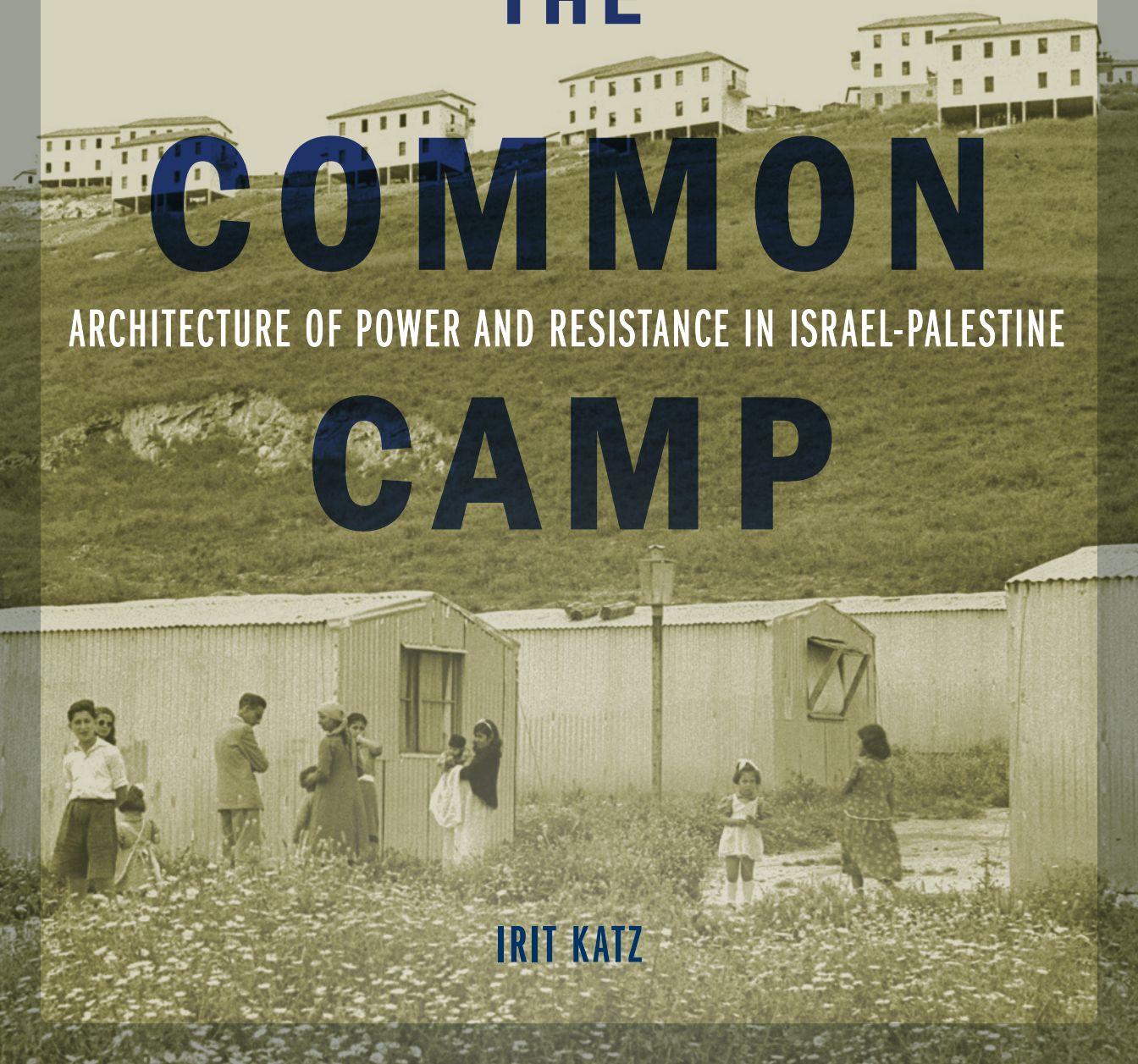


THE

COMMON

ARCHITECTURE OF POWER AND RESISTANCE IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE

CAMP



IRIT KATZ

THE COMMON CAMP

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THE COMMON CAMP

Architecture of Power and
Resistance in Israel–Palestine

IRIT KATZ



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The University of Minnesota is an equal-opportunity educator and employer.

We can no longer afford to take that which was good in the past and simply call it our heritage, to discard the bad and simply think of it as a dead load which by itself time will bury in oblivion. The subterranean stream of Western history has finally come to the surface and usurped the dignity of our tradition. This is the reality in which we live.

—Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Where there is power, there is resistance.

—Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*

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PREFACE

In the early years of the twenty-first century, the residents of the Bedouin unrecognized village Tarabin al-Sana were protesting against the plans of the neighboring Omer, my hometown, to expand over the lands on which they had lived for decades. It was clear that the violent clashes, which were followed by the eventual eviction of the village, could not be considered a single event. Rather, the events were part of Israel's ongoing approach to the tens of thousands of Bedouin living in the Negev unrecognized villages, suspending them there with no infrastructures or services and under a constant threat of expulsions and house demolitions, rendering them ever temporary and therefore ever displaceable.

As I grew up in the Negev and studied architecture in Jerusalem, it began to be apparent that spatial temporariness and violence are linked in both political aspects and spatial practices. Studying the destructive assaults inflicted by Israel on the Palestinian refugee camps in the second intifada and the invasiveness of the Israeli settler outposts that were erected not far from them made it evident that these environments were connected not only in political and territorial terms but also through architectural and material actions in which extreme force was intertwined with inherently temporary realities.

The research for this book evolved over two decades. During that time, new forms of similar spatial realities continued to be created by actors on all sides of the political spectrum, employing prefabricated or makeshift structures and swift construction. They have resonated not only with one another but also with the complex history of many other types of camps and temporary spaces created in the area in the past, such as Zionist settler camps and immigrant transit camps, some of which are long gone, while others have changed shape and function. While the differences between these spaces and their particular temporal and political realities were obvious, their commonness, it became clear, is deeply rooted in the spatial and political modus operandi that reshaped and still is shaping Palestine and Israel over the past century. The research has developed with the intention

to understand this reality in Israel–Palestine and, through it, to investigate the spatiopolitical meaning of the camp.

This book was formed and facilitated thanks to the support of many. I owe my deep gratitude to those who contributed to it, either directly or indirectly, through stimulating conversations, correspondences, and debates, and to those who generously supported me along the way with their encouragement and guidance. I am deeply indebted to Wendy Pullan, who supervised my PhD, for her uncompromising intellectual sincerity. I am also thankful to Haim Yacobi, who first encouraged me to study the case of Tarabin and Omer back in architecture school, for his support and friendship. To Ariella Aïsha Azoulay and Adi Ophir, who first introduced me to Giorgio Agamben in my hermeneutical and cultural studies, I am grateful for providing the intellectual foundations for this work. I was fortunate to be their student. I am also obliged to Oren Yiftachel for urging me to quit my job as a practicing architect in London in favor of pursuing this research and for our continuous conversations.

I have had the privilege of working with great colleagues at the University of Cambridge, the London School of Economics, and the University of Sheffield, which created an invaluable intellectual community that significantly contributed to the development of my thinking. I am particularly grateful to Ash Amin, Suzanne Hall, Michele Lancione, and Max Sternberg for their intellectual support and friendship. I am also indebted to academics working on the spatial and political meanings of the camp, with whom I was privileged to discuss and test my ideas, including Claudio Minca and Diana Martin while coediting *Camps Revisited*, as well as Adam Ramadan, Romola Sanyal, Nando Sigona, Simon Turner, Fatina Abreek-Zubiedat, Camillo Boano, Silvia Pasquetti, Giovanni Picker, Roy Kozlovsky, and Aya Musmar. Special thanks to Diane Davis, James Sidaway, Duncan Bell, Ariel Handel, Matthew White, Mansour Nasasra, and Ronnie Ellenblum, who were all a great source of intellectual engagement and encouragement.

