The Colonizing Self

OR, HOME AND HOMELESSNESS IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Hagar Kotef



The Colonizing Self

BUY

A Theory in Forms Book Series Editors Nancy Rose Hunt and Achille Mbembe

Duke University Press / Durham and London / 2020



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OR, HOME AND HOMELESSNESS IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE Hagar Kotef

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Kotef, Hagar, [date] author.

Title: The colonizing self: or, home and homelessness in Israel/Palestine / Hagar Kotef.

Other titles: Theory in forms.

Description: Durham: Duke University Press, 2020. | Series: Theory in forms | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020017127 (print) | LCCN 2020017128 (ebook)

ISBN 9781478010289 (hardcover) ISBN 9781478011330 (paperback)

ISBN 9781478012863 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Land settlement—West Bank. | Land settlement—Social aspects—West Bank. | Israelis—Colonization—West Bank. | Israelis—Homes and haunts—Social aspects—West Bank. | Israelis-West Bank-Social conditions.

Classification: LCC DSIIO.W47 K684 2020 (print) | LCC DSIIO.W47 (ebook)

DDC 333.3/156942089924—dc23

LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020017127

LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020017128

Cover art: © Marjan Teeuwen, courtesy Bruce Silverstein Gallery, NY. The cover image by the Dutch artist Marjan Teeuwen, from a series titled Destroyed House, is of a destroyed house in Gaza, which Teeuwen reassembled and photographed. This form of reclaiming debris and rubble is in conversation with many themes this book foregrounds—from the effort to render destruction visible as a critique of violence to the appropriation of someone else's home and its destruction as part of one's identity, national revival, or (as in the case of this image) a

professional art exhibition. PRESS

TO MY DAD—SO MUCH OF WHAT IS WRITTEN HERE IS A PROLONGED CONVERSATION WITH HIM; AND TO MAYA AND NOA, WHOM I HAVE MOVED AWAY FROM HOME, BUT FOR WHOM I'M TRYING, ENDLESSLY, TO BUILD ANOTHER



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I think Israelis should be aware that their presence in many places in the country entails the loss of a Palestinian family, the demolition of a house, the destruction of a village. . . . Many Israelis resist this because they think the consequence would be to leave. Not at all. . . . The last thing I want to do is to perpetuate this process by which one distortion leads to another. I have a horror of that. I saw it happen too many times. I don't want to see more people leave.—EDWARD W. SAID

"The Nakba is the history of anyone living on this land and/or anyone who cherishes it," states Eitan Bronstein Aparicio, director of the organization Zochrot and founder of De-Colonizer. And yet, it seems that making it, indeed, part of his own history is a struggle for Bronstein Aparicio—a struggle that manifests itself as a movement between two poles: On the one hand, Bronstein Aparicio is part of an ongoing endeavor to make the Palestinian Nakba visible and legible to the Jewish Israeli public. On the other hand, he reports grappling with the risk of colonizing Palestinian memory itself in and through this endeavor. As a result, he states, he can "never feel at home." Throughout this book we shall reencounter this sentiment: a sense of Jewish Israeli home that becomes impossible, or at least unstable, when home is entwined with the present or past of the Palestinian disaster. Yet we

Epigraph: Edward W. Said, "Interview with Ari Shavit," *Ha'aretz*, August 18, 2000, republished in *Power, Politics, and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*, by Edward W. Said, ed. Gauri Viswanathan (New York: Vintage Books, 2001). An English version can also be found at "Edward Said Interviewed by Ari Shavit for *Ha'aretz*," MiddleEast.org, August 26, 2000, http://www.middleeast.org/archives/8-00-31.htm.

I Eitan Bronstein Aparicio, "Finding Home in a New Memory: A Journey to the Golan," +972 magazin, June 4, 2016, https://972mag.com/finding-home-in-a-new-memory-a-journey-to-the-golan/I19816#_ftnreft.



shall find that just as prevalent is a sound sense of home that emerges despite, besides, and even through this disaster. The negotiations of a sense of belonging against the reality of this disaster give rise to the type of "self" this book seeks to identify. For the sake of brevity, I call it "the colonizing self."

In narrating his struggle, which so accurately captures the impasses of many activists working to undo the evils their own societies generate, Bronstein Aparicio takes us to the ruins of his wife's village, Mansura. Situated in the Golan Heights, Mansura is a Syrian village that was demolished in 1967. With his wife's family and others, Bronstein Aparicio returned to this site of destruction to tell the stories of the ruined village and to rebuild it—if only very partially—as a symbolic gesture. It is through this project, he writes, that he was finally able to construct his own sense of home. Through this experience, "it became clear to me that the story of Mansura had become my own not exclusively mine but also my own." In Bronstein Aparicio's description, the story of expulsion, expropriation, and demolition became "his own" when he participated in reconstructing both the oral history and the concrete space of the village; it is therefore "his" story as a storyteller, or as a participant in reconstructing both stories and traces. But what Bronstein Aparicio recognizes, and yet refuses to assert, is that the stories of the ruins were always also his stories; not as stories he comes to inhabit through Palestinian narratives or through his own embodied effort to create counternarratives, but as stories he inhabits through Israeli narratives and embodied projects that were always part of the Israeli project of settling the land. These stories were his own as the agent of these homes' destruction, rather than as the agent of their reconstruction and narration.

Akin to the Palestinian memories, these stories of settlement are passed on through generations (from my grandparents' generation, which was directly involved in the Nakba, to us, who still live in its aftermath and keep generating other catastrophes); and akin to the Palestinian memories, they come to shape Israeli identity. Yet they are often told differently, through gaps and silences that nonetheless carry with them acts of ruination. Stories of triumphs alongside stories of wartime anxiety and a fear of war that so many of us grew up with—that so many of us inhabit directly, having lived through wars and violence of various kinds—are inlaid with the physical remnants of Palestinian destruction. To recognize ourselves in these stories is to refuse a gap between "the state" and its people, between what "it" has done and who "we" are. For Bronstein Aparicio, or for me and

2 Bronstein Aparicio, "Finding Home."

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many others, it is to refuse a gap between the Left in Israel and Israeli violence, between some progressive "us" and all those forces standing between "us" and "peace." This refusal is not an act of erasing those distinctions; it is a form of taking responsibility—for what we have done, or for what was and is done in our name, or for all the destruction and violence whose fruits we still enjoy. This sense of responsibility can then become a first step toward reconstituting these distinctions in a way that is more politically productive.

I recall trips with my father along an abandoned railway to the ruins of Na'ane, which was close to the kibbutz where he was born and where my grand-parents still lived. I recall bathing on hot summer days in a pool in the Golan Heights that was built by the Syrian army for its officers. We knew it was called "the officers' pool," we always passed through the traces of war on our way to it, and yet this was "our" pool, a site of beauty amid fig trees, whose freezing water became our challenge—who would be brave enough to jump? My childhood memories, my home, cannot be detached from the violence of 1948 and 1967. When I miss my home, this is part of what I miss. In this regard, my point here and one of the main arguments of this book is that the construction of Jewish attachment to the landscape of Israel, the establishment of belonging to the land, the founding of home as well as homeland, includes a certain longing for and belonging to a past violence that becomes integral to Israelis' self-identity. It is this identity I seek to understand here.

Many Israelis who write about the occupation or the wider colonial facets of Israel's control over Palestinians—including myself—often focus on the mechanisms and technologies of power and domination, the structure of the law, or the logics of violence and governance. I seek here to turn the gaze toward the subject positions within the wider networks of occupation and settlement: the settler or colonizing self. How, then, can a critique be formulated when its material conditions are the object of critique? One can criticize one's state, to be sure—its violence, its wars. But how can one question the legitimacy of their own home; how can one point to the wrongs that are embedded in the very nature of their political existence? What would it mean for a Jewish Israeli to not simply write against "the occupation," but to recognize that her home is historically conditioned on the destruction of Palestinians' homes; that her attachment to this place is founded on a history—not such a distant history of violence and is conditioned, at least to some extent, on the perpetuation of this violence? (And since Israel has become a paradigm of a certain kind of leftist critique, it is worth noting that the primary difference between Israel and other settler colonies such as the United States or Australia in this regard

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is temporal density). Once we move to engage in such a critique, there is no more separation between the "I" who writes and her object of critique, that is, the state and its doings: military and police violence, planning policies, legal discrimination. The I itself becomes the object of critique and her voice—the place from which she speaks, her language, the dialogues available to her—can no longer pretend to assume a position that is simply and clearly oppositional to injustice. From this perspective, this book was impossible to write, an act of hitting an ethical and political wall wherever I turned. It is a book about these impasses.

Ultimately, at stake here is not the possibility to settle this mode of being-at-an-impasse, but to find ways of presence in the land (Israel in my case) that fracture and then undo it. I am not interested, in other words, in lamenting the tragedy of this subject position, but in offering a critique of this form of subjectivity. And yet to understand the mechanisms by which the colonizing self can be decolonized and a territory—a home—can be inhabited in noncolonial ways despite a history of colonization, we first need to understand what Manu Samnotra refers to as "the objective conditions of colonialism." In particular, we need to understand the mechanism of the colonizing self's entrenchment in both space and senses of justice. This is the main object of the book.



3 Manu Samnotra, "'Poor in World': Hannah Arendt's Critique of Imperialism," *Contemporary Political Theory* 18, no. 4 (2018): 562-82.

