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The decline and fall of the Israeli Military Government, 1948–1966: a case of settler-colonial consolidation?

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The term settler-colonialism has recently gained traction among scholars of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict who use it to address all forms of Zionist ideology and practices. This article, however, benefits from a conceptual distinction between colonial and settler-colonial Zionist policies when assessing the first two decades of Israel's existence. During this period, Palestinian-Arabs who remained within the state borders were granted nominal citizenship. At the same time, the state also subjected the majority of this population to the Military Government, a form of martial law which suspended many of the rights and legal protections that citizenship afforded. The article considers Israel's various forms of right-granting, social-democratic tendencies, and liberal policies as the post-Nakba continuation of Zionist settler-colonial consolidation. Conversely, Israel's Military Government and other forms of discrimination the Palestinian-Arab citizens endured could be considered colonial institutions that existed in tension with the logic of settler-colonial consolidation. My claim is that when Israel, during its first two decades, slowly dismantled the Military Government, it effectively abandoned a colonial form of interaction with the Palestinian-Arabs and thereby inched toward consolidating the Zionist settler-colonial project. I begin my article with a short discussion on colonialism and settler-colonialism as linked yet distinct historical phenomena. Then I present the colonial features of the Military Government and explain why they inhibited settler-colonial consolidation. After setting the stage, I analyze the Jewish-Israeli discourse formulated against the Military Government and show that in fact Zionists clearly saw a Zionist interest in adopting a more liberal attitude toward the Palestinian-Arab citizens. Finally, I show how this Zionist perception took over Israel's highest decision-making circles leading to the abolishment of the Military Government.

Experts on the Israeli/Zionist-Palestinian/Arab conflict and the large intellectual community interested in this topic recently saw the addition of Shira Robinson's ground-breaking *Citizen Strangers: Palestinians and the Birth of the Israel's Liberal Settler State*. The book focuses on Israel's first decade of existence – generally considered a time when the Palestinian dimension of the conflict wavered and Israel's primary concern became the Arab states.¹ In refreshing contrast, Robinson shows how the end of the 1948 War did not signal an end to Zionist entrenchment in Palestine at the expense of an indigenous Palestinian² population. Robinson also provides an important reminder that Israel, even before the occupation of 1967, subjected Palestinian-Arabs to a form of military rule.³

Robinson skillfully details the relationship between early Israel and its Palestinian-Arab citizens. This relationship, according to Robinson, revolved mainly around the 'contradictions' or

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'paradoxes' of Israel as 'a liberal settler state:' a liberal state committed to international norms and the rule of law while at the same time a settler-colonial state dedicated to preserving the racial privilege of Jews.⁴ The fundamentally contradictory policies of this liberal settler state endowed those Palestinians who evaded the 1948 ethnic cleansing with formal Israeli citizenship, while at the same time subjecting the majority of this constituency to a 'colonial' military regime in the form of the Military Government (*ha-mimshal ha-tzva'i*). For Robinson, the terms colonialism and settler-colonialism occasionally interchange⁵ and, as mentioned, the terms 'liberal' and 'settler-colonial' are understood here as being at a high level of tension, if not incongruity.

According to Robinson, a driving force for Israel's policies is Zionism's deeply seeded racism and 'pursuit of privilege'.⁶ Since the author considers Zionism a racist and therefore illiberal ideology, she thus finds the causes for the Military Government's subsequent demise during the 1960s in factors that are largely external to Zionism: (1) a courageous Palestinian-Arab grassroots struggle, (2) mounting pressure from the international community, and (3) an Israeli sense that it has already fulfilled its role in sequestering Arab lands.⁷ In contrast, rather than assuming an innate Zionist racism as an inhibiting causal factor, I will explain the dismantling of the Military Government by referring to the political economy of the Zionist settler society. In other words, I will show that the Military Government was dismantled not in spite of but rather *because* of Zionist ideology.

Without diminishing her achievement, the author's particular use of the terms 'settler-colonialism' and 'colonialism', and how the two relate to Zionism and liberalism invite an important debate and reflection. In recent years, there seems to be a measure of divergence in the way the term 'settler-colonialism' is used in the social sciences and the humanities. Some scholars of the conflict utilize the term settler-colonialism to explain the wide array of illiberal and oppressive policies, physical and symbolic, which Zionists have perpetrated against Palestinians from the late nineteenth century till today.⁸ This writing, to which Robinson's study belongs, deems settler-colonialism as a derivative of colonialism or as colonialism with settlers. In contrast, settler-colonial studies as an independent field is premised on the *analytical* distinction between the two terms. Furthermore, settler-colonial cases show clearly that in certain historical conjunctures, liberalism and settler-colonialism become most compatible.⁹

My article will utilize the analytical framework of settler-colonial studies to put forward an explanation for the demise of the Military Government, one which complements Robinson's findings but is located within the structure of Zionism as a settler-colonial movement. In this article, I will claim that the contradictions in Israel's treatment of the Palestinian-Arab minority are not derived from the incompatibility of Zionism and liberalism or between settler-colonialism and liberalism but rather by the tension between colonial and settler-colonial tendencies within the Zionist movement. My claim is that when Israel, during its first two decades, slowly dismantled the Military Government, it effectively abandoned one colonial form of interaction with the Palestinian-Arabs and thereby inched toward consolidating the Zionist settler-colonial project.

What follows is a short discussion on colonialism and settler-colonialism as linked yet distinct historical phenomena. Then I discuss the colonial features of the Military Government and explain why they inhibited settler-colonial consolidation. After setting the stage, I analyze the Jewish-Israeli discourse formulated against the Military Government and show that in fact Zionists clearly saw a Zionist interest in adopting a liberal attitude toward the Palestinian-Arab citizens. Finally, I show how this Zionist perception took over Israel's highest decision-making circles, leading to the abolishment of the Military Government.

Settler-colonialism and colonialism

Settler-colonialism and colonialism are modern historical phenomena which are historically linked, have always coalesced, at times harmoniously. Nevertheless, in their ideal type forms,

they are distinct: whereas colonialism is primarily the control of an exogenous polity over an indigenous population, settler-colonialism is the replacement of an indigenous population with an exogenous one.¹⁰ More bluntly, colonialists exploit the colonized; settler-colonialists go after their lands.¹¹

This distinction is paralleled in the different relationships formed between the exogenous and indigenous entities of the two respective historical formations. As colonial and settler-colonial projects entered the late nineteenth century it is well known that they have absorbed racial theories to justify their treatment of indigenous peoples. While both colonial empires and settler-states are racist, employing generic 'racism' as a causal factor for their actions conflates what Patrick Wolfe identified as very different 'structures of race'.¹² Though not a comforting distinction for the indigenous victims of colonialism or settler-colonialism, there is however a fundamental difference between 'colonial racism' and 'settler-colonial racism' – both morally repugnant. Colonial empires rationalized the exploitation of the populations they controlled with the help of racist institutions and racial discourses premised on the essential difference and hierarchy between the colonizer and the colonized.¹³ To insure the continuation of exploitation, empires perpetually sustained these institutions and discourses which in turn reified essential differences or 'othered' the native population. The essentialized categories formed through the colonial encounter became the nations that forced European empires and their agents back to the metropole.