I thank my editor, Pieter Martin, the editorial team at the University of Minnesota Press, and the book's two reviewers for their constructive comments; all were invaluable in the transformation of this project into a book. In Israel–Palestine, I am grateful to all those in Yeruham, Rakhma, and other camps and related urban contexts investigated in this book, who gave their time and stories, and to all the NGO activists, state officials, planners, architects, archivists, and everyone who agreed to contribute their crucial perspectives to this project.

This work was generously supported by Kettle's Yard, University of Pennsylvania's Perry World House, Paul Mellon Centre, the Anglo–Israel Association, and Girton College's Graduate Scholarship Awards, with special thanks to Girton Fellows Frances Gandy and Peter Sparks for their help and support. The academic awards this project received along the way, including the SAH/Mellon Author

award, the RIBA President's Award for Research, the Ben Halpern AIS award, and the SAHGB Morris Prize, were of great encouragement.

My family was the true force that made this book possible. I cannot thank them enough for always being interested and involved and for encouraging me in every possible way. This book is dedicated to my parents, Shoshana and Avraham Katz, with great appreciation, and in memory of my mother, who supported me in the difficult stages of this journey. Finally, my endless love to Alma and Ari, who fill my life with happiness: thank you for reminding me what the most important and urgent things are. And last, to Ze'ev, for our endless discussions since the very beginning of this project, which crossed with us cities and countries.

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GLOSSARY

- Aliyah:** The immigration of Diaspora Jews to the Land of Israel
- Ashkenazi Jews (plural, Ashkenazim):** Jews who originate from Europe
- Eretz Yisrael:** The Land of Israel (biblical term)
- frena (plural, frenot):** A Moroccan outdoor mud oven (similar to a Tabun/Taboon clay oven)
- hamula:** Extended family, which plays a vital role in Arab communities
- kibbutz and moshav (plural, kibbutzim and moshavim):** Israeli agricultural settlements based on cooperative communities
- Likud:** The major right-wing political party in Israel
- ma'abara (plural, ma'abarot):** Temporary transit camps for Jewish immigrants erected in Israel in the early 1950s during the mass-immigration period
- mahanot olim:** Jewish immigrant camps in Israel established in former British military camps at the beginning of the mass-immigration period
- Mapai:** A former left-wing political party in Israel (acronym for Hebrew Laborers Party of the Land of Israel) founded in the prestate period, later merged with the Israeli Labor Party
- mawat:** Dead land; a type of land tenure in the Ottoman Empire that was later adopted by Israel; similar to *terra nullius*, it is considered as empty land owned by no one, which therefore belongs to the state
- Mizrahi Jews (plural, Mizrahim):** Jews who originate from Muslim-majority countries (in the Middle East, North Africa, and so on)
- Nahal:** Acronym for *Noar Halutzi Lohem*, “pioneer combatant youth”
- Nakba:** (catastrophe); the destruction of Palestinian homeland and society and the permanent displacement of most of the Palestinians in 1948
- Olim (singular, Ole):** Jewish immigrants to the Land of Israel
- p'zura:** Term used by Israeli authorities to refer to unrecognized Negev Bedouin settlements (Hebrew for “scattering”)
- shig:** The main Bedouin tent (or part of a tent) used for hospitality

- siyag/siyaj:** The restricted zone under military rule created for the Negev Bedouin, to which many were transferred during and after the 1948 war (Hebrew and Arabic for “fence” or “enclosure”)
- sumud:** An Arabic term for “steadfastness” or “steadfast perseverance,” denoting a political strategy of remaining on the land to prevent its occupation by others
- Yishuv:** The Jews who lived in Palestine (Eretz Yisrael) before Israel’s establishment (Hebrew for “settlement”)

Abbreviations

- HCJ:** High Court of Justice
- IDF:** Israeli Defense Force
- IDP:** internally displaced person
- JDC:** American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (Jewish humanitarian organization)
- JNF:** Jewish National Fund
- PLO:** Palestine Liberation Organization
- RCUV:** Regional Council for Unrecognized Bedouin Villages, a political advocacy group that represents the interests of the Bedouin in the unrecognized villages
- UNRWA:** UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

INTRODUCTION

The Common Camp

Of the human settlements that have been formed over the centuries—villages, towns, cities—camps are considered a peculiar spatial entity. Whether they are erected as institutional spaces of detention or as makeshift spaces of refuge, camps are perceived as temporary environments that are created rapidly to respond to a specific situation and are expected to vanish as soon as that reality changes and things return to normal. Yet as some camps indeed appear and disappear swiftly and others exist for long periods of time, the multifaceted entity of the camp continues to emerge as a persistent space by which modern societies and political relations are managed and sometimes reworked. While most of us live in built environments that form the stable and predictable settings for our mundane activities, other people are torn from or disengage themselves from such a prosaic reality, living in situations that are transient and ephemeral. Camps are an inseparable part of the unstable realities created by forced displacement, colonial occupations, or acts of resistance and protest. They are often created ad hoc as spatial instruments, as means to an end to handle an urgent need or a change in a particular reality; they could also be created as pure means for political action or gesture; and they are also created as ends in themselves, as spatial voids that swallow and contain unresolved situations that stand at the core of modern politics. Once formed, camps are frequently suspended as spaces with no clear future, separated from their social and spatial surroundings, yet these spatial enclaves often do not remain still but, rather, dynamically stretch and transform as everyday needs and political demands are materialized and enacted through their spaces. While refugee, detention, and protest camps differ substantially in their functions, spatial forms, and modes of creation and organization, and while camps are often perceived as ambivalent sites of care and control, agency and oppression, temporariness and endurance, formality and informality, separation and connectivity, they are at the

same time recognized as various manifestations of the same ever-present spatial-political paradigm, one that is an important aspect of how we live today.

Over the past two decades, much has been written about the “return of the camp,” mainly in relation to the post-9/11 “war on terror” and the global proliferation of camps that form part of the current migration age.¹ The camp as a space where civilian populations are contained en masse, however, had already appeared in the colonies as early as the nineteenth century and has not disappeared since. It was used extensively during the twentieth century, which will be remembered, as famously stated by Zygmunt Bauman, as the “Century of Camps.”² In Israel–Palestine, camps were and still are commonly used to facilitate and resist the significant geopolitical changes of the twentieth century, most of them related to the Zionist and Israeli settlement and nation-building processes and to the Palestinian mass displacement they caused. Indeed, Israel–Palestine forms an extensive laboratory of camps, containing settler camps, immigrant camps, refugee camps, internally displaced person (IDP) camps, protest camps, and detention camps, which were created, sometimes changed, and often disappeared over the past century. As in other colonial, national, and postcolonial global settings of human movement and its restriction, where the camp was and still is extensively employed as a versatile instrument for transforming and controlling lands and populations, in Israel–Palestine camps form the *modus operandi* for responding to the drastic geopolitical changes the area has undergone and is still undergoing.

As prevalent as they are, however, camps seem to be everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Their disturbing images constantly appear in the news or rise from the archives as spaces that both constitute and represent urgent realities of crisis, emergency, expediency, and political turmoil, yet they remain distant and hidden from everyday environments and are rarely seen outside the reports of the media. Camps create flickering spatial entities that appear, transform, and disappear according to changing realities, and their patterns are therefore tricky to identify. As extraterritorial and extratemporal spaces existing on the outskirts and borderlands of cities and states, they are perceived as leftover temporary abject sites outside the perpetuity of ordinary environments and realities. They are also typically pushed to the edge of the architectural discourse, remaining in the periphery of discussions on modern built environments and on the architecture of modernity. Yet camps form intense sites of direct institutional power and of modes of resistance that are central to the way our modern built environments were and still are formed and to the way modern architecture was and still is being designed and created.