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This book is strangely personal, and yet was conceived with the help, support, thoughts, and investment of so many others. I have had the rare opportunity and sheer luck of working with the most brilliant colleagues, who have engaged with this manuscript in thorough, critical, and committed ways beyond what I could have ever hoped for. I really cannot thank them enough. Their thoughts and comments have shaped this book and so many of its arguments. At SOAS, my new home, Laleh Khalili, Ruba Salih, Rahul Rao, Charles Tripp, Rafeef Ziadah, and Carlo Bonura have read the manuscript or significant parts of it. The insights and thoughts they provided, their critique and their questions, have been essential to the process of writing it and thinking through its many predicaments. I have been overwhelmed, in the most positive way possible, by their thoughtfulness, kindness, and ways of seeing.

Over one brunch in London, Neve Gordon shifted much of the ethnographic work for this book, and helped me disentangle so many of my questions. On many other occasions he offered ideas, suggestions, and at times skepticism. These, and the comments he provided on the full draft, are woven throughout the final outcome. Over the years, our paths crossed in several continents, and now in London he has become not only a treasured colleague but also a friend. Noam Leshem and Keally McBride read the full manuscript as well. They did this thoroughly and carefully and with rare attentiveness. In Keally's hand it became a jigsaw puzzle, and as I worked through her comments—always as generous as they are astute—so many of its pieces fell into place. Noam has been significant in adding some of the missing pieces to the puzzle, rendering the picture somewhat more complete.

Merav Amir seems to have become a person without whom I find it difficult to think. Much of the ideas herein were formed in a constant dialogue with her, endless phone conversations, and exchange of drafts. She was also kind enough to join me on the trip to Giv'ot Olam, during which significant parts

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of the ethnographic work for chapter 3 took place. Murad Idris has become an interlocutor and a friend during the long course of writing this book. At numerous junctures he has thought with me or pushed me to think differently, often shedding so much light on a problem with just one quick, almost incidental comment.

Kobi Snitz kindly traveled with me to the West Bank several times. He accompanied me when I went to take pictures or to check the accuracy of maps marking fences around settlements; he organized the visit to Yanun and facilitated the conversations I had there; he put me in touch with others, who provided crucial information. I am grateful for his time, for the indispensable information he provided following years of activism, and for his company. Hagit Ofran from Peace Now, Dror Etkes from Kerem Navot, Ziv Stahl from Yesh Din, and John Brown from many places have all provided vital support in the process of writing this book. I am not merely indebted for their time and help; I am in awe and admiration of their work, for which the adjective "important" seems like an understatement. They are some of the few people who demonstrate in their daily doings that the space between the sea and the river can be made into a different, less destructive one.

Throughout the years, segments of the work herein have been presented in quite a few workshops, seminars, and conferences, and this book has benefited from so many such interactions. I have had the privilege of thinking out loud alongside some of the brightest critical thinkers in the world, and I thank those who gave me the opportunity to do so and those who engaged in the conversation. These have included two installments of Association for Political Theory (APT) (and I am especially thankful to Libby Anker and Adom Getachew for their comments as discussants), one Western Political Science Association (WPSA) (with special thanks to Jeanne Morefield for her comments as a discussant), an American Political Science Association (APSA), as well as many workshops and colloquiums. I thank Shai Gortler for the invitation to present at the Minnesota Political Theory Colloquium; Monica Brito Vieira for inviting me to the Political Theory Workshop at York; Sorana Jude for the invitation to the Politics Seminar in Newcastle; Meray Amir (again) for inviting me to the Lexicon Workshop at Queen's University, Belfast; Yair Wallach and Moriel Ram for the invitation to the "After Oslo" Lecture Series, as well as the "Turning to Matter and Space in Israel-Palestine" Workshop, both at SOAS; Jason Edwards for the invitation to the Birkbeck Political Theory Colloquium; Miriam Ticktin and Alexandra Delano for the invitation to the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility at the New School for Social Research; María González Pendás and Whitney Laemmli, for the invitations to present at the Crisis of Democracy

 ${\tt XIV} \cdot {\tt ACKNOWLEDGMENTS}$

Workshop at Paris's Institute for Ideas and Imagination; and Teresa Bejan for the invitation to present at the Oxford Political Thought Seminar.

Jack Halberstam and Lisa Lowe have offered me the rare honor of presenting a chapter as part of a Modern Language Association presidential panel, and I am grateful for this and for their support of my scholarship at large. David Joselit generously organized a public lecture at the Committee on Globalization and Social Change, CUNY Graduate Center, where I also had the opportunity of meeting the brilliant Audra Simpson, who has since become a dear interlocutor. Kristina Hagström-Ståhl has given me several exceptional opportunities to present bits and pieces of this project at Gothenburg-I thank her for the conversations she facilitated, her own unique insights, and her generosity. Catharina Bergil's inspiring invitation to Gothenburg's Dance and Theatre Festival began this exchange and, in a way, gave me the opportunity to think with others on this work for the very first time. There were also the intense and productive workshops organized by Jo McDonagh and Jonathan Sachs at the Clark Library, University of California, Los Angeles; by Adam Stern at Yale; by Murad Idris and Lawrie Balfour at the University of Virginia; and by Irus Braverman at SUNY Buffalo. Finally, again with Murad Idris, there was the Empire by Its Other Names Workshop we both assembled at Columbia University. The people I met through these scholarly encounters, and those whom I already knew and saw again, the intensity of discussion, and the thoughtful suggestions they made have been critical to the formation of the pages herein, and will stay with me much beyond.

The Politics Seminar at SOAs and the workshops organized by the Centre for Comparative Political Thought are other venues in which I have had the opportunity to present, listen, share thoughts, and work through critiques. And I thank Charles Tripp (again and again) for cultivating these spaces. Further, the ideas herein have been shaped through engagements with colleagues at SOAS's Politics and International Studies Department, as well as through less formal conversations and exchanges. Many of them have been acknowledged above as readers of the manuscript. I express my deep appreciation also to Meera Sabaratnam; Kerem Nisancioglu; Salwa Ismail, to whom I am especially grateful, as she facilitated my arrival at the department; Manjeet Ramgotra; and Mark Laffey, whom I thank also for supporting, together with Fiona Adamson, a manuscript workshop, which has been essential in the final revisions of this text. This department, in its unique approach to the discipline, its critical thinking, its commitment to politics, and its amazing students and wonderful colleagues, has been more than I could have imagined as an academic home.

as an academic home.
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There are so many others, in so many corners of the world, friends and colleagues and those who make this distinction impossible, who have been a part of this journey and contributed to it: Andrew Dilts, Ariel Handel, George Shulman, Hellen Kinsella, Uday Mehta, Yair Wallach, Gil Hochberg, Rafi Grosglik, Jeanne Morefield (again), Rob Nichols, Nancy Luxon, Yves Winter, Anne McNevin, Ann Stoler, Onur Ulas Ince, Chris Brown, Michal Givoni, and Yuval Evri. I feel blessed by the long or short conversations we have had, their knowledgeable references or suggestions, the work they have been kind enough to share, and their ongoing support.

Parts of this book have been published in other academic journals, and although I cannot personally thank the anonymous reviewers of these essays, if they happen to read this book, I hope they can identify their contributions. A version of the theoretical overview was published in *Political Theory*; I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Lawrie Balfour, for the engaged and dedicated work she has done as part of this publication. Thinking on this book started many years ago with another publication, the entry "Home" in *Mafte'akh: Lexical Review of Political Thought*. Much like my previous book, which took form after writing the entry "Movement," the roots of this book can be traced back to this intellectual project, which has been one of the most productive scholarly endeavors in which I have taken part. I am indebted to all those who were part of this project, and above all to Adi Ophir, who initiated it and assembled all of us around it.

Mori Ram has worked with me on this research and has helped with so much more than I originally expected or planned for. Phoebe O'Hara and Jordi Lpez Bo have also been incredibly helpful in the research process. Marieke Krijnen and Emma Jacobs provided attentive and careful editing, and the team at Duke University Press has done fantastic work throughout the production process. I am particularly appreciative of Sandra Korn, Susan Albury, and, of course, Courtney Berger, who was involved in this book even before it hatched, who has believed in it, pushed for it to be published with Duke, provided advice, and was patient and accommodating of so many requests. The two anonymous reviewers provided feedback that was simultaneously so uplifting and so perceptive. Their meticulous and careful reading and the productiveness with which they expressed their critique is deeply appreciated.

Finally, there are few people who have not contributed to this book directly, but without whom I would have probably not become the person writing it. Anat Biletzki introduced me to philosophy and to its intimate links to politics. She was my ultimate source of inspiration, and my decision to pursue an aca-

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demic career was very much a function of my desire to stand, one day, like her, in 144 Gilman (the room where she taught her Introduction to Logic) and open the eyes of others as she did for me. Adi Ophir has taught me what radical, critical thinking looks like, and has provided the philosophical path I have since sought to follow. Judith Butler has shaped my ways of seeing the world and understanding it, first in her writings and then in person; she also opened the world for me, and provided me the opportunity—often rare if not impossible—to escape. Last, Eileen Gillooly created a space—for me and so many others—in which more than I have ever believed to be possible became a reality. So many of the encounters, conversations, and friendships mentioned throughout these acknowledgments are her making, in one way or another.

