia and Arabophobia' (Mikdashi 2011). A modern and gay-friendly Israel is the inverse of a backward and homophobic Middle East/Palestine (see images 5 and 6). The two representations are juxtaposed in the assertion of Israel's civility. As stated by Michael Oren, 'Israel was fighting for gay rights before the 1967 war. Even when terrorists were blowing up our buses and cafes, there was equality for gays' (quoted in Goldman 2014).

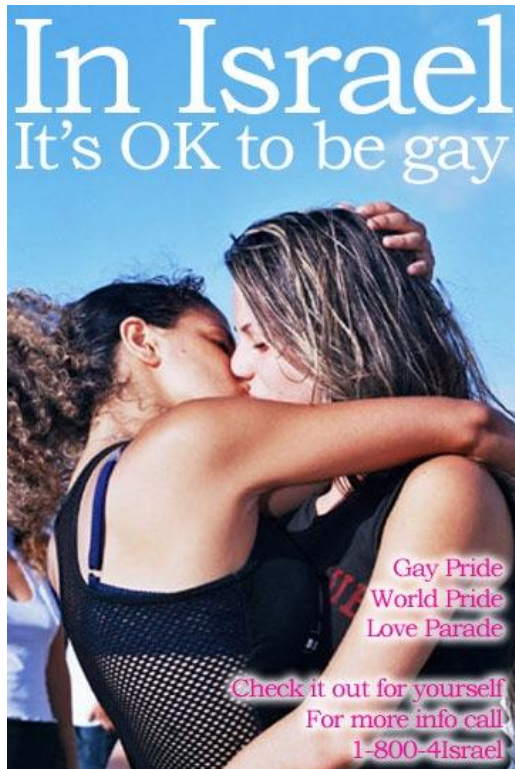


Image 5

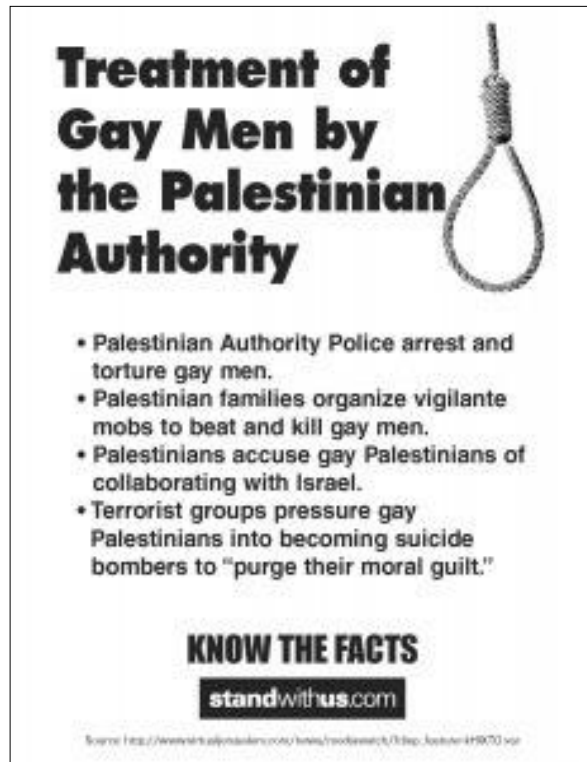


Image 6

Gay rights help to produce Israel's exceptionalism by representing the state as a positive force of civilisation. Pinkwashing thus builds on an orientalist 'hierarchy in which the West is better than the non-West, Israel is superior to Palestine, Christianity is preferable to Islam' (Rao 2010, 181). As Benjamin Netanyahu proclaimed in his address to the US Congress in 2011, the Middle East is 'a region where women are stoned, gays are hanged, Christians are persecuted ... Israel is not what is wrong about the Middle East; Israel is what's right about the Middle East' (quoted in The Globe and Mail 2011). This discourse is reiterated in Israel's *hasbara* efforts. As a campaign that circulated in the United States urged: 'In any war between the civilized man and the savage, support the civilized man. Support Israel' (Dabashi 2012; see image 7). Criticism over Israel's violence is then

rejected through the mantra ‘have you seen how *they* treat their gays?’ An example is Netanyahu’s call to the peace activists who were on the freedom Flotilla to Gaza:

Go to places where women are oppressed, homosexuals are hanged in public squares, to places where there are no human rights. Go to Tehran. Go to Gaza. Anyone who genuinely cares about human rights should support the democratic and the liberal state of Israel. (Quoted in Gross 2013a, 108, my translation from Hebrew)⁷⁸



Image 7

To cover for aggression directed against Palestinians, Amal Amireh argues, Israel also engaged in the queer demonising of Palestinians, building on the view of Palestinians as a homophobic society (Amireh 2010, 637–8). One of the most recent cynical uses of this practice was the case of Muhammad Abu-Khdeir, a 16-year-old Palestinian from East Jerusalem who was kidnapped, murdered and burned to death by a group of Israeli teens. After his parents reported the kidnapping, Israeli police and media circulated a rumour that Abu-Khdeir was killed by his family for being gay (Silverstein 2014). Israel had

⁷⁸ Netanyahu’s cynical use of gay rights internationally was criticised for not being matched by a commitment to advancing gay rights in Israel. Former MKs from Meretz have accused ‘Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of using Iran’s persecution of homosexuals to attack it on the world stage while doing nothing to advance gay rights at home’ (quoted in Potts 2013). For more critique of Netanyahu’s use of gay rights in the case of Iran, see Barak Ravid at Ha’Aretz:

In Israel, Netanyahu flees from LGBT issues as though they were on fire, but abroad he enjoys using the community for propaganda purposes in his war against a nuclear Iran. In almost every speech he has made in the United States or Europe, Netanyahu points out that in Iran they hang gay people in the public square, while in Israel we have gay pride parades. (Ravid 2013)

hoped that the story would stick long enough to tarnish Palestinians as bloodthirsty homophobes and to discredit Abu-Khdeir and his family among Palestinians themselves (Samuel 2014; Spier 2014).

Pinkwashing, Puar argues, also extends to the liberal supporters of the Palestinian cause. This is manifested in the intertwining of the Palestine question and gay rights. A common articulation of this liberal sentiment is the position that ‘of course we support the Palestinians in their quest for self-determination, but what about how sexist and homophobic they are?’ (Puar 2013b, 27), or the slogan ‘Israel, stop persecuting Palestine; Palestine, stop persecuting gays’, raised in a Palestine solidarity demonstration in London (see image 8). Similar sentiments also feature in Israeli liberal-Zionist circles. In a conference in Paris on sexual diversity, Nitzan Horowitz, a former gay MK of Meretz, a liberal-Zionist party, called on the Palestinian authority ‘to stop persecuting homosexuals. This situation is intolerable’ (quoted in Meranda 2009).



Image 8

To conclude, it is important to recognise pinkwashing as more than a rebranding campaign that aims to distract from the Israeli occupation by exploiting PQueers. Maya Mikdashi is right to argue that it ‘is not primarily about gay rights or homosexuality at all’ (Mikdashi 2011). Heike Schotten and Haneen Maikey suggest a reading of pinkwashing as ‘part of the ongoing Nakba. Both Zionism and pinkwashing depend on a notion of the prior destruction and continued negation of Palestine and Palestinian belonging’ (Schotten and Maikey 2012). Similarly, Ghadir Shafie suggests an understanding of pinkwashing as a strategy that is ‘deeply rooted in the Israeli ideology of racism, hatred, and denial of Palestinian existence’ (Shafie 2015, 84).

If we are to take seriously the argument of homonationalism as a structure of modernity, then pinkwashing, I suggest, should be read as part of a larger project of entrenching Israeli sovereignty and legitimising Zionist claims over Palestine. The naturalisation of sovereignty through gay rights works to enshrine Israel’s international legitimacy ‘to define who matters and who does not, who is disposable and who is not’ (Mbembe 2003, 27) and to justify Israel’s right to dominate and kill Palestinians (Perugini and Gordon 2015).

3. Palestinian Queers in Liberal LGBT Politics:

Conditionality and Erasure

Israel’s global investment in pinkwashing rests on the hypervisibility of PQueers as moribund figures and as victims of ‘honour killings’ perpetrated by their backward society. The Gay International has been complicit in perpetuating such images by circulating horror stories of Palestinian gays. Documentaries such as *The Invisible Men*, blogs, magazine articles and feature stories focus on the vulnerability of PQueers and the barbarity of Palestinian society. PQueers are flooded with requests for stories of victimisation. Khader Abu Seif, a Palestinian PQueer activist, tells of his experience:

About a year ago, I received a phone call from the BBC asking to interview me about the condition of Palestinian gays. I agreed in principle, and then the journalist asked me to share my difficult experience of coming out. I explained to him that in my specific case it was quite easy. So he asked me to tell him about the difficulties that Palestinian queers experience. I answered that I assume that some experience difficulties, while others less so. At this stage, he thanked me and asked me to connect him with someone who had been abused, kicked out of home, etc. (Quoted in Glazer 2014, my translation from Hebrew)

The view of PQueers as dying figures is joined with their representation as victims in need of rescue. As Jason Ritchie has shown, the encounter between PQueers and the Israeli LGBT community has been marked from its early days by a rescue mission (Ritchie 2010). The rescue project builds on the assumption that Palestinianness/Islam and queerness are irreconcilable. Israel's LGBT National Association, Ha'Aguda, has recently launched a helpline for Palestinian gays (even though this service is offered by PQueer organisations). The ad for the helpline featured a mosque (a signifier of Palestinian backwardness) with the caption "If the village will know [I am gay], I am screwed [read as dead]." We are here to listen to you' (see image 9).



Image 9

As Puar suggests, 'the LGBT rights project itself relies on the impossibility/absence/non-recognition of a proper Palestinian queer subject, except within the purview of the Israeli state itself' (Puar 2013b, 34). The implication of this impossibility is that 'queer identities and rights are possible only in the West' (Rahman 2014, 120). Within this discourse, the only path to freedom is the rescue and removal of PQueers from their society. Ghadir Shafie, a queer activist and a member of Aswat: Palestinian Gay Women, shared her story of seeking support through an Israeli LGBT helpline: 'When I called them, questioning

my sexual identity, the only advice they could offer me was to move to Tel-Aviv once I turn 18, because only there could I be free' (Interview, Ghadir Shafie 2013).

The gesture of rescue is conditional. PQueers are expected to respond with gratitude, erasing their Palestinian identity and denouncing their society. The opportunity to live at the intersections of one's own identity is a privilege exclusively reserved for Israeli gays. Forced to repress or even to hide their Arab and Palestinian identities, PQueers 'found themselves "in the closet", so to speak' (Maikey in Hochberg et al 2010, 603). Ghadir Shafie talks of her experiences of erasure, after moving to Tel Aviv at the age of 18:

While living in Tel Aviv, I was told by my Jewish friends: 'You do not look like an Arab and you do not have an accent in Hebrew like the rest of the Arabs. So why don't you just change your name to a Hebrew name? You pass easily as a Jew.' Although I was only 18, it became clear to me that I have been questioning my sexuality, while now they [the LGBT Israelis in Tel Aviv] are questioning my identity as Palestinian. So, I packed up my things and left Tel Aviv. Thinking back, it was the Israeli society – supposedly gay-friendly, enlightened and liberal – which put me back in the closet for 10 years, more than my Palestinian community ever did. (Interview, Ghadir Shafie 2013)

The insistence that PQueers renounce their Palestinianness takes an ambivalent form. Palestinianness is to be erased as a political antagonistic national identity, but it is also to be made visible as a culturalist identification that testifies to the barbarity and backwardness of Palestinian society and to the benevolence of Israeli liberals. Demands for erasure, however, should not to be confused with a desire to assimilate PQueers. Israeli gays, suggests Ritchie, constantly 'remind queer Palestinians who they really are and where they do – and don't – *belong*' (Ritchie 2010, 565, emphasis in original). Put differently, the liberal promise of inclusion and the colonial practice of erasure work in tandem to regulate and govern PQueer presence in ways that do not threaten racial hierarchies and power relations.

Saving PQueers is premised on a reproduction of Israel as a legitimate sovereign nation-state. The rescue paradigm, I suggest, should be understood as a sexualised manifestation of settler indigenisation and native de-indigenisation processes. To illuminate this argument, I analyse a report – *Nowhere to Run: Gay Palestinian Asylum-Seeking in Israel* – published in 2008 by the Public Interest Law Programme at Tel Aviv University. This report draws on the involvement of the authors, Michael Kagan and Anat Ben-Dor, in

legal representation of Palestinian gays who have sought asylum or temporary residence in Israel. The report challenges Israel's refusal to grant asylum to Palestinians gays.

