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PALESTINE, 1917-1939**

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THE SURROGATE COLONIZATION OF PALESTINE, 1917-1939

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ABSTRACT

The "surrogate colonization" of Palestine had a foreign power giving to a nonnative group rights over land occupied by an indigenous people. It thus brought into play the complementary and conflicting agendas of three culturally distinguishable parties: British, Jews and Arabs. Each party had both "externalist" [those with no sustained practical experience of day to day life in Palestine] and "internalist" representatives. The surrogate idea was based on a "strategic consensus" involving each party's externalist camp: the British ruling elite, the leadership of the World Zionist Organization and the Hashemite Dynasty of Arabia. The collapse of this triangular consensus, which put an end to the policy but not the process of surrogate colonization, resulted from irreconcilable antagonisms within and between the major currents of each internalist camp. A focus on the land problem in Palestine highlights contradictions in each party's internalist agenda, which forestalled a rift between the Jewish and British sides of the consensus long enough for the Zionist settlement in Palestine (Yishuv) to acquire territory and to develop a largely self-sufficient economic, cultural, political and military infrastructure. [Palestine, Zionism, British empire, fellaheen, land settlement]

During the First World War, American notions of self-determination infiltrated British and French colonial discourse. Wilsonian rhetoric was put to Orwellian use to resolve the dilemma that the Great War had posed for Europe's apparently failed civilizing mission. Some Europeans viewed this tragedy for technology and Christianity with remorse (Adas 1988). Others saw the possible end of civilized life. This is the way Gertrude Bell, Iraq's resident orientalist, eyed the postwar uprisings against European rule in the Middle East (5 September 1920)

unthinking people, who form the great mass of the world, follow suit in blind revolt against the accepted order.... We're near the complete collapse of society-the end of the Roman Empire ... and there's little on which you can depend for its reconstruction. The credit of European civilization is gone. Over and over again people have said to me that it has been a shock and a surprise to them to see Europe relapse into barbarism ... what else can you call the war? How can we, who managed our affairs so badly, claim to teach others to manage theirs better? [Bell 1930:404]

But what imperial leaders and their active agents largely regretted was the "error," which they meant to fix. For the undiminished geopolitical and world-market ambitions of the European powers required a rehabilitation of the mission that had rationalized the colonial drive to dominate humankind. Wilsonian doctrine provided a convenient vehicle because it resuscitated the ailing moral claim to rule in civilization's name. It did this by wedding notions of technological progress to democratic ideals. Henceforth, the unquestionable scientific advantage of Europe (and America) would be unselfishly applied to experiments in social and economic engineering with the aim of freeing the labor and minds of indigenous peoples.

By the first half of the last century, "the right of 'coloured peoples' to sell their labor in a free and-fair market" was already an axiom of Britain's civilizing effort in Africa (Comaroff and Cooper, this volume). Missionaries made it part of a campaign to place imperialism on a more secure moral footing than "might makes right." By substituting "free labor" for notions of vassalage and slavery, imperial conquest acquired a rationale more in tune with the application of liberal Enlightenment ideas to the management and expansion of the Industrial Revolution over the world.

In the wake of the Great War, the ideology of free labor, together with democratic ideas, could become an even more effective and subtle means of control. Equating freedom of labor

with freedom of thought would allow the ruling powers to deny a representative voice to those who-through indolence, ignorance, racial incapacity, and so on-continued to wallow in a state of savage sloth. Only when native peoples had been wrenched from their organic relationship with land and community could they be considered "ready" for home rule. By then, given the moribund state of their previous society and their need to survive in the "free" market, political subservience to Western institutions would be assured.

The Supreme Council of the League of Nations-Britain, France and Italy-framed a system of mandates for the new colonial order and cast of mind. Wilsonian rhetoric about "guiding" native peoples toward "self-determination" was kept to a minimum with regard to those areas of Africa included among the "B" and "C" mandates and containing important settler populations. It was different for "A" mandates of the Middle East: Syria (including Lebanon), Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Palestine (originally containing Transjordan). These Arab lands of the former Ottoman Empire had a relatively insignificant European settler population. As their importance was primarily strategic, they could simply be "administered" instead of colonized. Accordingly, the stated purpose of French mandatory rule in Syria, like British rule in Iraq, would be to render "administrative advice and assistance" until such time as the subject peoples, who were already "recognised as independent," could actually "stand alone."

"Enlightened" rule would benefit subject peoples, but also safeguard civilization while satisfying Europe's age-old thirst for the Orient:

and also the desire that has always pushed [Frenchmen] towards the countries of gods and colors: ardent religious desire to tread the Galilee grass where Christ stepped ... clairvoyant political desire to erect a dam against material or intellectual invasions of an Asia in perpetual ferment; simple desire for light, adventure, beauty, a carefree life that rapidly approaches anarchy [Bordeaux 1926,1:2].

From this vantage, it might take a while for Arabs to become stalwart and forthright enough to assume a place in the League of Nations; for, as T. E. Lawrence intoned, when Arabs are given their freedom they are as children: "full of dark depressions and exaltations, lacking in rule ... unstable as water" (1935:42). But they might still be encouraged toward "self-rule," say, in the manner outlined in 1917 by the former viceroy of India in a letter to Gertrude Bell: "It really would not matter if we choose three of the fattest men in Baghdad or three of the men with the longest beards who would be ruled by the resident and a certain number of advisers" (in O'Brien 1988:137). Such sentiments coincided in principle with those of Zionism's founding father, Theodore Herzl, and its chief Public Orator, Max Nordau; but the civilizing mission in Palestine might function better by a division of labor, with Britain supplying the force and Zionism providing the kultur: "we will endeavour to do in Asia minor what the British did in India-I am referring to our cultural work and not rule by force. We intend to come to Palestine as the emissaries of culture and to expand the moral boundaries of Europe to the Euphrates" (Nordau 1962,11:113).

Within the "A" system, Palestine posed a special problem, encouraging a novel solution. Strategically set between Asia and Africa, between Syria and Egypt, between French and British ambitions, it could not ultimately be entrusted to a people whose allegiance to principles and flags was, as Lawrence stressed, so inherently "feckless and colour blind" (1935:42). In a world newly made safe for democracy, neither could Palestine be colonized outright with settlers from the home country. But it would seem reasonable to have another people colonize the territory for the Empire's sake: a people presumably of the same "race" as the country's natives, unwanted in Europe but steeped in European civilization; a people perceived as downtrodden, but with the

intellectual industry and cultural commitment to secure the land; a people reputed to be clannishly bound to a worldwide network of social and financial alliances, but who might be strategically co-opted for the Empire's benefit; a people who would be grateful to the power that gave them their own home, but remain dependent on that power for continuing protection against potentially hostile neighbors. This was the rationale behind the surrogate colonization of Palestine.

Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill decreed how, in 1921, the principle of rule by "the consent of the governed" would thus apply to Palestine: "Step by step we shall develop representative institutions leading up to full self-government," but "our children's children will have passed away before that is accomplished" (in Klieman 1970:272). The Arabs could expect to wait a century or so before England considered these vestigial "desert hordes" sufficiently civilized to warrant political consideration. Only, by then-God willing-the Jews would be a majority.'

In November 1917, Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour declared Britain's support for a "Jewish National Home in Palestine ... it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done to prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities." Negotiations with Britain involved a threefold rationale for awarding Palestine to the Jews: geopolitical strategy, the civilizing mission of "enlightened imperialism," and what may be loosely termed "religion" (12 April 1916, N. Sokolow, "England as the Protective Power," FO 371/2817/63314). From the outset, Weizmann stressed the strategic value of surrogate colonization. In 1915 he wrote:

If Great Britain does not wish anyone else to have Palestine ... it will have to watch it and stop any penetration of another power. Surely ... that involves as much responsibility as would be involved by a British protectorate over Palestine, with the sole difference that watching is a much less effective preventative than an actual protectorate. I therefore thought that the middle course could be adopted ... viz; the Jews take over the country; the whole burden of organization falls on them, but for the next ten or fifteen years they work under a temporary British protectorate [1949,1:177].

Surrogate colonization was to follow "enlightened imperialist principles" (p. 182), which Jewish civilization was especially qualified to bring to the cultural desert of Palestine: "should Britain encourage a Jewish settlement there, as a British dependency, we could have in twenty to thirty years a million Jews out there, perhaps more; they would develop the country, bring back civilization to it and form a very effective guard for the Suez Canal" (p. 149). But it would be a mistake to underestimate the appeal of a Jewish renaissance in the Holy Land to the puritan evangelicalism of Britain's leadership. The Zionist promised to bring history again to a country whose "place names," mused Prime Minister Lloyd George, "were more familiar to me than those on the Western Front" (p. 152). As Weizmann stressed, "men like Balfour, Churchill, Lloyd George, were deeply religious and believed in the Bible ... so that we Zionists represented to them a great tradition for which they would have enormous respect" (p. 157). This is not to say that such men were necessarily fond of Jews, only of Zionism.²

In meetings brokered by Lawrence, Weizmann met Feisal, leader of the Arab Revolt against Turkey and Hashemite claimant to the Syrian throne: "the more the Arab movement represented by Feisal develops ... the less the conflict will be between this movement and Zionism.... The so-called Arab question in Palestine would therefore assume only a purely local character, and in fact is not considered as a serious factor by all those who know the local situation fully" (17 July 1918, Weizmann to Balfour, CZA Z4/16055). In January 1919, as a

prelude to the Paris Peace Conference, Feisal and Weizmann signed an agreement, which guaranteed the economic and political rights of Arabs and Jews in both "the Arab State and Palestine": "all necessary measures shall be taken ... to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil. In taking such measures the Arab peasant and tenant farmers shall be protected in their rights, and shall be assisted in forwarding their economic development" (Documents 1945:20). American Jewish leader Felix Frankfurter who, with Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, had obtained Wilson's consent to the Balfour Declaration, received Feisal's affirmation: "The Jewish movement is national and not imperialistic. Our movement is national and not imperialistic; and there is room in Syria for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other" (3 March 1919, Documents 1945:20). A "strategic consensus" between the British Empire, the Zionist organization and the Hashemite Dynasty seemed in hand.

Inside Palestine, however, there was not even the semblance of a consensus. Many local Arab leaders began to turn their back on the Hashemites. Thus, whereas in 1918, Kamel elHusseini, the mufti of Jerusalem, had expressed "complete confidence in the useful cooperation of all parties" (9 May 1918, Palestine News; cf. June 1918, Hussein to Feisal, FO 371/3403/126864), by 1919 he was reported to have said to a representative of the New York press:

I have been asked if the Hedjaz Kingdom will satisfy our national aspirations. Not at all. That is for the Bedouins across the Jordan. We are different people. Our native country is Palestine [3 March 1919, in Klieman 1970:23].

Some prominent personalities continued to support the idea of a pan-Arab nation, such as Awni 'Abd el-Hadi (a leader of one of the most established families in Palestine's Nablus region and a student founder of the secret nationalist society, al-Fatat, in Paris before the war); however, nearly all opposed the Balfour Declaration. As the Muslim-Christian Association told the American King-Crane Commission: "We have no relations with the Hedjaz [and Emir Feisal] ... it is impossible for us to make an understanding [with the Zionists] and even to live with them together" (18 June 1919, CZA L4/794).