The Leverhulme Trust generously provided the material conditions for the work of writing, as it gave me the precious gift of time. I am grateful for the opportunity they have given me to complete this book.



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Introduction

Home

This is a story of ruination at the foundation of a new political system.

—YAEL NAVARO-YASHIN

Indeed, the house is often made to stand for "the conflict" insofar as it represents the tangible losses and gains that resulted. —REBECCA BRYANT

I suppose part of my critique of Zionism is that it attaches too much importance to home. Saying, we need a home. And we will do anything to get a home, even if it means making others homeless. —EDWARD W. SAID

This is a book about homes that were formed in and through violence; about homes that themselves become tools of destruction and expulsion; and about lives and selves whose very being is a form of injury. "A space of belonging and alienation, intimacy and violence, desire and fear," as Alison Blunt and Ann Varley put it, which is "fundamental to being," home functions for me here as

Epigraphs: Yael Navaro-Yashin, "Affective Spaces, Melancholic Objects: Ruination and the Production of Anthropological Knowledge," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15, no. 1 (2009): 5; Rebecca Bryant, "History's Remainders: On Time and Objects after Conflict in Cyprus," *American Ethnologist* 41, no. 4 (2014): 690; Edward W. Said, "Interview with Ari Shavit," *Ha'aretz*, August 18, 2000, republished in *Power*, *Politics, and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*, by Edward W. Said, ed. Gauri Viswanathan (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 458.

- 1 Alison Blunt and Ann Varley, "Introduction: Geographies of Home," *Cultural Geographies* 11, no. 1 (2004): 3.
- 2 T. Peil, "Home," in *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, ed. Rob Kitchin and Nigel Thrift (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2009). For a phenomenological analysis of home as fundamental to being, see Dylan Trigg, *The Memory of Place: A Phenomenology of the Uncanny* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012).



a concrete site, but also a placeholder, a metaphor, for thinking identities (collective and individual) that emerge through violence. Most explicitly, home is a site that ties the self to the nation, for which it often serves as "an uneasy metaphor."

This book, then, looks at the systems of injury that have founded the system of property (from which enclosure, imperialism, slavery, or gentrification cannot be cleansed away) and are thus embedded into the concept of home if we think of any industrial, capitalist society.⁴ It looks at the violence intertwined with the intimacies of love and sexual desire, which is thus embedded into the concept of home if we think of kinship. But above all, it looks at settler colonies, wherein the construction of one's home, and ultimately one's (national) identity, is the destruction of another's. In this context, this book's main test case is Israel/Palestine, where, indeed, the territorial struggle involved in the formation of homeland often took—still takes—place through various struggles around houses.⁵

My linguistic points of departure are Hebrew and Arabic, in which home and house (affect and architecture, belonging and territory) are merged. This linguistic point of departure, as well as the location from which I write, allow a linguistic slide between several words: home, household, house, domestic, domos, and oikos. If Hannah Arendt is correct, these words do not merely have different meanings and do not merely represent different political systems; they actually organize and shape different political orders.⁶ And yet, the Hebrew word ba'it encapsulates this array of meanings. It is

- 3 Amahl Bishara, "House and Homeland: Examining Sentiments about and Claims to Jerusalem and Its Houses," *Social Text* 21, no. 2 (summer 2003): 143. On home as a metaphor for the nation or state, see also, among many others, Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Wurttemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871–1918* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Michael Feige, "Soft Power: The Meaning of Home for Gush Emunim Settlers," *Journal of Israeli History* 32, no. 1 (2013): 109–26; or Erin Manning, *Ephemeral Territories: Representing Nation, Home, and Identity in Canada* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).
- 4 For an excellent analysis tying together capitalism (postindustrialization, globalized markets), ethnic violence, and homes—their shortage, the fantasies constructing and undoing them, their geographies, and the various forms through which they are (re)created at a time of crisis—see Arjun Appadurai, "Spectral Housing and Urban Cleansing: Notes on Millennial Mumbai," *Public Culture* 12, no. 3 (fall 2000): 627–51.
- 5 Bishara, "House and Homeland," 144.
- 6 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

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the domos of the domestic sphere and it entails (or is contained within) the *oikonomia* of the oikos; it is a home, a house, and at times a household. In other words, it is the physical site, the social order that is organized within it, and the affectual dimensions that eventually territorialize identity as well as attachment.⁷ The Arabic *beit* likewise entails an array of functions that are scattered over several English concepts. But as we shall see, whereas language unites these functions, political history dissociates them in the case of many Palestinians.

"Home" thus represents here the spatial facets of attachment, belonging, community, kinship, identity, and thus subjectivity. These spatial facets render "home" an apt site (or, as stated above, an analogy, an allegory) for understanding settler colonialism: the political system defined by an attachment to space that rests on dispossession, on a primordial act of ethnic cleansing and the many forms of violence that follow.⁸

Accordingly, the task ahead is to understand the cultural, political, and theoretical apparatuses that enable people and nations to construct a home on the ruins of other people's homes, to feel that they belong to spaces of expulsion, or to develop an attachment to sites which subsequently—or even consequently—are transformed into sites of violence. Belonging is thus conceptualized here as and through settlement (homemaking, a mode of taking place) in order to produce an account of the relationship between collective identities and institutional, mass, or state violence. In a way, then, I ask about the affectual conditions of possibility of settler colonialism, which is

- 7 For a further analysis of this concept, see Hagar Kotef, "Ba'it (Home/Household)," *Mafte'akh*: Lexical Review of Political Thought 1E (2010), http://mafteakh.tau.ac.il/en/2010-01/01/.
- 8 Achille Mbembe provides a concise yet comprehensive map of these forms of violence in the context of colonization—from the founding violence that creates the space for its own appearance to a violence that "give[s] this order meaning," and to a violence that "recur[s] again and again in the most banal and ordinary situations," which falls "well short of what is properly called 'war,'" yet cannot be reduced to the notion of structural violence. Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2001), 25.
- 9 I am thinking here about belonging primarily in its political form, that is, as a mode of maintaining, demarcating, reproducing, or imagining "the boundaries of the political community." See Nira Yuval-Davis, *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations* (London: SAGE, 2011), 204. But as Yuval-Davis proposed, this mode of belonging is tangled up with other forms of belonging—with social categories (of race, class, gender, etc.) or value systems.
- 10 In Sara Ahmed's words: "The issue is that home is not simply about fantasies of belonging—where do I originate from—but that it is sentimentalized as a space of belonging ('home is where the heart is'). The question of home and being at home can only be addressed by considering the

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simultaneously a sociopolitical and a psychic question. After all, without such mechanisms of attachment to violence, "settling" would have been impossible amid the conditions of colonization. In so doing, I follow a rich body of literature that argues that colonization cannot be understood without what Ann Stoler terms the "emotional economies' of empire," and I try to understand those in their most spatially articulated manifestation. The house, its structure, its ideology, the sentiments invested in it, the social textures within it and those of which it forms a part, are inseparable from the financial systems, policies, and moral economies of empire. It herefore move between "home" as a metaphor for a state or an attachment to wider political constellations (community, territory, nation) and home as a component of the state (which is composed, as Aristotle stated, of many households), that is, the homes of individuals and small kinship units. This movement is a way of weaving together these affective economies, or untangling them to see how they are produced, managed, and regulated.

This means that settler colonialism also serves here as an example (if not an allegory in and of itself) of other political formations in which the existence of some—their lives, their bodies, their security, and their prosperity—is conditioned on inflicting violence on others. This violence can be direct or structural, deliberated or unintentional, celebrated or denied by the injuring persons, or can even hurt their sense of self (as is, for example, the case with progressive, leftist Israelis)—but it is nonetheless part of who they are. Who

question of affect: being at home is here a matter of how one feels or how one might fail to feel." "Home and Away: Narratives of Migration and Estrangement," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 2, no. 3 (December 1999): 341.

II Indeed, as Butler notes, the ethical and political reflection of the question of violence "must take place precisely at the threshold of the psychic and social worlds" (Judith Butler, *The Force of Non-violence* [New York: Verso Books, 2020], 172).

¹² Ann Laura Stoler, Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 68. See also Stoler's Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule (Oakland: University of California Press, 2002); Antoinette Burton, Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home, and History in Late Colonial India (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Philippa Levine, Prostitution, Race, and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire (New York: Routledge, 2003); and Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (New York: Routledge, 1995), among many others.

¹³ See, for example, Ian Baucom, "Mournful Histories: Narratives of Postimperial Melancholy," MFS: Modern Fiction Studies 42, no. 2 (summer 1996): 259–88; Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism (London: Vintage Books, 1994).

we are. As Jennifer Terry recently showed in regard to war, Bruce Robbins in regard to various modes of privilege, or Michael Rothberg in regard to various orders of systematic violence, systems of injury are woven into social positions in ways that make it impossible to simply renounce them, to simply take a stance against them, to simply say, in Jeanne Morefield's reconstruction, this is not "who we are." Which is not to say that we should accept these systems of injury. "Who we are" always takes form within broken, contradictory schemes that can never be determined once and for all. 15

THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN over a period of more than seven years, during which many dominant assumptions concerning political lives have shifted. When I started writing it, around 2012, there was a need, I thought, to question the assumption that those living in liberal democracies disavow violence, if only as a rhetorical maneuver. There was an urgency, I thought, to point to the undercurrents tethered to the political fabric (in Israel, but also in the United States or Europe) that render legitimate the explicit embrace of, and political will to, violence. But as the book was written, with the rise of Trump and the Far Right across the world, the explicit racism that came to light with Brexit, and the slow legalization of apartheid in Israel, these undercurrents rose to the surface. In this sense, the book is both more and less timely than originally planned. The theoretical effort to expose these desires or attachments may be less needed as they are now barer, but understanding them is more urgent than ever.