It is first important to mention that, despite its propaganda that reiterates Israel as a safe refuge for PQueers, Israel has in fact been systematically refusing to grant asylum to Palestinian queers (Kagan and Ben-Dor 2008). Moreover, even though Israeli propaganda claims that PQueer are persecuted, an Israeli interoffice committee, which included members from the Justice, Foreign and Interior Ministries, as well as the Prime Minister's Office, has determined that 'there is no systematic persecution based on sexual orientation in the Palestinian Authority' (quoted in Magnezi 2014).

In the report, Kagan and Ben-Dor argue for the de-politicisation of cases of PQueers seeking asylum in Israel. They call for evaluating the applicants *not* as Palestinians, but rather as queers. They also advocate for a consideration of these cases irrespective of the 'Israeli-Palestinian conflict', because 'gay Palestinians are *caught* in the middle of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict' (Kagan and Ben-Dor 2008, 5, emphasis added). Not least disturbingly, in the report the occupation is seen as a problem only insofar as it inhibits the ability of Palestinian gays to ask for asylum in Israel: 'One of the tragedies confronting gay Palestinians today is that the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict distracts from their ability to find safe haven from dangers that stem from their sexual identity' (Kagan and Ben-Dor 2008, 5). PQueers are thus subjected to a bifurcated regime of protection that frames their bodies as worthy of protection because of their queerness, but at the same time renders them vulnerable to violence as Palestinians. As Mikdashi pointedly argues:

Today, the promise of 'gay rights' for Palestinian goes something like this: The United States [or, in this case, liberal Zionist Israelis] will protect your right to not be detained because [you are] gay, but will not protect you from being detained because you are Palestinian. As a queer, you have the right to love and have sex with whomever you choose safely and without discrimination, but you do not have the right to be un-occupied, or to be free from oppression based on your political beliefs, actions, and affiliations. As long as it is Arabo-Islamic culture and its manifestation through (Palestinian) law that is oppressing you, we are here for you. If you are being oppressed by Israeli colonial policies, you're on your own. (Mikdashi 2011)

The report further argues that Israel has an obligation to grant asylum-seeking status to PQueers under international refugee law. At the same time, the authors stress that:

This report does not in any way touch on the debate over the fate of the 1948 Palestinian refugees and their descendants, which is one of the more difficult topics in Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations. As a matter of law, the right to seek asylum abroad is entirely separate from the question of refugee return ...

Not every Palestinian who applies would necessarily have a valid claim, and Israel is not obligated to provide sanctuary to individuals who are actually dangerous, Palestinian or otherwise. We believe that the best way to balance security against the need to protect people from persecution is simply to address each Palestinian case by the same standards applicable to everyone else. (Kagan and Ben-Dor 2008, 5–6)

Naturalising settler colonialism occurs, Morgensen suggests, ‘whenever conquest and the displacement of Native peoples are ignored or appear inevitable’ (Morgensen 2010, 121). PQueers are stripped of their history and their identity as indigenous to this land. They are constructed as asylum seekers in their own homeland, to be granted admission by an indulgence of the settler (now a sovereign native). By disconnecting PQueer claims for asylum in Israel from the larger Palestinian right of return, Israeli activism on behalf of PQueers safeguards Israel’s racialised national boundaries and naturalises its border regime as a legitimate expression of sovereignty.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the racialised, gendered and sexualised dimensions of Israel’s settler colonial project, analysing it in relation to global homonationalism. It has demonstrated how the racialising gendered and sexualised logics of the settler state intersect with the politics of homonationalism at the global level. The next chapter elaborates how these racialising logics and the violence that underscores them have been important dynamics in shaping PQueer modalities of resistance. As will be shown, in their struggle, PQueers are required to navigate and challenge multiple structures of domination, as figured both locally and transnationally.

The consolidation of the queer question, as demonstrated in this chapter, has been deeply entangled with the violence of Islamophobia, especially post-9/11. Israel’s strategy of pinkwashing, it has been suggested, should be understood as a practice of racialising not only PQueers, but also Palestinian society as a whole. However, when compared with that of other Palestinians who are racialised as a backward and barbaric society, the

racialisation of PQueers has taken more ambivalent forms. PQueers are produced as subjects worthy of life by virtue of their sexual identity, while at the same time they are subjected to the colonial necropolitics that governs their lives and deaths as Palestinians.

This chapter has introduced the theoretical framework and concepts that will guide the discussion of PQueer resistance in the next chapter. As will be demonstrated, homonationalism, the homocolonial practice of pinkwashing, and the encounter with the Israeli LGBT community, the Gay international and Palestinian exclusionary nationalism have been important factors in shaping PQueer resistance.

Chapter 6

Refusal as Emancipation

Introduction

This chapter explores PQueer modalities of resistance to settler colonialism and cultural imperialism. It argues that PQueer resistance has been shaped by the particular racialising gendered and sexualised logics of settler colonialism, and the ways in which these intersect with global homonational sexual politics. PQueer resistance, it is further argued, has developed to be informed by a Fanonian politics of rejection joined by a project of recovering the self.

The chapter comprises five sections. The first section provides an overview of the emergence of the PQueer movement, beginning with the founding of two organisations: AlQaws for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society in 2001, and Aswat: Palestinian Gay Women in 2002. The establishment of these two groups, it is suggested, should be understood in light of the rise of the LGBT movement in the West and in Israel, the mushrooming of PNGOs during the 1990s and 2000s, and the oppressive encounter between PQueers and the Israeli LGBT community – each of which has played a role in shaping the trajectory of the movement and its agendas.

The second section explores how the Western epistemology of sexual identities and Western scripts of sexual liberation have been experienced by PQueers. In this section, I argue that emancipatory models based on sexual visibility and coming out have had an oppressive rather than empowering effect. These models have subjected PQueers to structures of expectation that govern their identities and to inspection regimes against which they are measured and evaluated. This onerous experience has informed the movement's anti-imperial politics, leading to the rejection of the universalising doctrine of gay liberation propounded by the West. Instead, PQueers have engaged in an experimental journey of rearticulating PQueer subjectivities that are grounded in local experiences and culture.

The third section focuses on how PQueers have mobilised their intersecting identities in order to challenge the discourses that produce Palestinianness and queerness as irreconcilable identities. The insistence on the compatibility of these identities, I suggest, has also disrupted the homogenous category of the universal queer, refusing single-axis identitarian politics based on sexual identities, and carving out a space of legitimacy for non-Western articulations of sexual identities.

The fourth section analyses the development of the PQueer movement against Israeli occupation and settler colonialism. I argue that the practice of pinkwashing has provided an opportunity for PQueers to subvert homonationalism in order to (re)claim their voice, their agency and their visibility. Aligning the PQueer agenda with the global Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement has empowered the development of the queer movement as an antagonistic political force that refuses both queer and national accommodative liberal politics. Not least importantly, articulating a PQueer vision for BDS has been important in claiming legitimacy in Palestinian society itself – especially against imperial discourses that produce homosexuality as a signifier of Western modernity and exceptionalism, and against a history in Israel that has rendered homosexuality equivalent to colonial collaboration.

In the fifth and final section of this chapter, I argue that the success of PQueers in reclaiming their agency has evoked the dangers of reorienting queers through the fetishisation and exoticisation of their agency as exceptional. The section concludes by examining the ways in which PQueers have negotiated, resisted and refused the reorienting of PQueers and their tokenisation by supporters.

1. The Emergence of the Palestinian Queer Movement

The onset of the 21st century was an important moment in the history of PQueer organising. It saw the founding of two PQueer groups – AlQaws for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society in 2001, and Aswat: Palestinian Gay Women in 2002. Since the establishment of these groups, PQueer organising has been remarkably

successful in developing a vibrant PQueer community and creating a self-organised, self-represented and self-sustained movement marked by collective agency.

Before Aswat ('voices') and AlQaws ('rainbow') were formed, PQueers lived in isolation. There was neither an organised PQueer community nor a forum in which they could meet, socialise and seek support. The absence of a space of their own impelled many PQueers to turn to the Israeli LGBT community. This experience often engendered a sense of alienation. Lesbian activist Samira Saraya, a cofounder and former director of Aswat, shares her experience:

Every time a friend of mine wanted to introduce me to an Arab lesbian whom one of his friends knew, it would turn out to be me. I cannot even recall the number of times that I was matched to myself. But seriously, I did not know of other Arab lesbians. And that came with a price. I had a Jewish girlfriend for two years. After we broke up, I was sitting with an Arab friend. We were drinking and listening to Oum Kalthoum. Then it suddenly hit me: this is what I was missing for the past two years. For two years, I had hardly spoken Arabic or listened to Arabic music. (Interview, Samira Saraya 2012)

Naya, a co-founder of Aswat, adds:

When I moved to Jerusalem, I went a few times to the Israeli women's group at the Open House [LGBT community centre], but I just could not find myself there. I did not feel I belonged. It simply did not feel right. (Interview, Naya 2013)

Aswat began its journey as an online forum for Palestinian lesbians. It was only after months of trust-building that members of the group finally met in person. A sense of euphoria accompanied these meetings, which provided the first opportunity for Palestinian lesbians to meet. As Samira Saraya recalls:

It was amazing. We talked about sexuality in Arabic. We went together to demonstrations. We were finally able to be lesbians and Palestinians at the same time. (Interview, Samira Saraya 2012)

The meetings highlighted the need to form a space that was independent from that of the Israel LGBT community and could accommodate their particular needs and their intersecting identities as Palestinians, women and lesbians. As Naya explains:

We decided that we wanted to form a Palestinian women-only organisation. We felt that as women and as lesbians, we have different experiences from Arab gay men. We don't have the same protection, freedoms and mobility as they have. (Interview, Naya 2013)

Aswat was formally established in 2002 as part of Kayan, a Palestinian feminist organisation. For Aswat, the decision to organise as part of the Palestinian feminist movement was ideological. Gender, sexual and national identities have been perceived as mutually constitutive to the experiences of Palestinian gay women. Rauda Morcos, a cofounder of Aswat and also its first director, explains:

We wanted to form from the core of Palestinian society and Kayan was the most suitable place to start from. Working on forming Aswat, I started realising that your sexual identity becomes a political identity, while in the village [Rauda was living in a Palestinian village at the same time] your sexual identity is only about the fact that you have sex with women. This gap was suffocating. I wanted the two spaces to meet. (Interview, Rauda Morcos 2012)

The insistence on being part of the Palestinian feminist movement was not free of difficulties. Some feminist groups and activists were reluctant to cooperate, partner or be associated with Aswat, seeing such an alliance as a burden and an obstacle in their work on gender-related issues. Some groups, for example, objected to the inclusion of Aswat's name in petitions, or insisted on using only 'Aswat' and not the full title 'Aswat: Palestinian Gay Women' (Interviews with Rauda Morcos 2012; Ghadir Shafie 2013). Aswat was also excluded from a consortium of Palestinian feminist organisations convened to write the first shadow report on the status of women in Israel for the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Interview, Rauda Morcos 2012). Divergences in the agendas of the feminist and queer movements are not unique to the Palestinian case; they are embedded in the trajectories of the women and queer questions (Rao 2014).

The need to respond to these exclusions impacted Aswat's ability to formulate its own feminist and queer agenda. As Rauda Morcos states: 'Who said we wanted to be part of this liberal agenda of the UN? But then we were excluded, and this posed a different kind of challenge' (Interview, Rauda Morcos 2012). Nonetheless, the strategic investment in strengthening relationships with Palestinian feminist groups has led to growing cooperation between feminist and queer groups. Today, Aswat and AlQaws run joint projects in order to advance perceptions of gender and sexuality in Palestinian society (Interviews, Rauda Morcos 2012; Ghadir Shafie 2013; Roza 2012).