The home government's leadership generally dismissed such opposition from the Palestinian Arab community out of hand:

You asked me ... to repudiate the Balfour Declaration and to veto immigration.... It is not in my power to do so, nor, if it were in my power, would it be my wish.... We think it will be good for the world, good for the Jews and good for the British Empire. But we also think it will be good for the Arabs who dwell in Palestine [March 1921, Churchill to Palestinian Deputation, Klieman 1970:270].

Yet things seemed different to those stationed in Palestine (cf. Wasserstein 1978). In April 1918, the army installed an Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (OETA). Some in OETA came to consider the Balfour Declaration a legitimate wartime tactic that had outlived its usefulness. But even before the war, there was appreciable Arab hostility to Zionism, and many in the Foreign Office and the military administration surmised that further encouragement of Jewish colonization would only inflame the passions of the indigenous population to the point of making the country virtually ungovernable (6 December 1918, Clayton to Curzon, FO 371/3386/213403).

At the outset of the new Jewish settlement in the 1880s, Arab opposition was mostly a parochial affair. Jewish land purchases involved encroachment, and occasionally displacement, of peasants by an alien society. As one early colonist wrote:

The land that we have bought (for the colony of Ghederal constitutes the "soul and spirit" (nefesh vi ruah) of the [Arab] village [of Qatra]. The villagers borrowed from the French moneylender Polivar at such a high rate that they were finally compelled to sell their lands at the loanshark's price. As long as Polivar remained owner of the land, the fellaheen did not feel the full burden of their misfortune because he leased it to them. But now that the fellaheen realize that our [Jewish] brothers work the land on their own, and will not lease it ... the fellaheen are bare-how will they come by their daily bread? [15 November 1885, Moyal to Pinsker, in Druyanov 1919,1:670-71]

The Ottoman fiscal and land reforms (of the second phase of tanzimat), which first took effect in Palestine around 1870, soon resulted in the peasantry losing title to much of the land they cultivated (Schumacher 1889; Post 1891). But life conditions hardly deteriorated: improved physical security and opportunities provided by the emerging agricultural market more than offset the cost of paying rent to absentee titleholders (Scholch 1984; Gilbar 1986; cf. Oliphant 1887). Then came the Jewish colonists. Exchanging meager savings for precious deeds in Zion, they had left behind the alienating commerce of pogrom-ridden Eastern Europe to work the land of Abraham and Isaac for themselves: "that is why, all of a sudden, many fellaheen had no land to till; this affected their very existence and provoked the conflicts [at Petah Tikvah] that set our (Arab) brothers against us" (4 April 1886, Hirsch to Pinsker, in Druyanov 1919,1:746-54, 761-65). Many of these early colonists were genuinely surprised to find the children of Abraham's half-forgotten son, Ishmael, still dwelling on their father's land. A few saw the Arabs as long-lost brothers. Others dreamed the Arabs could be forced back to their desert banishment. The Arab peasants, it appears, were similarly disconcerted.

By 1890 the Yishuv's population had practically doubled to 48,000 persons, with nine agricultural settlements in place. Palestinian notables and landowners, whose prestige and power depended on the peasantry, began sending delegations to Constantinople. Under the leadership of Muhammed Tahrir el-Husseini, Mufti of Jerusalem, Palestinian opposition to Zionism received the Sublime Porte's favorable attention. Nevertheless, corrupt local Turkish officials allowed the number of Jewish colonies to double by 1897, the year of the First Zionist Congress. After the Revolt of the Young Turks in 1908, the rise of Arab nationalism within the wider framework of Ottoman patriotism started to transform the socioeconomic conflict into a political one. By the First World War, political opposition to Zionism had permeated many sectors of Arab society in the country and had begun to underscore a specifically Palestinian nationalism (Mandel 1976:213-14).

On entering Jerusalem in December 1917, General Allenby, whose army had come to wrest Palestine from the Turks, announced the crusades finally at an end and seemed to warm to Weizman's biblical overtures on behalf of a Jewish Palestine (Weizmann 1949,1:231). But prudence compelled him to stay implementation of the Balfour Declaration. Instead, Jerusalem's military governor, Ronald Storrs, disseminated the Anglo-French Joint Declaration, which promised to assist and encourage "the establishment of indigenous government and administrations in Syria and Mesopotamia" (19 November 1918, Storrs to GHQ-OETA, FO 371/3386/ 213403)-implying that OETA considered Palestine part of Syria (where HMG did not, Adelson 1975:268). But in Palestine, even more than in Iraq or Syria, sustained European guidance towards "self-determination" was all the more necessary in face of the Zionist menace: "The natives of the soil foresee their eventual banishment from the land. They need protection, the strongest protection, against the alien coming to their country" (16 August 1919, OETA Chief Administrator to Chief Political Officer, FO 371/4171/124482).

To a significant extent, the ranking members of the military (and later civilian) Palestine administration had both an anti-Zionist and Orientalist outlook. Not that Zionism and Orientalism were necessarily incompatible. Lawrence, for one, thought Zionism to be both the culmination and salvation of the Orient:

The Jewish experiment is ... a conscious effort on the part of the least European people in Europe, to head against the drift of ages, and return once more to the Orient from which they came.... The success of their scheme will involve inevitably the raising of the present Arab population to their own material level [Documents 1945:37].

Zionism might thus restore to the Jew his true Eastern heritage, liberating him from the degenerate society of urban schemers and usurers that a segregated European life had foisted upon him. But owing to his sojourn in the West, the Jew would be in a position to impart to the East a Western sense of duty and responsibility, which the Arab so notoriously lacked. The Arab, in turn, could infect the Jew with unfettered sentiment and the drive to creative expression. But Jewish resettlement in the East would not merely carry local import. It could well turn out to be the nucleus of a new world power that "to a very large extent must stand and fall by the course of the Zionist effort."

It was Storrs who, as Oriental Secretary in Egypt under Kitchener, mediated the initial negotiations for a military alliance between the British government and the Hashemites. These eventually led to the Arab Revolt, in which Lawrence became a principal guerilla strategist. As for Zionism, to a considerable extent Storrs shared Lawrence's appreciation of its spirit,' but he felt it had failed to carry out its mission, being far too infiltrated by "Kultur ... exclusively and - arrogantly Russian" to usher in the Oriental Millenium. If only "the Sephardic ... the 'Noble' Jew," the true Oriental, had a more significant role to play, then Lawrence's vision might come to pass. But the arrogance of Russian Jews was manifest in their attitude toward all Orientals, even their own coreligionists:

In the new land of Israel [the Sephardic] was not if despised at any rate ignored as a spineless Oriental. Yet it was this same Sephardic background that would have rendered the Sephardic ... ideal agents for dealing and negotiating with the Arabs [1940:87].

In sum, Storrs was anti-Zionist because he saw the Russian-dominated Zionist experiment to be fundamentally anti-Orientalist. For him, the object of the mandatory was to preserve the status quo with "mild impersonal British rule" (1940:96). But try as he might to implement this policy, Zionists within and without Palestine would attack his efforts in a manner "sometimes bitterly indictive and even menacing ... [but] I did not emerge from it an anti-semite for life" (1940:84-85; cf. 20 May 1918, Weizmann to Balfour, denouncing OETA's status quo policy as hindering Jewish settlement; and 16 March 1920, Weizmann to Chief Political Officer, asking that fellahin be denied agricultural loans for the sake of the status quo, CZA Z4/16055). As for ostensible Arab hostility to military occupation, this was only the expression of a people recently liberated from bondage coming to grips with "minor but irksome changes," such as the fact that "payment of taxes or compliance with new-fangled sanitary regulations can no longer be evaded by influence or backshish."

Like most administrators elsewhere in the British Empire, Storrs did not question the political assumptions underlying such forced measures. Resistance to "sanitary regulations," for example, was not only perceived to carry the threat of physical contagion, but the menace of potentially subversive mental contagion .5 Similarly, native attempts to elude the British census

were often as "politically" motivated as the efforts to carry it out. For instance, despite widespread Arab opposition to a proposed "legislative council" whose majority would be appointed by the administration, a general census was ordered for the purpose of preparing a register of electors. The administration warned the Arab executive that failure to cooperate with the census would be treated as a criminal offense: "Should there be obstruction, the Government will at once institute proceedings both against those who obstruct and those who instigated such obstruction" (17 Oct. 1922, Chief Secretary to Musa Kazim el-Husseini, CZA S25/ 4634). As elsewhere in the Empire, the census aimed principally to enumeratively fix the nature of goods and people in order to create the commercial and social categories by which the colony could be arranged: lives were thereby indexed for scrutiny and control by strangers, and fixed into categories that would limit peoples' adaptive flexibility and ability to develop as they saw fit in a rapidly changing world. Storrs, of course, never addressed the fact that "payment of taxes" implied a whole fiscal system based on maintaining the fellah's economic status quo by administratively fixing it in place, and that such rigid delimitation of the peasant economy helped greatly to destroy it.

In such measures, Palestine not only fell into the mold of Britain's other colonies, but represented a summation of the Empire's whole colonial experience. The prewar biblical and geographical surveys of the Palestine Exploration Fund (in which Kitchener had played a prominent role in 1874 and Lawrence in 1913), like similar surveys elsewhere in Africa and Asia, collected local histories, attached a set of customs to the native, fixed spatial boundaries for the people, and examined the practices of previous regimes with respect to that population. Once control of the area was established, a periodic census would codify the information to ensure a more effective manipulation of the populations concerned.

But it was the policy of "Land Settlement" that intellectually summed up, administratively set into place, and materially reset the conditions of people's existence. Inaugurated in Bengal in the 1770s, land settlement soon became the most extensive and continuous ordering activity of the British Empire (Cohn 1988). In Palestine, a century and a half of accumulated colonial wisdom in matters of land settlement-with accompanying surveys, censuses, sanitary measures, economic and "education" programs-was applied en bloc. Although the British Administration might roundly condemn Zionist "arrogance," and profess to champion the fellah's "needs," no official British policy statement or plan ever questioned the necessity for land settlement, or for using it as the cornerstone of fiscal, economic, social and-ultimately-- political control .⁶

Through the 1920s, most Palestinian village lands were distributed in a form of joint tenure called masha'a. From the outset, authorities sought to abolish masha'a as a precondition of land registration and settlement:

biennial redistribution hinders progress by discouraging personal initiative and preventing the expenditure of capital and by stereotyping the methods of cultivation ... ownership of detached lots, separated from one another by the land of other proprietors, is very general ... and places a serious obstacle in the way of an exact determination of the boundaries and the acquirement of a clear and valid title. The consolidation of such lots into continuous properties is a condition of the satisfactory economic development of the country [Government Report 1920:250-251].

In 1923, the Mesh'a'a Land Committee drafted plans to enforce the partition (ifraz) of undivided lands into permanently fixed parcels, or mafruz.