What I seek to offer here is a theory of the dispossessor. At least in the context of Israel/Palestine, much has been written on the dispossessed subject, and theories of subjectivity that work through the figure of the refugee or through the space of diaspora are quite prevalent. There has also been a proliferation of literature about the state as an actor or state actors, or mechanisms of power

15 See, for example, James Martel, The Misinterpellated Subject (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017); or Judith Butler's work, in particular, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (New York: Routledge, 1990), and Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex" (New York: Routledge, 1993).

(New York: Routledge, 1993).

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¹⁴ Jennifer Terry, Attachments to War: Biomedical Logics and Violence in Twenty-First-Century America (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017); Bruce Robbins, The Beneficiary (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017); Michael Rothberg, The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019); Jeanne Morefield, Empires without Imperialism: Anglo-American Decline and the Politics of Deflection (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.

that explain dispossession. But a theory of the dispossessing subject is largely missing. The Colonizing Self thus works at two levels: first, it provides a contextualized analysis of spaces of belonging in Israel/Palestine, and second, it provides a theoretical analysis of the forms of subjectivity at the foundation of both liberalism and settler colonialism (which are, historically at least, inextricable). In this regard the status of Israel as a liberal democracy (albeit an eroding one) merits some explication. "Liberal" and "democratic" are in Israel parameters limited to a dual matrix, combining citizenship status and location: All Jewish citizens (within the 1948 borders and in the settlements) enjoy liberal democracy, and, to a lesser degree, all citizens (Jewish and Palestinian) within the 1948 borders. Thus, even though also within these parameters, both the liberal and the democratic facets of the regime are limited, stratified, and eroding, and even though the "one state" is already the political condition of Israel/Palestine—and within these boundaries it is clearly a nondemocratic state-its matrix of control allows for clearly defined zones of democratic rule.16 When I refer here to "liberal" or "democratic" I refer to these enclaves, within which most Jewish Israelis reside.

To unfold this dual analysis, the book focuses on three main homes or, better yet, three main figures of home, archetypes of sorts that come to represent different modes of inhabiting violent geographies. The first is the home of one of the most violent settlers in the West Bank, a home that effectively led to the eviction of an entire Palestinian village. It is also the largest organic farm in Israel, and the relation between the ethics of organic agriculture and this form of dispossession is crucial to me, as part of an effort to understand the ethical schemes that are employed to support homes under such conditions of violence (part III). The second home is in fact a plurality of homes: the depopulated Palestinian homes that are inhabited by Israeli Jews, often progressive and left leaning (part II). These Palestinian homes—in Jaffa, Jerusalem, Ein Hod—and this mode of homemaking in the depopulated home/ space serve as an allegory for Zionism at large (if not settlement as such). At the focus of this allegory is liberal Zionism, and, in this sense, there is a wider lesson concerning liberal sentiments here. The duo formed by parts II and III moves between the 1967 and the 1948 borders and endeavors to think together (even if apart) the establishment of Israel and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. In very different ways, these two modes of homemaking open questions concerning the various narratives, ideologies, and ethics

¹⁶ For an analysis, see Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir, The One-State Condition: Occupation and Democracy in Israel/Palestine (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 203–24.

that allow one to live amid the destruction for which they are responsible. Accordingly, this analysis allows us to see the forms of social and political positions—the selves—that emerge through the attachment to these sites of violence. The analysis of these two parts is based on a spatial typology of contested homes, an ethnographic examination of these homes as sites wherein both formal citizenship and claims for place are negotiated, and a cultural analysis of identity production via a study of the representations of homes, national or private. Finally, the third home, which opens this book, is the figure of home as it circulates in political theory (part I). At its core, it is the home I reread into the Lockean concept of property, but in its wider sense, it is the home that I seek to situate as the core unit of political analysis. Via this reading, I show how the structure of dispossession is embedded into different modes of subjectivity, thereby providing a conceptual foundation for the analysis that follows.

Home and Violence: The Wider Scope of the Argument

Home is "the primary site around which identities are produced and performed," a site of intimacy and love, a site defined by attachments.¹⁷ At the same time, home is always also a site of injury: injuries caused by and to the territories we inhabit or the people with whom we share our lives or with whom we refuse to coinhabit; injuries caused by our disposed piles of rubbish or our sewage flows, or by police or military violence that penetrates home or refuses to do so. Furthermore, home is also an exclusionary space: it creates distinctions between those who can come in and those who must stay out; between those who stay overnight and those who must leave; those who have keys and those who must knock on the door—between the members of the household (and, within them, between family and domestic workers or slaves, for example) and guests or unwanted strangers. Or, to apply these distinctions to another context, between the members of the nation-state and its outsiders: guest workers, undocumented migrants, and those who cannot even cross the border. Home is thus a site of differentiations.

Therefore, in its articulation as both a political technology and a political concept, we can think of the home as a place of governing differences—governing by creating differences (by hiding them, containing them) or governing those who have been differentiated: the governance of wives, slaves, servants, and other domestic workers, as well as children or those presumed

Peil, "Home," 181.

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to be like children (and thus we can think of home as a meeting point for questions of race, class, legal residency, age, and disability). Home is that which can be—indeed is—differentiated (above all from the political), 18 and is that within which difference resides: It is the place of Woman (she who is different from Man); the signifier of private property (which produces class differences); and it is the function through which forms of government are differentiated: differences between those who are thoroughly and fully governed and those who can, in some fields, transcend being governed and are therefore "free" and "equal." If one of the main problems of early modern and modern political theory is the tension between theoretical equality (universalism) and a reality of domination, discrimination, and exploitation, then "home" may provide a theoretical solution. Prefiguring and conditioning the political sphere as a sphere of (presumed) equality, the home (or private sphere, or domestic sphere) allows differences and differentiations to be governed outside of politics and as if they were nonpolitical, making way for "universalism" at the state's level.20

At stake, then, is the array of connections between exclusion, often violent, and intimacy—an intimacy that always requires exclusion to maintain its parameters (intimacy, after all, cannot be stretched too far), yet tends to hide this aspect from the stories it tells about itself. This combination means that also at stake is a tension between fantasy and real life, or a tension between the promises of political concepts and the political orders they actually depict. In this sense, too, this book can be read as a parable. The

- 18 We see this in the Aristotelian demarcation of the oikos as the other of the polis and in a long tradition of both philosophy and historical accounts ever since. It underlies the dichotomy identified by Max Weber between the pure form of rational authority in the modern bureaucratic state, on the one hand, and the traditional state, drawing its form from the household, on the other. Mediated by civil society, this opposition also appears in Hegel; it is central to the rigid distinction between the private and the political that liberalism both assumes and demands—a distinction that preconditions the notion of private property; and it is shared by institutional-historical analyses that depict the emergence of the modern state from the royal court. According to the latter analyses, even though the state in its embryonic form was inseparable from the king's household, the modern state is defined as such *because* of the disentanglement of the sovereign from the persona of the king and of the state's bureaucracy from the management of the king's household.
- 19 I am thinking here along the lines of Arendt's reading of Aristoteles (see Human Condition).
- 20 As Carole Pateman has observed, or as Marx has made clear. Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), 26–52.

fantasy (or concept) it captures is a certain fantasy of home, as a sheltering, stable, and peaceful space. The reality is that of violence—the violence of forced mobility, demolition, and dispossession on which this book's argument focuses, but also of rape, incest, beating, imprisonment, confinement, isolation. This is not to say that all these violences are the same, and indeed, I will not consider all of them here.

Many have pointed to this tension before me, and their work can mark the larger scope of the argument, the wider field to which it applies.

Feminists across disciplines, historical moments, and geographical contexts have exposed the frequency of domestic violence, marital rape, or incest; they have shown how domestic work and care are outsourced to those working under conditions of exploitation, often paying with their own homes' collapse. Drawing on their important insights, my book nevertheless centers not on violence in the home, but on homes as a technology of violence that operates outward. Accordingly, working on home here is not a way of foregrounding intimate modes of injustice that often take place in the private sphere. Rather, my focus is *the intimacies of public wrongs*.

The history of public wrongs that is woven into the theory and practice of homemaking is quite diverse. Another one of its main fields is capitalism, and alongside gender and sexuality it, too, provides some of the larger parameters within which my argument can echo. Much like in settler colonialism, which is the focus of this inquiry, in capitalism we find mechanisms of attachment to objects of violence—objects whose production necessitates violence—and a continuous attachment to these objects even after this violence becomes apparent. Most relevant to the subject of this book would be cases of gentrification, or instances in which eminent domain is declared to evict some (most often the less well-off), transferring places of residence to private real-estate enterprises in a process through which new homes are constructed on the ruins of others. But in different forms and under different structures, we are attached to objects in which violence is implicated in even the most mundane practices of domesticity: from our contribution to degrading working conditions when ordering home supplies from Amazon, to the toxicity of mineral dust in the cobalt mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo that goes into the production of almost every battery we use (from laptops to electric cars), to the child and forced labor in those and other mines; the list goes on and on.