In contrast, settler-colonists identify less with an imperial metropole (which they have left) and are more interested in the native's land than his labor, and so they historically displayed a diminished tendency to sustain 'othered' indigenous populations. Instead of exploiting indigenous populations, successful settler-colonial projects demonstrated a propensity to have them 'erased'.¹⁴ Indeed, consequently, settler-colonial racial attitudes often enabled acts of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Nevertheless, not all natives facing settler-colonization become subject to physical liquidation or deportation – some are subjected to assimilatory policies, at times even through miscegenation. European-indigenous assimilation, not to mention intermarriage, undermines any colonial logic and might seem to counter the logic of erasure but it is in fact a most efficient path to stifle indigenous claims of ownership of their ancestral land.¹⁵

In successful settler-colonial cases (the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand being good examples) there has been room for some natives to be given equal political status to the settlers in the form of citizenship. The context of this equal status may vary between various republican, binational, multi-cultural, liberal, and social-democratic arrangements. Whatever the parameters of the settler-colonial regime turn out to be, the fundamental political equality between its subjects serves several purposes from the point of view of the settler and his interests in solidifying control over the target territory and emptying it from major indigenous alterities. Briefly explained, by forcefully asserting the legal validity of the category of 'citizens' over those of 'natives' and 'settlers', the latter undermine any demand for privileges the former could claim due to their indigeneity, to their 'being there first'.¹⁶ Furthermore, unlike colonial regimes which require increased levels of oppression, settler regimes based on the formal equality of settler and native can attain hegemony and become legitimate even in the eyes of those who paid the highest price for their establishment. Finally, universal citizenship in a liberal democratic political system can also provide the perfect context for the creation of land regimes in which tribal or familial land tenure patterns, common among non-European peoples, are broken down into individual and commoditized plots available for purchase in the 'free' market.¹⁷ Historically, all settler-colonial states, at one point or another, enacted a universal category of citizenship which included both settlers and indigenes. The result is that settlers make themselves natives and make the natives a folkloric trinket.¹⁸

A settler society can be considered fully sovereign only when it frees itself from imperial bonds and when the combination of physical and assimilatory erasure policies bring the natives to a state of political insignificance. If natives are still capable of claiming the land and its resources in the name of an autonomous indigenous entity, then full settler sovereignty has yet to be gained. Conversely, a settler-society's ability to absorb the natives as formally equal citizens, whether they like it or not, attests to a high level of settler sovereign capacity.¹⁹

As I mentioned, although settler-colonialism and colonialism are *analytically* antithetical, historically, the two phenomena often coalesce and interact: settler projects have always benefitted from imperial backing and imperial control was frequently justified by settler presence. Furthermore, settler-colonial societies at times formed colonial-like relationships with the natives, Apartheid South Africa being the most prominent example.²⁰ In the following parts of this article I will show that Israeli state policies toward the Palestinian-Arab population can be best described as following simultaneously both the logic of colonial exploitation and settler-colonial erasure. The dismantling of the Military Government will be explained as the forgoing of a single colonial institution in favor of pursuing Zionist settler-colonial interests. I believe this explanation is superior to prior ones which view the dismantling of the Military Government as standing in complete contrast to Zionist racial thinking.

The Israeli Military Government

The right to citizenship for Israel's Palestinian-Arab population was formulated explicitly in its 14 May 1948 declaration of independence and was implemented in subsequent years.²¹ At the same time, the first Israeli government also enacted a series of policies which emptied that citizenship from much of its meaningful content. Many of these policies were carried out under the authority of the Military Government. By September 1948, areas of the new state with a high concentration of Palestinian-Arab residents were declared closed security areas, administered by the Israeli army and subject to the Emergency Regulations that Israel adopted from the British Mandate's legal code. After the borders of the state stabilized early in 1949, Israel erected the Military Government with three geographical commands: North, Central, and South. The Military Government wielded emergency-time powers to enact restrictions on civilian movement such as curfews, administrative arrests, relocation of individuals away from their place of residence, as well as many other punitive measures. The main legal recourse Palestinian-Arabs possessed in challenging the Military Government's arbitrary policies was an appeal to the Israeli Supreme Court. Appeals were often dismissed by citing 'security reasons' (*mi-ta'amay bitahon*). According to Sarah Ozasck-Lazar, though working within legal constraints, the Military Government was 'all powerful'.²² Sabri Jiryis, one of the most articulate political commentators on the Military Government and its victim, referred to it as 'a state within a state'.²³

Israeli political leaders, military personnel, and pundits all claimed that the Military Government was vital for Israel's security. Publically, Israeli governments and mainstream intellectuals justified the Military Government's existence citing the risk of Palestinian-Arabs citizens joining a possible invasion by the neighboring states on account of their 'common interests with the Arabs beyond the borders'.²⁴ Furthermore, the Military Government, so claimed its defenders, was a necessity in the face of Israel's porous borders and the daily border-crossings of Palestinian-Arabs into the state for the purposes of military attacks, repatriation, and, most commonly, theft or retrieval of property.²⁵ Israeli security and law enforcement openly suspected Palestinian-Arab citizens as potential harborers of 'infiltrators' and as providing aid and intelligence to combatants (*fedayeen*).²⁶

Less publicly, however, the Military Government served other interests. One role the Military Government performed, generally known at the time yet not officially sanctioned, was the

monitoring and constraining of the non-Zionist Israeli Communist Party (Ha-Miflaga ha-Qomunistit ha-Yisraelit – MAKI). Complementary to this function was the coercion of Palestinian-Arab citizens to vote for the leadership party MAPAI (Land of Israel Workers Party, *Miflegat Po'alay Eretz Yisrael*) or its subservient Arab parliamentary lists.²⁷ Another, more sinister role had to do with the Israeli anticipation of a second war with the Arab states – should that war occur, holding the Palestinian-Arabs under a non-civilian government could have facilitated another mass transfer.²⁸ The Military Government also segregated cheaper Palestinian-Arab laborers from the Israeli labor market and thus protected the wages of Jewish workers.²⁹ Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Military Government provided the legal and administrative infrastructure for land confiscations in favor of Jewish settlements and enabled the Israeli government to constrict Palestinian-Arab inhabitation and cultivation of land once held by their compatriots now living in refugee camps alongside Israel's borders.³⁰

In 1951 Military Government control was lifted from the 'mixed' towns of Akka, Haifa, Jaffa, Lydda, and Ramle and its roster of employees was cut drastically from 1500 to 200 low-ranking soldiers who operated mainly from the 3 central commands and several outposts located in Palestinian-Arab towns and villages. The Military Government's individual or collective restrictions and sanctions were primarily enforced by the Border Patrol corps (*Mishmar ha-Gvul*) and other non-administrative army units. Considering that the Military Government's supporters justified it as a general security measure, a tool in the fight against infiltration and (more secretly) a future facilitator of another Arab transfer in the case of a second round of war, it is worth noting that inquiries into the workings of the Military Government began before that second round came in the 1956 War – a war which some believe included an attempt to create another mass exodus of Palestinian-Arabs and which also alleviated Israel's existential fears and solved the 'infiltration problem'.³¹ During its first decade, rumors of corruption and a general discomfort with the Military Government began to circulate inside the Israeli establishment. This resulted in inquiries as early as 1949, then more in 1950, 1951, and 1952. In December 1955, the Israeli government, bowing to pressure emanating from the public and from the leftist and liberal segments of its coalition, appointed a public committee to examine the possibility of downscaling the Military Government's scope.³²