The genesis of AIQaws was quite different. The organisation began its journey in 2001 as the ‘Arab project’ of the Jerusalem Open House (JOH), an Israeli LGBT organisation. The JOH decided to develop the Arab project in response to a significant decline in the numbers of Palestinian gays who visited the centre (most of whom were from East Jerusalem and the West Bank). The initiative was an effort to encourage Palestinian gays to return. Driven by a liberal and apolitical LGBT rights agenda, the JOH failed to recognise that the reduction in numbers was a result of the second intifada and the apartheid separation wall. As Haneen Maikey, co-founder and director of AIQaws, recalls:

They wondered why Palestinians stopped coming, and the answer they gave themselves was that there is no Arab member of staff. Even their answer was out of political context. This is how AIQaws started. They wanted someone Arab, who was me, who speaks Arabic. They even intended to name the position with the insulting title of ‘Arab Language Coordinator’. My only condition was to change the title of the position. (Interview, Haneen Maikey 2012)

The JOH is guided by an agenda that excludes LGBT issues from ‘politics’. It considers itself to be inclusionary and open to all strands of Israeli society, including secular and Orthodox Jews, West Bank settlers and Arabs. The project of AIQaws was part of the formulation of the JOH as a liberal-multicultural space. AIQaws was expected to adhere to the separation of sexuality from politics. As Maikey argues, it ‘can be seen, in retrospect, as an attempt to depoliticise the PQueer struggle, bringing it in line with an Israeli LGBT struggle that has been and continues to be largely apolitical’ (Maikey 2012, 124). Palestinian gay organising was welcomed – as long as it maintained itself as an Arab, as opposed to Palestinian, gay organisation and as long as it mimicked the model of Israeli gay organising.

The year 2006 was an important juncture in the development of AIQaws as a political agent. The decision of the JOH to pursue hosting World Pride in Jerusalem and the outbreak of the month-long Lebanon War during the summer intensified the alienation felt by PQueers in the Open House. This decision raised difficult questions regarding the possibility of PQueer organising within a framework of Israeli LGBT organising. How could PQueers support World Pride in the occupied Palestinian city of Jerusalem? How

could they be silent while Lebanese and Palestinian people were being subjected to violence and bombardment?⁷⁹

In 2007, AlQaws officially separated from the JOH and became an independent NGO. Based in Jerusalem, the experience of AlQaws was different from that of the Haifa-based Aswat, which emerged mainly as a space for '48 Palestinian lesbians. The location of AlQaws between East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Israel's normalised sovereignty in the '48 territories informed the emergence of the organisation as a space for PQueers from both sides of the Separation Wall. In fact, AlQaws is the *only* organisation that represents Palestinians from both sides of the wall. The trajectory of AlQaws would inform its development as a PQueer radical emancipatory project that transcends colonial borders and the fragmentation of the Palestinian people. However, this endeavour is not without difficulties. AlQaws faces the challenge of building a Palestinian movement in a reality in which Israel enacts multiple colonial regimes of sovereignty in the territories under its control.

Despite the differences between Aswat and AlQaws, both share a commitment to transforming the attitudes of Palestinian society to sexual and gender diversity. Both groups run support groups and operate helplines for Palestinian gays. These services are tailored to the multiple experiences of PQueers as shaped through the intersections of their national, gender and sexual identities (Interviews, Adnan 2012; Roza 2012). Aswat and AlQaws also invest significant efforts in the production of PQueer content that can capture the unique identities and experiences of PQueers. In addition, both organisations share a commitment to social transformation and to working with – and within – the Palestinian community. This commitment is articulated in collaborative projects with Palestinian feminist groups, including work with schools, social workers, counsellors and educational personnel.

2. Western Sexual Epistemology and Its Discontents

⁷⁹ Aswat's international call to boycott World Pride in Jerusalem was met with rage by Israeli LGBT groups, who saw it as a betrayal of a purportedly universal LGBT alliance (Interview, Rauda Morcos 2012).

In her book *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*, Lila Abu-Lughod reminds us: ‘When you save someone, you imply that you are saving her from something. You are also saving her *to* something’ (Abu-Lughod 2013, 46–7, emphasis in original). As has been discussed in Chapter 5, the Gay International (including Israeli liberals) is driven by a mission to save PQueers *from* their society (see also Ritchie 2010). But PQueers are also saved *to* something. As Joseph Massad’s important intervention reveals, this ‘something’ is articulated in the universalisation of Western epistemological and ontological conceptions of sexual identities (Massad 2002). He argues that this universalisation has entailed the transformation of ‘practitioners of same-sex contact into subjects who identify as homosexual and gay’ (Massad 2002, 362–3). The Gay International, Massad further argues, ‘produces homosexuals, as well as gays and lesbians, where they do not exist, and represses same-sex desires and practices that refuse to be assimilated into its sexual epistemology’ (Massad 2002, 362–3).⁸⁰

As scholars have shown, the universalisation of Western sexual modernity also extends to settler colonial contexts. Imperial and colonial intervention has erased native structures and orders of gender and sexuality (Morgensen 2010). The modern-white-national heteronormative sexuality in the United States, Scott Morgensen argues, was produced ‘by regulating Native sexuality and gender, while appearing to supplant them with the sexual modernity of settlers’ (Morgensen 2011, 31). Similar to Massad’s argument that imperial intervention has imposed a binary of straight versus gay, Andrea Smith argues that the Western binary conception of gender has been imposed on native peoples. This binary, she argues, has also shaped vulnerabilities of natives to the violence of settler colonialism. Writing on settler colonialism in the United States, Smith notes that ‘the first peoples targeted for destruction in Native communities were those who did not neatly fit into western gender categories’ (Smith 2005, 178).

In his work, Massad goes so far as to argue that Arab queer organising is complicit with the imperial epistemic reproduction of sexual identities and the hetero–homo binary. He argues that:

⁸⁰ Massad has been critiqued for homogenising Western gay groups and the politics and agendas that underpin their work (see Rahman 2014; Rao 2010). However, despite differences, he is correct to argue that ‘a certain ontology and epistemology are taken as axiomatic by *all* of them’ (Massad 2002, 365).

... the production of the gay (and her/his correlate, the straight) Arab is predicated on the invisibilization of the majority of Arabs whose ontology is not dependent on this Euro-American formation nor on its imperial missions and who do not live under a Western regime of sexuality. (Massad in Éwanjé-Épée and Magliani-Belkacem 2013)

Massad labels those Arabs who identify as gay as native informants, a highly charged term in the Arab World. Similarly, Aswat and AlQaws have been dismissed and discredited by Massad as organisations based ‘in Israel that are staffed by Palestinian citizens of Israel’ (Massad in Éwanjé-Épée and Magliani-Belkacem 2013). Nonetheless, Massad’s work is not rejected by PQueers, who have responded to it with mixed feelings. As Rauda Morcos explains:

When his article was published in 2002, it was just when we started forming Aswat. Massad’s work hit us in a really sensitive place. We needed his work. It captured the imperial sentiments of Israeli and Western gay groups that we have been experiencing in our encounter with them. But he also did not leave a room for us to be gays. For him we are nothing less than collaborators. (Interview, Rauda Morcos 2012)

Massad’s work leaves Arab queers with two options. You can either be an Arab gay who is a native informant, or an authentic Arab who engages in same-sex relations (Shalakany 2007). Massad homogenises both the Gay International (Rahman 2014; Rao 2010) and Arab queers. Commenting on the latter, Frances Hasso argues that his work ‘does not acknowledge the possibility of plural sexual subjectivities that may or may not rely on bounded sexual object choice and that may or may not include visibility and identity’ (Hasso 2011, 653). Massad’s view leaves little room for exploring Arab queer activism as a complex, dynamic and diverse phenomenon, which also includes activism that rejects the Gay International imperialist interventionist agendas.⁸¹ Nonetheless, his work

⁸¹ Massad’s work has been controversial also for its arguments that resisting homosexuality is a sign not of homophobia, but rather of resistance to Western imperialism. Using the Queen Boat as the main example, Massad argues that ‘it is not same-sex sexual practices that are being repressed by the Egyptian police but rather the socio-political identification of these practices with the Western identity of gayness and publicness that these gay-identified men seek’ (Massad 2002, 382). In other words, homophobia cannot exist where homosexuality (as sexual identity) does not exist. The interference of the Gay International and its complicit native informants, he argues, has resulted in a backlash in the form of escalating state violence against same-sex practitioners, who are usually from the underprivileged class. Massad’s analysis, argues Rahman, reproduces the view of homosexuality as a form of Western exceptionalism and reduces sexuality to Western modernisation (Rahman 2014, 89). Consequently, homophobia is seen to be the result of imperialist interventions, ‘ignoring the oppressiveness of communitarian homophobia’ (Rao 2010, 176). Massad fails to consider that both nationalism and imperialism are heavily invested in reproducing homophobia. Anti-imperialism becomes a trope used by repressive and authoritarian regimes that mobilise

remains vital to our understanding of the ways in which the universalisation of a Western sexual epistemology has been constitutive to the subjectivity and resistance of PQueers.

2.1 Refusal and the Project of Restructuring a Palestinian Queer Self

For PQueers, the problem of history and memory is at the heart of queer organising. Unlike the Bedouin struggle, where remembrance is a central site of resistance and *sumud*, the queer case is marked by the absence of a collective memory. As Sami, a leading queer activist at AlQaws, points out:

We don't know much about our history. We don't always know what was there before imperialism/colonialism. This is not unique to queer activism. We experienced a brutal act of erasure and replacement with something new. (Interview, Sami 2013)

This erasure complicates the task of carving out a space for a PQueer subjectivity to emerge. Haneen Maikey discusses this erasure:

Speaking of memory, part of the Zionist project is to erase history. I was in LA for a big anti-normalisation BDS meeting. This really amazing man comes to me and introduces himself as someone from Jerusalem who was displaced in 1967. He was actually involved in queer organising in Palestine in the early 1960s. He was working with more than a hundred gay men in Palestine. I knew that we are not the first ones to do that. It was so powerful. (Maikey in AlQaws 2014b)

Rauda Morcos also shares her experience:

A while after I was outed [Rauda was outed against her will in one of Israel's major newspapers], I went to visit my grandma who was very old. I was dreading seeing her because of all the gossip that my outing spurred in the village. We talked and then she suddenly asked me, 'What is all this gossip in the village that you are – what is that word? – les-something?' I was going, 'Oh my god, how will I explain this to my grandmother?' I simply explained that I am a woman who is attracted to other women. She said, 'That's all?' Then she said, 'I don't understand what all the fuss is all about. Back in the days there were two women X and Y, who were living together in the village. Everyone knew about them. You are not the first. As long as you are happy.' And, I had no idea about them! And then she started telling me about her life with my grandfather, opening up a whole new world to me about her life. (Interview, Rauda Morcos 2012)

homosexuality (and homophobic sentiments) to define and mark the boundaries of the nation and position themselves as guardians and protectors of national sovereignty (Pratt 2007). The discourse of homosexuality as a Western conspiracy is further invoked in order to distract the population from everyday repression, state-sanctioned violence, economic recession and a lack of political rights and freedoms (Bahgat 2001). While the origins of homophobia in the Arab-Muslim world can be traced to imperialism, nationalism and the postcolonial state have been major forces in institutionalising and sustaining it.

This erasure partially helps to explain the reliance on the Western gay agenda and discourses when Aswat and AlQaws were each beginning to organise. During these periods, both organisations experimented in translating Western materials into Arabic and adapting them to the local context. As PQueers met, shared their experiences, and discussed sexuality in Arabic, it became clear that mimicking a liberal gay agenda and scripts of sexual liberation limited the development of local understandings of sexuality and sexual identities. This realisation led PQueers to question the relevance of Western frameworks and to seek local alternatives. In the words of Haneen Maikey:

We realised that Western agendas of coming out, gay visibility, pride and fighting homophobia are simply not suitable for our own experiences as Palestinian queers. We started asking: How can we discuss homosexuality in a society that does not discuss sexuality? How do we discuss homophobia in a society that does not discuss sexuality? And, is homophobia a relevant concept to our society? We realised that the focus of our work should be opening the conversation about sexuality. (Interview, Haneen Maikey 2012)

Western scripts of sexual emancipation centre visibility and coming out as inherent to the journey of sexual emancipation. Queer visibility, Jason Ritchie argues, ‘is both a tactic and a goal, the means and the end of gay activism’ (Ritchie 2010, 533). In the West, coming out, Darnell Moore suggests, ‘is often considered the only means of survival for queer people’ (Moore 2012). The obsession of Western feminism and LGBT rights with sexual visibility is based on the ‘precept that women [and gays] are not free until and unless they are sexually free’ (Zakaria 2015).