Lauren Berlant further shows that desire under capitalism attaches itself not just to objects implicated in violence (through their production, or through the social organizations that coalesce around either production or consumption),

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but to the very order of violence. I will return to this analogy in detail in the theoretical overview and chapter 2. Whereas it is Berlant's model of attachment that will stand at the basis of one of the main arguments of this book, the analogy between capitalist systems and settler colonialism has other facets which will be considered here only partially. A key analogy here is the capitalist mode of production through destruction that David Harvey identifies, following Marx.²¹ For Harvey, it is capitalist production that is at stake here; but creative destruction is also the mode through which settlers' homemaking takes place.

Finally, much like the case of both settler colonialism and intimacy or kinship, part of what shapes capitalist form of destruction is the question of substitution. Presumably, whereas both capitalist consumption and sexual desire are organized according to the logic of substitution, at stake in settler colonialism is precisely the lack of the possibility of substituting the object of attachment: territory. That is, if in capitalism the logic of value or exchange, and certainly practices of surplus consumption, are anchored in the possibility—and the desire—to substitute one object (concrete or abstracted) for another, and if sexual desire is organized around the substitution of one object of desire with another (this is precisely the foundation of the Oedipal complex, the structure of Lacan's objet petit a, but also the nature of any new relationship or most fantasies), then in settler colonialism the singularity of the territory, its irreplaceability, is the political principle that drives and justifies settlement. Yet the difference does not hold, and the mechanism of substitution often remains an unrealized potential, even in the former two orders. In this sense, to borrow Berlant's words (themselves borrowed), this book "politicizes Freud's observation that 'people never willingly abandon a libidinal position, not even, indeed, when a substitute is already beckoning to them."22

1957), 244

10 · INTRODUCTION

²¹ David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital and the Crises of Capitalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Gastón Gordillo inverts the famous "creative destruction" into "destructive production" to think of the capitalist production of space. Gastón R. Gordillo, *Rubble: The Afterlife of Destruction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014). See also Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 100.

²² Lauren Berlant, Cruel Optimism (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 27. Quote from Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia [1915]," in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 14, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth,

Israeli Homes

"The ongoing requirement to eliminate the Native alternative continues to shape the colonial society that settlers construct on their expropriated land base," argues Patrick Wolfe.23 The main argument of this book is that not just societies, but also modes of selfhood are shaped by this ongoing requirement. In other words, there is a settler self and it is constituted as part of a project of ethnic cleansing. As Ruba Salih and Sophie Richter-Devroe put it in the Israeli context, "land confiscation, annexation, and fragmentation are foundational not only to the formation of Israeli settler nationalism but also to the definition of its citizens as political and human subjects."24 The story of the "political and human subject" that is formed via "land confiscation, annexation, and fragmentation" (in Salih and Richter-Devroe's words) is the story of the homemaking of the Israeli Jew in Israel/Palestine.²⁵ And this story must be examined also through all those Palestinian homes whose destruction constitutes this home: homes that are bulldozed or bombarded, at times killing their inhabitants in their collapse; homes that are still standing but have become inaccessible; homes whose keys are kept in the hope of return and that are often inhabited by others; temporary homes in refugee camps that have become permanent; homes that are rendered illegal by discriminatory land regimes; homes that are being demolished cyclically as part of Israel's effort to make more land available for Jewish settlement; but also homes that are being rebuilt, again and again, as a form of resistance—staying put, sumud, as a political struggle reasserting identity and belonging.²⁶

Zionism is often described as (indeed is) "a massive housing project." Yet as Idan Landau observed,

- 23 Patrick Wolfe, Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race (New York: Verso Books, 2016), 33.
- 24 Ruba Salih and Sophie Richter-Devroe, "Palestine beyond National Frames: Emerging Politics, Cultures, and Claims," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 117, no. 1 (2018): 7; my italics.
- 25 I add here the qualifier "Jew" to "Israeli" in order not to erase the roughly 20 percent of the Israeli population who are not Jews, particularly Palestinians who are citizens of the Israeli state. This qualifier may produce some discomfort, as it may sound essentializing and as such racist (anti-Semitic). This is not my intention here.
- 26 Sumud literally means "persistence," but also refers to the act of Palestinians staying closely, tightly, stubbornly to the land, and building a home and a homeland, despite the effort to dispossess them. See Alexandra Rijke and Toine van Teeffelen, "To Exist Is to Resist: Sumud, Heroism, and the Everyday," Jerusalem Quarterly 59 (2014): 86–99; Raja Shehadeh, The Third Way: A Journal of Life in the West Bank (New York: Quartet Books, 1982).
- 27 Yael Allweil, Homeland: Zionism as Housing Regime, 1860-2011 (London: Routledge, 2017), 5. Allweil analyzes the Zionist project through what she refers to as "Israel's housing regime," which was

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if someone were to summarize the Zionist project one day, [they] would have to face one baffling fact: how is it that so many people tie Zionism to construction and production, rather than to destruction and eviction? After all, alongside the obsession with nonstop construction, mostly beyond the Green Line, the roars of bulldozers have always been present: ascending, striking, breaking, and shattering. Migrants' housing projects were built instantly, build-your-own-home neighborhoods, neighborhoods for military personnel, suburbs, and luxurious highrises sprung up like mushrooms after the rain; and at the very same time, the angel of Zionist history amassed a pile of debris which "grows skyward." ²⁸

Stories of destruction also feature in Israeli identity via the destruction of Jewish homes: above all, the hounding image of the destruction of the temple, which is referred to in Hebrew as the destruction of home, the prolonged exile that followed, and the Holocaust. This duality of constitutive destruction can be a version of Said's claim that both nations share a history of dispossession, but this is not the claim I want to make here. I will not offer a detailed mapping of these various destroyed homes and the diverse courses of their destruction. I rather seek to isolate a segment from this complex map in order to integrate destruction and construction into one history, one identity, of a community, a nation, for which destruction is constitutive.

FOR NOW, AMID all this destruction, I want to focus on the constitutive destruction that took place in 1948 and its long aftermath in order to introduce a wider question regarding knowledge and violence.

In the aftermath of the two grand territorial wars of Israel—in 1948 and 1967—massive projects of demolition have changed the Israeli landscape.

[&]quot;intended to provide housing for each citizen as a fulfilment of the right of each Jew to the ancestral homeland in which he or she was being rooted" (12). Note the conflation here between "citizen" and "Jew," which has served to deny many Palestinian citizens the right to a proper home.

²⁸ Idan Landau, "House Demolitions: The Enduring Background Noise of Zionism," *Lo lamut tipesh* [Don't die dumb] (blog), June 10, 2013, https://idanlandau.com/2013/06/10/house-demolishions -zionism-background-noise/; my translation. The quoted segment is from Walter Benjamin's "On the Concept of History," in *Selected Writings*, vol. 4: 1938–1940, ed. Michael W. Jennings and Howard Eiland, 389–400 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), ix.

Pictures and maps showing "before" and "after" strikingly present the construction of the Jewish homeland as heavily dependent on destruction (see figures I.I–I.3). Ever since this period, house demolition in its various forms has been a dominant political technology in Israel, and an essential element in its construction.²⁹

My argument in regard to this political technology is dual. First, as aforementioned, I argue that this destruction is constitutive. That is, this destruction is not a mere historical contingency. It is rather woven into Israeli subjectivity, as far as such exists (and national selves never fully exist as such). To put it differently, this book sets out to show that Israelis are intimately invested in destruction in various ways. Second and relatedly, I argue that in some cases, this destruction is affirmed rather than denied. This second argument intervenes in a larger debate in the literature concerning the work of collective memory in Israel/Palestine, as well as colonial memory more broadly. I touch on it extensively in the theoretical overview. Within this debate, some emphasize the erasure of Palestinian history and landscape, intended to deny their very existence in the land and, derivatively, the violence entailed in removing them;³⁰ some focus on

- 29 There are many dimensions to the transformation of Arab land into Jewish land. On the legal status of territory, see Geremy Forman and Alexandre Kedar, "From Arab Land to 'Israel Lands': The Legal Dispossession of the Palestinians Displaced by Israel in the Wake of 1948," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 22, no. 6 (December 2004): 809–30; Alexandre Kedar, "The Legal Transformation of Ethnic Geography: Israeli Law and the Palestinian Landholder 1948–1967," *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics* 33, no. 4 (2001): 923–1000; Issachar Rosen-Zvi, *Taking Space Seriously: Law, Space and Society in Contemporary Israel* (Abingdon, VA: Routledge, 2017). In regard to the Bedouin minority, see Alexandre Kedar, Ahmad Amara, and Oren Yiftachel, *Emptied Lands: A Legal Geography of Bedouin Rights in the Negev* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018). Noam Leshem emphasizes that the state is not a unified entity in this regard, and many who settled in depopulated Arab houses or areas cannot simply be seen as its agents. They had conflicting relations with the state, which often treated them as illegal trespassers. Noam Leshem, *Life after Ruin: The Struggles over Israel's Depopulated Arab Spaces* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
- A very partial list includes Nadia Abu El-Haj, Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Salman H. Abu Sitta, The Palestinian Nakba 1948: The Register of Depopulated Localities in Palestine (London: Palestinian Return Centre, 1998); Meron Benvenisti, Sacred Landscape: The Buried History of the Holy Land since 1948 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Noga Kadman, Erased from Space and Consciousness: Israel and the Depopulated Palestinian Villages of 1948 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015); Walid Khalidi, ed., All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948 (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992). I review others throughout this book.