Israel's second decade saw more demonstrations, conferences, petitions and the establishment of Jewish-Arab organizations against the Military Government. This trend accompanied the Zionist leadership's abandonment of the idea of another mass transfer of Palestinian-Arabs.³³ In March 1958, Ben-Gurion appointed another commission, which recommended by majority an end to the Military Government. Ben-Gurion refused to do so but acceded to a series of 'alleviations' (*haqalot*) concerning movement restrictions. In the Israeli Knesset, the supporters of the Military Government fought harsh parliamentary battles in 1959, 1961, 1962, and 1963, winning each time with declining margins. In 1963, Ben-Gurion, the champion of the Military Government, retired and was replaced by Levi Eshkol, who continued to enact alleviations and in November 1965 announced his intention to end the Military Government altogether. This policy was implemented in December 1966 when some of the administrative capacities of the Military Government were handed over to both the Israeli police and the internal security service (SHABAK). Only on October 1968 did all movement restrictions on Palestinian-Arabs who were citizens of Israel officially end.

At this point, it is worth noticing how the distinction between colonialism and settler-colonialism can inform the analysis of Israel's early history.³⁴ Israel's independence is comparable to other settler-colonial cases in that it was achieved through a disengagement from an imperial entity and through the drastic erasure of indigenous Palestinian-Arabs via transfer. Israel's earliest policies also feature a settler-colonial logic such as transforming the remaining Palestinian-Arabs within Israel's sovereign border to potential candidates for erasure via assimilation as formal

citizens.³⁵ The word ‘potential’ is key because in fact the creation of the Military Government and other policies denied Palestinian-Arabs equal rights and the legal protections of citizenship. Upon reexamination of the explicit and more secretive roles that the Military Government served, we can see that they clearly featured a settler-colonial logic: facilitating a potential transfer, keeping Palestinian refugees out and, perhaps most importantly, the transferring of lands from Arab to Jewish hands. Nevertheless, though having several settler-colonial objectives, the Military Government as a form of political practice bore several fundamental characteristics of a colonial regime.

Contemporary and recent scholarship on Israel and the Palestinian-Arab minority during the first two decades of the new state frequently makes use of the colonial paradigm to define the relationship between Israel and its Palestinian-Arab minority. While there was no body of water separating the civilian controlled parts of Israel and the regions subject to the Military Government, many commentators on this regime, some firmly embedded in Israel’s establishment, considered it as a form of rule comparable to European imperialism.³⁶ The Emergency Regulations themselves, the legal framework for the Military Government, were an inheritance of late British Empire attempts to quell restless colonial dependencies.³⁷ The Military Government demarcated the divide within Israel between Jewish and Arab sectors, a divide similar to that between metropole and colony of the nineteenth-century empire, justifying unequal allocation of resources and services, gaps in the income level, education and even infant mortality. In 1978, sociologist Elia Zureik identified the structural dependency of the Palestinian-Arab sector on the Jewish one as ‘internal colonialism’.³⁸

Like other colonial regimes, the Military Government did not excel in creating a self-disciplining subject and often resorted to arbitrary sanctions and punishments. The key to the Military Government’s power lay in its authority to sanction aspects of everyday life – residence, movement, commerce, and employment in certain professions. Furthermore, Military Government officers, similarly to other colonial administrators, demonstrated a preference to govern through local ‘traditional’ notables or tribal leaders, and often fought Israel’s civic ministries seeking to extend their services and bureaucracy into the Palestinian-Arab settlements.³⁹ Following Ottoman and Mandatory regimes, the Military Government appointed a village head, *mukhtār* – designated the main representative of the village community with the Military Government and with the state in general.⁴⁰ Holding this position allowed for a considerable amount of leverage for one village faction or extended family and was part of a wider Israeli policy of cultivating a collaborating class of Arab dignitaries, promoting tribalism, and sowing sectarianism.⁴¹ Contemporary and retrospective memoirs, films, novels, press reports, and other sources authored by Arabs and Jews alike depict a paternalistic and arbitrary regime. Like other colonial administrations, governors, and their personnel implemented their absolute policies with little oversight and often elicited bribes and favors from Palestinian-Arabs, particularly in the form of lavish meals prepared in the fantasized style of Arab hospitality.⁴²

Beyond the moral implications of colonialism, the Military Government was not only an example of how Jews wronged Palestinian-Arabs but, like all colonial regimes, it shaped the very categories of Arab and Jew. Primary sources from the time reveal the wide circulation of certain ‘truths’ about the Palestinian-Arab (referred to exclusively as ‘Arab’ or ‘Arab Israeli’ or ‘Arab of Israel’), such as his tribal, disloyal, opportunistic, patriarchal, unruly, and corrupt character. Such imagery is rooted in a time old European Orientalist discourse now re-enforced in the context of Israeli rule over a Palestinian-Arab population. The Military Government itself was a consumer and producer of ‘experts’ in dealing with the Palestinian-Arab citizens, contributed to the Israeli Orientalist discourse surrounding them. Shira Robinson clearly shows how arbitrary and coercive policies re-enforced Palestinian national antagonism against the State. In short, the Military Government, like any other form of colonial rule, was premised on and reified the

essential difference between the two categories occupying the two sides of the colonial divide.⁴³ The 'coloniality' of the Military Government and the fact that it aggravated the 'otherness' of Palestinian-Arabs meant that it stood in tension with settler-colonial patterns of consolidation.

It is important to stress that by pointing to this tension between the Military Government and settler-colonial consolidation, I do not mean to say that Zionists *had* to abolish this colonial institution and edge Israel closer to approximating a liberal democracy. Nevertheless, if we consider Zionist history as comparable to other settler-colonial cases, then this compels us to ask whether Israel's slow dismantling of the Military Government could be explained not as a reluctant backtracking from Zionism but rather as a policy enacted with strict Zionist interests in mind. The next segment will show just that.

Early Zionist opposition to the Military Government

The most vigorous and consistent Zionist voices against the Military Government came from MAPAM (Unified Workers Party, *Mifleget Po'alim Me'uhedet*), in particular from its most leftist faction, Ha-Shomer Ha-Tz'air (The Young Guard, hereafter HT).⁴⁴ This small but not marginal Zionist stream maintained the belief, until the end of the 1948 War, that Zionism should be fulfilled by the creation of a binational Jewish-Arab state in an unpartitioned Palestine. Even after the War, its leadership generally supported the repatriation of Palestinian refugees. At the same time, during the War, HT kibbutz members and other party supporters took a disproportionately large part in the Jewish fighting forces and did not shy away from perpetrating acts of ethnic cleansing.⁴⁵

As much as these political practices are morally contradictory, one can view HT as a party which, despite changing circumstances, quite consistently promoted a settler-colonial agenda and was uncomfortable with colonial forms of domination over the Palestinian-Arabs. HT's pre-1948 Marxist binationalism should not be considered a cynical lie but rather a sincere Zionist program for Jewish-Arab coexistence. HT coined binationalism in universalistic terms but also promoted it as true Zionism. Practically, however, HT's binationalism would have spelled the erasure of Palestinian-Arab political, economic, and cultural autonomy. Furthermore, binationalism, as opposed to two states, would have allowed Jewish settlement in all of Palestine.