Like colonial feminism, the Gay International has failed to consider whether these models are relevant to the experiences and agendas of non-white queer groups both in and outside of the West. Interviews with PQueers reveal that the trope of sexual visibility and the discourse of coming out have proven to be repressive rather than emancipating, creating another burden for PQueers. Tamer, a gay activist, shares his experience:

My friends, siblings, parents and some of my extended family know I am gay, but my co-workers, for example, do not. So, am I in or out of the closet? I do not find this framework to be useful or helpful. It mainly seems to be out of context. (Interview, Tamer 2012)

The trope of the closet and the equation of sexual liberation with sexual visibility form a powerful discursive framework and inspection regime against which PQueers are measured. Liberation is constantly gauged by the ability of PQueers to hold hands, hug and kiss each other, and dress freely in public. Inability to perform according to these norms renders PQueers as insufficiently free. The liberation of PQueers (and of Palestinian society) is further assessed by the freedom to hold pride parades in Ramallah or other Palestinian cities, regardless of whether sexual visibility is a relevant pretext for PQueers and their society. Israeli and Western gays, and non-gays, have assumed the role of the gatekeepers who determine who is a proper liberated gay subject, and who is not. As Tamer explains:

Israeli Jews often ask me, ‘Are you in or out of the closet?’ Why is this question relevant? What does it indicate about me? That I am courageous enough? And what constitutes in and out of the closet? (Interview, Tamer 2012)

The closet, I suggest, has come to serve a civilisational mission function that is similar to the colonial quest to unveil Muslim women. Just as Muslim women are to be liberated through their unveiling, Arab/Muslim/Palestinian queers are to be liberated by being helped out of the closet. Though the veil has cultural and religious significance not shared by the trope of the closet, both impulses speak to similar liberal-oriental sensibilities. They are signifiers of the repression of women and gays and of the backwardness of Arab and Muslim societies.

The imposition of the precept of sexual visibility as sexual liberation on Palestinians also extends to Israeli radical anti-occupation (and even anti-Zionist) queer activism. In her work on Black Laundry (Kvisa Shchora in Hebrew), a group of Israeli queer anti-occupation activists, Amalia Ziv describes the following incident as a testament to the group’s uncompromising radical politics:

Black Laundry ... linked the marginal sexual and gender identity of its members to the group’s solidarity with the oppression of Palestinians and insisted on rendering that sexual and gender identity visible when participating in Left demonstrations. This insistence became particularly salient in the face of pressures toward closeting, as happened, for instance, in 2002 when Black Laundry, together with other Jewish peace groups, participated in the Arab Land Day procession. Muslim organizations that took part in the organizing objected to the group marching with signs proclaiming its members’ sexuality. Eventually, a compromise was reached according to which none of the Jewish groups carried signs, but the Black Laundry contingent showed up with T-shirts that stated the members’ identity. (Ziv 2010, 541)

This story exemplifies that a radical anti-occupation stance does not absolve Israeli queers of complicity with cultural imperialism. The refusal of Palestinian society to submit to enforced sexual visibility is characterised as ‘pressures towards closeting’ (Ziv 2010, 541). Palestinian society is once again measured according to its tolerance of sexual visibility. Even in the radical circle of Israeli queer organising, support of Palestinians is conditioned (even if implicitly) upon civilising Palestinians into a Western/settler sexual modernity.

These experiences have led the PQueer movement to adopt an antagonistic and rejectionist stance vis-à-vis the Western liberal gay agenda. This has been joined by the movement’s engagement in articulating – and disarticulating – what it means to be a ‘queer in Palestine and a Palestinian queer’ (Maikey in AlQaws 2014a). The very act of rejection has been constitutive to the decolonisation of PQueer politics and the queer self. As Tamer says:

We had to go through the stage of expressive refusal and rejection, which was powerful and full of anger, in order to move to the next stage of articulating what it means to be a Palestinian queer. (Interview, Tamer 2012)

Rejection, however, is more than a strategy, a tactic or a means to an end; it is also a political imperative of the PQueer struggle. This refusal to mimic the Western gay agenda is complemented by a positive project of restructuring a PQueer subjectivity that is grounded in local experiences, culture, history and politics. To engage in this positive project of recovery of the self, both Aswat and AlQaws invest in developing spaces for local queer political and cultural content to emerge.⁸²

⁸² Committed to working with and expanding the conversation on sexuality within Palestinian society and civil society, AlQaws has partnered with progressive Palestinian platforms in order to produce queer content and integrate it into the flourishing scene of Palestinian cultural production. It has worked to intervene in and transform the larger discourse on gender and sexuality in Palestinian society. Such outreach projects include Queeriat as part of Qadita, a radical Palestinian online platform that focuses on culture, society and politics; Hawamesh (‘margins’), a monthly discussion forum that brings ‘sexual and gender diversity discourse more directly to the public’; running an ‘academic school’ for Palestinian activists and academics to discuss sexual and gender diversity, which resulted in the publication of a special issue of *Jadal*, a journal by Mada Al-Carmel, a Palestinian research centre; and, finally, the Ghanni A’an Ta’arif/Singing Sexuality project, which brought together Palestinian artists to produce an album that uses music to bring gender and sexual content to the wider Palestinian public.

PQueer resistance can be conceptualised as an experimental journey of disarticulating and rearticulating PQueer subjectivity. It is, using the words of Partha Chatterjee, a project of rejecting the modernities established by others (as discussed in Chapter 1). Such a journey, Chatterjee suggests, requires courage (Chatterjee 1997). This courage is articulated in confronting and challenging powerful forces and discourses, as well as imagining alternative ways of being a PQueer. But this journey is also an experimental project, which demands the courage to make mistakes and to engage in constant self-reflection and reformulation of strategies. This endeavour is not free of contradictions and ambivalence. It is marked simultaneously by the pursuit and denouncement of authenticity, and by the rejection and inescapability of Western sexual modernity. Nonetheless, the very advancement of such a project is courageously confrontational and subversively radical.

3. Intersectionality as Disruptive

As discussed in Chapter 1, colonial domination includes the production of binary representations of self and otherness (Fanon 1963; Said 1978a) and their inherent ambivalence (Bhabha [1991] 1994). As demonstrated above, PQueers occupy an ambivalent place in the liberal imaginary. In Bhabian terms, they are not quite gay and not quite Palestinian. Their folding into modernity is never complete; they continue to be racialised as Arabs/Palestinians/Muslims.

The colonial discourse renders queerness and Palestinianness/Islam as incompatible. The two are viewed as ‘the product of mutually exclusive “cultures”’ (Rahman 2010, 948). In his work on queer Muslims, Momin Rahman argues that ‘the “impossibility” of gay Muslims is exactly their power in resistance’ (Rahman 2010, 952). This is also the case for PQueers. The insistence of PQueers on intersectional articulation of their identities is a powerful form of resistance to the violence of homonationalism and homocolonialism, and the racialisation of Palestinians/Arabs/Muslims.

I suggest that just as we can speak of intersectional subordination – that is, marginalisation that is shaped by the intersections of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, age and ability – we can also speak about intersectional subaltern resistance.

From its origins dating back to Sojourner Truth's renowned speech 'Ain't I a Woman?' in 1851, to the introduction of intersectionality as a term in Kimberle Crenshaw's famous article in 1989 (Crenshaw 1989), intersectionality has been mainstreamed into feminist studies as a prominent theoretical framework for theorising difference and social stratification (Yuval-Davis 2006). Intersectionality has been problematised for its treatment of identities (race, gender, class and sexuality) as separate categories that meet at a single point of crossing (Puar 2011b). My use of intersectionality builds upon approaches that accommodate an understanding of intersectionality as a lived structure, not an event, perceiving race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality and class as being interwoven, interconnected and mutually constitutive (see Brah and Phoenix 2004; Puar 2011b).

Articulating Palestinian and queer identities as mutually constitutive, I argue, is a particularly powerful and subversive act that allows PQueers to challenge the homonational and homocolonial discourses that produce sexual identities as signifiers of Western exceptionalism and modernity. Similar to the Naqab Bedouin, who articulate hybrid Bedouin traditional/modern identities in order to challenge their view as premodern subjects, PQueers mobilise intersectionality to reclaim the possibility of Palestinian queerness.

Intersectionality as resistance further allows PQueers to disrupt the universalisation of a homogenous category of universal queer and to challenge the liberal gay agenda that is based on a single-axis identity politics. Such politics assumes sexuality as the paramount factor that shapes subjugation and experiences of violence. As Maya Mikdashi rightly points out, 'homophobia could be a less defining experience than say, the racism experienced by an African American queer or a Syrian queer protesting against authoritarianism and neoliberal market restructuring' (Mikdashi 2011). This could be the case for PQueers whose lives are shaped through the experience of occupation, dispossession, displacement and racial discrimination. As pointedly articulated by Sami, 'there is no pink door leading to a secret pathway through the Wall for me' (Sami in Schulman 2012, 154).

As has been elaborated in Chapter 5 and earlier in this chapter, the polarising discourse on PQueers is premised on their disaggregation from their society (Jamal 2015). Articulating Palestinianness as constitutive to queerness plays an important role in refusing the logics that position PQueers and their society in antagonistic terms. By mobilising intersectionality, PQueers reject their conceptualisation as subjects in need of rescue by insisting that Palestinian society is not something from which they need to be saved. Instead, the PQueer agenda is based on reinforcing the relationships between PQueers and their societies. As Rauda states, Aswat is about ‘finding what connects you to your society, and investing in these connections’ (Interview, Rauda Morcos 2012). Similarly, AlQaws sees its role as creating a conversation about sexuality in Palestinian society (Interview, Haneen Maikey 2012).

As the next section shows, the political mobilisation of intersectionality as disruption, and intersectionality as rejection, plays an important role in the development of a PQueer activism that is grounded in a radical anticolonial and anti-imperial agenda.

4. Centring the Question of Palestine in Palestinian Queer Organising

The project of articulating PQueer subjectivity that transcends the Western sexual modernity as its guiding script has been coupled with efforts to create a space where PQueers can engage – from within their own intersecting identities – with the Palestinian struggle for liberation. PQueers have tapped into this homonationality moment and subverted Israel’s growing investment in pinkwashing to instigate a PQueer political voice.

Early expressions of the PQueer political voice can be traced to 2006, when Aswat issued a statement and engaged in an international campaign against the decision to hold World Pride 2006 in Jerusalem. The statement read as follows:

In a time where the world will be celebrating their pride in being Lesbians, Gays, Bi-sexual, Trans, Queer and Intersexual in the heart of Jerusalem, the Palestinian people will be paying the price. ‘Love Without Borders’ in a country that believes in sep[a]rating two people by checkpoints, walls, closures, curfews, confiscation of lands, demolishing houses, arresting and killing. (Aswat, 2006)

However, PQueer activism against pinkwashing emerged as a ‘publicly and strategically organised’ (Schulman 2012, 157) movement only in 2010, amid a growing investment by Israel in pinkwashing rebranding efforts. In her book *Israel/Palestine and the Queer International*, Sarah Schulman, an American writer and a lesbian activist, shares her (contested) narrative of the development of the PQueer movement for BDS.

In 2010, Schulman came to Palestine on a solidarity/study visit after rejecting an invitation to give a keynote address at Tel Aviv University. During her visit, she travelled across historic Palestine and met with PQueer activists and BDS leaders (as well as Israeli anti-occupation queer activists). She explored the possibility of bringing a queer voice into the Palestinian-led BDS movement, and sought to recruit the support of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) for her idea of enlisting PQueers who ‘could tour the United States to talk about boycott’ (Schulman 2012, 91). PACBI’s response was dismissive, arguing that there were no PQueers who would be willing to participate. To that, PQueer responded: ‘We don’t need them [PACBI] to speak to the U.S. queer community ... We just do it directly’ (Maikey in Schulman 2012, 92). And, indeed, the tour took place without the endorsement of PACBI.

The position of PACBI is not exceptional in the history of anticolonial struggles. It is yet another example of the rift that has long existed between nationalism as a hegemonic masculine exclusionary project and its ethnic/racial/religious/gendered others (in the context of India, see Chatterjee 1989; on Palestinian nationalism, see Massad 1995; in the context of South Africa, see McClintock 1991; on the gendering of nationalism, see Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989). However, Maikey’s statement reflects a defiance of national authority. This defiance asserts the autonomous standing of PQueer agency and claims a PQueer role in the struggle against settler colonialism. Since then, the BDS movement has endorsed Palestinian Queers for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (PQBDS) and the PQueer movement has come to occupy an internal/exterior positionality. This ambivalent positionality carves out a space for PQueers to articulate a radical alternative politics to that of liberal and neoliberal nationalism.