FIGURE 1.1. Manshiyya. January 1949 (source: Zalmanya).

the various rationales deployed to justify Palestinians' dispossession when their existence becomes undeniable;³¹ some argue that there are large holes in these networks of blindness and denial through which that past constantly emerges;³² some call for a complete change of metaphors.³³ Rather than working to provide

31 The myth of nomadism alongside apparatuses producing nomadism, and with them the notion of terra nullius, is probably the most dominant here, in the context of Israel/Palestine and others. See, for example, Kedar, Amara, and Yiftachel, Emptied Lands; Hagar Kotef, Movement and the Ordering of Freedom: On Liberal Governances of Mobility (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015); Carole Pateman and Charles W. Mills, Contract and Domination (Malden, MA: Polity, 2007).



FIGURE 1.2. Shows Tel Aviv in the early 2000s. The minaret of the Hassan Bek Mosque serves here as a visual anchor.

further "proof" of or "support" for this side or the other, I am more interested in the very existence of this debate. The debate itself reflects an unstable dyad of collective memory that can then be translated into an argument regarding the content of what is remembered (did we know? did we see? have we forgotten? erased? denied? could we have been aware?—or unaware?). I contend that this dyad, and the difficulty of accounting for it, is at least partly generated

32 Gil Z. Hochberg, Visual Occupation: Violence and Visibility in a Conflict Zone (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015); Leshem, Life after Ruin. For other contexts, see Stoler, Along the Archival Grain, chapter 7, "Imperial Dispositions of Disregard."

33 Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Aphasia: Race and Disabled Histories in France," *Public Culture* 23, no. 1 (winter 2011): 121–56.

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- Building demolished before July 1949
- Building demolished before July 1980
- — Boundaries of the 1948 demolition operation, 28 hectares version
- Boundaries of the 1948 demolition operation, 41.5 hectares version

FIGURE I.3. Manshiyya's destruction plan. In dark gray houses that were destroyed by October 1949; in light gray, houses that were destroyed by 1980. Courtesy of Or Aleksandrowicz. Aleksandrowicz's work details these acts of destruction, questions the security claims behind them, and unfolds the long history of destruction behind several of Tel Aviv's neighborhoods. Image from "The Camouflage of War: Planned Destruction in Jaffa and Tel Aviv, 1948," *Planning Perspective* 32, no. 2 (2017): 188.

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by the difficulty of settling modes of being-with-violence. Put differently, the inability to settle down colonial memory, as well as the inability to settle the different theoretical frameworks accounting for this memory, is a function of the difficulty of acknowledging that selves can live with their own violence in nonconflictual ways. This difficulty may be of the settler's own memory or the theorist's frame—and I will keep moving here between these levels of analysis. It is this assumption, that people cannot reconcile their self-image with the violence they inflict on others, that I want to question.

A Methodological Note: Settler Colonialism

"Home" can be seen as one of the main criteria differentiating colonialism from settler colonialism. Wolfe famously distinguished between the imperative to work imposed on the colonized in colonialism (part of a racial system that exploits bodies and resources) and the imperative to move imposed on the colonized in settler colonialism (part of a racial system that takes over land for the purpose of settlement). Thus, in the first system, various modes of colonial governance endeavored to maintain the metropole as a home and keep the attachments of Europeans to the colony limited and transient.³⁴ In the case of settler colonialism, however, at stake is the production and preservation of home in the colony. What will be outlined in this book is therefore a history of sentiments that allow one to stay put, to form an identity unaffected, or less affected, or at least not completely undone by its contradictions and violence.

The facts that "settlers come to stay," that settler colonialism is "first and foremost a project of replacement," and that in the act of settlement settlers "destroy to replace"³⁵ render the paradigm of settler colonialism an apt lens through which to examine my question concerning home as a tool of destruction (or perhaps render "home" an apt lens through which to examine settler

This was done via the regulation of sex and kinship, the school system, and the emphasis on constant mobility of bureaucrats across the empire. Such managed circulations—within the empire and between colonies and metropoles—aimed at creating proper attachments and ways of being "moved" that separated "home" (in the metropole) from "away" (in the empire). It generated bonds to people as well as territories, but also cultivated aversions to people and territories in the colony, from whom one had to remain detached. See Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 68 (although the project of narrating these movements reaches beyond this page and book, and can be traced through most of Stoler's writings). Sara Ahmed shows how the result is entire groups, mostly of postcolonized subjects, for whom this distinction between "home" and "away" becomes impossible (Ahmed, "Home and Away").

35 Wolfe, Traces of History, 33.

colonialism). This does not mean that settlers necessarily bring about destruction maliciously, but if in settler colonialism the primary identity is the relation to place,³⁶ and if this belonging is an act of elimination and dispossession,³⁷ then by being who one is, one is already implicated in violence.³⁸ Violence, then, emerges as a precondition for the integrity of one's subjectivity. This is the main claim of this book.

Nevertheless, two primary reservations can be made in regard to the framing of Israel as a settler-colonial state and this argument's framing. First, many of the events, modes of attachment, and practices of homemaking that will occupy these pages resonate and have parallels with other historical and geopolitical contexts: Poles, Germans, or Hungarians who moved into the homes of Jews after the Second World War; postpartition "house swaps" in India/Pakistan; or Turkish Cypriots who came to inhabit the homes of Greek Cypriots after partition. I therefore refer here to "settler colonialism" not as an exclusive and excluding framework. Unlike some tendencies in the recent field of comparative settler-colonial studies, I prefer to follow Stoler's insight that there is no one imperial (or colonial, or settler-colonial) case that is identical to the other, which also means that sometimes cases that can be categorized as settler colonialism in some respects resemble civil wars, postcolonial partitions, or national revivals in other facets.³⁹

The second reservation has to do with the particular status of Israel within this framework. With the emergence of "settler-colonial studies," there has been much debate concerning the relevance of this framework to the Israeli/Palestinian context. Some have treated it as a clear case of

- 36 This is the case even if settlement takes the form of a national identity, mostly since such societies are often migrant societies, united primarily by the territory.
- 37 Patrick Wolfe's famous formulation of settler colonialism as a "logic of elimination" is not an argument that all settler colonies are necessarily genocidal. The imperative posed by such societies is not always about death, but always about movement: the imperative on indigenous populations to move. Patrick Wolfe, Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event (London: Cassell, 1999). For the colonial histories and the limits of the concept of dispossession, as well as for the possibility of reclaiming it in radical struggles for decolonization, see Robert Nichols, Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, forthcoming).
- With Ariella Azoulay, we can think of this claim somewhat differently but with the same conclusion: by being *governed* as a citizen alongside noncitizens, one is "in effect exerting violence." Ariella Azoulay, "Civil Alliances—Palestine, 1947–1948," Settler Colonial Studies 4, no. 4 (2014): 416.
- 39 Ann Laura Stoler, "On Degrees of Imperial Sovereignty," Public Culture 18, no. 1 (2006): 125-46.

settler colonialism, if not one of the primary players in the comparative playing field of the discipline.⁴⁰ Others pointed to the limitations of this paradigm—for Israel as well as for other geopolitical contexts.⁴¹ Given the

- 40 A special issue of the journal Settler Colonial Studies (as well as many other essays in it throughout the years) was dedicated to examining this paradigm in relation to Israel/Palestine. For the analytical and political benefits of applying the category "settler colonialism" to the Israeli case, see Omar Salamanca, Mezna Qato, Kareem Rabie, and Sobhi Samour, "Past Is Present: Settler Colonialism in Palestine," Settler Colonial Studies 2, no. 1 (2012): 1-8. See also other papers in that volume. One of the first accounts of Israel as a settler-colonial state is Maxime Rodinson's Israel: A Colonial-Settler State? (New York: Monad Press, 1973). However, as Patrick Wolfe notes, despite its title, this book does not think about settler colonialism in particular, but about colonialism as such. For Wolfe's account of how this book has shaped his understanding of settler colonialism, see Patrick Wolfe, "New Jews for Old: Settler State Formation and the Impossibility of Zionism: In Memory of Edward W. Said," Arena Journal 37/38 (2012): 285-321. Wolfe dedicated a significant segment of his comparative account of settler colonialism to the Israeli case, marking it as a settler-colonialism case par excellence (see Traces of History). Just as important, the paradigm has given language to resistance and the imagination of new horizons, particularly among Palestinians who are citizens of Israel, since it allowed for a shift from the discourse of "peace process," "conflict management," or even "occupation" to a language of decolonization that assumes the need to account for the mode of governance also within the 1948 borders.
- 41 For the limits of this paradigm in this context, see Rachel Busbridge, "Israel-Palestine and the Settler Colonial 'Turn': From Interpretation to Decolonization," Theory, Culture and Society 35, no. I (January 2018): 91-115, which also provides a comprehensive review of the settlercolonialism literature in relation to the Israeli/Palestinian context. Some have called for thinking within other frameworks, such as apartheid (e.g., Abigail B. Bakan and Yasmeen Abu-Laban, "Israel/Palestine, South Africa and the 'One-State Solution': The Case for an Apartheid Analysis," Politikon 37, nos. 2-3 [2010]: 331-51; Hilla Dayan, "Regimes of Separation: Israel/Palestine and the Shadow of Apartheid," in The Power of Inclusive Exclusion: Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, ed. Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni, and Sari Hanafi [New York: Zone, 2009], 281-322); ethnocracy (Oren Yiftachel, Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006]); or simply colonialism (Derek Gregory, The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq [Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005]). Lorenzo Veracini argued that while the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is a colonial project, within the 1948 borders it is a settler-colonial one ("The Other Shift: Settler Colonialism, Israel, and the Occupation," Journal of Palestine Studies 42, no. 2 [winter 2013]: 26-42). Others have rejected these critiques altogether, insisting that Zionism is a national project. Between these approaches, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin argued that "we must rid ourselves of the tendency to think in terms of the dichotomy colonialism/nationalism, which often dominates the discussion of the Zionist consciousness," not just because the term colonial seems to entail "a total delegitimating" and "the term 'national' [presumably] justifie[s] anything," but also because, as Raef Zreik notes, both historically and conceptually, Zionism has always entailed both dimensions—the national and the settler colonial. Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, "Exile, History, and the Nationalization of