As a shadow that constantly follows modern life, camps are extensively employed by both authoritarian regimes and contemporary democracies as instruments of custody, containment, and abandonment. As such, camps are mainly analyzed as devices of power, created by, and mostly for, populations stripped

of their basic rights, spaces that are managed outside society and ordinary state apparatuses in order to maintain, in Liisa Malkki's words, the "national order of things."³ However, the camp is not only a space where powerless people are contained; while many camps are indeed inhabited by weakened populations excluded by stronger powers, others were and still are inhabited by and used by the strong as instruments to gain and extend control over desired territories. In addition, camps may also be transformed by their residents into platforms for their political struggles. If, as Walter Benjamin wrote, "there is no document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism," then extreme spatial brutality would share the realm of architecture as a cultural product whose violence is often justified by political agendas in the guise of professional intentions.⁴ For modern architecture, the camp would be one of the most visible manifestations of this spatial violence, whether as a space inflicting violence or as an instrument used to resist it.

The word "camp" is etymologically derived from Latin *campus*, related to an empty space, a plain, or a field. Camps are indeed created on unoccupied areas, often with the open field remaining between their temporary structures, ready to return to its previous unpopulated condition. As such, at least in their initial creation, camps are not inherently related to the area where they appear; they are *in* a particular space but not *of* the space they occupy. "To camp" is also a verb, and camps could also be seen as an action, a space that is also a practice formed and performed as a temporary event in which certain people (or materials or powers) camp and move on, maintaining fluid positions while sometimes permanently changing the realities around them. Importantly, the word "camp" is also about a group of people collectively defined around a particular idea. Camps are therefore also about social, political, and other imposed or self-defined identities and the struggle over and against them. As such, camps seem to combine a field (space), an action (event), and possibly also a particular group (identity) by or around which they are formed. In Hebrew, the word "camp," *mahane* (מַחֲנֶה), means both a place of temporary and often collective inhabitation, where tents or ephemeral structures are erected, and also a group of people who make up one side of a debate or argument. It is derived from the stem verb *hana* (חָנָה), meaning to temporarily park in one place. In Arabic the most prevalent word for "camp" is *mukhayyam* (مُخَيَّم), a name for a place that is installed for a specific purpose, often for an unclear duration. It is derived from the stem verb *khayam* (خَيَّمَ), meaning "he/she installed a tent," a verb with the meaning of often-collective inhabitation.⁵

Rather than being regarded as mere spaces, camps are seen here as purposeful and collectively populated spaces that are also identified and defined through the element of time as spatial events or actions. They are created and endure between the empty, the occupied, and the no-longer-occupied; between arriving, claiming,

moving on, or remaining for an unforeseen period; between the ephemeral, the suspended, and the potentially permanent. This spatial flexibility, however, which could be seen as potent (as much as unpredictable) in specific circumstances, also brings with it stretched situations of prolonged suspension, with their diverse affects ranging from uncertainty and fear to hope and agentic forms of waiting.

“The common camp” is a term that pulls the camp out of its marginal position, establishing it as a common space at the center of the way modern politics is shaped and organized. The camp is common because it is prevalent; it is common in the sense of being widespread despite efforts to make it invisible. In Israel–Palestine’s ongoing state of exception, the camp is indeed so common that it has almost become an ordinary, typical space. The camp is also common in the sense of being a joint phenomenon that influences many, a sort of a spatial common denominator that links varied ethnic groups, historic periods, and political actions. While the meaning of the word “camp” itself indicates separation, the fact that it is used by or for so many groups of people makes it in some sense a common ground of segregation and exclusion—either willingly generated from within or imposed from the outside. This term could be looked at as the other side of the Hobbesian Commonwealth:⁶ while Hobbes’s term means a political organization of people under one sovereign, “the common camp” implies a variety of social, spatial, and political separations and different kinds of exclusion enacted by or on different people by the same multifaceted tool, where some people might create the subversive space of what Stefano Harney and Fred Moten call “the undercommons.”⁷ Camps, however, not only separate but also sometimes create new common spaces within themselves, new commons where unique alliances and political subjectivities evolve, often through the intrinsic and dynamic creation of the camp’s space itself. The various types of camps created over the years in Israel–Palestine allow us to reinterpret and conceptualize the spatial vocabulary of the camp and its political meaning while also illuminating new aspects of the constantly evolving global reality of camp spaces.

The Spatiopolitical Mechanism of the Camp

Camps have multifaceted spatial features that appear in highly rationalized institutional spaces and in self-made, makeshift environments, both often created to provide the bare minimum for their residents. Institutional camps created for civilians are incarnations of a distinct disciplinary facility: the military camp, originally designed to manage a specific population—soldiers—in a strict, controlled manner. The basic blueprint of the military camp and military technologies of containment were appropriated in the nineteenth century in the colonies and later in Europe and worldwide for the mass control and care of people in a va-

riety of famine camps, plague camps, concentration camps, and refugee camps.⁸ “Apparently nobody wants to know that contemporary history has created a new kind of human being—the kind that are put in concentration camps by their foes and in internment camps by their friends,” reflected Hannah Arendt in her 1943 essay “We Refugees” on the tight connection between concentration camps and camps where refugees were contained out of sight and out of mind.⁹ The camp, reflected Arendt later, “was the only ‘country’ the world had to offer the stateless” and “the only practical substitute for a nonexistent homeland.”¹⁰

Concentration camps and refugee camps use the same techniques, addressing the minimal aspects of the biological lives of those contained in the camp, providing basic needs such as food, shelter, hygiene, and security. Such techniques could prevent or create a humanitarian disaster not only within but also *by* the camp, according to the camp’s objectives and according to how this isolated and isolating space is managed. Other camps, ones that are not institutional facilities, were and still are created or altered by their inhabitants as ad hoc makeshift spaces, which sometimes urbanize. While the city and the camp are often seen as spatial entities that stand on the two sides of a “strict analytical dichotomy,” the relationship between camps and cities is often composite and entangled.¹¹ The camp’s military–civilian link and its complex connection to the city, both appearing in many forms in the camps created in Israel–Palestine, have existed since antiquity. Roman military camps were established on the principles of Roman towns; the military camp was created as “an improvised city,” in the words of the Roman historian Flavius Josephus (c. 37–95); some of those military spaces later transformed into civilian settlements, including some cities we know today, such as Vienna and Manchester.¹² Yet, importantly, the camp is not only a space but also a social and political structure defining a particular group. “Camp thinking” is the term Paul Gilroy uses to describe the fixed racial, national, and cultural categories, based on sameness, that separates humans into biological and cultural hierarchies, often leading to the separation and containment of people in actual camp spaces.¹³

“Today it is not the city but rather the camp that is the fundamental biopolitical paradigm of the West,” argued the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, whose influential theory brought the idea of “the camp” to the front lines of academic research.¹⁴ Agamben’s theory of sovereign power and the state / space of exception, presented in a number of books, particularly *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*,¹⁵ places the camp at the center of modern (bio)politics, together with the figure produced in the camp: *homo sacer*, an exposed person, or “bare life,” whose rights and social, political, and human existence are denied. Following, though not always explicitly, the observations of Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, Carl Schmitt, and Walter Benjamin about modern society, sovereignty, and politics, Agamben sees the hidden matrix of the modern political order in the incorporation of bare life into the political realm by its exclusion in the camp. For Agamben,

the Nazi camps were not a historical anomaly but, rather, an example of the thanatopolitical space of the camp as the *nomos* of the modern, where the classical Aristotelian separation between life and politics collapses and where power directly confronts stripped life in its most dehumanized form. The camp for Agamben is the fundamental (although not the only) space of exception; its particular juridico-political structure creates a place where, in Arendt's words, "everything is possible."¹⁶ Camps, contends Agamben, emerge as particular spaces where law and fact become indistinguishable whenever the central nexus of the modern nation–state—land (territory), inscribed life (nation), and order (state)—enters into an ongoing crisis.