For the administration, the fiscal benefits to be derived from divided, private proprietorship were paramount: "The main objects of land settlement are to determine and register existing rights in land; to facilitate dealings and reduce litigation; and to provide an accurate record of land holding, for the purpose of a fair and efficient distribution of land taxes" (December 1945, General Monthly Bulletin of Current Statistics, ISA 017/3/30). For Zionists, legislation designed to convert masha'a into mafruz would allow them to buy into the village patrimony and eventually alienate it from the peasants (see 9 Nov. 1931, Marguiles to JA, Die Pachterfrage in Palastina, in Stein 1984:240-241). But British and Zionist interests coincided on policy. As the director of lands informed the Federation of Jewish Farmers, once Jews had acquired a share of masha'a land, they could force partition through the courts: "If the co-owners do not agree between them as to partition, the application for partition from one of the co-owners is sufficient for the Court to give a decision on the partition" (2 December 1923, Doukhan to Smilansky, CZA KKL5/1878). Furthermore, "a proper land settlement was also the only way to make lands available for the Jews without political complications" (19 March 1924, "Note on an Interview with Mr. Stubbs-Director of Lands," CZA KKL5/1878).

With the land so divided, the corporate structure of the village economy was considerably more prone to disintegrate. The various co-cultivation partnerships (sharika) would dissolve and individual cultivators would depart from the overall agriculture regime previously scheduled by the community's elders (ikhtiyariyyah). With the unraveling of economic coordination often came the fragmentation of those diverse forms of social organization linked to masha'a. Villagers could expect to witness: conflicts between family members over an increasingly smaller, scattered and agriculturally worthless land inheritance; disputes between adjacent plot holders from different kin groups over the boundaries of ever more numerous and irregular parcels; and village factionalism less and less constrained by the necessity of agricultural cooperation (Atran 1985).

Under such conditions, the remaining village lands might be purchased in short order. Frequently, however, Zionist purchasing agents would buy masha'a shares from absentee owners or independent peasant proprietors, while granting villagers a temporary lease on the land. Because the price of mafruz lands was generally four or five times that of masha'a lands, this practice allowed the purchase of additional shares at relatively modest cost. It also avoided lengthy litigation against the various boundary claims of many individuals when land settlement came to the village. If the lands were purchased in this way from absentee owners, then the political consequences of dispossession of the peasantry could also be mitigated. Arab owners—rather than the Jews—would be required to rid the land of tenants before final payment, and it would be up to these landowners to initiate partition proceedings against the remaining independent peasant holders. The Arab owners could themselves avoid the political onus of a sellout to the Jews by taking out fictitious mortgages and "defaulting" on them. The administration would then foreclose and offer the land at public auction to the highest bidder. Such, for example, were the tactics used by the Jewish National Fund for the acquisition of land owned by some members of the Abd el-Hadi family in the village of Zar'in (see Stein 1984:7076; on Settlement ISA 22-3568/23; 25 October 1945, JNF Haifa, CZA KKL5/15030).

Still, the peasants often attempted to maintain the land as masha'a, and generally avoided registration as long as possible. Despite strenuous efforts by the Department of Land Registry, in 1925 apparently three-fourths of the land of Palestine was still not registered (17 March 1925, Palestine Zionist Executive to Anglo-Palestine Company, CZA Z4/771 /II; December 1925, "Report on the Land System of Palestine by Sir Ernest Dowson," ISA 22-3571 /1). The Land

Settlement Ordinance of 1928 thus pointedly aimed at abolishing masha'a through forced division and registration; however, because of the difficulties in getting villagers to accede to a compulsory agreement over a permanent division of shares and fixing of parcels, it also had little initial success (Government Report 1930b:31).

Nevertheless, by 1930 only about half of the land of Palestine was still held in masha'a (Government Report 1930e:45), and barely one quarter of it a decade later (Vaschitz 1947:46). Sometimes the peasants hoped to stave off the passing en masse of their threatened patrimony into the hands of others by first "freezing" the masha'a themselves (ifraz barani). In the village of Isfiya, for instance, when masha'a shares were sold, the name of the previous shareholder and the location of the parcels he cultivated at the time were marked by the new owner in the unofficial transfer deed (hudjah shari'a). Subsequent redistribution of masha'a parcels by lottery (qura), however, meant that any given parcel would be assigned to different cultivators over time. Later, by suspending the system of periodic distribution, villagers could block outside shareholders from claiming any given parcel; for a cultivator whose name was not marked in the original transfer deed had a preemptory right to that parcel if he had continuously cultivated it over ten years (Atran 1986). Yet as long as the village corporation remained intact, masha'a constituted not only the preferred agrarian regime for extensive cereal cultivation, but the collectivity's principal means of blocking a sell-off by individual shareholders (see 1910-1912, *Erwerbbaussichten für neue Einwanderer in der Landwirtschaft in Palestina*, on difficulty in acquiring land from peasant-owned masha'a villages, CZA L1 /70; 1 Sept. 1922, Abdullah Samara to Arab Executive, on policy of encouraging masha'a co-owners to block sale of individual shares, ISA 65/1059/338-P). Accordingly, the stronger the corporate integrity of the peasant community, the more likely its resistance to land settlement.

For example, throughout the mandate the villagers of Umm el-Fahm in Northern Samaria continued to cultivate their 25,000 dunams of masha'a land at Khirbet Lajjun in the large interior Plain of Esdraelon. Although settlement of the Esdraelon had high priority for the administration and Jewish National Fund, the corporate integrity of the four main patronymic groups (hamayil) constituted an effective system of checks and balances on the divergent needs of families within each group and the rival interests between groups. This prevented economically weak members from selling out to Jews or absentee Arab landowners. It also blocked economically strong members who would force partition to allow individual landholders the option to change the agrarian regime and raise land values (Atran 1987).

For the authorities, however, masha'a was an "unmitigated evil." There could be no rational colonial policy without land settlement, and no settlement with masha'a: "introduction of the idea of cultivated communal land ... is contrary to the Land Code and subversive, indeed, of the principles upon which it is based" (Goadby and Doukhan 1935:207). Thus, it was an unquestioned axiom of all official reports on the agricultural condition of Palestine that: "one of the essential pre-conditions of development is that the land shall be partitioned" (Government Report 1930b:31-33). A corollary to this axiom was that: "almost any partition, however officially bad, is better than no partition at all" (Government Report 1931:13). Besides, partition and settlement had reportedly worked in Egypt and the Punjab, and reports showed it could also work in Palestine (7 December 1923, Dowson to Clayton, "Notes on Land-Tax, Cadastral Survey, and Land Settlement in Palestine," CO 733/60/59971; Government Report 1930c).

Still, the peasants stubbornly persisted in their economically pernicious and outworn ways: "it appears evident that, in certain areas, the Arabs regard this [masha'a] system of

tenancy, destructive as it is of all development, as a safeguard against alienation" (Government Report 1937:219):

imagine an English village where every farmer each year is compelled to pass on his lands and buildings to a neighbor ... and receive some other neighbor's farm in exchange, he will get some inkling of what obstacles to progress can exist to agricultural development in Palestine (Government Report 1931:11).

It never seemed to occur to the "experts" that such a scenario was as bizarre as the forced attempt to convert Palestinian fellahin into yeomen. Yet, that is precisely what British policy aimed to do at every turn, it being "considered that the principles of the English Law [with regard to agricultural holdings], with some simplification, are applicable to Palestine" (1927, "Report of the Committee to Advise in the Protection of Agricultural Tenants," ISA 22-3542/ G612).

The result for the Palestinian peasantry was as disastrous as the imagined scenario of the English farmer suddenly compelled to cultivate his garden patch in masha'a. Indeed, most of the "evils" associated with masha'a only appeared with mafruz, when peasants were suddenly forced to live with the results of their last redistribution as if caught in an arbitrary moment of "musical chairs." With partition, the socioeconomic system that attended masha'a was prone to collapse, and peasants were left with increasingly fragmented and unmanageable parcels which did little for economic cooperation and long-term planning. Thus, the celebrated "Five Village Survey" published in the administration's General Monthly Bulletin of Current Statistics (1945-46, ISA 017/3/30), attributed practically all of the ills associated with the abortion of masha'a to its conception. Using the Torrens system, British land registration followed the Swiss model, which resulted in the permanent scattering of an individual's masha'a holdings over various fiscal blocks. Unfortunately, this "demonstration" of the nefarious effects of masha'a has informed most subsequent accounts of the land system in Palestine (Avneri 1980:193-94; cf. Granott 1952:ch. 8).⁷

In 1921, the Palestine Zionist Executive was established. From World Zionist headquarters in London, Chaim Weizmann determined policy and sent his executors (Kisch, Sacher, Eder) to Palestine to implement it. That policy, Weizmann had defined to the American Secretary of State at the Paris Peace Conference in February, 1919:

to mean the creation of an administration which would arise out of the natural conditions of the country-always safeguarding the interests of the non-Jews-with the hope that by Jewish immigration Palestine would ultimately become as Jewish as England is English ... and took as my example the outstanding success which the French had at that time made of Tunisia [Weizmann 1949,1:2441.

But whereas direct French colonial rule sought to utilize, rather than displace, the fellah's labor (Poncet 1962), Zionist colonization had no use for Arab labor, at least in principle:

while we must certainly prevent anything like wholesale eviction of the fellaheen, we must at the same time not do anything which could in any way strengthen their hold on Erez Israel. On the contrary, means will have to be found to effect a gradual diminution of the rural population ... perhaps ... in pursuance of a friendly policy towards the new Arabia ... for the settlement of ... the fellah tenants of the effendis" [November 1918, L. Kohn, "Proposals for the Preparation of a Memorandum (to the British Government) on the Land Question in Palestine," CZA Z4/1260/II].

Although the various groups represented on the Palestine Zionist Executive-including (the originally Eastern European) Jewish Labor Movement-agreed in principle, they disagreed about means (see 21 May 1925, Protocols of the Palestine Zionist Executive, CZA Library).

Labor had by then rejected the orthodox Marxist idea of noncollaboration with the (essentially middle-class Western European) Zionist leadership, but saw workers' organizations and settlements as the engine driving the Zionist enterprise. Concentrating on the Yishuv's socioeconomic infrastructure, Labor did not yet have the political inclination or wherewithal to challenge the London Executive's prerogatives, such as obtaining foreign investment capital and negotiating with the British Empire (Cohen 1987). Labor's idea of the nation-building process was based on two interdependent principles: "conquest of labor" (kibush ha-avodah) and "conquest of land" (kibush ha-qarqa'ot). The first principle meant to exclude any Arab worker from all Zionist enterprises, while the second principle aimed to privatize, purchase and alienate Arab lands for the benefit of the "unalienable collective patrimony of the Jewish people." Anyone opposing these principles was both a national and class enemy: "only an anti-semitite will see in our struggle for the [exclusive] right to work our settlement as harmful to the Arab worker" (in Ben Gurion 1955:96-97):

we must bring our settlement to a condition similar to that which exists in England: the English employer also has the possibility of introducing cheap labor from India or China, but the English worker and the general public will not permit him to do this ... the Arab farm and the Jewish farm are closer to one another than India and England, and the labor question is therefore all the more difficult and dangerous, but fundamentally we face the same situation [fall 1929, "Avodah ivrit o mi'urevet bi-moshavot"].

Such a view did not preclude "solidarity" with Arab farmers and workers, or even with their national aspirations. It only implied that Arabs renounce their rights in Palestine and that they look for economic and national fulfilment where "the real Arab movement is developing in Mecca and Damascus" (17 July 1918, Weizmann to Balfour, CZA L3/310).