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first reservation, I have no stakes in arguing that Israel falls or does not fall within the parameters of this paradigm. I nevertheless use it, despite these limits, since—to follow Raef Zreik's useful formulation—in its "praxis and tools," Zionism follows the structure of settler colonialism: "Its takeover of the land, its dream of the disappearance of the native, the importance it allocates to the frontier, its expanding nature and the stories that it tells itself about the land as being terra nullius all match the settler-colonial paradigm." This is even though, as Zreik himself contends, Zionism was at the same time a national movement, a revival of a nation in what was—and still is—seen as its own homeland.

Finally, a conceptual clarification is required. In the Israeli context, the term *settler* is most often used to designate someone living beyond the Green Line, primarily in the West Bank. However, if we think within the framework of settler colonialism, then at least schematically, all Jews in Israel fall under this category. There are several ways in which this categorization can—and should—be problematized. Elsewhere, with Yuval Evri, I do some of this work of problematization in regard to Palestinian Jews (who were natives of the land)⁴³ and others have done so as well, particularly in regard to Mizrahi Jews.⁴⁴ But the work of this book progresses primarily through figures, and the detailed historical work that such problematization necessitates will not be done here.

Jewish Memory: Some Reflections on the Zionist Notion of History and Return," *Journal of Levantine Studies* 3, no. 2 (winter 2013): note 43; Raef Zreik, "Leumit ve colonialit" [National and colonial], *Ha'aretz*, July 21, 2015, https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/.premium-1.2688934.

⁴² Raef Zreik, "When Does a Settler Become a Native? (With Apologies to Mamdani)," *Constellations* 23, no. 3 (2016): 359.

⁴³ Yuval Evri and Hagar Kotef, "When Does a Native Become a Settler?," Constellations (forthcoming).

⁴⁴ Unlike Palestinian Jews—who have been living in Palestine during, and sometimes before, the Ottoman Empire, and were considered as natives by themselves as well as by their fellow Muslim and Christian Palestinians and the authorities, Mizrahi Jews is a term usually serving to mark those who immigrated to Israel, often after 1948. However, because they came from Arab-speaking countries and had been an integral part of the Middle East and the Ottoman Empire, Jews from North Africa and the Middle East ("Mizrahi") are often seen as part of a different logic and structure of immigration and placement, if not the victims of Zionism as a European/settler project. See, for example, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, "Zionist Return to the West and the Mizrachi Jewish Perspective," in *Orientalism and the Jews*, ed. Ivan Kalmar and Derek Penslar (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2005), 162–81; Ella Shohat, "Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of Its Jewish Victims," *Social Text* 19/20 (autumn 1988): 1–35.

A Note on Exile (and Politics)

If Zionism can be defined as a negation of exile⁴⁵ and a construction of an exclusively Jewish homeland, and if the outcome of this return from exile is destruction, would the key to justice be exile, a refusal of a home that has become a tool of dispossession?⁴⁶ Within a state of left-wing despair, some have advocated this as the political solution. But within a global regime in which modes of both mobility and stability are radically differentiated,⁴⁷ there are political and ethical risks involved in romanticizing exile. Sara Ahmed questions, as a mode of warning, whether exile and other modes of nomadic and diasporic existence are the coherent choices of the "one that can do so, because the world is already constituted as their home." "Is this," she further asks, "an example of movement as a form of privilege rather than transgression, a movement that is itself predicated on the translation of the collective and forced movements of others into an act of individual and free choice?"⁴⁸

Alternatively, one could advocate exile not as a concrete call, say, for the Jews to leave Israel/Palestine (a call, we must note, that takes the form of ethnic cleansing), but as a conceptual tool that allows a reorganization of political life. Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin proposes to think of exile not as "the opposition to homeland, but [as] a sensitivity that leads towards a process of decolonization that includes Jews and Arabs alike, in which Jews limit their rights in order to create the space for a Palestinian existence, while Palestinians recognize Jewish existence." Such a concept "may become the starting point for thinking about alternatives to partitions, as well as the idea of the nation state, without ignoring national differences." This imagining of political exile will not be a romanticization of what Said saw as "the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home," but rather, and still after Said, a way of thinking of a

- 45 For a complex analysis of this rejection, see Raz-Krakotzkin, "Exile, History."
- 46 For such a call, see Daniel Boyarin, A Traveling Homeland: The Babylonian Talmud as Diaspora (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Judith Butler, Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); and Arendt, to whom we shall return. For a contemporary call for Jewish/Israeli diasporic existence as part of a growing despair in the Israeli left, as well as its critique, see Michal Givoni, "Indifference and Repetition: Occupation Testimonies and Left-Wing Despair," Cultural Studies 33, no. 4 (2019): 595–631.
- 47 See, for example, Tim Cresswell, On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World (New York: Routledge, 2006); Kotef, Movement.
- 48 Ahmed, "Home and Away," 335.
- 49 Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, "Exile and Binationalism: From Gershom Scholem and Hannah Arendt to Edward Said and Mahmoud Darwish" (Carl Heinrich Becker Lecture, Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Berlin, 2012), 129.

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shared condition of displacement from which another politics can emerge.⁵⁰ Not a negation of home, but a way of envisioning "political principles that are derived from the diasporic conditions that must also, as it were, be brought home." Such a concept of exile could become, in Butler's words, "an internal criticism of the national, if not a set of qualifications and safeguards that inhere in any possible nation." In times in which, as Adorno famously put it, "it is part of morality not to be at home in one's home" (and were there ever any other times?), would this advocation of exile not be a preferred political solution?⁵³

Perhaps. But, again following Ahmed, it may be that by thinking of exile conceptually we are, once more, engaging in a romanticizing move in which the nomads, the exiled, "come to perform a particular kind of theoretical work, to represent something other than themselves." Can one think concretely about exile as a condition that can be employed to organize the political communities at home, as it were? Can one do so in ways that fracture the modes of entrenched, exclusive nationalism but do not further fracture the subject, already in "a discontinuous state of being" generated by displacement? S

Perhaps. But in this book, rather than focusing on shared models of diasporic homemaking or the Jewish sense of rebuilding a home postdiaspora, I ask about the meeting point of these two homes—the Palestinian and the Jewish Israeli—as part of an effort to understand how the destruction of homes (of Palestinians) becomes constitutive of the construction of homes: of the construction of Israel as a national home, of the establishment of houses for Israelis to reside in, and of the sense of attachment to territory that is formative of identities. Thinking about this connection urges us to think of the home's absence not as another possible definition of homes (as in the case of diasporic models of homemaking) but as a condition that subtends the being—the presence—of some homes. This again places the conceptualization of home within an analytic of violence, or makes home the embodiment of such an analytic.

- 51 J. Butler, Parting Ways, 208.
- 52 J. Butler, Parting Ways, 209.
- Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*: *Reflections on a Damaged Life* (London: Verso Books, 2005), 39.
- 54 Ahmed, "Home and Away," 334.
- 55 Said, Reflections on Exile, 177.
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⁵⁰ Edward W. Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 171.

Structure and Main Arguments

The Colonizing Self is composed of three main chapters and six shorter "satellites" organized in three parts. Before each of the main chapters, a brief interlude opens the particular question of the chapter to a different context—sometimes, the interlude examines a different case of settler colonialism; at other times, it serves to offer a different departing point for the main chapter. The goal of these interludes is to gesture toward other domains to which the argument is relevant, even though I cannot fully develop these other directions here. After each chapter, an epilogue offers an analysis of one of the core problems that surfaced in the main chapter. These are more structural interventions, focusing on specific questions the main chapters opened up but did not fully address.

AFTER THIS INTRODUCTION, a theoretical overview sets the ground for my main question concerning the relations between violence and identity. It attempts to map the primary models within which these relations are conceptualized in existing literature, and marks the main theoretical lacuna this book seeks to address. These models are going to be unpacked throughout the book and guide its inquiry.