Since its publication, Agamben's theory has become an almost-mandatory rite of passage for scholars discussing the camp, with scholarship shifting between universally and concretely embracing the theory to utterly rejecting, even condemning, it.¹⁷ Examining camps as actual spaces, scholars have highlighted particular geopolitical situations that contradict Agamben's theory, such as the fact that many camps were and still are being created outside the nation–state–territory triad, particularly in colonial and offshore contexts.¹⁸ The investigation of the camp should not be limited to the formation and function of the modern nation-state, with Arendt herself famously exposing the colonial roots of the Nazi concentration camps.¹⁹ The fortified territories and "shifting borders" that structure human movement and its spaces in the Leviathan we call the globalized world, by combining "border barriers, corridors, and transit camps," show that camps are now part of the global order both within and beyond the nation-state.²⁰ Even more importantly, Agamben's theory has been rejected for failing to consider the complex and dynamic power relations within the camp, reducing people in the camp to helpless biological beings while ignoring the resourceful ways in which their political agency and subjectivity are enacted and rearticulated in camps around the world.²¹ Yet Agamben primarily sees the camp as a *paradigm* of the contradictions of modern biopolitics,²² and abandoning the Agambenian theory completely might risk overlooking his insights into the core meaning of the camp to modern societies and political thought.

That camps are not only the spaces of *homines sacri* (that is, bare lives stripped of appropriate legal and political protection) is obvious when we consider the multifaceted camp forms and functions in the ever-growing inventory of camp spaces around us—refugee camps, holiday camps, mining camps, protest camps, detention camps—with their indeterminate and occasionally interchangeable functions.²³ Yet what links these different forms—the fact that they facilitate particular spatial practices, such as speedy creation and potentially rapid further change, either to liquidation or to further versatility—is also what makes the camp such a highly responsive political mechanism. Its rapidly created, rapidly changed, flexible spaces, with their often-tangled top-down and bottom-up formations, can be created as instruments for the immediate control of people (and lands), but they

can also be seized by inhabitants as emancipatory instruments of political agency. The political understanding of the camp, therefore, must examine it beyond a solely theoretical paradigm and embark on a genealogical account that investigates the camp from its colonial past to nation-states and locates it in the global (post)colonial present.

Architectural, material, and spatial analysis becomes crucial in such an investigation. Camps can be, at the same time, spaces of power and resistance, and this book traces how the changing political roles of these spaces are being worked out through their materiality and built worlds, but also through their metaphorical existence as the empty core of modern politics. In examining particular spatial practices and material worlds and the geopolitics that creates the camp's various and often changing taxonomies, we can decipher the meaning of the multiple spatial practices that create and transform the camp in relation to the various and occasionally changing politics that it shapes. It is important to note that architecture here is perceived not as a mere representation, symbol, or illustration of preexisting politics but, rather, as a central realm through which politics and social and cultural meanings are enacted, mediated, and reshaped through specific embodied and often performative spatial practices. This is happening in the most basic spatial registers through acts of construction and destruction, through design and its overt or hidden logistics and logics, through particular modes of use, and through symbolic value, whether in everyday spatial contexts or in history and theory. The work of architects who designed and employed camps and camp-related spaces in Israel–Palestine is discussed in this book, reframing the means and the ends of architectural projects and expertise.

While the camp is a multifaceted, versatile spatial entity, most of the attempts to understand and conceptualize it as a political space, in both theoretical and empirical investigations, focus on one type of camp, whether the concentration camp, the detention camp, or, most commonly, the refugee camp. These camps are investigated in both historical and contemporary contexts, and while they are different from one another, they share an inherent similarity: they are spaces created by stronger powers to contain specific people (insurgent colonized populations, irregular migrants, refugees). Yet camps are not created only as spaces where the strong dominate the weak, who then may or may not adjust them to meet their everyday needs and their political ambitions. From their ancient creation in the Roman world to their modern colonial uses, camps were also formed by and for military and civilian forces as spaces that enhanced their power—for example, by moving through or expanding into new territories. Considering these and other camps by and within which the political (broadly conceived as the domain of power) is enacted and reworked will enable us to further decipher the particular logic the camp represents and constitutes.

Trying to avoid an essentialist approach that ascribes necessary and common

characteristics to all camps, and at the same time aiming to better understand the camp and its workings, this book combines a genealogical and theoretical approach to interpret and conceptualize the camp in general and in Israel–Palestine in particular. Theoretically, the book situates the camp in relation to modernity, including its most prevalent political constellations: primarily colonialism and the nation-state, including their entanglements in settler societies, as well as more recent globalized political forms. As such, the camp is explored in relation to core concepts in which modern politics is grounded—namely sovereignty, including juridical and governmental orders; territory, with its particular spatial apparatuses; and people, reflecting on the national, ethnoracial, cultural, social, and ideological frameworks according to which they are divided and categorized. In addition, the rapidly changing modern material world is carefully considered as the very stuff camps are made of. These aspects enable us to locate the camp as a governmental and material force and as a spatial and human constellation that is distinct in its settings and will form a foundation to conceptualize the camp not only as a paradigm but also as a concrete space that generates specific forms of power.

Political thinking assumes a multiplicity of forms, and the camp's complex politics is examined in this book through the writings of political thinkers, including those already mentioned here, who reflect on the camp and other modern spaces as instruments and realms of power and resistance. These examinations include particular notions and theoretical accounts, such as Zygmunt Bauman's understanding of modernity as a quest for order and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conceptualization of processes of becoming minor as a way camp spaces are deterritorialized and politicized by their dwellers.²⁴ These investigations are based on and generated by actual camp spaces and architectures and by an examination of those who created, managed, and inhabited them, all functioning as the book's primary sources. Whether those sources are analyzed through spatial ethnography or archival research, they are all imbued with ontological and epistemological value that infuse their theorization.

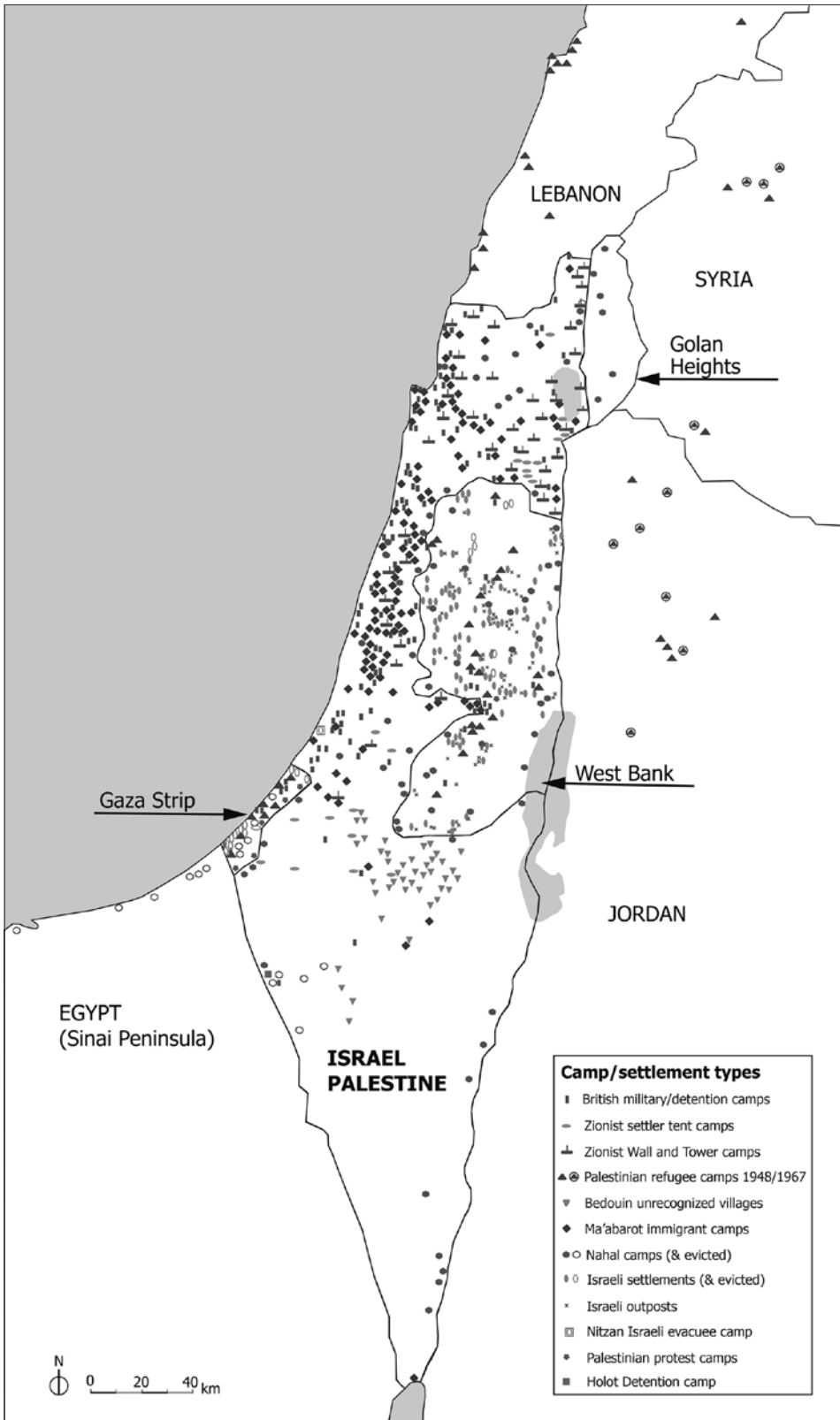
Importantly, in addition to these theoretical and empirical foundations, this book is based on a genealogical approach, enabling us to move beyond the word–concept relations and bring in things, practices, and the workings of power to gain a better understanding of what the evolving meaning of the camp is, particularly in the context of Israel–Palestine. Genealogy, perceived as the historical examination of the conditions of possibility of things being as they are, enables us to reinterrogate narratives while making legible the material, cultural, and political kinships that subtend them. This is about telling the story both backward and forward, tracing how the contemporary experiences and practices of the camp have emerged from different sources in an extended process in which their earlier modes were reinterpreted by later ones, while continuing to create multiple different outputs, some of which have been formed as this book evolved. According to Nietzsche's