PQBDS was established in 2010 as ‘a group of Palestinian queer activists who live in the Palestinian Occupied Territory and inside Israel, who came together to promote and stand for the Palestinian civil society call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel’ (PQBDS website).⁸³ That same year, Pinkwatching Israel, a transnational network of activists, was formed with a mission to create ‘a global movement to promote queer-powered calls against pinkwashing and pushing the Boycott, Sanctions and Divestment Campaign against Israel to the forefront of the global queer movement’. The network ‘brings together vibrant queer and BDS activists from around the world to imagine, visualize, and campaign for BDS and expose pinkwashing’ (Pinkwatching Israel website).⁸⁴

The anti-pinkwashing movement has grown rapidly, gaining momentum and becoming an important voice in global LGBT politics and in the global Palestinian solidarity movement. It has raised awareness of pinkwashing and Israeli occupation in the West and has urged Western audiences to support BDS. The movement mobilises supporters to monitor and protest Israeli funding and sponsorship of queer conferences, gay film festivals and gay pride parades. It also campaigns against gay tourism in Israel and lobbies LGBT groups to withdraw from holding or participating in events in Israel (for a detailed chronicle of anti-pinkwashing activism, see Schulman 2012).

With time, the political agenda of PQueer organising has developed beyond anti-pinkwashing activism that monitors, reveals, reacts to and contests pinkwashing. It has transformed from a reactive form of activism into a movement that is grounded in a ‘vision of decolonization and liberation’ (Darwich and Maikey 2014, 283). The PQueer agenda has expanded to explore broader questions concerning the intersection between sexual politics, imperialism and settler colonialism, reflecting a ‘commitment to work on theoretical and practical terrains that is broad and expansive’ (Davis in AlQaws 2012).

PQueer politics and analysis have been innovative. As opposed to the Palestinian liberal national movement, which sought to reveal Israel’s violence as contradictory to Western

⁸³ See the PQBDS website at <https://pqbds.wordpress.com/about/>, accessed 3 February 2016.

⁸⁴ See the Pinkwatching Israel website at <http://www.pinkwatchingisrael.com/about-us/>, accessed 3 February 2016.

liberalism, PQueer refuses the idealisation of Western liberalism and recognises liberalism and colonial violence as constitutive to one another. It contextualises liberal sexual politics within the broader politics of Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism. This political agenda simultaneously works to politicise Palestinian (and global) queer organising and to integrate a queer viewpoint into the question of Palestine by developing an analysis that illuminates ‘the connection between sexual repression and political oppression’ (Hayes 2000, 19, emphasis in original).

4.1 The Dynamics of Anticoloniality and Legitimacy

In the discourse of the Gay International, Amal Amireh pointedly argues that ‘Palestinian queers occupy two extreme locations: either they are hypervisible or they are invisible. In both cases, it is their Palestinianness, not their queerness, that determines if and how they are seen’ (Amireh 2010, 636). Anti-pinkwashing mobilisation has had two central aims: the first aim was to visibilise PQueers as political agents and to challenge their appropriation as victims in need of saving; the second was to visibilise the question of Palestine and to challenge Israel’s legitimacy globally by centring Israel’s settler colonial violence. As Sami reflects:

Pinkwashing took our voice, made us visible as victims and Israel as benevolent saviours. PQBDS was us reclaiming our voice. Israel claimed that to support Palestinian queers is to support Israel. Our message was that if you want to support us, support the BDS. The BDS as a campaign that relies on Palestinian civil society’s call for BDS was a good fit in challenging pinkwashing. It just required us to add the nuances and specificities of pinkwashing and how it works and to tie it with BDS. (Interview, Sami 2013)

The decision to endorse BDS was a significant step in making the PQueer movement integral to the Palestinian struggle for liberation. Articulating a queer BDS facilitated the development of the movement as an antagonistic political force that can speak both to the larger Palestinian solidarity movement and to queer audiences (though they are not its main target audience). As Angela Davis has observed, ‘queer BDS is helping radical forces around the world to develop new ways of engaging in ideological struggle. What might appear to be small and marginal is in fact vast and central’ (Davis in AIQaws 2012).

A vision of queer BDS assisted the movement in questioning the relevance of the liberal grammar of LGBT rights. PQueer questioned the relevance of LGBT demands for

recognition, inclusion and sexual citizenship in the context of a settler state that has political, social, economic, cultural and legal structures aimed at advancing Jewish racial supremacy. Instead, the PQueer movement pursued an articulation of resistance that is not complicit with the normalisation of settler/sexual citizenship, authority and sovereignty.

Articulating resistance as antagonistic is also reflected in PQueer rejection of the 'common sense' that frames the anticolonial Palestinian struggle as a joined struggle that is built on a politics of alliance. It allows PQueer to continue to reject cooperation with the Israeli LGBT community and Israeli queer anticolonial groups as partners (Interview, Haneen Maikey 2012). Cooperation with the Israeli LGBT movement is conceived by PQueers as an attempt to appropriate them as part of the Israeli anti-occupation movement. The politics of alliance is viewed as a perpetuation of the fragmentation of Palestinian political subjectivity. Furthermore, the power relations in the encounter between natives and settlers, it is believed, invite a containment of the PQueer struggle, risk undermining PQueer autonomy and agency, and subject PQueers to demands to negotiate their identities and their struggle. Furthermore, partnership with Israelis is viewed as a divestment of attention and resources from the PQueer struggle for liberation. As Audre Lorde pointedly states:

... this is an old and primary tool of all oppressors to keep the oppressed occupied with the master's concerns [in this case, the master's fantasies] ... This is a diversion of energies and a tragic repetition of racist patriarchal thought. (Lorde 1984, 113)

PQueer resistance thus refuses the ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism. It insists on marking *all* Israelis as settlers. This is a significant political statement, particularly since the radical Israeli leftists still refuse to acknowledge their position as settlers. PQueer resistance builds on a Fanonian understanding of the colonial condition in dichotomous and absolute terms of occupier–occupied, coloniser–colonised and settler–native. Postcolonial theorists have rightly emphasised the need to 'go beyond the binary categories used in standard interpretations of domination' (Mbembe 2001, 103). However, I suggest that we need to acknowledge that binary framings serve an important function in enabling natives to transcend the ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism and to refuse the co-optation of native struggles through the frameworks of citizenship and agendas of recognition and reconciliation.

Israel's decades-long practice of blackmailing Palestinian gays in order to force them to collaborate with the state has produced, in the Palestinian society, an association of homosexuality with colonial collaboration. This has resulted in the literal production of PQueers as native informants and in aligning homosexuality with colonialism (Maikey and Hillal 2015). Furthermore, the consolidation of the queer question as the litmus test for national sovereignty and the homonationalist racial hierarchisation of bodies have made legitimacy an even more urgent battle to fight. The movement's political oppositional agenda, and its endorsement of BDS, have thus been vital to its pursuit of legitimacy in Palestinian society. As Sami explains:

Our work overseas on BDS impacted us internally and our relationship to the Palestinian national movement. In Palestine, your political activism gives or denies you legitimacy in society. (Interview, Sami 2013)

Seeking legitimacy within Palestinian society is complicated by the burden of homonationalism. As Puar argues, 'like modernity, homonationalism can be resisted and resignified, but not opted out of: we are all conditioned by it and through it' (Puar 2013a, 336). This burden is characterised by, on the one hand, the movement's disavowal of the homonational logic that produces queer bodies as superior and, on the other hand, the impossibility of not being conditioned by it. An example of how the burden of homonationalism imposes particular discourses is a letter sent in 2014 to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by a group of 43 Israeli reservists, who served in the Israeli army's elite intelligence unit known as Unit 8200. In the letter, the soldiers revealed what had been long known to every Palestinian, that in their service they gathered information on innocent and vulnerable Palestinians who could potentially be blackmailed into collaborating with Israel. This included material on Palestinians facing severe economic hardship, Palestinians in need of medical treatment outside the OPT, and gay Palestinians. As stated by one of the signatories:

If you're a homosexual who knows someone who knows a wanted man – Israel will turn your life into a misery. If you need an urgent medical treatment in Israel, the West Bank or overseas – we're on your tail. The State of Israel will let you die before it lets you go for medical treatment without your first giving information about your cousin, the wanted man. Every time we hook an innocent person who can be blackmailed for information, or to conscript him as a collaborator, that's like gold for us and for the entire Israeli intelligence community. In a training course we actually learned and memorized the different Arabic words for homosexual. (Quoted in Derfner 2014)

Once the story broke, it took on a life of its own. PQueer bodies were prioritised. The story was framed around Israel's practices of blackmailing Palestinian gays. Other Palestinians who were subjected to similar forms of surveillance and blackmail were ignored. The focus on PQueers was also reinforced by supporters and sympathisers who tapped into the homonationalist interest in PQueers to highlight Israel's oppressive policies. Responding to the reproduction of homonationalism, AlQaws published the following statement:

Singling out sexuality ignores the stranglehold that Israel's militarized colonial regime has on the lives and privacy of Palestinians more generally throughout Palestine. Blackmailing and extorting an individual on the basis of their sexuality is, of course, a naked act of oppression. But it is no more or less oppressive than blackmailing and extorting an individual on the basis of their lack of access to healthcare, disrupted freedom of movement, exposure of marital infidelities, finances, drug use, or anything else. (AlQaws 2014c)

Another manifestation of the burden of homonationalism is the appropriation of PQueer agency in order to humanise Palestinians by producing them as (semi)Western. For example, a piece in the *New York Times* celebrated the 'Liberal Arab Culture' in Haifa, where 'the cool kids are Palestinians, and they have unfurled a self-consciously Arab milieu that is secular, feminist and gay-friendly' (Hadid 2016). Palestinian claims for freedom and sovereignty are legitimised through the queer question. As Haneen Maikey explains, these appropriations demand that PQueers reject the discourse that says 'there are Palestinian radical gays', but PQueers insist that 'we are not doing pinkwashing in reverse' (Interview, Haneen Maikey 2012).

5. (Re)Orienting Palestinian Queers: Whiteness and the Double Bind of Palestinian Queer Organising

There is little doubt that anti-pinkwashing activism has resulted in the exposition of the PQueer voice, both locally and transnationally. PQueer agency and political subjectivity are now hard to ignore.

In the Bedouin case, we have seen that the question of whether Bedouin agency is intelligible to supporters and sympathisers remains open. In contrast, the antagonistic

nature of the PQueer movement and its mobilisation of anger make PQueer agency intelligible to supporters. But this acknowledgement of agency does not necessarily revoke the dangers of self-orientalising (as manifested in the slogan ‘we are a new generation of strong Palestinian queers’) and the (re)orienting of PQueers by supporters.

The encounter of PQueers with whiteness subjects them to a double bind. Anti-pinkwashing activism has allowed PQueers to reclaim agency, visibility and voice. However, once agency has been reclaimed, it becomes fetishised in ways that risk PQueers being appropriated, tokenised, (re)orientalised and exoticised by supporters and sympathisers.

A recent example of the fascination with the PQueer as a figure of strength is the documentary film *Oriented*, which has achieved international success. *Oriented* presents the story of three forceful and charismatic Palestinian gay men – Khader, Fadi and Naim – who live in Tel Aviv and battle the accommodation of their intersectional identities. The film has been praised for telling a different story about Palestinian gays, one that moves beyond their portrayal as victims in need of saving (Goldman 2015). However, *Oriented* exemplifies the cynical use of PQueer agency to satisfy a liberal-oriental gaze without undermining Israel as the locus for Palestinian queer freedom. It is premised on a fetishised treatment of PQueer agency and its commodification as a source of strength. The narrative of strong Palestinian gay men, as a phenomenon deserving attention, is the motivation behind the film. In the words of the director, Jake Witzefeld, a British Jew who was living in Israel at the time:

I came across the writing of Khader Abu Seif for *Mako*, an Israeli online publication, representing new voices of Palestinian citizens in the Tel Aviv LGTB centre. This identify was new to me: an Israeli citizen who identifies as a Palestinian, is homosexual and is vocally active, trying to make people aware of his identity. (Quoted in Fathom 2016)

AlQaws rightly critiqued the film for its focus on PQueer life in Tel Aviv, arguing that this focus reproduces the image of Tel Aviv as a liberal gay haven that can accommodate a flourishing PQueer agency (AlQaws 2015). Furthermore, while the film has built its success on (re)orienting PQueers through the fetishisation of their agency, the director has ignored the call of one of its stars, Fadi Daem, to refrain from screening the film

during Pride Week in Tel Aviv, as this is an act of pinkwashing. In response, Fadi released the following statement:

3 years ago I took part in a documentary called 'Oriented'. Over the last year the film has spread through cinemas around the world, from New York to Bucharest. I feel proud of what my closest friends and I accomplished but somewhere along the way the message I tried to bring got lost. Now the film is set to open the TLV Fest (an LGBTQ film festival that takes place during Pride Week in Tel Aviv) and I couldn't be more ashamed.

In my opinion, the film was made to highlight a new struggle that the occupation has created, the struggle of clashing identities and discrimination. Screening the film during TLV Fest, a festival sponsored by the Israeli government, is a direct act of Pinkwashing and represents the opposite of what I tried to accomplish with the film.