Thus, while labor might countenance Arab nationalism outside the country, it could not tolerate Palestinian nationalism. For the Arabs of Palestine, if left to their own resources, were inherently incapable of building the country because their leaders were parasitic and their masses primitive: "The national autonomy we demand for ourselves, we also demand for the Arabs. But we do not recognize their right to rule the country to the extent that it has not been built by them and is still awaiting its cultivators" (Ben Gurion in Gorny 1987:140). As Levi Shkolnik (Eshkol) put the matter following the riots of 1921: "one effendi has more influence over villagers than a 'national movement' " (June 1921, Legislative Council, Labor Archives, Tel Aviv, 102-IV).⁸

In August 1929, Arab rioting swept over the country, sparked by a demonstration on Jerusalem's Temple Mount in the name of Betar, the militant Jewish nationalist and anti-communist revisionist youth movement. Betar was protesting Arab "provocation" and harassment of Jewish worshippers at the Wailing Wall (Government Report 1930a:73-78). Ironically, the "harassment," which included the installation of Moslem prayer callers (muezzin) and "musical ceremonies" (zikr) near the Wall (Buraq), was itself in protest against the "arrogance" of Jewish "Bolshevists" who sought "to gradually take possession of Al Aqsa [Islam's third holiest mosque] on the pretense that it is the Temple, by starting with the Western Wall" (11 October 1928, Hajj Amin el-Husseini, Mufti of Jerusalem, al-/ami'a al-Arabiyya; 3 December 1929, Minutes of Shaw Commission, CZA Library).⁹

After the rioting British policy seemed to turn toward appeasement of Arab demands. Weizmann, who had forged the strategic consensus with Britain, was forced from office in summer 1931 at the seventeenth Zionist Congress. Labor locked in combat with the Revisionists for control of the Congress. The unified Labor Party, Mapai, garnered 29 percent of the vote and Jabotinsky's Revisionist Party 25 percent. The American Zionists, together with the Religious

Zionists (Mizrachi), entered into negotiations with Jabotinsky. But he lost American support and his bid for the Zionist leadership. Due, in part, to seemingly uncompromising demands for leadership of the coalition, and for implementation of a militant nationalist program that would only further provoke the Arabs and alarm the British. The other reason was Labor's unified strength, its record of practical achievement in the Yishuv, and its ability to compromise with those "bourgeois" elements of the General Zionist Faction that were still loyal to Weizmann (Horowitz and Lissak 1978). From this vantage, Labor was poised to take over the Yishuv's political, economic and military agenda-lock, stock and barrel.

One final element was required, however. To assure its hegemony over virtually all segments of the Zionist movement, Labor would seek to co-opt the nationalist opposition to accommodation with the Arabs. It did this by taking the idea of class struggle within the Yishuv—an idea once dear to Ben Gurion but alien to his coalition partners in Labor—and transforming it into a principle of class struggle between Zionism and Palestinian nationalism.¹⁰ It implied adopting Jabotinsky's credo of hammering down Arab nationalist sentiment behind an "iron wall" (haqir ha-barzel)."

From 1920 to 1925 Palestine was under the "Civil Administration" of Herbert Samuel. Although a self-proclaimed "moderate Zionist," he saw himself continuing the "mild and impersonal rule" advocated by Storrs: "The Administration was active in promoting the welfare of Arabs as if there had been no Zionist complication and no refusal to cooperate; it has been animated in this respect as any British Administration in Asia or Africa" (Government Report 1925:44).¹² He attributed lack of Arab cooperation less to fear that "the Arab will find himself subordinated or even forced out of the country," than to the fact that "a large proportion take no interest in public affairs" (1925:45). But the Haycraft Inquiry into the riots of May 1921 found that Arab discontent: "arises perhaps from a habit of [responsible Zionists] of regarding Palestine as 'a deserted, derelict land,' sparsely inhabited by a population without traditions of nationality, where political experiments may be launched without arousing local opposition." And Arab reaction to such an "irritant" was to be expected, in that "the people are more politically minded than in a small English country town, and the discussion of politics is their chief, if not their only, intellectual occupation" (Government Report 1921:12, 57).

The period 1925-28 was to be the quietest time of the mandate. The year 1925 had witnessed a relatively large increase in Jewish immigration, and land purchases were far more than in any other year of the mandate (31 March 1938, Gurevich, JA Statistician to JA Political Dept., CZA S25/6563). These purchases, transacted mainly with the Greek Orthodox Sursock family resident in Beirut and Alexandria, effectively allowed the Yishuv to dominate the great interior Valley of Israel (Esdraelon, Jezreel). Part of the narrow Wadi 'Ara, linking the valley to the coastal plain (Sharon, Philistia), was also obtained from the Abd el-Hadis, one of Palestine's important families (CZA KKL5/3108/Wadi 'Ara files); and negotiations for the Wadi el-Hawareth (Emeq Hefer), which straddled the coastal road between Jaffa and Haifa, were soon underway with the heirs of the Maronite Tayan family in Beirut and Jaffa. Together, these acquisitions would give the Zionist settlement economic control of the ancient via maris linking Syria to Egypt, and would strategically divide the Arab East and the Arab West, the Arab North and the Arab South.¹³

But the realization and effect of this economic-strategic policy would be delayed a few years as the Jewish economy plunged into recession. By 1927, emigration equalled immigration, and land sales had plummeted to little more than a tenth of what they had been just two years before as the collapse of the Polish zloty prevented further infusions of imported capital by

(mainly Polish) immigrants. The resultant depression, coupled with the severe drought and earthquakes of 1927, prevented the economic absorption of newcomers, rendered existing settlements precarious, and caused the Yishuv to halt its expansion and retrench (Government Report 1928).

In July 1928, Lord Plumer ended his tenure as Samuel's successor to the office of Palestine High Commissioner. In the interval between Plumer's departure and the arrival in December 1928 of the new High Commissioner, Sir John Chancellor, the country was administered by H. C. Luke who later became Chancellor's Chief Secretary and principal advisor. Luke, who had been Assistant Governor of Jerusalem under Storrs, shared many of his mentor's perceptions, including an aversion to the Balfour Declaration and a desire for greater Arab representation (Luke 1956,11:15). In June 1929, the Conservative Government fell and a Labor Government whose members had played no role in drafting the Balfour Declaration came into power. The Colonial Secretary, Lord Passfield (Sidney Webb), particularly opposed expanding Jewish settlement. By then, however, the Jewish economy was well under way to a sustained recovery. With Labor poised to establish its hegemony over the Yishuv's economy and world Zionist policy-making, it would soon be able to mount an effective political counterattack.

In response to the August riots, Passfield commissioned Sir Walter Shaw to head an inquiry into their causes. In March 1930, the Shaw Commission recommended a suspension of Jewish land purchases and the latest Jewish immigration quota. During a London visit by a delegation of the Palestine Arab Executive, the Colonial Office made clear its intention to mollify Arab opinion. But more "facts" were required to justify any apparent shift in policy. Despite the objections of the delegation to yet another official inquiry (12 May 1930, Statement of the Arab Delegation on Failure of Negotiations, CZA S25/3478), Passfield appointed Sir John Hope-Simpson to examine immigration and land settlement. Apparently, Hope-Simpson was instructed to work in consultation with the High Commissioner and direct his conclusions along the policy guidelines already laid out in a January dispatch from Chancellor to Passfield (Porath 1977:28). Accordingly, Hope-Simpson surmised that the economic "absorptive capacity" of Palestine had been effectively reached for the foreseeable future, and any additional immigration or land sales were likely only to lead to dispossession, dislocation and disaffection of the peasantry: "In fact the average existing fellah holding is insufficient to maintain anything like a decent standard of living" (Government Report 1930b:64).

In October 1930, Passfield incorporated these findings into a White Paper, which omitted mention of the Balfour Declaration and accorded with Arab demands for limitations on Jewish immigration and suspension of land purchases: "Transfers of land will be permitted only in so far as they do not interfere with the plans" of the Government for the gradual development of Arab agriculture (Government Report 1930d:23). This apparently new British turn in policy agreed with Zionist land policy in one fundamental respect abolition of masha'a: "Nearly half of the Arab villages are held on mesh'a tenure and there is a consensus of opinion that this system is a great obstacle to the development of the country" (Government Report 1930d:24).

At this juncture, it seemed that His Majesty's Government and the Civil Administration had finally come to an agreement to abandon the Balfour Declaration and prepare the way for the establishment of Arab self-rule along much the same lines as those envisioned for Iraq (which, in 1932, was granted independence and entered the League of Nations). Needless to say, the World Zionist Organization and its Liberal and Tory supporters roundly condemned this apparent reversal of policy. But it was Jewish Labor's appeal to its British counterpart, coupled with the significance of the Jewish Liberal and Labor vote and the relative insignificance of Arab opinion,

that threatened to cause defections of support from British Labor and thus bring down Ramsay MacDonald's minority government.

The Jewish Labor Union (Histadrut) representative in England, Dov Hos, asked British Trade Unionist leader Ernest Bevin to intervene. According to Ben-Gurion and Hos, Bevin did so abundantly and decisively (in Sykes 1973:275)." But MacDonald had never been hostile to Zionism. Addressing the Histadrut on an earlier Palestine visit, he had echoed the Liberal-Tory leadership's encouragement and warning: "If you conceal the big cards at first but play the low ones, I am sure that you will have hopes of winning the game" (in Gorny 1983:38; cf. 22 July 1921, Notes on a Conversation at Mr. Balfour's House, with Lloyd George, Churchill and Weizmann, CZA Z4/16055). The ever cautious Weizmann, while lamenting that his pro-British policy had been "politically discredited," nevertheless reassured MacDonald: "We wish to make it clear to the Arabs that we do not aim at establishing ourselves in Palestine at their cost" (4 Nov. 1930, Weizmann to MacDonald's son; 2 Feb. 1930, Weizmann to MacDonald, in Weizmann 1978,XV). Still, it would actually be to their advantage to have them transferred to Transjordan (5 Dec. 1930, Meeting with Cabinet Committee, Weizmann Archives; cf. 23 March 1930, Ruppin "Jewish Land Purchase", CZA 525/4207; Arlosoroff in Labour Monthly, May/June 1930; Granovsky 1931:31).

At the House of Commons, MacDonald read a letter of "clarification" addressed to Weizmann. This effectively retracted the White Paper in favor of what the Arabs termed "The Black Letter." It reaffirmed the Balfour Declaration and argued that the White Paper really "did not imply a prohibition of acquisition of additional land by Jews" (13 February 1931, Parliamentary Debates). The Black Letter did as much to politically discredit the "moderate" faction of the Arab Executive (Musa Kazim Husseini, Ragheb Nashashibi, Awni Abd el-Hadi), as the White Paper had done to Weizmann and his supporters. The home government's double about-face undermined Zionist as well as Palestinian Arab policies that were primarily geared to enlist British support for their respective national causes. But unlike the more radical elements of the Arab National Movement, which eventually brought down the Arab Executive, Jewish Labor was able to reconstitute the Palestine Zionist Executive on a more secure footing as the Jewish Agency Executive. Its political strength was rooted primarily in Jewish Labor's practical achievements in Palestine, although ties to British Labor provided crucial secondary support at a critical time. As a result, surrogate colonization was still on track. Now, however, the strategic consensus between Britain and Zionism revolved on the accord between British and Jewish Labor.