reflection on genealogy, each examined phenomenon is “continually interpreted anew, requisitioned anew, transformed and redirected to a new purpose,” making the reinterpretation a conflictual process with contingent and variable outcome. “The form is fluid,” Nietzsche contends; “the ‘meaning’ [*Sinn*] even more so.”²⁵ As Foucault constantly emphasizes, genealogy “opposes itself to the search for ‘origins.’” Nor is it about imposing “a predetermined form to all its vicissitudes.”²⁶ Instead, genealogy is about acknowledging the dispersion of passing events, identifying the minute deviations, the accidents, or, conversely, the complete reversal and faulty calculations that gave birth to the things that continue to exist around us, including their ever-changing attributes and shifting and eroding meanings. Camps are spaces that often shift rapidly in function, form, and meaning in relation to historical, geopolitical, and cultural contexts, and so their genealogical explorations enable us to situate particular environments, experiences, and practices as part of the camp as a particular group not because all its members share exclusive generic characteristics, but because they stand in a particular historical relationship of reinterpretation to one another.

The Common Camp, therefore, is about how particular spaces, practices, experiences, concepts, and political implications of the camp are connected to one another through complex and overlapping processes of drift in meaning created by the shifting workings of the powers forming and interpreting them. In the settings of Israel–Palestine, the common camp is traced as the territory’s hidden gene of a spatial practice that changes, mutates, disappears, and reappears in relation to the shifting geopolitics in the area. This act of interpretation is therefore admittedly political. It uncovers latent relations intertwined with the workings of power, even if these are linked to actors, contexts, and periods that are often examined as detached and unrelated. Unavoidably, the space and concept of “the camp” here is open to interpretation and receives new meanings in relation to its multifaceted roles, settings, and changes.

The Common Camp in Israel–Palestine

Camps and temporary settlements are prevalent in Israel–Palestine. Erected ad hoc for various reasons, in diverse shapes and forms, by and for different populations and actors, some camps create rigidly organized, totally ordered spaces, and others are makeshift spaces with no apparent organizing principles. However, the continuous appearance of these camps over the last century in this territory requires further explanation of a situation of which temporariness is an enduring feature. The Palestinian refugee camps erected following the 1948 Arab–Israeli war, which still exist today, are probably the best known, yet many other camp formations can be identified within this territory.



Map 1. Camps and temporary settlements created in Israel–Palestine over the past century.

The unique camp-cum-laboratory of Israel–Palestine—with its settler and detention camps of the early Zionist and British colonial periods; immigrant transit camps, refugee camps, and IDP camps of the Israeli nation-building internal colonization period and Palestinian mass-displacement period; and later colonial, decolonial, and postcolonial settler, protest, and migrant detention camps—allows us to study the meaning of this architectural instrument in its various manifestations, uses, and articulations. This book by no means makes a comparison between the camps of the destitute and those of the privileged, between the spaces of the dispossessed and those of the people who are still actively expelling them. Rather, this study traces the camp as it changes in relation to the shifting powers in the area, exposing the camp as a sophisticated instrument of power and of occasional resistance to it, while bringing the camp's centrality to the attention of the architectural discourse and of those who look at the relations between space and power in Israel–Palestine and beyond. Importantly, the many types of camps that have appeared in the territory, and in places related to it, over the last century form a distinctive paradigmatic pattern, and the study of camps in Israel–Palestine reveals a crucial aspect of the way the territory was and still is managed, organized, negotiated, and reshaped.

Camps have been an inseparable part of the spatial and later territorial changes in the area since the beginning of the twentieth century, when Zionist settlers erected tent camps in remote locations. Under British rule (1917–48), these evolved into prefabricated fortified camps as part of the ambition to expand the territory of a possible future state, and detention camps were later constructed by British authorities to prevent illegal Jewish immigrants/refugees from entering the country. Following the 1948 Arab–Israeli war, Palestinian refugee camps were founded in neighboring Arab countries and in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and makeshift camps were also created within Israel's 1948 boundaries by internally displaced Palestinian populations. At the same time, other camps were created by the new Israeli state in order to absorb and later spread the waves of Jewish immigrants entering the country, and military–civilian camps of the Israeli army were also created to fortify the state's new frontier areas. As the geopolitical map changed, new camps appeared: after the Israeli occupations of the 1967 war; during the Palestinian uprising of the 1980s (the first intifada); during the new wave of Jewish mass immigration in the 1990s; after the 2005 Israeli evacuation of the Gaza Strip; following the arrival in Israel, from the mid-2010s, of African asylum seekers to Israel; and during the ongoing civilian occupation and protest in the Palestinian-occupied territories. Thus, over the past century, dozens of settler camps, transit camps, detention camps, and protest camps were erected in Israel–Palestine by and for different populations, actors, and purposes.

This brief list of examples, part of which will be further examined here and throughout the book, demonstrates that while these spaces differ significantly in

their political objectives and spatial forms, reliance on camps seems to be a central pattern in the way space and populations are managed in the region. What is common to these camps? What do their differences mean? And finally, why are they so prevalent in Israel–Palestine? This book attempts to answer these questions while advancing our understanding of the camp itself as a versatile spatiopolitical instrument.

Israel is an important example of the settler colonial and national creation and territorial redefinition of states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, using different techniques to manage and reorganize populations in space. The vast mosaic of camps in Israel–Palestine is grounded in this particular history and in the character of the radical geopolitical changes this territory has undergone over the last century. These changes were not a consequence of arbitrary or uncontrollable events; rather, they were part of a political idea that turned into a national movement, then into a grand plan, and then eventually into a national project—the Zionist project, whose goal was to make historic Palestine, or the Jewish geothological *Eretz Yisrael* (the land of Israel), the national home of the Jewish people.

When the Zionist project began to develop in the late nineteenth century, it was accompanied by the famous motto “A land without a people, for a people without a land,” which depicted Palestine as an unsettled land waiting to be redeemed. But Palestine was, of course, already inhabited, primarily by Arab populations, and its territorial conquest required the recruitment of particular means.²⁷ Camps were readily adopted by Zionist settlers and later by Israeli national powers as one of the primary mechanisms both to change Palestine’s territorial and demographic reality and to deal with the consequences of these radical alterations.