Therefore, another way to look at HT's binationalism is as a settler-colonial prescription, albeit a less violent than the one eventually pursued, for erasing indigenous alterities and opening their lands to settlement. HT promoted binationalism in the face of a particular pre-1948 demographic reality in which Palestinian-Arabs made up the overwhelming majority of the country's population. As Zionist forces depopulated entire hamlets and erected a sovereign state with an almost 90% Jewish majority, strict and immediate binationalism as a method for erasing indigenous forms of political organization became less appealing.

MAPAM's history features more moral contradictions and settler-colonial consistencies. HT indeed stood firm on the need to abolish the Military Government and all other forms of discrimination against Palestinian-Arab citizens but at the same time its affiliated kibbutzim had no qualms in accepting Palestinian-Arab land as part of the post-Nakba land-looting⁴⁶ which the Military Government partially enabled. Of course, sequestering Palestinian-Arab land was excused with HT's unique blend of Zionism and Marxism calling for the need to proletarianize the remaining rural Palestinian-Arabs and by pointing to security risks posed by a high concentration of Arab settlements in border areas. Concomitantly, representatives of MAPAM, from all its factions, explained their resistance to the Military Government with Zionist-Marxist rhetoric calling for Hebrew-Arab class solidarity and the security imperative of absorbing the Palestinian-Arabs into Israeli society.⁴⁷ Once again, a settler-colonial agenda and Jewish-Arab political equality appear to be complementary.

In sum, once the post-1948 reality unfolded – a sovereign state where Zionist interests were no longer at the mercy of the British Empire nor subject to the will of the indigenous Palestinian population – no moral reservation could withstand MAPAM/HT's Jewish settlement imperative. Nevertheless, Zionist ideals also lead this party's leaders to conclude that the state's security needs called for abolishing the Military Government. One of many examples of MAPAM's interest-based objection to the Military Government can be found in the deposition it submitted to the 1956 committee of inquiry on the Military Government. Author Meir Ya'ari, Member of Knesset and party ideologue, first addressed the security pretext of the Military Government and stated the following:

The needs of security demand proper relations (*yahasim taqinim*) and rapprochement between the segments of the population and the deepening and strengthening of the Arab sector's (*ha-yishuv ha-'Aravi*) bond (*ziqa*) and loyalty to the State of Israel.

This goal can only be achieved by implementing true equality between the Jewish and Arab citizen and the rooting of all discriminations based on nationality.

The Military Government serves the opposite goal. It erects a barrier between Jews and Arabs, it annuls equality, and under the pretext of propping up security it creates nationalistic discrimination. It pushes the majority of the Arab sector to giving up on the possibility of having just and equal lives in the State of Israel and thus creates fertile grounds for dispositions which are hostile to the state.⁴⁸

Another party which consistently opposed the Military Government was the leftist Ahdut ha-'Avoda – Po'alay Tzion, which broke off from MAPAM in 1955. This party fashioned itself as being more security-oriented and, unlike HT, did not accept Arabs into its ranks. Nevertheless, since 1959, when the issue came to a vote in the Knesset, the party voted in favor of abolishing the Military Government. Yigal Allon, a prominent party figure also couched his objection to the Military Government in the language of Israeli security interests. Allon was a decorated officer of the 1948 War, a Member of Knesset, a minister and later on vice prime minister, who fashioned himself as a scholarly strategist. In 1959 he published a book-long essay, *A Screen of Sand*, in which he prescribed a detailed security doctrine for Israel. In a chapter titled 'The Arab Population and the State's Security', Allon writes in an unapologetic manner about the 'Arab problem' within Israel and enumerates the various security risks that the Palestinian-Arab poses to, in his words, the 'mono-national Jewish State'.⁴⁹ While Allon saw in the Palestinian-Arabs a threat very similarly to the way Ben-Gurion did, he nevertheless prescribed the 'hastening of the Arabs' coming to terms with the renewal of Israel, and promoting their willingness to integrate into it socially'.⁵⁰ In sharp contrast to this goal, Allon warned that

the very existence of the Military Government is after all one of the factors of the nationalistic awakening and arousal amongst the Arab population [...]. External pressure which is enforced by discriminatory laws achieves an opposite goal from its intention, as historical facts teaches us as well as our current reality. Political pressure (*lahatz medini*) against a national division, even if it may postpone the collision, nevertheless inspires hostile consciousness, pours content to its actions, creates longing and aspirations and does not solve the [Arab] problem but makes it worse.⁵¹

These detractions of the Military Government from the Israeli Marxist left appealed to democratic principles, not simply in the name of morality and humanism but with a clear security interest in mind. Similar attitudes were already espoused throughout the first decade of Israel's existence by key figures from non-Marxist Zionist parties, namely the General Zionists Party, the Progressive Party and the Religious-National Party.⁵²

In August 1959, the Military Government survived a Knesset vote with the support of the intransigent MAPAI, its subsidiary Arab lists, and the right-wing Herut which sat in the

opposition. At that time, Herut still supported in principle the existence of the Military Government but blamed MAPAI for using it to intimidate Arabs for their votes. Nevertheless, in a series of articles published in mid-1959 by the party's organ, *Herut*, Yohanan Bader, Member of Knesset and Menchem Begin's right hand, seems to have charted the course for his party's ultimate opposition to the Military Government.

In an article titled 'With All Due Honesty towards the Arab who is a Citizen of Israel,' Bader framed the dilemma as being between giving up on a 'security measure' or giving up on the chance to 'absorb in our midst the residents of the closed security regions as truly equal citizens, content and loyal as only a free citizen can be'.⁵³ To solve this dilemma Bader went as far as to propose a temporary cancellation of the Military Government in order to assess its necessity. In his criticism of the Military Government, Bader emphasized the sycophantic attitude that it coerced from Palestinian-Arab village elders and tribal chiefs:

These methods, which we know from the days of foreign rule (British Mandate) – their costs outweigh the benefits. We will not solve any problem by cooperating with 'notables' (*notabilim*). We will not solve the problem giving allowances to a few instead of giving all [the Arabs] their rights.⁵⁴

Supplementing his assessment that the Military Government employed defunct colonial methods, Bader added a moral dimension to his discomfort from this institution. In the article, Bader mentioned a visit to the Triangle region where he came across a long line of Arabs waiting for permits outside the office of the military governor. This sight, he claims, immediately took him back to his days in a Russian labor/refugee camp where he spent the years of World War II. The Soviet authorities supplied the internees with all that they needed, 'all but liberty' (*hofesh*). Bader goes on to enumerate all the things that 'we' (the Jews) did for the Arab citizens of Israel and yet 'as long as we will not eliminate the sentiments that I felt there in northern Russia, as long as we will not abolish the Military Government which restricts civic liberties in its regions – our work is not done'.⁵⁵

Herut's turning against the Military Government was ascribed at the time by MAPAI and its supporters to electoral considerations. Turning against the Military Government would have indeed allowed Herut to compete for Palestinian-Arab votes but also provided a chance to deny MAPAI its power to coerce them from the population living under this regime.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, one cannot overlook the fact that once the students of Vladimir Jabotinsky gained an interest in abolishing a discriminatory aspect of the Jewish state, they could have easily found a wide array of civic minded and liberal remarks within their teacher's vision for Zionism.⁵⁷

Since its creation, the Zionist movement has seen bitter rivalries among its various factions. After 1948, these factions had very different visions for Israel's political system, economic structure, social hierarchy, handling of the conflict, and even its cold-war alignment. Nevertheless, by the beginning of Israel's second decade, a rare consensus emerged among bitter ideological foes in the Knesset: the Military Government was no longer, and perhaps had never been, in the best interest of the state. MAPAI accused the other parties of using the issue of the Military Government as a political battering ram against its rule. Indeed, both right-winged Herut and the Zionist left stood to benefit electorally from targeting the Military Government; either by gaining Palestinian-Arab votes or denying them from MAPAI. Notwithstanding these Machiavellian considerations, when turning against the Military Government, spokespersons from the left and right in fact appealed to a Zionist discourse which bound Israeli security interest with equal rights for the Palestinian-Arabs. It is important to point out that this Zionist discourse was authentic and congruent with settler-colonial patterns of consolidation.