PART I: HOMES

A home—and identity—that is built on the dispossession (the destruction) of others encapsulates a structure of belonging that is not limited to Israel. Rather than a comparative analysis of settler colonies and their construction of home (which is undoubtedly of value), part I, "Homes," returns to some key moments in political theory to show the conceptual foundations for this book's inquiry. Specifically, I argue that the kind of political self that is formed within a specific theory in which home is the basic unit of analysis is ontologically dependent on violence.

The interlude, "Home/Homelessness," works primarily with Arendt to foreground two claims: (i) Despite an effort to allocate "home" to a separate, nonpolitical sphere, homemaking appears to be foundational in a significant part of the history of political thought, and "Man" emerges as a domestic animal. The ability to sustain a political community is thus seen as a function of sedentary qualities. (ii) Within these texts, the concept of home is narrowed down to particular (European) models. Given (i), this narrowing means that this tradition can see only some subjects as fully human. This global distribution of homelessness and entitlement to homes will be mapped onto the

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Israeli/Palestinian context in the following chapters. The main chapter of part I, "The Consuming Self: On Locke, Aristotle, Feminist Theory, and Domestic Violences," looks at the concept of home as it materializes in three moments in political theory: Aristotle's theory of politics, feminist theory's critique of domesticity, and Locke's theory of property. The latter is the focus of that chapter, since it works at the essential converging point of liberalism and settler colonialism. Drawing on Carole Pateman's famous reading in *The Sexual Contract*, according to which it is the family, rather than the individual, that "contracts in," I argue that the basic property-making unit shifts throughout chapter 5 of the *Second Treatise* (the chapter on property). Whereas it begins with the individual body, over the course of the chapter Locke carries it to the household. The household thus appears as the basic political unit, rather than the individual or even Pateman's couple.

My reading of Locke does not merely serve to introduce the home to the core of political theory; it also demonstrates that the Lockean individual had strong expansionist tendencies. This understanding of the expansionist drive at the foundation of liberal subjectivity establishes the basis for the analysis of settler colonialism that is to follow. Moreover, since the household can materialize as a property-making unit in Locke only via enclosure, and since its paradigmatic means of expansion is agriculture, the link to the analysis of organic agriculture in the West Bank (part III) is fully made.

Part I ends with an epilogue titled "Unsettlement," which situates the analysis in the particular space of Israel/Palestine. The epilogue problematizes some of the framings of this book in order to show the multiple positions and possible trajectories that will be sidelined by the focus of my argument. Marking those is necessary not only as part of demarcating the wider picture, but also since this plurality entails alternative political possibilities to the trajectory this book tracks. It thereby also lays bare some of the methodological frames employed in my analysis of homemaking in Israel/Palestine, and as such serves as an introduction of sorts to parts II and III. Thus, even readers less interested in the more theoretical discussion, who may prefer to skip Part I and focus their reading on the more concrete discussion of Israel/Palestine, should probably begin with this brief chapter.

PART II: RELICS

Part II, "Relics," opens with a reading of Lorraine Hansberry's *Les Blancs*. This interlude, "A Brief Reflection on Death and Decolonization," focuses on notions of home among the settler figures in the play and asks about the prospects of decolonization given their modes of attachment to territory. Since the play is

situated in an imaginary African country, this reading also opens a path to a comparative analysis vis-à-vis chapter 2. Chapter 2, "Home (and the Ruins That Remain)," looks into identities that are shaped when one's own sense of belonging is saturated with the violence of the past. Focusing on Jewish Israelis who made homes in depopulated Palestinian homes, the chapter develops a model of wounded attachments (following Wendy Brown) to the violence undergirding political belonging. It may be questioned to what degree this attachment is indeed an attachment to violence: Those who live in the ruins of others often do not experience their lives as violent, and those who look at the landscape dotted with half-standing houses may not see it as a remnant of violence. There is here an attachment to a home, a land, but not, one may argue, to the violence that made the former possible, even if such violence was a necessary element of colonization. To address this potential reservation, the epilogue, "A Phenomenology of Violence: Ruins," provides a typology of the violence that is nonetheless there. It is there as a residue that cannot be erased; it is there as a trace that still carries elements of the violent past; it is there in the clash between temporalities of those for whom violence is indeed in the past and those who still experience it as their everyday. The chapter provides a phenomenological map of these modes of violence in order to peel apart—but also weave together—the different forms of violence with which this book engages.

PART III: SETTLEMENT

Part III, "Settlement," moves to the West Bank. Thus, whereas part II focuses on those who inherited the colonized space they came to inhabit, part III looks at the act of colonization as it takes place. Nevertheless, the divisions between the arguments developed in part II and those developed in part III are not necessarily superimposed on the 1948/1967 division. These lines of division are questioned at the end of chapter 3, and feature here only for the sake of clarity and simplification.

Part III presents two stories of two homes in the West Bank, both revolving around the production of food, as an element of domesticity. It begins with an interlude, "A Moment of Popular Culture: The Home of *MasterChef*," that introduces the concept of home in the West Bank through a brief engagement with the Israeli franchise of the popular reality show *MasterChef*. The show's seventh season included a settler from the evicted outpost Amona among its contestants. I follow the way this contender won over the hearts of the Israeli mainstream through this show. His story of loss and homelessness joins the politics of food to provide an account of the normalization of settlements in Israel today. This politics of food remains central to the main chapter of this

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part, chapter 3: "On Eggs and Dispossession: Organic Agriculture and the New Settlement Movement." Focusing on one extreme outpost in the West Bank called Giv'ot Olam, it analyzes a process of homemaking in which violence and dispossession are ongoing practices. Giv'ot Olam was the forerunner of the new settlement movement that is often referred to as "hilltop youth": a movement aimed at grabbing more land by building illegal outposts outside established settlements. Giv'ot Olam is also, as aforementioned, the largest organic farm in Israel and the largest supplier of organic, free-range eggs in the country. Examining both the ethics of organic food and the material conditions of organic agriculture (land resources, waste, and water), I show how a home is created as a dispositional tool within an ethical scheme. This chapter also tracks the story of the Palestinian village Yanun, which has been almost completely abandoned following constant harassment and severe attacks from Giv'ot Olam's settlers. The epilogue, "An Ethic of Violence: Organic Washing," returns to the question of violence's visibility that is key to the theoretical overview and part II. It asks whether the scheme of organic agriculture sustains settlements' violence by enveloping it with a language of justice and care (toward animals or the earth) that hides violence from sight ("washes" it in green politics). Based on the ethnographic work of chapter 3, the epilogue concludes the book by arguing that we need to find an alternative account, one that shows not how people deny their violence to sustain it, but how life with violence is embraced.

THE THREE MAIN CHAPTERS at the heart of each part thus offer a certain historical journey. I begin with the imaginary past of settler colonialism (chapter 1), move to a more recent history of Israel/Palestine (chapter 2), and end by looking at the present-day West Bank (chapter 3).56 Yet this chronology is not strictly kept. It presents a present that can be dated to the past, and a past that still lingers in the present, in order to show the ontologies and fractured histories of the settler-colonial project.

Chapter 2 is "historical" not just because it focuses on the homes depopulated in 1948, but also because it represents a position that is becoming less dominant in Israel. In the last decade or so, Israel's attitude toward its own violence has dramatically changed. Though such changes are always fractured, never linear, and appear gradually and unevenly across society-and hence dating them is a somewhat problematic exercise—this change occurred sometime after the 2006 Lebanon War. It was first clearly manifested in Gaza in

56 I thank reviewer number 2 for this observation.

2009. Chapter 2 marks this trajectory from selves who are truly undone by their own violence, who cannot inhabit life once they realize the destruction that this inhabitation generates, to selves who "shoot and cry"—the famous formulation that comes to mark "crying" as both a token paid so that violence can continue and a way of indulging one's own pain when confronted with the suffering one causes to others—and, finally, to selves who do not even cry after shooting, who "shoot and do not apologize," 57 who fully own their violence and no longer come undone by it. Nevertheless, the subjects featured in chapter 2 are not perpetrators in the classic formulations, but rather those defined by Robbins as structural beneficiaries or by Rothberg as implicated subjects:⁵⁸ They are those who "occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm," who "contribute to, inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes."59 Their relations to violence accordingly remain more ambivalent than what we see in chapter 3.

In a similar yet mirrored vein, chapter 3 is "contemporary," not just because it depicts the current settlement movement in the West Bank but also because it depicts most clearly the aforementioned nonconflictual approach to violence that is becoming more dominant in Israeli public discourse. It represents, in this sense, a wider tendency in Israel to steer away from the liberal-democratic facets of the state project and more openly embrace its nationalist-settler facets. And yet this chapter, too, is "historical," in the sense that the positions and patterns of settlement it describes have been typical to the project of settling Israel from the very outset. The juxtaposition of chapters 2 and 3 is, accordingly, not a claim that West Bank settlers (the protagonists of part III) inhabit this violent position whereas liberal Zionists within the 1948 borders (the protagonists of part II) do not. My point is precisely that in the historical trajectories this book marks, both positions come to inhabit violence in non- (or less) conflictual ways, albeit differently.

57 To paraphrase the election slogan of the Jewish Home Party from the 2014 campaign. I elaborate on this formulation at the end of chapter 2.

⁵⁸ Robbins, Beneficiary; Rothberg, Implicated Subject.

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