Like other encompassing state projects of social engineering and territorial ordering, the Zionist project also included a utopian vision and a high-modernist ideology.²⁸ In the case of Zionism, this was supplemented by a modern messianic spirit appropriated to achieve national goals; its radical religious version generated further geopolitical alterations after the 1967 war, almost two decades after Israel’s establishment. Outpost camps and other forms of temporary spaces are central to these changes, which continue today in the effort to gain control over the West Bank, part of what the current messianic settlers perceive as the entire *Eretz Yisrael*. This time Palestine’s geopolitical alterations are pursued not by the relatively fragile political powers of an ethnic minority struggling for survival, as in the beginning of the twentieth century, but by settler forces backed up by the strong military and governmental powers of the Israeli state.

It is crucial to understand Israel–Palestine in relation to settler societies as a form of colonialism, which in the Zionist context has been described as colonization for the survival of the Jewish ethnicity.²⁹ Zionism combined colonial and

ethnonational elements from its earliest stages, encouraging Jews to settle in the remembered Land of Israel as a form of collective survival in the face of the threats of anti-Semitism and persecution that increased in nineteenth-century Europe. The gradually developing goals and actions of the Zionist movement were colonial and later national and territorial par excellence: to purchase and settle land, attract settlers, develop agriculture, and launch an international campaign for Jewish political sovereignty. As Oren Yiftachel argues, the Zionist settlers' territoriality became a continuing attempt to Judaize the land "in the name of national self-determination in a Jewish homeland."³⁰

Israel–Palestine's genealogy of camps emerges from the initial approach and actions of the Zionist settler society and its national modernist tools and ideology. Camps were used from the earliest stages of Zionist expansion to "the frontier," the "taming" and settling of which was a central icon in Zionist discourse. The camp was initially adopted during the first, second, and, especially, third *Aliyah* immigration waves, when temporary tent camps were used by idealist Zionist settlers, defined as pioneers (*halutzim* in Hebrew), who settled in remote areas as part of the effort to "build the country," cultivate the land, and thus spread across the territory.³¹ The best-known type of prestate settler camps were the prefabricated, fortified "wall and tower" outpost camps, of which over fifty were erected in what were considered frontier territories during the years of the Arab uprising (1936–39). All of these Zionist settler camps were fundamental to the creation of a continuous Jewish territory later acknowledged in the UN partition plan for Palestine. Like other camps for civilians, settler camps are also deeply rooted in colonial history, as can be seen in Australia, the Americas, and South Africa as well. Thus, the specific Zionist example can be placed in the wider context of colonial settler societies. It is worth mentioning that while this form of settlement was supported by the British authorities at the beginning of the British Mandate, their attitude changed drastically during the Arab uprising, when strict limitations on Jewish immigration to Palestine were enforced by containing illegal Jewish immigrants/refugees in detention camps in Palestine and beyond. These camps were yet another type of camp that appeared in the area during the period, similar to many other examples of internment camps in what Aidan Forth calls "Britain's empire of camps," as well as in other colonial areas examined in this book.³²

However, it is only by looking at the period after the establishment of Israel in 1948 that we can see how the camp was widely adopted as a multifaceted mechanism to manage and reorganize the Jewish and Arab populations within and outside the territory. While the prestate settler camps had a mainly territorial meaning, the intensified role of the camp during the first years of statehood was more complex, as it was used for complementary spatial and political purposes. The camp was a territorial mechanism that allowed one population to spread while concentrating and suspending another, and it was also a mechanism that enabled

the implementation of a modernist ideology of creating a planned new order while facilitating an ethnic if not racial division of Israel's Jewish population.

Camps, created and managed by the Jewish Agency and the state, were used to absorb and then spread mass Jewish immigration, which in Israel's first three years doubled the size of the Jewish population to 1.2 million. This immigration came from two main sources: first, European Jews who had survived the war, including the Nazi concentration and death camps of the Holocaust, many as displaced refugees who had lost their homes and families and were suspended in displaced persons or transit camps, waiting for the gates of the new country to open after the closure imposed by the British authorities; and second, Jews from Arab countries who wished to come to Israel because of religious aspirations, who feared violence due to the Arab–Israeli war and a number of violent attacks on their communities, or who were persuaded by Zionist propaganda that enticed them to leave their homes and settle in the new state.

Camps were created abroad by Jewish institutions such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC, or the Joint) in order to gather together Jewish immigrants before transferring them to their new state. The first immigrant camps in Israel were established in the abandoned British military camps, followed by a multiplicity of smaller-scale immigrant transit camps—the *ma'abarot*—which were constructed across the country, including in frontier areas. This immigrant transit camp project and the modern frontier development towns that followed have generated an internal Jewish ethnic division in Israel based on territorial ordering: while the founding group of European Jews (Ashkenazim) tightened its hold on the upper social spheres in Israel's central cities and in the early kibbutz and moshav settlements, the “eastern/oriental Jews” (Mizrahim), who came later from Muslim countries, were marginalized, relegated to the state's periphery in the *ma'abara* camps and, later, development towns.

The distorted mirror images of these camps are the Palestinian refugee camps created by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in neighboring Arab countries for those who fled or were forced out of their homes during the 1948 war and were not allowed to return to what had become part of the new Israeli state. These camps appeared in the same years as the Israeli immigrant and transit camps and supported a population of about the same size. However, while the Jewish migrant transit camps were liquidated after a few years and many of their dwellers were moved into the government-planned development towns, the Palestinian camps still exist today, gaining a particular political meaning of the refugees' resistance to their situation of continuous displacement and demand for the Palestinian right of return (*haqq al-'awda* in Arabic or *zekhut ha'shivah* in Hebrew). Camps were also used by the Israeli army to detain thousands of Palestinian civilians during the 1948 war, and makeshift

camps and settlements were created within post-1948-war Israel by the internally displaced Palestinian populations, including the Bedouin. Over the years, some of these have become unrecognized settlements where Palestinian populations have been suspended for decades with no basic infrastructure or state services. Many Negev Bedouin live in these conditions to this day.

The appearance of camps in Israel–Palestine is closely connected to the discrepancy between Israel’s territorial and ethnic boundaries, as well as to its emergence as a modern state for the Jewish people on a territory that was mainly inhabited by Arab populations. Many of these camps form part of the indefatigable efforts of the Zionist movement, followed by the Israeli state, to establish Jewish domination over the territory while destabilizing the Arab presence and reducing it to a minimum. The scope of this phenomenon and its particular manifestations show that these camps are not only related to the actions of early statehood, which included the “purification” of the Israeli population by the containment of marginalized “undesired” minorities. Rather, these camps are part of Israel’s drastic yet persistent geopolitical reformations and to their related continuous *state of emergency*, which is tightly bound to what seems to be an everlasting yet well-calculated *emergence of state*.

Indeed, detention, settler, and immigrant camps have continued to appear in Israel–Palestine following the additional territorial and demographic changes in the area. The *Nahal* (the Hebrew acronym for *Noar Halutzi Lohem*, “pioneer combatant youth”) military–civilian agriculture camps that fortified Israel’s frontier areas after the state was established were also erected by Israel after the 1967 war in the newly conquered territories in the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank, and Jewish settler outpost camps were also continuously erected in the Palestinian occupied territories. During the 1980s, an internment camp was opened to confine the Palestinian population participating in the first uprising against Israel (the first intifada). During the 1990s, a second generation of immigrant camps appeared in peripheral areas to accommodate a new wave of mass immigration arriving from the former USSR and Ethiopia, while a new series of settler outpost camps were created following the Oslo Accords. In 2005, a camp was constructed to temporarily house the Israeli settlers evicted from the Gaza Strip. More recently, in 2013, a detention camp for African asylum seekers was opened in the Negev desert, while Palestinian protest camps were erected over the last decade in the West Bank and along the fortified border fence erected by Israel as part of its blockade of the Gaza Strip.