To complete this segment on the discourse surrounding the Military Government in the 1950s and 1960s, one should mention those who supported its indefinite continuation. In the partisan

MAPAI daily *Davar* and the centrist *Yediot Ahronot*, the editorials concerning the Military Government would generally proceed as follows: the Military Government was an unfortunate infringement on the rights of the Arab citizens but it is the need of the hour.⁵⁸ In other words, the way supporters of the Military Government phrased their arguments generally assumed its ephemeral nature and suggested also that it was not an optimal or natural policy but rather a contingent one. This attitude was shared even by Ben-Gurion, the diehard supporter of the Military Government who as early as November 1959, though fully committed to its continuation, declared that:

As long as our neighbors wish to annihilate us ... we must maintain the Military Government while keeping in mind that the security measures are scaled down to meet security needs and will not unnecessarily harm the civil rights and freedom of movement of the its inhabitants.⁵⁹

Politicians, military spokespersons and pundits who backed the Military Government were obviously not exemplars of liberal thinking and yet, it is important to notice that arguing for the Military Government was generally within the parameters of a discourse founded on the concept of security and not on Jewish privilege. As this segment has shown, Zionists who rejected the Military Government won the day by monopolizing this discourse.

MAPAI's deliberations on the end of the Military Government

I now turn to MAPAI – Israel's governing party until 1977. The Israeli State Archive holds a dossier contributed from Levi Eshkol's estate titled 'The Military Government'. The dossier contains mostly meeting protocols which began soon after his appointment to the prime ministership in the summer 1963 and on, and provides the viewpoint of Israel's most conservative-thinking circles in regards to the Military Government and the Palestinian-Arabs in general. After showing how the smaller Zionist parties became convinced that abolishing the Military Government would be in Israel's best interests, I will now show how the logic of settler-colonial erasure manifested itself in the opinions and suggestions of Israel's top decision-making forums.

Prime Minister Eshkol came to these meetings in late 1963 with the clear idea that the Military Government should remain in place for the near future. At the same time, it is also clear that Eshkol had come to believe that the Military Government was unsustainable; politically, practically, and morally. In a private meeting with Foreign Minister Golda Meir, Eshkol stated that while he understands the current need to maintain the Military Government, he himself is 'not fully resigned that Israel, 15 years after its establishment, needs this measure'. He then stated that he does not see how the Military Government prevents political activity against the government suggesting that in fact it is the cause for anti-government sentiment. In this meeting he also announced that he 'cannot accept the claim that military rule is indispensable, perhaps it is for one, two, three years, but there is a limit'.⁶⁰ Eshkol was less decisive in larger forums and would not reveal this opinion when meeting with the heads of other parties who already opposed the Military Government but by 1963, Eshkol's opinions on the Military Government seemed to be derived from a general outlook that the government should do more to promote Palestinian-Arab incorporation into the rest of Israeli society and economy.⁶¹

The dossier shows that by 1963, MAPAI ministers, Israel's top decision-makers, generally agreed with Eshkol and understood that keeping the Military Government with its restrictions was highly problematic. Their distaste for the Military Government was at times based on democratic principles but more often the need to treat the Palestinian-Arabs more fairly was argued as a way to counter their questionable loyalty and the threat they posed as Arabs to the Jewish state. This idea was expressed by Uri Lubrani, the outgoing Advisor to Prime Minister on Arab Affairs, who claimed that there was 'no hope' that Arabs and Jews will ever live according to the biblical

phrase: ‘the wolf shall dwell with the lamb’. Lubrani, Israel’s top civilian authority on the Palestinian-Arabs, believed that many (but indeed not all) of them ‘look forward to the day that someone will come and destroy Israel’. Lubrani’s prescription however for this situation was to make sure that those Arabs who wish to see Israel’s demise ‘sit quietly and wait for someone else to do the work’ and thus will not ‘actively cooperate with this expectation’. The way to achieve that goal was ‘to give them the maximum amount of civic rights’. When Eshkol, playing devil’s advocate, asked ‘if so, why?’ Lubrani replied: ‘There is nothing else you can do’.⁶² In parallel to what Lubrani thought of the Palestinian-Arabs, one can say that MAPAI leadership once looked forward to a day when the Palestinian-Arabs be physically ejected but in 1963, it seemed to have come to terms with the need to absorb them and get rid of the Military Government – not quite though, there was one issue which kept MAPAI from doing so.

Eshkol and the MAPAI leadership believed that the Military Government should only be abolished when the government could make sure that this act of liberalization would not impinge on plans to ‘Judaize’ the Galilee. Protocols from the dossier reveal that any step taken to dismantle the Military Government, namely alleviating movement restrictions, were measured against the risk of this policy constraining the government’s ability to settle Arab lands with Jews.⁶³ In other words, the main question in MAPAI’s internal debate over the Military Government was whether this colonial tool still has any relevance in achieving settler-colonial goals of turning over land from indigenous to settler – the answer was a cautious ‘no’.

Of course, by the time these meetings were held in 1963, the state, aided by the parastatal Jewish National Fund (JNF), had already committed a massive sequestering of Arab lands making the Military Government seem even more superfluous. A good example for the parameters of debate within MAPAI on the issues of the Military Government and Jewish settlement is a small argument that developed between Minister of Education Zalman Aran and a young Shimon Peres, at the time vice-Minister of Defense. Peres advocated for maintaining the Military Government but issuing for entire Palestinian-Arab villages with communal permits (*rishayon kibbutzi*) to move about. These would have saved individual Palestinian-Arabs the trouble of applying and waiting in line for a permit at the offices of the local military governor. Aran was baffled by Peres’ proposal because it effectively gave Palestinian-Arabs freedom of movement and allowed them to relocate within Israel but at the same time kept the symbolic restriction of the permit intact, thus still placing them in a ‘cage’. ‘Where is the sense in that?’ Aran asked and then qualified his rhetoric question with this statement: ‘If someone would tell me that relocation would be a risk, and that the Arabs will spread all over the lands of the Galilee [only then] would I [agree to] leave this restriction in place.’ To this Peres retorted with what he thought would be an ominous suggestion: ‘Let us say that they move to Tel Aviv.’ To which Aran reiterated his position, one which seems to have been shared with the rest of the government:

Thousands of Arabs work in Tel Aviv, Arabs even work in the *kibbutzim*. What I am saying is that if there is no risk of their taking over the lands of the Galilee – I would cancel this business of not allowing them to relocate [...].⁶⁴

Aran’s mentioning of Arabs working in Tel Aviv and the *kibbutzim* reveals another Zionist interest in liberalization – the incorporation of Palestinian-Arabs into the Israeli labor market. The loss of Palestinian-Arab land in 1948 due to the new border erected with Jordan and the ensuing land-looting by the JNF meant that the only way for Palestinian-Arabs to self-sustain was to serve as day laborers in the Jewish urban and agricultural sectors – with or without a permit.⁶⁵ In 1963, the creation of an Arab underclass was already in full swing and the MAPAI ministers were slowly realizing that subjecting this underclass to racist restrictions was

counter-productive. Eshkol, for instance, who still thought the Military Government should be maintained, demanded that more be done to absorb Arabs in Government ministries.⁶⁶ Eliyahu Sasson, Minister of the Postal Service and a senior Orientalist, added that an unemployed Arab university graduate will be a 'hostile' one while others on this topic simply stated in their words that the Arabs would be loyal if their material needs were addressed in the same manner as those of the Jewish constituency.⁶⁷ This type of thinking is drastically different from pre-state Labor Zionism which raised the ideal of 'Hebrew Labor' to cult-like proportions and proves that a certain exclusionary sentiment within Zionism, a sentiment that MAPAI had once championed, was waning.⁶⁸

The point here is not to show that Israel's top decision-makers believed in human equality as in fact Israeli policies until 1966 and after prove that their commitment to egalitarianism was weak, and the term 'Judaizing the Galilee' denotes a racist policy if ever there was one. Nevertheless, it would be superficial to simply dismiss Eshkol and his peers as Zionists and thus racists. It should be noticed that the reasoning for erecting Jewish 'points' in the Galilee was argued for using the same logic as the idea of incorporating the Palestinian-Arabs into Israeli society. Undoubtedly, racialized conceptualizations of Palestinian-Arabs have always informed Zionist thought and practice but here, the Zionism and racism of Eshkol and his peers did not call for racial segregation. On the contrary, the main issue the MAPAI leadership had with the Palestinian-Arabs of the Galilee was that in their cultural seclusion and geographical containment they might find a source for irredentist claims.⁶⁹ Though not a source of comfort for the Palestinian-Arab who had his or her land confiscated for the sake of a *kibbutz*, this version of Zionism was not exclusivist in its nature; rather, it is a Zionism which deemed the geographic and economic intermingling of Jews and Palestinian-Arabs not merely beneficial but also necessary. In the eyes of Eshkol, Jewish settlement in the Galilee was explicitly meant to further the 'assimilation' (*asimilatzia*) of the Palestinian-Arabs within the Jewish population as has happened 'to Jews who dwell among other people'.⁷⁰ In 1963, the Military Government seemed to have become an obstacle for reaching this goal.

In sum, the debates within MAPAI and the Israeli top security forums reveal three main parameters for policy which the Israeli leadership could agree upon: (1) the Palestinian-Arabs loyalty to the state was questionable and they posed an actual threat to the sovereign integrity of Israel. (2) 'Judaization' – erecting Jewish settlements in the midst of large population concentration of Palestinian-Arabs, particularly in the Galilee as a vital Israeli interest. (3) The Palestinian-Arabs needed to be absorbed on a more egalitarian basis into Israeli society, making the Military Government's days numbered. While these three positions are morally inconsistent, from a perspective of a settler-colonial political economy they are neither contradictory nor paradoxical. Rather, they are harmonious and complementary.

I would like to conclude this segment with an example of how settler-colonial policies transcend material consideration and realpolitik, and can also be explained as an aspiration to become a powerful sovereign. In these meetings headed by Eshkol and attended by MAPAI leaders and heads of the security apparatuses, it is possible to sense a difference in temperament between participants born in Eastern Europe who were more civic minded individuals and those sons of the Hebrew Yishuv who were more militaristic. The pristine representation of the latter would have to be Moshe Dayan, whose personal record (and appearance) epitomized the tough *sabra*. Dayan opposed the Military Government's movement restrictions and was 'for allowing an Arab to live in the Land of Israel wherever he may wish'⁷¹ but before sharing these opinions he broke into a short analysis which, in my opinion, is even more revealing. Dayan reflected on the factors which lead to the debate on the wisdom of keeping the Military Government citing three: Israel's improved sense security, the fact that the militant Ben-Gurion has been replaced by Eshkol, and 'the Jewish aspect – the pressure [against the Military Government] from

Jews.’ Dayan then elaborated on this third aspect: ‘I am happy that the question of the Military Government is the issue of the Jews. It may very well be that the British “exodus” from Egypt was caused by the English students and not the [Egyptian] Fed’ayun [sic].’⁷²

Dayan here compares Israel’s situation with that of Britain during the 1956 Suez Crisis and suggests that its withdrawal from the canal was prompted by home-grown pressure and not Egyptian resiliency. In the same vein, Dayan stressed that the Jewish colonial relationship with the Palestinian-Arabs should be undone by the Jews themselves and not because of pressure from the indigenous population. Dayan and others during these meetings hardly mentioned the persistent Palestinian-Arab struggle against the Military Government nor the tepid international criticism of Israel on this Issue. The reason for this, I maintain, is not because these were unimportant factors but rather because Dayan, the embodiment of the new Jew that Zionism was to create, was commenting here as a sovereign settler-colonist; in insisting that the fate of the Palestinian-Arabs in Israel should not be in their own hands but should now be ‘the issue of the Jews’. The willingness to endow the Palestinian-Arabs with a measure of civic rights attests to the fact that during the 1960s, the Zionist movement came close, perhaps as close as it ever will, to attaining confident control over the land and populations within Israel’s borders.

Conclusion

The Military Government was only one of several mechanisms of control, surveillance, oppression and manipulation which Israel imposed over the Palestinian-Arabs within its borders and its dismantling could have hardly been considered an end to official, not to mention, tacit forms of discrimination in Israel. Nevertheless, as much as it is not my intention to celebrate Israeli democracy, one cannot ignore the fact that the erosion of the Military Government and its cancellation poured a measure of content into the Israeli citizenship of the Palestinian-Arabs. Therefore, the abolition of the arguably colonial Military Government was congruent with settler-colonial patterns of consolidation. This is because citizenship in liberal settler regimes has the potential to render indigenous or subaltern identities to be politically irrelevant. This claim however does not mean that the Israeli political, military, and cultural cores consciously acted as settler-colonialists seeking consolidation. Nevertheless, the contemporary voices from the Israeli debate on the Military Government show that in fact its dismantling was argued on the basis of Zionist self-interest and the need to squelch Palestinian-Arab grievances against the Jewish State.

Robinson’s claim that Zionism is dedicated to the preservation of Jewish privilege in Palestine is indeed accurate. Nevertheless, the story of the dismantling of the Military Government proves that at one time, Zionists understood that in order to safeguard their privileges they must make sincere steps to cover them up with a more liberal and more democratic regime. Since 1967, with the constitution and entrenchment of a second colonial regime by the State of Israel, it seems that Zionists have forgotten this brutal wisdom.