The arguments advanced by Jewish Labor in the appeal to British Labor and against the Shaw and Hope-Simpson reports were predicated on assumptions similar to those held by "enlightened imperialists" who opposed representative government for the Arabs: namely, that none of the life wishes expressed by the peasantry were worthy of serious consideration: "With very few exceptions the Fellahin are illiterate and would be entirely under the influence of the few literate Effendis and their agents" (1 June 1921, Zionist Executive to CO, CZA Z4/10655). The Arab masses had no polity, no economy and no culture to speak of: "the fabric of Arab social life in Palestine is not that of a modern industrial nation but rather that of an oriental, backward, semi-feudal society.... The tenants are dominated by the landlords, not only economically, but also spiritually, socially and politically." Hence, the fellahin are incapable of even representing themselves; they have "no representation in the true sense of the term ... of national' institutions ... The Arab populace thus remains inarticulate, and their life interests

practically unvoiced" (Histadrut Memorandum submitted to Palestine Commission of Inquiry, December 1929, Documents 1930).

The testimony presented to the Royal Commissions on behalf of the Arab populace was worthless because it was proffered by blood-sucking effendis-class enemies-that had no interest in, right to, or capacity for accurately conveying the wants of the people: "the only category of people consulted by Government on matters concerning Arab population, all belong to that section of society which drastically opposes all social progress and any improvement in the lot of the workman." Unrest owed exclusively to "the intrigue of the clique of effendis" who seek to perpetuate power by arousing "the fanatical instincts of the ignorant Arab masses." British Labor must thus see the Zionist truth that "every resident [of Palestine] was forced to recognise," that is, wealth, progress, peace and "the development of common ties among all sections of the population." With Labor "now standing at the head of the British Empire," there is "ground for hope that the question of peace in Palestine will be envisaged in the proper light" (Histadrut Memorandum on the August Disturbances, submitted to the British Labour Party and the Socialist International, in Documents 1930).

By the time this appeal was written, Jewish Labor had long been disabused of its own rhetorical illusions about class solidarity between Jew and Arab. But if reality failed to correspond to ideology, it was because reality was not living up to its historical promise. This Hegelian view of social history proved as congenial to the thinking of British Labor in the early 1930s as it did to Zionist socialism. Indeed, it was generally compatible with the teleological thinking that justified the neocolonialism of virtually the whole Socialist International. Like Marx, who believed Mediterranean peasants to be "mere cattle robbers," and Engels, who dismissed Abd el-Qader's revolt against the French in Algeria as the "hopeless struggle" of those "in a barbarian state of society" (in Turner 1978:5), neither Jewish Labor, British Labor nor French Labor believed the Arabs capable of a true awakening of their own making (see Marseilles 1988). Asleep since time immemorial, "The Immovable East," would have to be stirred to action and guided on the road to progress. As she could not represent herself, she would have to have surrogates speak for her who were steeped in more "advanced forces of production."

Although by 1930 hope had faded for peaceful cooperation with Arabs on Zionist terms, Jewish Labor claimed that the Arabs still materially benefited from Zionism. To restrict immigration and land settlement would deprive the Arab peasantry of a first taste of real freedom:

The bulk of the land used so far for purposes of Jewish settlement was formerly in the hands of effendis who either let it lie waste as a pasture of a few flocks of sheep, for lack of will or financial capacity to develop them, or else rented them out to fellaheen tenants.... To these tenants ... the indemnities paid by the Jewish colonising agencies often meant the first chance of freeing themselves from the threefold yoke of the landlord, the usurer and the execution officer, and of setting up a home on their newly acquired land ... with the aid of heavier investment [Documents 1930].

Consider the "freedom" thus accorded the Wadi el-Hawareth Arabs. From the beginning of the mandate there was marked Jewish encroachment in the coastal plain, especially around the strategically important settlement of Hedera situated between Jaffa and Haifa. The area was one of the main troublespots during the "disturbances" of May 1921, and the Wadi el-Hawareth Arabs were collectively fined for their role in "the breach of Public Peace, unwarranted raids and

pillage" (Nov. 1921, Governor Jaffa District, ISA 22-3372/Wadi Hawareth). Still, they feared Zionism.

In October 1928, a sale was arranged between the JNF and heirs of the putative absentee landowner of Wadi el-Hawareth, and eviction notices served (Contrat de Vente entre Tayan et Hankin, CZA KKLS/3110; 30 Nov. 1929, Nablus District Court, CZA S25/7620). The Jewish Agency recognized 84 "legal tenants." But compensation was initially offered to only some of these, with "some people having received compensation in respect of their relatives" (13 March 1932, Shertok to Webb, CZA S25/7620). The idea of compensation at the time was that: "since the 84 tenants who received our notices in accordance with the law are the main tenants and include all the Mukhtars [headmen] and the leading trouble-makers who brought actions against us their eviction would bring about the leaving of the land by all the others" (1 Dec. 1929, "Meeting with Mr. Webb," CZA Z4/3444/III). But most of the tribesmen refused to vacate, claiming the land was theirs.

An initial administration estimate of 1200 residents (Government Report 1930a:119) was laid to the naivete of officials concerning "what is common knowledge in Palestine-that in the meantime strangers have been brought into the Wadi Hawarith area" (Stein 1939:101). Tribesmen had been treated "with great indulgence by discussing with them the payment of compensation" and would have gone peacefully were it not for "the well-known instigator" Abdallah Samara (a local landowner and ally of the Mufti) (12 March 1929, Hankin to PLDC, CZA Z4/3444/III). As the administration began looking into the claims, Zionist representatives declaimed "the falseness of claimants' statements ... at every stage." They considered the compensation offered more than generous inasmuch as the original list of eighty odd claimants taken from the "Mukhtar's registers ... in itself was exaggerated." As for the additional claimants: "there are people who never cultivated any land at Wadi Hawareth, are not known to us, and not mentioned at all in the registers submitted by the Mukhtars" (29 Jan, 1932, Hankin to JNF, CZA S25/7620). They were not even known to "Mr. Tayan who, for many years, cultivated the Wadi Hawareth lands" (18 Feb. 1932, Arlosoroff to Webb).

But the Jewish Agency was certainly cognizant of the fact that the Tayans did not "cultivate" the land in partnership with their tenants, and frequently did not even bother to collect the rent (Ashbal 1969:83). The agency also knew that many of the tribesmen were not even aware that Tayan held title to the land they worked (Ruppin 1947,11:126). After the Ottoman Land Laws were promulgated, they had registered their holdings in the names of their Amir and his family, who resided in Beirut; and the Amir and his family, in turn, sold the titles they had been entrusted with to Antoine Tayan in 1870 (16 Feb. 1932, DO Tulkarm, ISA 22-3372/Wadi Hawareth).

After interviewing nearly all the claimants, the official in charge of the case was "entirely against his expectations, quite favorably impressed with the evidence of the Arabs" and also with the fact that "Samara gave his evidence fairly" (24 April 1932, Horowitz to Arlosoroff, "Notes of an Interview with Mr. Justice Webb," 24.4.1932). In the end, however, the whole transaction was found perfectly "legal." The administration agreed to transport the tribesmen and their belongings to Beisan, some 50 miles away, where the JNF had earlier offered to place at their disposal 5000 dunams of irrigable land on a three-year lease against rent of one-fifth the produce. Still the Arabs refused. Although the Jewish Agency accepted a delay on eviction until the crop was in (19 May 1933, Message from Shertok received by DO Tulkarm, ISA 223372/Wadi Hawareth), the administration did not on grounds that the situation needed to be regularized: "it is essential finality is reached" (29 May 1933, DC Haifa to DO Tulkarm).

Shortly before the inhabitants were actually evicted in 1933, British officials had drawn up detailed lists of 336 tenant-families targeted for removal, including kinds of crops and animals attaching to each name on the lists (125 in the northern section: 27 March 1933, ADC Samaria to Dept. of Development; and 206 in the southern section: 9 Dec. 1935, A/DC Samaria to Chief Sec.). In the end, compensation totaling LP 6,154 was paid to 1500-2000 souls. The administration estimated that each tenant-family required about 130 dunams to subsist with familiar techniques of extensive cereal cultivation. But even if fairly distributed, the compensation would only have allowed purchases averaging little more than one dunam (one-fourth acre) of masha'a land per person (at a going rate of around LP 2.5 per dunam), assuming masha'a shares would be sold to outsiders in the first place. In areas that had already been partitioned through land settlement, the money provided might fetch one-fourth of a dunam or less:

With further reference [to the resettlement of the Wadi el-Hawareth Arabs] ... I have to inform you that the land prices at Umm Khalid village [where Jews had previously bought land] is [sic] rapidly increasing and a dunam of land at present worth from LP 10-15, it is rather not possible to obtain any land at Khirbet Beit Lid as all the Khirbet lands are Masha'a and cannot be purchased [31 July 1933, DO Tulkarm to Development Dept.].

True, the tribesmen could have gone to Beisan. But even if the former cultivators had been able to master irrigation techniques in a short enough time to survive by "learning to do more with less," as Zionist policy toward Arab farming called for (Granovsky 1931:25-26), there would have been no room for their flocks or their future: "Even if some suitable place could be found for the graziers and some other available land for the cultivators, it seems likely that the tribe will lose its identity as a tribe and become a scattered community" (Government Report 1930a:119).

For four years most of the Wadi el-Hawareth Arabs refused to move. Eventually, they forced their plight on the political agenda of the national leadership. For a brief time-but enough to significantly effect British, Jewish and Arab policy-the Wadi el-Hawareth affair was /a cause cefebre in the triangular conflict (Adler 1988). 'Awni Abd al-Hadi, now president of the nationalist Istaglal Party, defended the tenants in the last stages of litigation against the Jewish Agency and the administration. Previously, while serving on the Arab Executive, he had represented the Tayan heirs and colluded in their scheme with the Jewish National Fund to have the Wadi el-Hawareth put up for public auction so that the tenants could not exercise the preemptory right of first purchase that accompanied regular land sales. Although the Palestine Land Development Company had agreed to purchase price of LP 136,000 (21 Aug. 1929, JNF to Hankin, CZA KKL5/31 10), a fictitious mortgage was arranged. After default, and foreclosure by the Nablus Court, the Jewish National Fund "bought" the land at auction for LP 41,000 but actually paid the prearranged price to the Tayan heirs. When, in 1933, the Mufti's supporters advertised the affair in the Arab press, Awni's prestige suffered considerably (Porath 1977:127; cf. 21 July 1933, CID Report, FO 371/16926/E-4461).¹⁵

The southern section of the tribe was evicted in June 1933 and the northern section in November: "their tents were removed from the Wadi Hawarith and placed, by order of the execution officer, on a public road which formed one of the boundaries of Wadi Hawarith" (9 Dec. 1935, A/DC Samaria to Chief Sec.; 29 May 1933, DC Haifa to DO Tulkarm, ISA 22-3372/Wadi Hawareth). Many refused to leave. Some attempted to join demonstrations in Tulkarem marking the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration but were forced back by the RAF (15 Nov.

1933, CID Report, FO 371/17878). Half the animals of those who stayed were dead within months and starvation threatened the remaining tribe members (28 Jan. 1934, ADC Samaria to DC Haifa, ISA 22-3372/Wadi Hawareth).