The ethnically oriented spatial policies in Israel–Palestine, including the different camps, have been examined by numerous scholars, and their work is taken up in this book; however, most analyses have focused on specific spaces, populations, and periods and have not addressed the encompassing and ever-changing apparatus of the camp itself. Other scholars, in work that is also fundamental

for this study, have identified Israel's ethnocratic and racialized spatial and geopolitical patterns as an ongoing national regime, controlled by a dominant ethnic group, that spans spaces and periods, yet the wider role of the camp as a versatile spatiopolitical tool in the territory has not yet been examined. In addition to the scholarship on the camp discussed earlier, this book is deeply rooted in the work of historians, architectural historians and theorists, geographers, sociologists, anthropologists, and political philosophers who examine the ways space and populations were and still are managed in Israel–Palestine in general and in relation to the camp in particular. The advantage of examining different sorts of camps is that it allows us to expose systematic spatiopolitical patterns, and drastic diversions from them, in spaces that are mostly analyzed as completely different phenomena.

The camps in Israel–Palestine differ substantially. They were created in many forms, from modern prefabricated temporary units, to makeshift camps, to enduring and appropriated camp spaces; they were made by and for different populations and actors; they existed for different lengths of time, a few years or generations; and they served different purposes, primarily to spread the Jewish population over the territory, to concentrate and suspend the Arab populations within or outside the territory, or to resist these imposed state and civil actions of occupation, expulsion, concentration, suspension, and expropriation. These differences are much more complicated and less binary than what is presented here, but illustrating these basic patterns is required for an initial understanding of this complex reality, which is unfolded in this book.

Capturing Architectural Ghosts

Complex and dynamic systems and mechanisms are not easy to decode. In some cases, a new language and new concepts are needed to capture a transforming and multifaceted apparatus and to understand it as a specific yet evolving instrument, in all its intricate modes of operation. The arguments and conceptualizations of the book aim to open a wider understanding, both theoretical and genealogical, of the camp as a dynamic device. Through an examination of camps in Israel–Palestine in relation to other situations and contexts, the book offers an account of the camp's appearance and change, from the beginning of colonialism, through national and state-building projects, to its current global proliferation. The theoretical foundations for examining these camps are explored deeply in chapter 1, but the meaning of the differences between these camps is further analyzed in the following chapters. This investigation allows us to understand the complexity of the camp itself as an ever-changing mechanism and thus to go beyond its general conceptualization, and it also allows us to examine the various ways camps

were and still are used as a determining factor in the continuing rearrangement of Israel–Palestine and other modern societies and territories.

The book explores the camp through three complementary modes of investigation: theoretical, historical–genealogical, and spatial–material. Together, these investigations enable us to reflect on the camp’s meanings in Israel–Palestine’s changing geopolitics. First, in order to understand the situation of the camp, it is necessary to establish a theoretical understanding that allows different spatial types to be read as a group of related spatiopolitical phenomena. Agamben’s theory is the basis for this initial approach, yet a critical examination of his theory as it relates to the multifaceted camp types in Israel–Palestine and beyond and in light of the emerging critical scholarship on the theory allows us to form a wider theoretical foundation. This foundation defines the camp first and foremost as a spatiopolitical apparatus that, together with its substantial sociopolitical attributes, creates an instrument that may drastically affect populations, territories, and political negotiations. Second, to understand the prevalent role of the camp in Israel–Palestine, we must also understand the history of the region, including the history of the different political attitudes, policies, and modes of governance established in relation to historical events (such as mass immigration, or the Arab–Israeli conflict). These historical studies are intertwined through the book as a necessary background for understanding the centrality of the camp as an instrument widely used to deal with specific situations in the territory.³³ Third, an empirical study of very different examples of camps that also have commonalities (such as in the ways they are inhabited and evolve spatially and politically) allows us to discuss the specific spatial, social, and political aspects of the camp as a real, physical space.

The book operates between various levels of analysis. This is not only because it reflects on camps created in very different periods, from those of the British Mandate, to the camps of the state-building period, with its displacements and emplacements, to contemporary camp environments. It is also because the book analyzes multiple types of camps, aiming to illustrate a comprehensible genealogy showing how they were differently used in Israel–Palestine and changed throughout the years. In some cases, broad types and alignments of camps, such as the Zionist settler camps and the Palestinian refugee camps, are examined. In other cases, the book zooms in to examine a specific camp, such as the Tel-Yeruhim immigrant transit camp, the Rakhma Bedouin camp, or the Holot detention camp for African asylum seekers, enabling us to discuss them as particular places with specific people, spaces, and (his)stories, but always in relation to the larger apparatuses that created them.

The inherent differences between the camps created in different periods also means that various methodologies were used to examine them, involving hermeneutical historical and archival research as well as qualitative ethnographic

research strategies, such as observational research, mapping, and interviews.³⁴ Because one of the most significant attributes of the camp is its temporariness, researching these spaces often involved chasing architectural ghosts, as many camps no longer exist as real physical places but only as archived documents, archeological remnants, or oral histories. Ghosts, as Derrida tells us, are entities that, despite not being present or presently living, still have power to influence the lives of those who are, as an ongoing intergenerational trauma.³⁵ While some of the camps in Israel–Palestine are still very much living entities, the specters of others that have been erased and are long gone still have a grip on the area’s spaces, people, and troubled politics.

As clear evidence of Frantz Fanon’s argument that the “settler makes history and is conscious of making it,”³⁶ many of the camp spaces related to the modernist Zionist movement and the Israeli state creation process were frantically documented and meticulously archived as a testimony to the essential scaffolding of progress and national creation, and as a pure expression of power. Certain Palestinian spaces of refuge were also closely documented by international powers in what could be seen as part of the link between humanitarian practices and colonial legacies of control over the documented image. At the same time, other temporary spaces were thoroughly wiped away, with the intention of leaving no trace, and are missing from the archives, which are never innocent but impose, in Achille Mbembe’s words, the “identification and interpretation” of the powerful.³⁷ These missing spaces and the documents related to them, many of which are still classified by the state or are still actively concealed,³⁸ remain hidden and muted and are recovered here through the oral histories of those who experienced them. On the other hand, because other camps studied here still exist today as part of an unstable political reality, this study also examines them as lived spaces, while following the spatial and political changes they underwent over time.

It is important to mention how sensitive the subject of “the camp” is in the region. For the Jewish population, the word “camp” immediately calls up haunting images of the Nazi concentration and death camps of the Holocaust (the Shoah), the horrific genocide of European Jewry during World War II, with the mass murder of six million Jews, men, women, and children. Differently, for Palestinians, the word relates to the ongoing situation of the refugee camps created after the 1948 *Nakba* (the Palestinian Catastrophe) and the 1967 war, to host the two waves of Palestinian refugees and still in existence. These spaces are inherently linked to very different, dreadful realities and traumatic memories, which are also used politically by both sides. We need to acknowledge that these reminders are always in the background, and they occasionally appear in the book as difficult associations for their survivors and victims. There is no attempt here to obscure or compare their singularities. This book, indeed, deals with contested concepts and materials, sensitive for all sides involved, a fact that influenced its writing and production

until the very last phases. It was not easy, for example, to obtain permission to use photos from archives that work for and represent opposite ideologies and political interests, such as the archives of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and UNRWA, where I had to explain the essence of this work. Instead of the pure oppositional potential of these photos, I allow them to speak to one another, as Ariella Aïsha Azoulay suggests in her account on photography's civil contract, as part of "an attempt to rethink the political space of governed populations," including the domination of the powers controlling their images.³⁹ Part of what this book attempts is to dismantle the stereotypes of these difficult environments and expose their workings and experiences, going beyond the politics that appropriates their histories. The identification of the camp as an instrument generating similar experiences, such as imposed separation, suspension, and discrimination, that many groups in this territory have in common might have a political meaning in itself. By recasting Israel–Palestine's political scripts and histories through bringing into a dialogue interlinked and common realities of oppression that are often examined separately, *The Common Camp* might form a point of departure for new understandings between different groups who were governed by the same violent mechanism, or at least challenge and displace the strict partition between them.