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Notes

1. Yazid Sayigh, *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949–1993* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1997); Avraham Sela, *The Decline of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Middle East Politics and the Quest for Regional Order* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998); Moshe Shemesh, *Arab Politics, Palestinian Nationalism and the Six Day War: The Crystallization of Arab Strategy and Nasir's Descent to War, 1957–1967* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2008).
2. This paper refers to the Palestinian population living in Israel and holding Israeli citizenship as 'Palestinian-Arabs.'
3. See also, Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976); Uzi Benziman and Atallah Mansour, *Dayare Mishneh: 'Arviye Yisrael: Ma'amadam Veha-Mediniyut Kelapehem* (Yerushalayim: Keter, 1992); Sarah Ozacky-Lazar, 'Hitgabshut Yahasay Ha-Gomlin Bayn Yehudim Le-'Aravim Bi-Medinat Yisrael: Ha-'Asor Ha-Rishon 1948–1958' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Haifa University, 1996); Hillel Cohen, 'Aravim Tovim: Ha-Modi'in Ha-Yisreeli Veha-'Arvim Be-Yisrael: Sokhnim U-Maf'ilim, Meshatfim U-Mordim, Matarot ve-Shitot' (Yerushalayim: Hotsaat 'Ivrit: Keter, 2006); Yair Bauml, *Tsel Kahol Lavan: Mediniyut Ha-Mimsad Ha-Yisreeli U-Fe'ulotav Be-Kerev Ha-Ezrahim Ha-'Aravim Be-Yisrael: Ha-Shanim Ha-Me'atsvot 1958–1968* (Hefah: Pardes, 2007).
4. Shira Robinson, *Citizen Strangers: Palestinians and the Birth of Israel's Liberal Settler State* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 3, 8–11, 15–16, 55–58, 69–70, 72, 80, 97–98, 137, 152, 160, 198.
5. *Ibid.*, 42, 55, 66–67.
6. *Ibid.*, 5, 13–18.
7. *Ibid.*, 189–192.
8. Omar Jabary Salamanca et al., 'Past Is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine', *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012): 1–8; Ilan Pappé, 'Shtetl Colonialism: First and Last Impressions of Indigeneity by Colonial Colonisers', *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012): 39–58; Mary Boger, 'A Ghetto State of Ghettos: Palestinians Under Israeli Citizenship' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, CUNY, 2008); Hunayda Ghanem, 'Lo Mamash Apartheid: 'Al Ha-Dinamiqa Bayn Kolonialism Hityashvuti Le-Kibush Tzva'i', *Hamerhav Hatizburi* 6 (2012): 95–112.
9. Gabriel Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel* (London: Verso, 2008), 61–78; Lorenzo Veracini, 'Introducing: Settler Colonial Studies', *Settler Colonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (2011): 1–12.
10. Veracini, 'Introducing: Settler Colonial Studies'.
11. Patrick Wolfe, 'Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race', *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 3 (2001): 866–905.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003); Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1967); Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
14. I use this term in a similar the same manner as Patrick Wolfe uses 'elimination', and Lorenzo Veracini uses 'transfer'. See Wolfe, 'Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race'; Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Houndmills, Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Gabi Piterberg utilized the word 'erasures' to describe what various forms of Zionist discourse mean for Palestinian-Arabs, see 'Erasures', *New Left Review* 10 (2001).
15. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 25.
16. Elizabeth A. Povinelli, 'The State of Shame: Australian Multiculturalism and the Crisis of Indigenous Citizenship', *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1998): 582; Wolfe, 'Land, Labor, and Difference', 893; Elizabeth Povinelli, 'The Governance of the Prior', *Interventions* 13, no. 1 (March 2011): 13–30.
17. Wolfe, 'Land, Labor, and Difference'.
18. Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, chap. 1.
19. *Ibid.*, chap. 2.
20. James Tully, 'The Struggles of Indigenous Peoples for and of Freedom', in *Political Theory and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, ed. Duncan Ivison, Paul Paul, and Will Sanders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 36–59.

21. In reality, Israeli citizenship was granted only to 40% of the Palestinian-Arab who resided in the state and was gradually extended to most others in the following years, see Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 68–112.
22. Sarah Ozacky-Lazar, 'Ha-Mimshal Ha-Tzva'i Ke-Manganon Shlita Ba-Ezrahim Ha-'Aravim', *Ha-Mizrah Ha-Hadash* 43 (2002): 104–132.
23. Sabri Jiryis, *Ha-'Aravim Be-Yisrael* (Haifa: Al-Itihad Publishing, 1966), 21.
24. From the 1956 Ratner commission on the Military Government, quoted in Ozacky-Lazar, 'Ha-Mimshal Ha-Tzva'i Ke-Manganon Shlita Ba-Ezrahim Ha-'Aravim', 106.
25. For an extensive study of this period see Benny Morris, *Israel's Border Wars, 1949–1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1993).
26. Ozacky-Lazar, 'Ha-Mimshal Ha-Tzva'i Ke-Manganon Shlita Ba-Ezrahim Ha-'Aravim', 106; Hillel Cohen, *Good Arabs: The Israeli Security Agencies and the Israeli Arabs 1948–1967* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 65–94.
27. Jiryis, *Ha-'Aravim Be-Yisrael*, 44–45; Habib Qahwaji, *Al-'Arab Fi Zill Al-Ihtilal Al-Israili Mundhu 1948* (Bayrut: Munazzamat al-Tahrir al-Filastiniyah, Markaz al-Abhath, 1972), 147–159.
28. Bauml, *Tsel Kahol Lavan*, 71–73.
29. Yair Bauml, 'Shi'abud Ha-Kalkala Ha-'Aravit Le-Tovat Ha-Migzar Ha-Yehudi, 1958–1967', *Ha-Mizrah Ha-Hadash* 48 (2009): 101–129.
30. Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel*, 8; Cohen, 'Aravim Tovim', 119–149.
31. Morris, *Israel's Border Wars, 1949–1956*, 419–425.
32. Ozacky-Lazar, 'Ha-Mimshal Ha-Tzva'i Ke-Manganon Shlita Ba-Ezrahim Ha-'Aravim', 115–119.
33. Historian Yair Bauml enumerated the immediate reasons for the persistence of the debate on the Military Government: (1) the continued pressure from leftist and centrist coalition parties; (2) new voices against the Military Government, now from within the ruling MAPAI and the Israeli security establishment; (3) a growing criticism against the Military Government in light of the Kafr Qassem massacre trials; (4) the growing economic demand for free access to Arab laborers; and (5) the Jewish realization that another mass exodus of Palestinians will not occur and that the Palestinian-Arab citizens are there to stay. The two latter elements, the need for working hands and the coming to terms with the Arab citizenry, speak of liberal economic consideration, alongside the security needs, for the democratic attitude of Zionists toward the Palestinian-Arabs. Yair Bauml, 'Ha-Mimshal Ha-Tzva'i ve-Tahalikh Bitulo, 1948–1966', *Ha-Mizrah Ha-Hadash* 43 (2002): 138.
34. For other scholarship which successfully incorporated a comparative approach to settler-colonialism or explicitly used settler-colonial studies in their research on Zionist history see: Baruch Kimmerling, *Zionism and Territory: The Socio-Territorial Dimensions of Zionist Politics* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1983); Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor, and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism*; Lorenzo Veracini, *Israel and Settler Society* (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2006).
35. The drive to assimilate the Palestinian-Arab community in order to erase it has been discussed thoroughly in Piterberg, 'Erasures', 43–46; Bauml, *Tsel Kahol Lavan*, 29–69.
36. See the speech given by Elimelekh Rimalt, MK from the General Zionists Party and representing the Religious National Party, MAPAM, Ahdut ha-'Avoda, and MAKI in *Haboker*, 30 July 1959, 1, 3; Gil Eyal, *The Disenchantment of the Orient: Expertise in Arab Affairs and the Israeli State* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 152–184; Cohen, 'Aravim Tovim', 50; Shira Robinson, 'Occupied Citizens in a Liberal State: Palestinians Under Military Rule and the Colonial Formation of Israeli Society, 1948–1966' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford, 2005); Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*.
37. Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 33–34.
38. Elia Zureik, *The Palestinians in Israel: A Study in Internal Colonialism* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1979); Bauml, 'Shi'abud Ha-Kalkala Ha-'Aravit Le-Tovat Ha-Migzar Ha-Yehudi, 1958–1967'.
39. Jiryis, *Ha-'Aravim Be-Yisrael*, 50–52; Tom Segev, 1949: *Ha-Yisraelim Ha-Ri'shonim* (Jerusalem: Domino, 1984), 61–65. See also the correspondences of an Israeli tax clerk with his official on the lack of cooperation of the Military Government in the triangle; Israel Defense Forces Archive, file no. 53/233/1955.
40. Gabriel Baer, 'The Office and Function of the Village Mukhtar', in *Palestinian Society and Politics*, ed. Joel S. Migdal (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 103–123.
41. Cohen, *Good Arabs*; Bauml, *Tsel Kahol Lavan*, 83.