An occupying country cannot celebrate freedom while denying it from a whole nation. A racist country cannot celebrate diversity. I will not take part in these screenings and celebrations, I hope you won't either. (Facebook post, 28 May 2016)

The dangers of tokenising and (re)orienting also extend to the political mobilisation of PQueers. In the early days of anti-pinkwashing activism, PQueer mobilisation was focused on raising the awareness of liberal sympathisers and supporters – in Europe, the United States and Canada – to Israel's practices of pinkwashing and advocating that they support the Palestinian call for BDS. At this time, the ascendance of whiteness was inevitable, given that the main target of Israel's pinkwashing was the West. Similarly, white activists were important interlocutors in facilitating access to a wide range of audiences through capitalising on existing transnational networks. The dominance of white activists demanded that PQueers carefully navigate the liberal violence of white benevolence and the dangers of reorienting PQueers through the exoticisation of their agency.

While living in London, I attended two public events with Haneen Maikey, the director of AlQaws. The first event was a talk delivered by Maikey as part of the Marxism 2012 conference. The second was a community-based event that took place in 2013.⁸⁵ In general, Maikey's overseas talks attract wide attention – and rightly so, as she is a compelling speaker. Her presentation at the Marxism 2012 conference was no different, and it attracted hundreds of people. Maikey's talk, as always, was political. It focused on sexual politics, pinkwashing, the occupation and the violence of settler colonialism. And

⁸⁵ The event was held at 5–7pm on Saturday, 6 July 2013, at the Fitzrovia Community Centre in London.

yet, at the Q&A that followed, most of the questions were concerned with Maikey's own experience of being a lesbian in Palestinian society. (The second talk saw a similar dynamic.) Maikey was asked how her parents reacted to her being lesbian, whether they accepted her, how the village reacted, and so on. The questioners wanted the exotic and juicy details. Refusing this oriental gaze, Maikey skilfully shifted the focus back to the sexual politics of settler colonialism and to challenging the Islamophobic discourse that produces Palestinian society as pathologically homophobic.

The oriental gaze builds on a representation of PQueer agency as exceptional and even anomalous (P. J. Deloria 2004). To these audiences, Maikey embodied that exceptionalism by being a smart, funny and assertive Palestinian lesbian. These encounters are not unique to PQueers. Palestinians (and, more generally, Muslims) who appear to break these stereotypes ('You don't look Arab', 'How come you wear a veil and are educated?', and so on) are subjected to similar forms of orientalisering.

The celebration of agency, Nayrouz A.H. argues, reflects a wider problem in the dynamics that are in play in transnational PQueer organising. A.H. goes so far as to argue that international solidarity activists are trying to engineer a PQueer activist who can adhere to an imagery of a politicised, strong-yet-authentic subject. She argues that:

The International solidarity movement is best described as constructing a fantasy through which many people can imagine a particular queer Palestinian subject, who is appealing to the North American queer activist discourses ...

I see today a danger with some forms of international queer solidarity, not only, in being complicit with uncritical racist and imperial construction of a 'liberated Palestinian queer subject', but also in dumping the orientalist fantasy of western queer activists on specific image of politicized freedom-fighter queer Palestinian, who is always already burdened with keeping up with the fantasy ...

I absolutely felt like we are heading again to what Gayatri Spivak described as 'White men are saving brown women from brown men'. While, the forces are different, the dynamics are similar. I felt that that here North American (often) white queers want to save Palestinian queers from the Israeli Pinkwashing and homonationalism, then call this act 'solidarity'. (A.H. 2013)

In our interview, Maikey further describes the pressures faced by PQueer activists in the early days of anti-pinkwashing mobilisation:

In 2010, we had a big tour in the US. It was very successful. The last talk was at City University of New York. Four hundred people attended, and another three hundred

people were turned down because of space limits. They [white organisers] wanted to build on this experience, arguing that it should become a blueprint for our activism in strategising our struggle. The strategy was that we need to bring pretty, articulate, sassy, funny, smart, sharp people with American accents to speak to American audiences, do interviews for TV, the *New York Times*, etc. They even sent emails to the BDS national committee, saying that this is what should happen. Since then, we have cut our relationships with many of them. (Interview, Haneen Maikey 2012)

Thus, homonationalism, orientalism and cultural imperialism shape not only conservative politics, but also progressive politics. The double binds that result from structures of expectation cannot be avoided. They are part of the structural violence to which native peoples are subjected. Jessica Cattelino argues that such a double bind ‘must be refused by reorganizing the cultural expectations on which it rests and by attending to the lived practices by which indigenous people enact sovereignty’ (Cattelino 2010, 252). PQueer activists navigate their struggle in the face of multiple structures of expectations that risk reorienting and tokenising them as an authentication stamp for solidarity activism. This has demanded that PQueers invest significant efforts to guarantee their ownership and leadership of the movement. Maikey shares her experience:

We realised that we need to take ownership and control the building and management of our movement as we see fit. This required managing interests, power relations, how to deliver your message, and how to control it. It took a lot of effort and time. In the beginning, we were very much hands on. Today, we let go more. We feel that we have built an effective movement and that our voice is strong enough. We don’t need to control everything all the time. But at the beginning it was necessary. And we made a lot of people angry. (Interview, Haneen Maikey 2012)

The intersectional location of the PQueer movement between the global queer movement and the Palestinian solidarity movement posed an additional challenge for the PQueer movement. In her keynote address at the Homonationalism and Pinkwashing Conference at City University of New York, Maikey described the tensions that underlay the first LGBT delegation to Palestine in 2012. The delegates included prominent activists, academics and writers from the US LGBT community, including Sarah Schulman and Jasbir Puar.⁸⁶ Tensions were evident in the desire of participants to learn more about LGBTs in Palestine and the desire of PQueers to focus on Palestine and the occupation.

⁸⁶ For more information on the delegation, see Cassell 2012; see also Barrows-Friedman 2012.

These tensions reflected a wider contention over what the PQueer struggle is about. Some have perceived PQueer activism as an effort to transform, politicise and radicalise global queer politics, or as a project that aims ‘to make Palestine more appealing to queer people’ (Maikey and Stelder 2015, 98). Instead, PQueers insist on framing the movement as part of wider radical project of decolonisation and liberation. This approach challenges an understanding of the movement as one that seeks to liberate PQueers. Rather, it articulates the movement as a project of decolonising Palestine. This agenda, Maikey has argued, ensures that solidarity is with Palestine, rather than with queers in Palestine (Maikey in AIQaws 2013). The agenda has also led to an increased focus within the movement on forging and strengthening alliances with Palestine solidarity groups, as well as with African-American groups such as Black Lives Matter, the Audre Lorde Project, and indigenous peoples (see Atshan and Moore 2014).⁸⁷

Conclusion

The case study of the PQueer movement offers an important contribution to the study of ’48 Palestinian resistance to settler colonialism, illuminating the often overlooked gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial domination and resistance to it. It also brings to the fore a different political project that refuses the ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism, articulating instead a resistance that calls into question the colonial condition (Fanon 1963). Emerging in ’48 Palestine, the movement has demonstrated the ways in which the liberalism of the settler state – and national liberalism – can be transcended, articulating instead a radical and antagonistic anticolonial and anti-imperial project.

Part III of this thesis has argued that PQueer subjugation and resistance should be understood in light of the particular racialising gendered and sexualised logics of settler colonialism, and in light of the intersection of these logics with the global politics of homonationalism. The ambivalent positionality of PQueers between life and death, nationalism and its discontents, modernity and backwardness, inclusion and exclusion, legitimacy and illegitimacy have shaped the many burdens – and the structures of

⁸⁷ For example, a delegation of 11 indigenous women and Women of Color feminists who visited Palestine. For more information on the delegation, see Abunimah 2011.

expectation – that they face. These burdens are negotiated, challenged, navigated, managed and refused in the processes of resistance. But, as this case study has illuminated, for these burdens to be transcended, they first need to be identified, understood and unpacked in the process of resistance.

Responding to the particular structures of racialisation (and their intersections), PQueer organising has made defiance central to resistance. PQueer resistance has developed as a project that refuses mimicry. It is a subversive project of disruption, drawing its strength in outright expressions of rejection. This unequivocal politics of refusal further builds on the mobilisation of anger and on the articulation of the colonial condition in dichotomous terms. These strategies are important in managing the danger of being appropriated by the liberal sexual agenda and also by supporters of the PQueer movement. Rejection, as both a negative and a constructive project, is intrinsic to a larger project of restructuring PQueer subjectivity. It also functions as a political compass in guiding the development of the movement, its agenda and its engagement with different actors.

Conclusion

History is made by men and women, just as it can also be unmade and re-written, always with various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurements tolerated, so that 'our' East, 'our' Orient becomes 'ours' to possess and direct. (Said 2004, 871)

This thesis has sought to fundamentally reconceptualise the resistance of '48 Palestinians to Israeli settler colonialism. By engaging ethnographically with the case studies of the Palestinian Bedouin struggle for land rights and the Palestinian queer (PQueer) movement, I have explored the racialised, ethnic, gendered and sexualised dimensions of settler colonial violence, asked how these factors shape colonial subjectivities and modalities of resistance, and identified the ways in which the transnational³ is imbricated within these processes.

Building on an understanding of resistance as diagnostic of power (Abu-Lughod 1990), this thesis has argued that the resistance of Palestinians in Israel is diagnostic of the structure of Israel as a liberal settler state, and unfolds in relation to the liminal positionality of '48 Palestinians in the Israeli liberal settler state as both citizens and colonial subjects. This core argument has challenged the frameworks of ethnocracy, ethnonationalism and minority studies that have been most prevalent in earlier research on '48 Palestinians.

'48 Palestinian modalities of resistance, it has been further suggested, are indicative of the ambivalent encounter of Palestinians in Israel with liberal frameworks of human rights as simultaneously empowering and oppressive. This thesis has demonstrated the ways in which the subjugation, subjectivities and modalities of resistance of '48 Palestinians are shaped in complex ways by the racialising logics of liberal settler colonialism, which cannot be understood outside of the intersectionality of race with gender, sexuality and class, and the ways in which these racialising logics can be reproduced in the deployment of particular liberal discourses of human rights.

This thesis has intervened in and contributed to the study of Palestinians in Israel, and more specifically to the theorisation of their resistance, in a number of important ways. It has innovatively brought together settler colonial studies and postcolonial theory as an analytical framework for the study of Palestinians in Israel. Settler colonialism and race, I have suggested, are fundamental factors in understanding not only the oppression but also the political mobilisation of '48 Palestinians. In addition, this thesis has integrated the transnational as an important additional dimension, challenging the prevalent tendency to domesticise the Palestinians of Israel as an internal issue of the settler state. Instead, this research has positioned the study of Palestinians in Israel within a larger critical body of Palestine studies and the broader context of the study of settler colonialism as a transnational phenomenon.

The two selected ethnographies have pioneered a new approach to the study of Palestinian political mobilisation. Existing studies on the national politics of Palestinians in Israel have limited their focus to formal political movements and parties, parliamentary participation and PNGOs. Grassroots movements and the mobilisation of women, LGBT people, Bedouin and other ethnic/religious minorities have therefore been routinely excluded from these studies. Notably, the Bedouin struggle has received attention only within the field of Naqab/Negev Bedouin studies, while the PQueer movement has received very limited attention and only from within postcolonial and transnational queer studies. The two ethnographies have therefore broadened our understanding of domination and resistance by incorporating diverse elements of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

Finally, through the focus on indigeneity and LGBT rights, this research has problematised the dominant normative conception of multiculturalism and liberal human rights as emancipatory frameworks and tools. The case studies have illuminated the complex and ambivalent ways in which settler colonial modes of racialisation can intersect – and be reproduced – in liberal frameworks and discourses of human rights.

1. Resistance and the Impasse of Liberal Settler Colonialism

I have suggested that in order to properly understand Palestinian resistance in Israel, we need to conceptualise Israel as a *liberal* settler state. This is not a trivial proposition, yet it remains marginal in the field. The call to rethink Israel as a liberal settler state is bound to be contested by mainstream scholars who reject the framing of Israel as a settler colonial project (but would welcome recognising its liberal dimension). It is also bound to be rejected by critical scholars who have invested considerable effort in debunking claims that Israel is a liberal democracy, arguing instead that it should be conceptualised as an ethnic state or ethnocracy.