The northern section of the tribe petitioned the High Commissioner in order that: "Your Excellency may be moved to order that a village for us be constructed near" the remains of a Sheikh "we hold ... in great veneration." A loan was also requested "in order to enable us to improve our economic and agricultural standing" (25 May 1934, Mukhtar of Wadi Hawareth Shemali to HC). The Arab District Officer in Tulkarem recommended that they be allowed to settle near the tomb "as a conversion in residence from tent to a house reflect in the refinement and improvement of the Bedouin character." But he rejected the idea of a loan; instead, "I propose that their engagement on public services work such as road work etc. is more preferable as this will teach them the principle to earn their living by the sweat [sic] of their foreheads" (29 June 1934, DO Tulkarm to DC Nablus).

The idea of putting the near-destitute remnants of Wadi el-Hawareth to roadwork had been broached a couple of months before by the Assistant District Commissioner in Nablus: "It is doubtful whether there are many of the Arabs sufficiently energetic to apply for work on this [Jaffa-Haifa coastal] road but if they refuse the offer of employment it will be impossible for them to claim that they are completely destitute" (23 April 1934, Acting ADC Samaria to DC Haifa). Later he would also complain of their refusal to offer themselves for work draining the malarial swampland they had been squeezed onto: "preferring apparently the easier conditions available at (the Jewish settlement of) Hedera" where some of them had managed to find work (17 July 1934, to DO Tulkarm). He concurred with the District Officer that "agricultural loans or any assistance in the form of cash" would be a waste of "the tax payers' expenditure." But as the Wadi el-Hawareth Arabs were inherently incapable of productive labor they should not be encouraged to remain in an area they had lived in for at least a century and possibly several (Oppenheim 1943):

these simple tribesmen if left alone and unaided, will never be able to cultivate the reclaimed area under any intensive system or to operate an irrigation scheme ... I see no reason why Government should build houses for these Bedouin.... I feel very strongly that nothing should be done to encourage the permanent settlement of these people in this area. Though they must be provided for for the moment, a tendency among them to drift away has been noted. The area is surrounded by Jewish Settlements and in my opinion this pocket of primitive Semi-negroid Beduin ... is a nuisance and only serves to impede the proper development of a very valuable area [23 July 1934, to DC Haifa, ISA 22/3372/Wadi Hawareth].

Wauchope, Chancellor's successor, also opined that if the land were reclaimed the squatters would not disperse (26 January 1934, HC to Colonial Secretary, CO 733/251/3729). But many still did not budge. Years later, the Director of Land Settlement, exasperated with this example of Arab sloth and nuisance, grudgingly offered them a short-term lease on some of the state land they had been squatting upon: "I have no sympathy with the Wadi Hawareth Arabs who are subsisting on Government generosity yet do nothing but make difficulties. However, my concern is to regularise the situation" (19 September 1941, Bennett to A/DC Samaria, ISA Wadi Hawareth).¹⁶

In 1947, the administration contemplated the possibility of allowing the children of Wadi elHawareth a school (19 April 1947, ADC Tulkarm to DC Samaria); however, events forestalled the realization of a final act of British generosity. Following the United Nations vote for Palestine's partition, the mukhtar of the tribe's northern section initiated a call for peace at the Yishuv's Emeq Hefer Regional Council (12 December 1947, Labor Archives, 235-IV/2093). But

in March 1948, Labor's Haganah attacked the tribe's remnants, "advised" them to leave and then, "assisted by the local Jewish settlements, systematically destroyed the houses and huts at ... Wadi al-Hawarith ... making a return all but impossible" (Morris 1987:53, 119).

As Keneth Stein sums up the story: "There seems little doubt that the administration pampered the Wadi Hawarith Arabs" (1984:162). In any event "income from these lands had been minimal due to the primitive methods of cultivation used by the few, if any, inhabitants" (Porath 1976:19). Surely, then, "despite the hardship it entailed on a small number of individuals, the Palestinian Arabs derived great economic benefit from the agricultural and industrial development of the yishuv" (Haim 1983:71).

Yet, from the mid-1920s through the early 1930s, the grain market was severely depressed. Zionist policymakers were quick to see the advantage:

It is therefore in our interests to keep the doors for foreign cereals open ... it will be in our interests that vacant land be heavily taxed by the Government. The fellah can improve his position only if the Government will put up a powerful agricultural bank, which is hardly to be expected [7 March 1924, N. Tischby, "Land Purchase in Erez Israel," CZA KKL5/1878].

Selected spots might thus be easily picked off, with a view to doubling the Jewish settlement at "1,400,000 dunams": "Although the said purchases would not give us more than about one tenth of the country, they would ... fortify our national-strategic position to a point of almost impregnability."

The Colonial Office agreed that loans to "Arabs for improving each his own little patch would be a sheer waste of money" (30 November 1932, Colonial Secretary to Weizmann, CO 733/223/97248). Presumably, the fellah would use an advance either to continue the pernicious masha'a or to end it; but should he end it, the resulting fragmentary holdings would be valueless as collateral. Larger owners were tempted to surreptitiously sell off uncompetitive excess land at high prices-which their own opposition to Zionism had helped to generate (for example, Firestone 1975, on Nazmi 'Abd el-Hadi's losses at Zar'in; and CZA KKL5/4639 on subsequent sales to Jews, 18 July 1933, PLDC to JNF). This diminished their political effectiveness, and peasants began to assume greater force in dealing with grievances. The early 1930s thus witnessed an Arab national movement whose leaders had fallen into some disrepute but whose masses still lacked the organization to impose themselves. Before the Arab Revolt temporarily managed to patch contradictions in the movement, the Yishuv was able to shore up its own national-institutional framework with the manpower and money of German refugees. From 1933 through 1936, the Yishuv's population doubled to 370,000 souls, and "the amount of land now held in Palestine is 1,427,450 dunams" (5 May 1936 JA Political Dept. to Mary Humphrey, CZA S25-6563).

In 1937, a Royal Commission inquired into the causes of a general Arab Revolt (Thawra) begun the year before. The Peel Commission advocated partition of the country and recommended transferring Arabs from the prospective Jewish zone, in which Arabs were still a majority. The Arab Higher Committee was unanimous against partition, but often divided over whether to fight the British or negotiate. Its visible spokesmen-the Mufti, Ragheb Nashashibi and Awni 'Abd el-Hadi-were often at violent odds. Moreover, although after 1929 the land issue began to supersede that of immigration at the forefront of the Arab nationalist agenda, national "leaders" failed to stem loss of land to Jews. Indeed, they accused one another of abetting the process (using information generously supplied by the Political Department of the Jewish Agency)."

Jabotinsky's Revisionist Party, the nationalist forebear of Israel's Likud, rejected partition outright, claiming Jewish proprietorship over all Palestine. Labor was ambivalent, but (aside from the radical left) against anything less than full sovereignty in at least part of Palestine. Aware of the Yishuv's strategic advantage, its principal internal architect and now Zionism's chief policymaker, David Ben Gurion, argued that partition did not preclude the ultimate quest for a "Greater Israel" (Ben Gurion 1968:211):

When we acquire a thousand or 10,000 dunams we are happy and do not feel that we have thus failed to acquire the whole country.... A Jewish State [in part of Palestine] will serve our historical efforts to redeem the country in its entirety.... We shall organize a sophisticated defense force-an elite army ... one of the best in the world. And I am sure that we will not be prevented from settling in other parts of the country, either through ... mutual accord with our Arab neighbors or otherwise [5 August 1937].

He assured the Jewish Agency Executive that: "in the Jewish State, the Arab minority will diminish (yelekh vi yigatein), either by "voluntary transfer" of some 350,000 "Arab tenants, laborers and farmers from the Jewish state to neighboring Arab states," or by "an iron fist" (yad hazakah) (7-12 June 1938, Protocols of /A Executive, CZA Library; cf. CZA S25/42).

The Jews, it is true, held less than ten percent of the total land area of Palestine, and less than a fifth of its cultivable land. Yet, the Yishuv's territorial continuum in the former masha'a lands of Palestine's fertile plains, and virtual possession of the coast, held the key to the country's economic future while strategically dividing Arab-controlled regions. Moreover, the Arab Revolt had provided incentive and opportunity for Jews to acquire armed might, with British acquiescence and occasional active support. The Yishuv's main underground military force, Haganah, had swelled from 2000 before the revolt to 25,000 by the end of 1937. By the revolt's close, in 1939, the frame of a regular army with a general staff was set; and over 40 "tower and stockade" settlements (homah u migdal) had been erected to defend the Yishuv's perimeters and to provide a forward base for the further expansion of an eventual Jewish state (Orren 1978; cf. files in CZA S2512955).

Jewish Labor and nationalist leaders agreed that the Arabs would have to forego any ambition for political sovereignty in Jewish Palestine. If they didn't like it, offered Jabotinsky, they could go to Iraq (Schechtman 1961,11:325); indeed, "we need not regard the possible departure of 900,000 with dismay" (Jabotinsky 1940, in *Moledet* (Bulletin of the Homeland Party for Arab Transfer), No. 3, December 1938). This "visionary" idea for an eventual transfer of most of the native populace approximated the number of refugees estimated in the wake of Israel's creation (900,000 in Arab sources; 750,000 for the Red Cross; 600,000-including 350,000 still living off the land-according to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, June 1949, ISA FM 2444/19).

In the final analysis, the purposeful attitude of Labor converged with "enlightened" imperialism in one crucial respect: the Arabs were, like children, incapable of defining themselves. Practically, this meant that they lacked any sense of initiative. Indeed, the fact that they required a mandatory made this "self-evident." Local administrators might despise the Zionist enterprise as well, but they could not argue with the very palpable Jewish achievements in modern education, economy and social management. By contrast, the Arabs were considered backward and likely to remain so for some time. At best, the administration could hope to salvage enough decayed essence of "the Oriental character" to recover "once more a level of taste and workmanship such as the 13th century Arab world gave Europe"; but little else could be expected inasmuch as Arab capacity for modern technical knowledge "is fixed by nature; it

can be reached but cannot be increased by education" (HC Chancellor, Director of Education Farrell, in Miller 1985:110-12).

Not that Orientalists like Storrs preferred the "metallic clang" of the new Zion to intricate Eastern pleasures (Storrs 1937:397). But the imperial mission, like socialism's, required that the forces of Western modernity progress. Zionists rightly claimed that the administration was thus impeding advance in favor of the status quo. The administration dealt with this contradiction by grudgingly allowing the Jewish settlement to grow in size and power, while trying to "protect" the native populace from the consequences of this "Zionist complication." Under more "normal" circumstances of colonialism, such an attitude might well have allowed the emergence and the eventual independence of an Arab Palestine. But within the context of surrogate colonization, the administration's "mild and impersonal" embrace effectively strangled all hope of national development.

The peasants had no voice in the administration, apart from a handful of Arab District Officers distrusted by both sides. Increasingly frequent pleas for technical education and economic aid, and for some form of representative government, ultimately fell on a deaf ear. They were thwarted from either creatively adapting to change or initiating it. Instead, they were compelled to live in accordance with "traditional" society as the British conceived it. Custom, for the administration, was not the thick web of informal relationships that binds together the real lives of people, but a rarefied and rigid motley of bureaucratic notions arbitrarily related to peasant life. Whatever could not be so bureaucratized was, ipso facto, illegitimate. The fellah, then, had to make the best of an increasingly fractured economic, social and political life—the major breaks of which fell close enough to "traditional" lines as defined by the administration to blind it to the scope of Arab frustration and resentment. When the storm finally broke in 1936, the British were unprepared and, fatefully, turned to the Jewish settlement for help in controlling the country.