42. Haim Hefer, 'Military Governors (song)', in Revi'iyat Mo'adon ha-Teatron, *Shirei ha-Frere Jacques*, 1977 found in Robinson, *Occupied Citizens in a Liberal State*; Robinson, *Citizen Strangers*, 93–95; Benziman and Mansour, *Dayare Mishneh*; Qahwaji, *Al-'Arab Fi Zill Al-Ihtilal Al-Israili Mundhu 1948*; Jiryis, *Ha-'Aravim Be-Yisrael*. See also Baruch Gitlis' novel, *Ha-Moshel Ha-Mekho'ar (The Ugly Governor)* in which he claimed authenticity to the events of corruption and feasting depicted in the book.
43. Eyal, *The Disenchantment of the Orient*, 17–32; Alina Korn, 'From Refugees to Infiltrators: Constructing Political Crime in Israel in the 1950s', *International Journal of the Sociology of Law* 31, no. 1 (March 2003): 1–22.
44. Ozacky-Lazar, 'Ha-Mimshal Ha-Tzva'i Ke-Manganon Shlita Ba-Ezrahim Ha-'Aravim', 115–119.
45. Yossi Amitay, *Ahavat-'Amim Ba-Mivhan: Mapam, 1948–1954: 'Amadot Be-Sugyat 'Arviyay Eretz Yisrael* (Tel-Aviv: Ts'erikover, 1988), 13–66; Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 434.
46. I thank Gabriel Piterberg for coining this term.
47. Amitay, *Ahavat-'Amim Ba-Mivhan*, 101–105.
48. "'Al ha-Mimshal ha-Tzva'i," *'Al ha-Mishmar*, March 11, 1956, 1.
49. Yigal Allon, *Masakh Shel Hol*, 1968 ed. (Tel Aviv: ha-Kibuts ha-Meuhad, 1959), 337.
50. *Ibid.*, 324.
51. *Ibid.*, 329.
52. Aharon Cohen, 'On the Arab Problem in Israel', *'Al ha-Mishmar*, April 9, 1952, 4; Peretz Berstein, 'Arviyay Yisrael', *Haboqer*, July 13, 1956, 3; 'It is time to Abolish the Military Government in its Current Form', *Haboqer*, July 30, 1959, 3; The two parties united in 1961 to form the Israeli Liberal Party. The Progressive Party was headed by Pinhas Rosen who in 1959 was appointed by the Ben-Gurion government to head an inquiry on the issue of the Military Government. Rosen and two other members from this party recommended it be abolished.
53. Yohanan Bader, 'Be-Kenut Klapay ha-'Aravi Ezrah Yisrael', *Herut*, May 22, 2
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. Herzl Rosenblum, 'Ha-Gal ha-'Akhur (editorial)', *Yediot Aharonot*, January 1, 1962, 2; 'The Military Government Serves the Ruling Party in the State', *Herut*, November 16, 4.
57. See Vladimir Jabotinsky and Rafaela Bilski-Cohen, *Li-Mahutah Shel Ha-Demokratyah: Mishnato Ha-Liberalit Veba-Demokratit Shel Zeev Zhabotinski* (Tel Aviv: Hotsaat ha-misdar 'al-shem Zeev Zhabotinski, 2001); Dimitry Shumsky, 'Brith Shalom's Uniqueness Reconsidered: Hans Kohn and Autonomist Zionism', *Jewish History* 25, nos. 3–4 (July 12, 2011): 339–353.
58. Shimon Peres, 'Ha-Mimshal Ha-Tzva'i hu Pri shel Mimshal Milhamti', *Davar*, January 26, 2; 'Davar Hayom (editorial)', *Davar*, December 1, 1955, 1; 'Le'et Kazot? (editorial)', *Herut*, December 4, 1955, 2; 'Martin Buber ve-Hamimshal ha-Tzva'i', *Yediot Aharonot*, January 16, 1962, 5; Herzl Rosenblum, 'Be-Lev Patuah', *Yediot Aharonot/7 Yamim*, February 22, 1963, 12; Herzl Rosenblum, 'Tzvi'ut', *Yediot Aharonot*, February 20, 1963, 2; See 'Davar Hayom' editorials in *Davar*, December 31, 1961; January 8, 1962; February 2, 1962; November 14, 1962; December 5, 1962; February 20, 1963; February 21, 1963.
59. 'Rosh ha-Memshala Soqer', *Davar*, March 17, 1959, 2; 'Ben-Gurion Makhriz', *Herut*, March 17, 1959, 2.
60. 'Eshkol with Meir, July 9, 1963', Israel State Archives, A/7921/1 (Hereafter ISA).
61. 'Eshkol with the Department of Arab Affairs, July 23, 1963', ISA.
62. *Ibid.*
63. 'Meeting on Arab Affairs ('inyanay 'aravim)', August 8, 1963, ISA, particularly the opinions of Eshkol and Peres.
64. 'Our Minister's (sareynu) meeting', September 12, 1963, ISA.
65. Bauml, *Tsel Kahol Lavan*, 130–203.
66. 'Eshkol with the Department of Arab Affairs', July 23, 1963, ISA.
67. See the opinions of Aba Eban; Sh. Bendor; G. Polak, in *Ibid.*
68. Shafir, *Land, Labor, and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914*; Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906–1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism*, 69–78.
69. See the comments of Rehav'am Amir, Eshkol and Abba Eban in the same meeting above.
70. "'Our Comrades" (havereinu) meeting', October 9, 1963," ISA.
71. 'Our Minister's (sareynu) meeting', September 12, 1963, ISA.
72. *Ibid.*