To understand why, how and in what ways Palestinians engage with the Israeli state and its institutions (such as the parliament, courts, ministries and other governmental institutions), we should consider the specific liberal and democratic configuration of the settler state, and what this liberal order imposes on indigenous people. This thesis has demonstrated the interplay between inclusion and exclusion, citizenship and colonial subjecthood, and the ambivalence within liberalism as a structure of both opportunity and violence. This renders the colonial condition ambivalent, producing hybrid colonial subjectivities and hybrid modalities of resistance. Contradictions and paradoxes are therefore inescapable. Native resistance is often marked by engaging settler sovereignty while also disavowing it, mobilising citizenship while transcending it, and challenging settler legitimacy while reproducing and normalising it.

Building on the work of Shira Robinson (2013) and Nadia Abu El-Haj (2010), this thesis has advocated a need to open a space to critically engage with the complex structuring dynamics that constitute Israel as a liberal settler state. There is a need to move away from viewing liberalism as a normative concept, against which the Israeli regime should be evaluated and measured. Treating liberalism in normative terms has, in some respects, aided subversive projects of undermining Israel's normative power. However, it has also left the dark side of liberalism unacknowledged. Such an approach risks simplistically reducing the scope of critical inquiry to Israel's democratic shortfalls, as opposed to its underlying settler colonial dynamic. The misleading implication, therefore, is that in order to become a true liberal democracy, Israel should remedy the treatment of its

Palestinian citizens and ensure substantive equality through a liberal politics of recognition.

Acknowledging Israel as a liberal settler state does not mean celebrating Israel as a liberal democracy. It also does not mean viewing Israel's liberalism and settler colonialism as two separate features of the settler polity. My proposition is different. Instead, I have argued that it is important to read the two as convergent and interrelated. In other words, it is an understanding of liberalism as constitutive of the Zionist Israeli settler colonial project. The work of Edward Said, Joseph Massad and Nadia Abu El-Haj (among others, but one aspect of decolonising research is privileging Palestinian critical pioneering scholarship) provides a substantive theoretical basis for such engagement. Instead of being treated as a merely normative concept, liberalism should be treated as an analytic, a political project (a vehicle of both liberation and domination) that is rooted in Western modernity, imperialism and orientalism, and in a European conception of race.

2. The Settler Colonial Condition

This thesis has further demonstrated that in order to unpack the different performances, discourses, strategies and practices of native resistance to settler colonialism, we must first examine how the colonial condition is conceptualised by the colonised themselves. Postcolonial theory shows that colonial violence impacts how resistance and decolonisation are conceptualised. As Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon describe, the colonial condition is one of brutal occupation, shaped by physical and material violence such as the encounter with checkpoints, soldiers and colonial administration, and the denial of citizenship, freedoms and rights (Fanon 1963; Memmi [1965] 2003). It is thus not surprising that both theorists understood resistance and decolonisation to be no less than a total revolt.

While Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are subjected to military occupation, the governance (and colonisation) of Palestinians in Israel is more equivocal because of their incorporation as citizens, especially after the end of the military rule in 1966. Israel's illusionary promise of inclusion has produced a colonial condition that is marked by ambivalence (Bhabha [1991] 1994). This leaves more room for ambiguity in how native

people articulate their own condition and positionality vis-à-vis the state's colonial power.

How the colonial condition is experienced, understood and expressed is neither a matter of semantics nor a mere intellectual exercise. It produces concrete and lived social meanings, political visions and social worlds. As Vine Deloria, a prominent Native American intellectual, has argued, 'to bring about a radical change in present structure ... depends upon how clearly those people advocating change want a change and *understand the system they are facing*' (V. Deloria [1970] 2007, 67, emphasis added).

The history of Palestinian resistance in Israel illustrates that the conceptualisation of Israel as a settler colonial polity is not as straightforward as it might appear. As I have suggested, this ambivalence has produced '48 Palestinian projects that are framed in both reformative and transformative terms. During the first decades, mobilisation was framed as a liberal struggle of equality: '48 Palestinians were conceptualised not as colonised indigenous people, but rather as a population that was discriminated against. The rise of the Palestinian national movement since the 1990s has inspired a more radical political project that is grounded in multicultural demands for recognition and democratisation through the transformation of Israel from a Jewish state to a state for all its citizens. This project has been both subversive in Bhabian terms and antagonistic in Fanonian terms (Bhabha [1991] 1994; Fanon 1963).

Throughout the history of Palestinian struggle in Israel, there have been persistent voices and movements centring upon an anticolonial political vision (such as Al-Ard and Abna' a Al-Balad). These movements remained, however, marginal in Palestinian politics. In recent years, new and explicitly anticolonial movements have mobilised a Fanonian antagonistic-rejectionist modality of resistance and vision of decolonisation. These movements insist on a political project of decolonising Palestine, not transforming Israel.

This multiplicity of projects is best understood as the result of the *liberal* settler colonial condition. The predicaments and closures within native resistance to settler colonialism, this thesis has suggested, emphasise the need to bring together Fanonian and Bhabian

theorisations of the colonial condition and resistance. This thesis has argued that there is a need to transcend the ambivalence of liberal settler colonialism and the liberal politics of human rights in order to achieve a more radical vision of decolonisation. This demands problematising the conventional view of citizenship as merely an opportunity structure (Jamal 2007a) and looking instead to how the structure of citizenship works to contain and control native struggles by confining them to the liberal institutions and logics of the settler state. Put differently, in order to transcend the ambivalence of settler colonialism, there is a need to de-normalise native citizenship.

The PQueer movement is a profound case study for considering how the predicaments and closures of resistance within the liberal settler state can be challenged. The case study demonstrates the need to diagnose the ambivalence of the liberal settler state not as transformative (in Bhabian terms), but rather as pathological (in Fanonian terms). While dichotomising colonial relationships may be limiting theoretically, the PQueer movement shows that these dichotomies have political significance. ‘Transcending’ is not a straightforward or easy task. Here, the Fanonian politics of rejection becomes an important modality and organising principle of native resistance. It generates a radical project of decolonisation that refuses the settler state and troubles its authority and sovereignty.

3. Intersectional Resistance, Racialisation and the Liberal Project of Human Rights

This thesis has argued that the resistance of Palestinians in Israel should be understood as being shaped by its encounters with the liberal discourse of human rights. Despite the prominence of liberal multiculturalism and human rights in the struggle of Palestinians in Israel, little attention has been given to how ordinary people experience the liberal grammar of human rights (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2012; Shalhoub-Kevorkian et al 2014). Most studies have tended to adopt a normative approach that perceives multiculturalism as an ideal form of governance and human rights as an empowering tool and a vehicle for emancipation.

This thesis has suggested that the racialising logics of settler colonialism, as well as its intersections with ethnicity, gender and sexuality, are important factors that shape '48 Palestinian resistance. By incorporating critical approaches to human rights (Abu-Lughod 2013; Massad 2002; Perugini and Gordon 2015) into the study of Palestinians in Israel, the discussion in this thesis of the Palestinian Bedouin struggle and the PQueer movement has highlighted how such racialising logics are reproduced in disturbing ways when they encounter the liberal politics and discourses of human rights.

'48 Palestinian civil society, political discourse and political mobilisations have been influenced by the rise of multiculturalism, as well as minority, indigenous and LGBT rights, and the hegemony of identity politics in the global politics of culture. '48 Palestinian subjectivities and modalities of resistance evolve and transform in response to the liberalism that animates the settler state, global imperialism, and the politics of international human rights. Focusing on indigeneity (based on the fetishisation of the premodern indigenous subject) and LGBT communities (based on the ambivalent folding of the queer racialised subject into modernity), the selected ethnographies have exemplified the ways in which the human rights framework has figured in two ambivalent ways: as a vehicle for empowerment and emancipation, and as a framework that is complacent with the reproduction of colonial violence.

The rise of the indigenous and LGBT movements globally – as part of the transnational ascent of identity politics – has provided Palestinian Bedouin and PQueers with new spaces, recourses and opportunities to organise, mobilise and resist. After decades of failure to achieve justice through the Israeli courts, and following an escalation in the state's use of violence against them, the Naqab Bedouin have turned to the indigenous rights framework to become visible and transcend the constraints of settler colonial law and Israeli citizenship. Grounded in international law, indigeneity offered marginalised Bedouin an alternative legal framework and moral justification for making land claims. It opened a space for them to become part of a larger global community of indigenous peoples who face similar structures of violence and colonial practices of erasure.

The rise of the LGBT movement – both globally and in Israel – did not bypass PQueers, who began to organise in the early 2000s. The emergence of PQueer groups, this thesis

has shown, should be understood in light of the encounter of PQueers with the liberal Israeli queer community. It is an encounter marked by alienation, erasure and liberal racism. Capitalising on the global transformations of LGBT politics and the mushrooming of PNGOs in particular, PQueers organised autonomous spaces that could accommodate their intersecting identities.

By mobilising indigeneity and LGBT rights, Palestinian Bedouin and queers have been able to circumvent the restraining forces of the settler state and exclusionary Palestinian nationalism. At the same time, however, both of these frameworks are marked by epistemological and ontological structures that regulate and reconfigure identities, subjectivities and struggles. The Gay International has universalised Western sexual identities and imposed Western scripts for sexual liberation. Similarly, global indigenous frameworks are complicit with the epistemological reproduction of indigenous people as premodern, only this time it is an emancipatory force and a justification for land rights.

The racialising logics of the settler state – in its ethnic, gendered and sexualised workings – have been reproduced in the violence of liberal human rights, thereby re-enshrining colonial power and re-inscribing race. Indigeneity and gay rights have maintained, though in different ways, the singularity of Western modernity and the epistemological distinction between the West and the Rest. In the case of the Palestinian Bedouin, configuring their identity as premodern became an asset that heralded in protection under the umbrella of indigenous rights. The simultaneous production of PQueers as dying figures in need of rescue, and as modern subjects by virtue of their sexual identity (as long as it conformed to the Western model), has disturbingly aligned with Israel's pinkwashing and racialising practices. To 'enjoy' protections as gays, PQueers are required to denounce their Palestinian, Arab and Muslim identities and to adopt Western models of sexual liberation.

The emancipatory promise of the indigenous and LGBT frameworks has proven to be conditional, with each undermined by a particular structure of expectation. While indigeneity requires the Bedouin to remain preserved as authentic and exotic premodern subjects, the Gay International requires PQueers to be proper modern queer subjects by adopting Western sexual identities and agendas. Any refusal to conform with – and

perform – these expectations meets serious sanctions: a retraction of the status of indigeneity and the associated bundle of rights, or re-racialisation as unruly and defiant queers.

The particular structures of racialisation and marginalisation, as shaped through the intersections of ethnicity, gender and sexuality, are determinative factors in how each group responds to liberal violence. The discursive, epistemic and symbolic violence that the Naqab Bedouin confront at the state level is tied to the very materiality of their oppression, manifested in chronic conditions of poverty, land confiscation, forced displacement and the erasure of Bedouin economies, communities and culture (or its reconfiguring through its commodification). Under such conditions, rejecting or resisting the culturalisation of indigeneity can be a matter of privilege.

Such conditions have made Bedouin engagement with indigeneity ambivalent: indigeneity is at once mobilised, subverted and challenged. Resistance has manifested in both accommodative and radical politics, as well as in hybrid modalities of resistance that include subversion and rejection. Seeking to capitalise on the political opportunities and international attention that indigeneity engenders, the Naqab Bedouin engage in practices of strategic essentialism, performative indigeneity, and a ‘drama of suffering’ that registers with liberal audiences (Khalili 2007, 33). At the same time, Bedouin activists subvert the culturalist interest in their cause in order to re-centre politics and expose Israel as a racial settler state.

While the Naqab Bedouin are subjected to the burden of culture, they are not passive to it. Bedouin activists confound the binary of modernity and premodernity and challenge their culturalisation, exoticisation and folklorisation by configuring the Bedouin figure as a hybrid modern–traditional subject. Not least importantly, younger generations of Bedouin activists are mobilising discourses that challenge making the grant of land rights conditional on cultural distinctiveness. In doing so, they subvert and rework the indigeneity framework by seeking its de-culturalisation and (re)politicisation. While the mobilisation of indigeneity is more associated with resistance as subversion, Bedouin resistance as *sumud* is rooted in a confrontational and antagonistic modality of resistance.