With regard to land—the central symbol in the national struggle between Jew and Arab in Palestine—the British undermined their own efforts to preserve the status quo. To preserve bureaucratically the peasant's agrarian regime required altering it just enough to make it susceptible to administrative and fiscal control. The change wrought was enormous. By imposing land settlement, the British encouraged fragmentation and dispossession of landholdings as well as social dislocation and disaffection. Increasingly, this "residual peasantry" would be compelled to work in towns, yet continue to live in villages because they could not afford to live in towns.',, Neither wholly proletarian nor peasant, neither socially urban nor rural, the semi-proletarianized Palestinian villager was well on the way to becoming a "Partner of the Wind" (Shrik elHawa).

Many British officials and Zionist planners believed that such a rootless lot would be all the more manageable, and that they could and should be transferred from Palestine, either willingly or unwillingly (cf. 3 September 1943, High Commissioner Mac Michael, ISA 22-3511/SD8). At the very least, recalcitrant groups of former tenants and graziers might be treated by "a series of evictions and trespasses, interspersed with actions under the Crime (Prevention) Ordinance, until such time as [they] have disappeared as labourers into the towns or as shepherds on the lands of some gullible village" (7 November 1940, DC Samaria to Chief Secretary, ISA 22-3511/SD8). But the fellahin could no more readily accept the loss of the land they worked than loss of family or honor ('eflah ardak wastor 'ardak); and they would intermittently remind those who sought to supplant them that "he who sows the wind reaps the storm" (min yezra' it-rieh yahsud il-'asifah).

NOTES

Acknowledgments. The author is a Senior SSRC-MacArthur Fellow; the ideas expressed are wholly his own and in no way advert to the institutions with which he is affiliated. The following abbreviations will be used: Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem (CZA); Israel State Archives, Jerusalem (ISA); Jewish Agency for Palestine (JA); Palestine Land Development Company (PLDC); Jewish National Fund UNF); Foreign Office Records, London (FO); Colonial Office Records, London (CO); High Commissioner for Palestine (HC); District Commissioner (DC); Assistant DC (ADC); Acting DC (A/DC); District Officer (DO).

¹In August 1919, Balfour wrote a memorandum stating that: "in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the present inhabitants.... Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long tradition, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit the ancient land" (in Sykes 1973:5). Lloyd George and Churchill concurred. Questioned by Horace Rumbold before the Peel Commission as to whether it was a "harsh injustice" to have the "indigenous population" suffer the invasion of a "foreign race," Churchill retorted that: (1) the Jews were there first, (2) the "hordes of Islam" were strangers to the country and had ruined it-for "where the Arab goes, it is often desert," and (3) it would be gravely unjust to leave the Holy Land barren when Zionists seek to plant the land with orange groves (12 March 1937, in Gilbert 1973:421-26).

²Churchill saw Zionism pitted against Bolshevism in "a struggle for the soul of the Jewish people" (8 February 1920, illustrated Sunday Herald). What concerned him was not so much the Jewish "soul," but that Jewish leaders of victorious Red armies, like Trotsky, were appealing to substantial Jewish populations of Central Europe and Central Asia to join in an onslaught on Europe and Asia Minor. According to Asquith (Prime Minister in 1916), when the Zionist idea was brought to his attention by Herbert Samuel (later first HC for Palestine), "curiously enough, the only other partisan of this proposal is Lloyd George who, I need not say, does not care a damn for the Jews or their past or their future, but thinks it will be an outrage to let the Holy Places pass into the possession of 'agnostic, atheistic France' " (in Antonius 1938:264). As for Balfour, it was his Government in 1904 that introduced the Aliens Bill to stop immigration from pogromridden Eastern Europe. Balfour insisted the bill was "wholly ... distinct from the Jewish question" (2 May 1905, Hansard Parliamentary Debates, v. 145, col. 795), despite "the undoubted evils that had fallen upon the country from an immigration that was largely Jewish" (10 July 1905, col. 155). Weizmann's apology for the Aliens Bill rings hollow: "this cannot be looked upon as anti-semitism in the ordinary or vulgar sense of that word; it is a universal social and economic concomitant of Jewish immigration, and we cannot shake it off" (1919,1:90). In America, Henry Cabot Lodge, Zionism's champion in Congress, felt it "one of the great blots on the face of civilization" that "Palestine should be under the control of the Mohammedans" (7 May 1922, Congressional Record, vol. 52, pt. 5, 5376). In 1943, Franklin Roosevelt made one of the crucial American decisions on Palestine when he urged the British to admit 100,000 Jewish refugees, the very same ones that had been denied entry into the United States.

³Yet like many in the Army, Lord Curzon, Balfour's successor as Foreign Secretary, was no more keen on Palestine passing to the hands of "seedy Jews" from Central Europe than to those of the country's "socalled" Arabs (Ingrams 1972:92). But, he lost responsibility for Palestine in 1921 to Colonial Secretary Churchill, who then shifted its defense to the Air

Ministry (in Bowie 1957:211). The consequences of what Curzon called this "put up job between LG and Churchill" may perhaps best be highlighted by a meeting between Weizmann, Balfour, Churchill and Lloyd George (22 July 1921, Notes of Conversation Held at Mr. Balfour's, CZA Z4/16055):

Lloyd George and Balfour: [both said that by the [Balfour] Declaration they always meant an eventual Jewish State.]

Weizmann: [continuing on position of Zionism, stoppage of emigration, non-granting of necessary concessions for development, lack of security for Jewish population] "we are gun-running and I can't allow it" [also the arriving of colonists].

Churchill: (interrupting) "We won't mind it, but don't speak of it."

Weizmann: "I would like it sanctioned. Is it agreed?" [They all agreed to this].

Churchill: [took official view of the Administration showing the difficult situation that had arisen owing to the Balfour Declaration which was opposed by the Arabs, nine-tenths of the British officials on the spot, and some of the Jews in Palestine. He said it was a poor country in which destitute emigrants could not be dumped.]

Weizmann: [refused this and spoke of "representative Government project."!] Churchill: [quoted Mesopotamia and Transjordanian]

Weizmann: "you will not convince me that self-government has been given to these two lands because you think it is right, it has only been given because you must," [all agreed.] "If you do the same thing with Palestine it means giving up Palestine-and that is what I want to know."

Lloyd George to Churchill: "You musn't give representative government to Palestine."

Lawrence, who became Churchill's adviser for the Middle East, belonged with Storrs to a special group of Orientalists actively engaged in the imperial politics of the World War: "we called ourselves 'Intrusive' as a band; for we meant to break into the accepted halls of English foreign policy, and build a new people in the East" (Lawrence 1935:58-59). Lawrence considered Storrs "the first of us ... the most brilliant Englishman in the Near East ... the great man among us ... a lesson to every Englishman alive of how to deal with suspicious or unwilling Orientals." Storrs repaid the compliment to that "shy, gallant, unaccountable emanation of genius ... Lawrence of Arabia" (Storrs 1940:37). The "band" was, as Said (1978:224) describes it: "bound together by contradictory notions and personal similarities: great individuality, sympathy and intuitive identification with the Orient, a jealously preserved sense of personal mission in the Orient, cultivated eccentricity and final disapproval of the Orient."

⁵For example: 10 March 1945, DC Samaria to DC Jerusalem, Recommendation that Public Health Ordinance violations come under the Criminal Code; 8 Sept. 1933, DO Safad to ADC Galilee, Note on "Village Improvements" indicating that elders opposed to administration "suggestions" would be "dealt with accordingly," ISA 27-2629/G337.

⁶"Under the provisions of the Survey Ordinance of 1920, owners of property ... are warned ... to hold themselves in readiness to attend at such times and places as may thereafter be appointed by the Survey Officer, to point out to the Surveyors on the ground the boundaries of their properties, produce their kushans [title deeds], supply any references to Land Registry Documents in their possession, and give any other assistance in their power.... Article 7 of the Ordinance provides that any person failing to obey ... shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment" (21 November 1922, Cadastral Survey Notice, Gaza District, CZA 525/4634).

⁷Much scholarly opinion still uncritically goes by the "authoritative" consensus: "The masha' land system was described by every major authority on land in Palestine as the most debilitating factor affecting the economic betterment of the Palestinian fellaheen" (Stein 1984:14). Yet no historian or anthropologist has detailed how, precisely, masha'a operated in

Palestine over time-much less how, in fact, it produced all of the evils imputed to it (Patai 1949, Rosenfeld 1964, Baer 1966). Indeed, in curious disregard for masha'a, otherwise serious scholars are led to blatant falsehoods: "in Syria on the whole, the masha' system had not penetrated the mountain regions or had at least fallen into desuetude there in Ottoman times. This is also true in Palestine" (Sch6lch 1986:142). True, unlike the bulk of plain lands, hills unsuited for large-scale cereal cultivation were often not held in masha'a; still, a substantial portion of hilly land was. In fact, the only places in historic Palestine where masha'a persisted after the British Mandate and still persists today are precisely in the hill regions, both among the fellahin (for example, 'Anza in the Samaritan hills, Sa'ir in Mount Hebron) and 'arab semi-nomads (for example, 'Arab il-Ka'abneh, 'Arab il-Ramadin both between the mountains south of Hebron and the Dead Sea).

⁸Indeed, as late as 1969, Golda Meir, Eshkol's successor as both head of Labor and Prime Minister of Israel, denied the very possibility of Palestinian nationalism: "It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as a Palestinian people.... They did not exist" (15 June 1969, London Sunday Times).

⁹With the aid of Samuel, Hajj Amin became Mufti in May 1921, following the death of his half-brother Kamel. Raised in a tradition of cooperation with imperial powers (his father was Mufti under the Turks), he sought accommodation with Britain, but not Zionism. When pushed by radical, grass-roots elements of the nationalist movement to choose between losing mass support and the Arab Revolt he opted for the later and was forced to flee to Syria. He became the staunchest advocate of Palestinian nationalism, which he sought to turn into the motor of an Islamic reawakening throughout the Arab world. Compelled by the French to leave Syria, he was hunted down in Iraq by an Irgun assassination squad with Churchill's blessing and eventually took refuge in Nazi Germany (Mattar 1988). Although vilified in Zionist historiography as being a fanatical anti-semitic from the start, there is scant evidence that he actively encouraged violence against Jews before the Revolt (cf. Government Report 1930a:82).

¹⁰A condition that Chaim Arlosoroff, the ideologue of Ha-Poet Ha-Tsair (Young Worker Party), put on joining Ben Gurion's larger Ahdut Ha- Avodah (Union of Labor Party) in a coalition was disavowal of the principal of class struggle between Jews (see "Milhemet ha-ma'amadot bi-Mitsiut Eretz Yisraelit" in Arlosoroff 1958). Labor Zionism was no longer to be primarily a means for Jews to achieve a classless society; rather, the working class would have a leading, but by no means exclusive, role in creating a Jewish State. In 1929, Ben Gurion made this the pivot of a revised Labor policy aimed at "transforming the working class into a working nation" (am oved). Non-Zionist elements were invited to join an expanded and de-ideologized Jewish Agency, whose Executive would henceforth speak and act for the Yishuv as a whole.

¹¹Jabotinsky believed with Mazzini that: "before associating ourselves with the nations which compose humanity we must exist as a nation" (Mazzini 1907:55). He evoked Mussolini's praise as "the man who really understands" how to forge a Jewish Nation (in Sachar 1976:187), namely, by building it as an "iron wall" (AI Qir ha-Barzel in Jabotinsky 1959:251-266). Because he felt that Western culture had penetrated Palestinian consciousness, he was almost alone among Zionist leaders to hold that "a national movement exists" which is not that of a "mob, but a living nation": "the young Arab generation love their homeland, and is there any doubt that here too is a pure Arab generation dreaming wonderful dreams?" (Ma Rotzim ha-Tzionim me ha-Rivisionistim? in 1959:283-302). This meant Palestinian nationalism must be all the more suppressed. His party's military arm, Irgun, functioned on the principle of disproportionate retaliation against any perceived threat to Zionist ambitions (first in regard to Arabs and later, under his heir, Menachem Begin, the British as well). Although in the 1930s Jabotinsky was

marginalized by the Zionist mainstream, often his stance on major issues was eventually adopted. Consider, for example, the following item: "Yitzhak Shamir, Israel's prime minister, promised an 'iron fist' would meet any bid for a Palestinian State" (11 August 1988, International Herald Tribune).

¹²Thomas Hodgkin, who briefly served as ADC for Haifa and as Wauchope's private secretary, also considered that "like other mandated territories, Palestine is for all practical purposes (except from a tariff point of view) a Crown Colony" (July 1936, in Hodgkin 1986:192). But Hodgkin, who was booted out of the country in 1936 for communist and pro-Arab sympathies, held a different view: "Western imperialism in general, and British imperialism in particular ... destruction of the established peasant economy; the alienation of the land to immigrant colons; proletarianization and the growth of unemployment; the emergence of shantytowns; the imposition of an oppressive and alien bureaucratic apparatus; the stimulation of communal rivalries and conflicts (behind the myth of 'preserving the balance between communities'); striking bargains with collaborators and imprisoning, exiling or killing the revolutionaries" (Hodgkin 1982).

¹³"By the acquisition of the large Wadi Hawareth area and others, both large and small, the company [PLDC] succeeded in a considerable degree to unite isolated areas in Jewish possession in this neighbourhood and to lay the foundation for the creation of a district of intensive Jewish settlement, similar to the valley of Esdraelon, to the acquisition of which the company dedicated its activities in previous years" (PLDC Report for 1929, CZA Z4/3444/III). Purchase agreements for portions of these two tracts were nearly concluded on the eve of World War 1 (22 July 1914, Ruppin to JNF, CZA KKL5/1717) but had to be painstakingly renegotiated after the war.

¹⁴"Ironically, it was Bevin who, as Foreign Secretary in Attlee's post-war Labor Government, became Zionism's chief nemesis (see Louis 1985:383-396).

¹⁵In January 1930, Awni was elected to an Arab Executive Delegation whose mission was to press the Colonial Office to change Mandatory policy. Although the PLDC had operated on the principle that the role of Arab middlemen "must be kept absolutely secret" (9 September 1928, Hmnkin to PLDC, CZA KKL5/3110 Wadi Hawareth), the Arab Delegation's visit prompted a reassessment: "I am of the opinion that it would be advisable to make an attempt to discredit, in the eyes of the public in England ... Aouni Abdel Hadi.... I know of course that the PLDC has strenuously opposed the showing up of Aouni Abdel Hadi before the [Shawl Inquiry Commission, on the plea that if we exposed those effendis who have acted as middlemen on land purchases we might find it difficult to get them to help us in buying land in the future; but ... several others will come forward to play the part as long as there is money for them in the business" (22 January 1930, Tolkowsky to Kisch, CZA S25/3478). A decision was taken to withhold exposure "unless and until" necessary in order "not to give the delegation gratuitous advertisement" (26 January 1930, Kisch to Tolkowsky). When negotiations between the delegation and the Colonial Office broke down, the decision to expose Awni was temporarily shelved. But in February 1932, Awni took a case against the JNF. An Arab witness for the JNF denounced Awni's involvement in the Wadi Hawareth sale at the Nablus District Court (Avneri 1980:120). The administration also tried to show that "Ouni Bey Abdul Hadi received LP 2,700 from the Jews for letting the Wadi Hawarith lands be put up for auction by the Courts," but was "unable to prove" it (7 January 1933, Andrews to Hussein, 1933; 12 January 1933, Hussein to Andrews, ISA 22-3372/Wadi Hawarith). According to Aharon Ben Shemesh, the JNF lawyer in the Wadi Hawareth affair, Awni was paid off by Hankin, who handled the JNF purchase (Avneri

1980:120). Whatever Awni's role in the Wadi el-Hawareth affair, it seems clear that by 1930 he deeply felt that "the uninterrupted acquisition of land occupied by the Arabs is for me a primordial question-of life and death" (22 January 1930, Conversation between Haim Kalvarisky and Awni Abd el-Hadi, CZA 525/3051). As Secretary of Istaqlal he argued that: "There can be no conciliation between Jews who desire Palestine as a Jewish country.... In Palestine ... for thousands of years, Arabs have existed. They have lived poorly, it is true, but they have lived.... We are not against Jews because they are Jews. Your living must not prevent us from living" (8 August 1935, Interview with Awni). As events proved, his fears were not unwarranted. Meeting with Jewish Agency representatives in Geneva during the Arab Revolt he asked: "how can we believe in peace at a time when it is thought to transfer the Arabs from their country by force?" The answer Zionist officials gave him was hardly reassuring: "As a lawyer you must know that everywhere in the world there exists the law of expropriation [eminent domain], and at a time when the good of all is at issue the will of the individual cannot be considered" (30 August 1937, Thon to Shertok on Conversation with Awni; 27 August 1930, Agronski to Weizmann, Ben Gurion, Shertok and Goldmann). Despairing of any accommodation with Britain or Zionism, Awni wrote the Arab Higher Committee that "a shot or bomb has more influence than delegations to Geneva or London" (30 August 1937, Intelligence Report, CZA S25/3571). After subsequently suffering a breakdown, he continued to agitate against partition (Egyptian Gazette, 6 January 1938) and for unity within the AHC (offering part of his personal fortune to Ragheb Nashashibi to close ranks with Hajj Amin, 22 December 1938, Intelligence Report, CZA 525/10098). He also led the fight against Zionist violations of the 1940 Land Transfer Regulations (CO 722/435/75072/9). Despite attempts to undermine Awni's role in the Arab National Movement, Zionist leaders generally considered him of all the Palestinian national leaders "a more serious and less unworthy adversary, although, of course, he is [was?] engaged in the land business which perhaps makes a weak joint in his armour" (20 March 1930, Kisch to Weizmann, CZA S25/3478).

¹⁶A long-term lease for the tribe could not be entered into because the tribe did not meet the conditions for official recognition. Legally, only a "juristic person" representing the tribe could sign such a lease; however, neither the Mukhtar nor anyone else in the tribe qualified under the terms of the Village Administration Ordinance (16 August 1943, Palestine Gazette, No. 1286). To qualify for the "privilege" of recognition: "the only criterion that can be accepted ... is whether the village itself is sufficiently advanced to reap the full benefits from the Ordinance and whether its behaviour in the past has been sufficiently good to warrant the help which the Government must necessarily give to a newly formed Village Council" (10 November 1945, A/DC Samaria to ADC Tulkarm, ISA 22-3372/Wadi Hawareth). But even if the Wadi Hawareth Arabs had shown "good behavior," which by protesting over loss of their land they had not, there was a final catch (22): "As you know they have no land of their own and hence have no feeling of security or permanence" that would warrant considering their settlement a bonafide "village" (13 November 1945, ADC Tulkarm to ADC Samaria). Accordingly, the tribesmen had no legal existence and thus could not enter into a long-term agreement with the administration. The Mukhtars of both the northern and southern sections of the tribe refused to consider a short-term lease because they felt it tantamount to giving up the claim on their former lands, from which they still believed they had been wrongfully evicted. The Administration then decided to ask for a nominal rent of LP 5 per annum, as that "would give us an implied lease."

¹⁷The divisiveness of the land issue in Palestinian national politics is evident from a Zionist intelligence report of one of the rare meetings of the Arab Executive that preceded its formal dissolution in 1934:

The first speaker was Jamal Husseini who described the goal of the gathering ... in relation to matters of Jewish immigration and land sales. After him spoke ... Ahmed Shuqeiri, a member of Istaqlal, he had had enough ... hinting to members of the Opposition [Ragheb Nashashibi's Party] that they were middlemen and panderers (sarsurim). There was an outcry in the hall by Opposition supporters [who] demanded that he take his words back. The Mufti's men were also offended by his words and began to shout "The Mufti is the People and the People, the Mufti".... The peasant delegates especially became excited. They shouted "panderers", "undercover agents," "government supporters," "land sellers," etc. And the police were frightened and sent another fifteen policemen [who were] in an automobile on the side [Report on AE Meeting, 30 March 1933, D. Tidhar, CZA S25/30131].

As time passed, the situation only seemed to worsen:

The agitation, both oral and written, is mainly concentrated on the sale of land. It seems that Arab leaders have come to the conclusion that there is no sense in fighting against immigration as long as the Arabs will sell their lands, and they have therefore decided to direct all their energies against the sale of land. According to one source, Jamal el Husseini and Emil el Guri and Munif el Husseini are to publish a black book of brokers engaged in sale of land to the Jews. The book will contain the names and photographs of the brokers and lists of the lands sold by them to the Jews. According to other sources of information, terrorist Organisations have recently been established to wage war against brokers. As a first act of these organisations one may mention the murder of the Broker Saleh Issa Hamdan in the village of Kolonia.... Among those arrested in connection with his murder are two of the Mufti party [5-20 November 1934, Review of Arab Camp, CZA 525/3472].

Although there is no extant trace of such an Arab "black book," there is evidence of its preparation (13 November 1934, Intelligence Report, CZA 525/3542). The Political Department of the Jewish Agency did prepare lists of Arab landbrokers involved in the National Movement, and apparently forwarded such information to interested parties when expedient (see files in CZA 525/3472). It merits note that many of the issues concerning land sales to Jews are still pertinent to current events, as this recent headline indicates: "Land Dealer Killed" (14 May 1989, Jerusalem Post).

¹⁸In Israel the process has continued (Rosenfeld 1964; Lustick 1980). Since 1967, less restrained manipulations of land, labor and law have been clearly evident in the colonization, exploitation and rule of occupied Gaza and the West Bank (see Aruri 1984). Thus, by 1985 (the last year for which complete figures are available), over one-third of the West Bank had been "declared" state land open to Jewish settlement, and less than half of the Gaza Strip was deemed rightfully to "belong" to Arab owners (Benvenisti and Khayat 1988:61, 113). Unskilled laborers from the occupied territories (who work in Israel by day but must return to their homes at night) could expect to earn in a day what unskilled Israeli workers average in three or four hours (Statistical Abstract for Israel 1988:377, 732). Finally, Palestinians of the occupied territories are not allowed representative local or national government; rather, a "Civil Administration" operates, like the British mandate, with the prerogatives of martial law to assure that the imposed "legal order" prevails over native "terrorism."

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