The racialisation logics facing PQueers have produced a fundamentally different modality of resistance. PQueers have responded in less ambivalent ways to the violence of homonationalism, pinkwashing, and the Gay International and its civilisation mission. They have tapped into – and subverted – the homonational moment and Israel’s increased investment in pinkwashing in order to reject the epistemic violence of Western sexuality and to leverage a space in which PQueers can become visible political agents. Western LGBT discourse is deeply polarised and imperialist. Therefore, the ability of PQueers to challenge and reject these dynamics has been central to their ability to seek legitimacy from the larger Palestinian community. Rejection has also been intrinsic to the project of restructuring PQueer subjectivities as grounded in local experiences, cultures and politics. Rejection – as a pedagogy and a political imperative – is at the heart of the PQueer movement. It informs two projects of liberation. The first is decolonising PQueer subjectivities and politics. The second is structuring the PQueer movement so that it is anticolonial, anti-imperial and anti-racial, and informed by Fanonian universal humanist sensibilities.

As the case studies demonstrate and as Jessica Cattelino persuasively articulates, there is no escape from the structures of expectation that colonised people face, or from the double binds that these expectations create (Cattelino 2012). These structures of expectation are part of the violence of settler colonialism. And they are deeply informed by the workings of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. As the experiences of Palestinian Bedouin and PQueers show, such double binds can only be managed, negotiated, subverted, challenged, rejected and disarticulated in the process of resistance. However, as Talal Asad argues, ‘the process of “cultural translation” is inevitably enmeshed in conditions of power’ (Asad 1986, 163). The question remains whether native challenges to culturalisation and racialisation are intelligible to liberal-orientalist sensibilities.

Finally, both case studies demonstrate that the human rights framework can in fact contribute to domination, racialisation and culturalisation. When marginalised groups mobilise human rights in terms of strategic essentialism alone, this depoliticises the nature and effect of their engagements, which are embedded in deep power imbalances. The hegemony of human rights can produce political projects that contain and displace other radical emancipatory projects. As has been shown, indigeneity has produced the

Bedouin struggle as a project of cultural recognition, instead of a struggle for land and decolonisation. Similarly, the Gay International and the universalisation of gay rights produce a blueprint of the global queer subject and models of sexual emancipation. These projects often come with significant resources and political leverage. Refusing them is therefore not easy. Conditions of extreme marginality do not always enable the antagonistic politics of refusal. In these cases, resistance as subversion is an important way of asserting native agency.

4. Wider Implications and Future Research

Although this thesis has focused specifically on Palestinian resistance to the Israeli settler state, it also bears great relevance to other settler colonial contexts. The liberalism of the settler state is not new. As scholars have demonstrated, the liberal aspirations of the settler state were deeply racialised. However, the liberal settler state has changed. No longer explicitly exclusionary, it is now marked by both exclusionary and inclusionary structures and practices. As scholars have shown, the violence of elimination and dispossession is still at play. However, it is increasingly carried and justified through a sophisticated progressive liberal rhetoric of inclusion, recognition and reconciliation (Coulthard 2014; Simpson 2014). This makes the task of uncovering the racial and colonial underpinnings of these policies and rhetorics even more urgent. Indeed, there is a growing body of work that problematises the liberal rhetoric of inclusion and reveals how multiculturalism is just a gentler form of ‘managing Indians and their difference’ (Simpson 2014, 20).

This thesis provides an important basis for developing a more structural analysis of contemporary settler states. We see today many different models of liberal settler states, which are marked by different-yet-similar technologies of governing indigenous people, their struggles and their entitlement to rights. The liberal settler model of the United States is different, for example, from the Canadian and Australian multicultural models. Similarly, the liberalism that marks Israel’s frontier stage settler colonialism differs from Anglophone settler colonialism. There is therefore room to continue the theorisation of settler colonialism in a way that unpacks these different contemporary formations of settler colonialism as unmistakably *liberal*. A comparative agenda could help shed light

on these transformations and variations in structures, patterns and practices of domination and racialisation.

In the case of the Palestinians in Israel, there is a need to further decolonise the scholarship, which remains largely confined to Israeli sociology and political science. A constructive starting point could be to situate the study of Palestinians in Israel within the wider global history, and present workings, of imperialism and settler colonialism, as well as the broader question of Palestine. Building on the work of Robinson (2013) and critical scholars, this research opens a critical space for rethinking the theorisation of the Israeli state and its Palestinian subject-citizens. As Wolfe notes, ‘in order for something to be resisted, it must be first understood’ (Wolfe 2016a, 28). This thesis has demonstrated how the misdiagnosis of the state as an ethnocracy means that the prevalent analyses of Palestinians in Israel suffer from foundational epistemological and ontological omissions. While this thesis has shown how the liberal settler state and its racialising logics have informed ’48 Palestinian politics, it has only begun the analysis of how the liberalism of the Israeli colonial state has taken different forms and manifestations since its inception. The liberalism of the Israeli state during the military rule differs from its (neo)liberal iteration of the 1980s and 1990s, and again from the transformations in Israeli politics since the year 2000. Future research can expand our understanding of how these transformations have impacted ’48 Palestinian status, politics and struggle.

Through this thesis, I have also endeavoured to open up new spaces for further and comparative study on the practices and politics of resistance in the context of *liberal* settler colonialism. The incorporation of indigenous people into the settler state as citizens has dramatically transformed their conception of, and relationship and engagement with, the settler state, as well as forms of resistance and struggle. The core dilemmas, contradictions, double binds and closures that Palestinian activists in Israel face in their resistance are shared by other indigenous peoples. These could be further unpacked to inform a better understanding of contemporary native resistance to settler colonialism and the different strategies mobilised by indigenous people.

We are witnessing the rise of new indigenous movements and new scholarship engaged in expanding indigenous imaginaries of resistance and decolonisation beyond the restraining liberal logic of citizenship, recognition, reconciliation and rights. New movements are articulating fresh agendas in vocabularies of refusal and assertion of native sovereignty. Palestinians in Israel are undergoing similar processes. This research has offered some insights into such resistances through its focus on the Palestinian Bedouin and PQueer movements. However, other grassroots movements that share similar agendas and dilemmas are emerging in the '48 Palestinian contexts. For those studying Palestinians in Israel, the recent transformations in their mobilisation and the emergence of new political agendas are fruitful grounds for further research. These should be understood within the broader context of transnational transformations in the modalities of resistance of indigenous people. A comparative perspective that engages with critical indigenous scholarship can contribute to unpacking and theorising these changes.

As the scholarship on settler colonialism shows, the economic and racialising logics of settler colonialism are foundational to the difference between franchise and settler colonialism. The engagement of this research with how these logics have manifested in the context of Palestinians in Israel has been limited (and has focused especially on the Palestinian Bedouin context). There is a need to better understand the ways in which global processes of neoliberalism are articulated in relation to the liberal settler state and how the Israeli neoliberal state is facilitating the continued dispossession and subjugation of indigenous peoples through settler encroachment. In the context of Palestinians in Israel, the convergence between neoliberalism and Israeli settler colonialism remains overlooked. Increasing poverty and de-development is best explained in relation to the particular exclusionary economic logics that drive Israel as a neoliberal settler state. Ethnic cleansing in settler frontiers within the Green Line – such as in the Palestinian cities of Acre, Jaffa, Lod, Ramla and Haifa – further exemplifies how theoretical engagement with the neoliberalism of the Israeli state can enrich and broaden our understanding of the lineages that exist between the liberal and neoliberal character of the contemporary settler state.

Finally, while this research illuminates that indigenous struggles are marked by multiple political projects, it leaves the question of decolonisation under-explored. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon asks ‘what does a black man want?’. This question bears relevance to indigenous peoples and to the question of decolonisation. As Fanon suggests, the pathologies that racial and colonial domination produce render the colonised at once wanting to be white and rejecting whiteness. We see this manifesting also in the multiplicity of political projects advanced in indigenous struggles. More specifically, we see this in the struggle of Palestinians in Israel and the contestations between those who seek to reform and transform the state, and those who seek to decolonise and dismantle altogether. There is a need to explore these contestations further and to unpack the political implications of the lack of a unified project, and whether this lack is chronic to the liberal settler colonial condition.

The durability of settler colonialism is a challenge in indigenous struggles, and to the critical theorisation of decolonisation in settler contexts. The absence of the possibility of a de-colonial moment – as a celebratory spectacle marked by national rejuvenation and the expulsion of the coloniser – renders decolonisation in settler colonialism anti-cathartic. It further invites us to think about questions such as these: What could it mean to decolonise regimes such as the United States, Canada, Australia or New Zealand that are ‘impervious to regime change’ (Wolfe 2006a, 402)? What could it mean to decolonise Palestine? And, finally, what could native justice mean in a decolonised settler state? One possible way to think about decolonisation is that it is a process (and an ambiguous one). Decolonisation is a lived structure, articulated in the pursuit of justice and defined by its inevitable incompleteness. Theorising resistance without engaging with the question of decolonisation renders our understanding of settler colonialism and indigenous struggles incomplete.

5. Decolonising Settler Colonialism: An (Im)Possible Project?

As Wolfe pointedly articulates, ‘the incompleteness of racial domination is the trace and the achievement of resistance, a space of hope’ (Wolfe 2016b, 272). Palestinians – like other native peoples – live in a structure of domination, inevitably making resistance a

structure itself (Wolfe 2006a). As long as domination, dispossession and violence are the forces that shape native existence, resistance will be a defining feature of native life. The miraculous survival of indigenous people as meaningful political subjects is a testament to the strength of their resistance in the face of momentous structures of oppression, erasure and dispossession. As long as indigenous people survive as political subjects, erasure is never complete. Furthermore, indigenous peoples are in themselves monuments that disturb the forces of erasure. They serve as a constant reminder that settler colonial projects – even when triumphant, durable and irreversible – have been born out of a history of violence.

When it comes to decolonisation, the case of Palestine resembles South Africa more than Australia, the United States or Canada. The one-state solution as a project of dismantling the racial Jewish settler state appears to be a viable – though contested – political project. And, as in South Africa, the task of deracialisation is likely to be an enduring challenge. However, unlike South Africa, where the political struggle of black South Africans was organised around a demand to end apartheid, the Palestinian struggle continues to be fractured across a multiplicity of political projects.

Political proposals range from the two-state solution, as advanced by Israeli leftists (Yiftachel 2013), to the one-decolonised-and-deracialised-state solution (Said 1999; Abunimah 2006). Opponents of the one-state solution invoke racial arguments – similar to those that raged in South Africa – about the barbaric nature of Arabs, implying that if Jewish domination is to end it will threaten the survival of the Jewish race altogether. In both Israel and the West, the notion of equality between Jews and Arabs is still seen as a provocative and radical proposition. Resistance to the one-state solution and equality extends to those who insist on maintaining the Jewish state in the name of pragmatism. Recently, critical Jewish Israelis advocated a model of confederation that will maintain:

... an open border between the two entities for trade, employment, and tourism (but not for residence) ... Opening the possibility of Palestinian refugees to resettle in Israel as Palestinian citizens, possibly in numbers proportional to the numbers of Jewish settlers in Palestine. (Yiftachel 2013, 4)

The two-state and confederation models demand that Palestinians in Israel make peace with their racial structural subjugation. They also ask refugees to forgo their right of

return in order to allow the continued existence of the Jewish supremacist state. The rhetoric of pragmatism conceals, however, an underlying racialism. As Massad states:

... what makes the return of Palestinian refugees whom Israel expelled and whose land it stole and steals non-pragmatic is not some geographic or 'demographic' consideration, not some environmental or logistical obstacle; what makes their return non-pragmatic is that they are *not Jews*. (Massad 2003, 442, emphasis in original)

Given the plurality of political proposals – and the fact that political solutions are often developed without the participation of Palestinian peoples – the validity of models that continue to reinscribe race and racial hierarchies should be questioned.

Palestinians still struggle to impart a moral imperative that should be a common-sense understanding: that 'nation-states should never be able to found themselves through the dispossession of whole populations who fail to fit the purified idea of the nation' (Butler 2012, 24). The dispossession and continued exile of Palestinians is still seen as a legitimate price to pay for sustaining the Jewish state.

Struggles for decolonisation, Fanon reminds us, are also struggles to be incorporated into humanity (Fanon 1963, 1967). Almost seven decades after the establishment of the State of Israel, Palestinians continue to resist and to demand the recognition of their humanity and their right to self-representation. As Edward Said points out, 'the Palestinian actuality is today, was yesterday, and most likely tomorrow will be built upon an act of resistance to this new foreign colonialism' (Said 1979a, 8). The *sumud* of the Palestinian people renders Zionist racial domination incomplete. But this *sumud* must be supplemented by a more radical political project of decolonisation and deracialisation of the democratic state – the creation of one state. The emergence of new movements, both in Palestine and globally, that transcend the constraints of liberal politics and insist on nothing less than 'a complete calling in question of the colonial situation' (Fanon 1963, 37), is a space of hope.

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