The book traces and analyzes the camp's appearances and variations from early modernity to the present, examining its manifestations and dynamics in Israel–Palestine and beyond. The camp is first theoretically discussed as a spatiopolitical mechanism of modernity. Then, each chapter explores specific camp types in relation to a particular geopolitical situation and related historical period and theoretical aspects. These camps are connected in a genealogical account, illustrating how the camp has transformed over the past century.

Chapter 1 offers a theoretical framework for investigating the camp as a versatile mechanism of modern politics. Through the writings of political thinkers such as Arendt, Foucault, Agamben, Mbembe, and others, the chapter investigates the camp in relation to core political and spatial concepts, including sovereignty, territoriality, population, and materiality. The chapter also examines the inherent connection between the camp and colonialism, and colonial settler societies in particular, and its adaptation to serve the needs of national and global political orders and their changing geopolitical frontiers.

The next six chapters discuss the camp in specific contexts and periods in Israel–Palestine and beyond, while unpacking its changing architectural and political meaning. Focusing on the period of the British rule over Palestine (1917–48), chapter 2 discusses the multifaceted roles of the camp in relation to the intertwined British and Zionist colonial powers. The chapter centers on three different types of camps: the British military camps that evolved after the occupation of the territory during World War I; the Zionist settler tent camps that later evolved to

the wall and tower fortified camps, creating the initial Jewish agricultural frontier territorial settlements; and the British detention camps where Jews and Arabs who resisted the British rule, as well as Jewish immigrants/refugees who entered the country illegally, were detained. In this chapter, I begin to develop the themes that are discussed throughout the book, primarily the existence of the camp on a military–civilian continuum, the creation of camps as frontier spaces, and the camp’s roles of not only spatial exclusion, expulsion, and expropriation but also of territorial expansion.

The next three chapters examine the central role of the camp in Israel’s state-building projects as an instrument that, on the one hand, facilitated the absorption of Jewish immigrants and their dispersal over the territory and, on the other hand, was used to concentrate and suspend the internally displaced Arab populations remaining in Israel after the 1948 war. Chapter 3 examines the camp as an ordering mechanism by exploring the camps created during the Israeli mass-immigration period (1948–51). These include the immigrant camps established abroad (in places such as Algiers, Aden, Marseille, and Brindisi) to gather Jewish immigrants before bringing them to Israel, the closed immigrant camps created in Israel in deserted British military camps to absorb and contain Jewish migrants, and the *ma’abarot*, the immigrant transit camps used to absorb Jewish immigrants and later to spread them across the territory. Based on Zygmunt Bauman’s and James Scott’s theories of modernism and order, the chapter analyzes how the camp helped facilitate Israel’s profound geopolitical and spatial changes, allowing it to be established as a state formed by two allegedly contradictory but in fact complementary conditions: it was the product, on the one hand, of a chaotic state of emergency created by mass immigration and, on the other hand, of an ambitious and comprehensive modernist project. Arie Sharon, the architect who was head of the governmental Planning Department in Israel’s early years, is one of the main figures discussed in this chapter. He was the leading architect of Israel’s National Plan, the state’s first encompassing master plan, and camps were one of the means for its implementation.

Chapter 4 analyzes the camp as an instrument of population management and territorial control by looking closely at the central role of the frontier *ma’abara* transit camps used by Israel to disperse the new Jewish immigrants across the country. The chapter focuses on the story of Yeruham, established in 1951 as an isolated *ma’abara* camp in the Negev desert, which eventually became a permanent town. The chapter follows Yeruham’s early years closely, analyzing it as a frontier camp whose function was based on its isolated location and spatial temporariness, a centralized mode of governance, and a strong ideology of modern development and planning that allowed immigrants to be used as pawns in the creation of Israel’s new social and territorial order. The *ma’abara* camps are also analyzed here as the initial tool causing the spatial segregation of Jewish society

in Israel along ethnoracial lines. The spatial and architectural connection between the camp and the modern tenement blocks of Israeli development towns is also examined in this chapter, as are the minor acts of resilience and resistance engaged in by immigrants coping with the reality of the camp that was imposed on them.

The complementary side of chapters 3 and 4 is presented in chapters 5 and 6, focusing on camps created as spatial instruments for containing and suspending internally displaced indigenous Palestinian populations in Israel and Palestinian refugees, as part of the state-building process and in later years. Chapter 5 analyzes the encampments and makeshift settlements created by internally displaced Palestinian populations that later developed into unrecognized villages, telling the story of Rakhma, a makeshift unrecognized Bedouin settlement neighboring Yeruham, which was created in the late 1950s when the population was displaced to the area by the Israeli army. The imposed campness of the makeshift village is discussed as an instrument that allowed and still allows Israel to suspend indigenous populations as temporary inhabitants as a tactic to further concentrate and urbanize them according to the interests of the state. The chapter examines the architectural meaning of the “chaotic” environments of the unrecognized settlements that are managed by Israel as de facto makeshift camps, interpreting their deep sociospatial order, often invisible to Israeli authorities, against the “total order” of institutionalized camps. Rakhma’s actions to resist its imposed situation through spatial initiatives are analyzed as a tool of cultural negotiation and political struggle for their denied resources and rights.

Chapter 6 focuses on the very different camps that formed and changed in the territories occupied by Israel following the 1967 Six-Day War. Through an analysis of the Palestinian refugee camps and the Palestinian protest camps in the Palestinian occupied territories, it examines how the camp, on the one hand, was used as a tool of resistance, protest, and struggle against the Israeli occupation, while it also, on the other hand, became the target of Israeli efforts to reduce and rearrange the population of Palestinian refugees in those territories. Through an analysis of Israeli settler camps created by different groups in the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, and the Palestinian occupied territories of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the chapter also examines how the settler camp has facilitated Israel’s continuous colonial occupation. The chapter looks at how the space of the refugee camp enables its residents to articulate and enact a new political reality, while shaping interactions through its built environment as a form of architectural resistance. It also shows how the Israeli settler camps and the infrastructures that connect them are together used as a territorial instrument that further encamps the Palestinians in separated, shrinking, and controlled territorial enclaves.

The Holot detention camp for African asylum seekers, opened in 2013 in the Negev desert as a space of containment and banishment, is the focus of chapter 7. The chapter shows how this camp, originally conceived as a border camp intended

to control the movement of newcomers to Israel, was mainly operated to remove this vulnerable population from Israeli cities and to pressure them to “willingly” leave the country. The camp, where Israel detained asylum seekers for various periods of time, is discussed in the broader context of the contemporary global penal colony, an ever-changing infrastructure of camps where unwanted populations are suspended and managed.

The conclusion discusses the book’s main understandings of the camp as a result of its genealogical analysis: its function as a versatile multifaceted instrument based on spatial temporariness and the management of specific populations outside the normal state order and through particular modern technologies and materialities; its complementary use for concentration, containment, expulsion, and expropriation as well as for mobility and territorial expansion; the complex meaning behind its various “ordered” and “chaotic” spaces; its function as a political instrument of control, exclusion, protest, and resistance; its relation to the city; and its transformations as Israel–Palestine’s hidden spatial gene, a gene that drastically influenced the territory’s political and spatial formation. The conclusion also highlights how the extremes of the camp allow fundamental spatial and architectural perceptions to be challenged and reconceptualized. The camp’s role, the conclusion shows, is that of a modern instrument that has been and still is—from the early days of colonialism, through state-building processes, and in the present global political order—used to reorganize, control, and negotiate territories and populations. It suggests that the instrument of the camp will continue to transform and emerge according to political changes as a space that materializes through the everlasting struggles between the power *over* human life and the power *of* human life to resist a certain reality and struggle to change it.

The Common Camp aims to reveal the camp not only as a space but also as a spatial practice that produces a politics proper to itself, a politics that is not only constituting the camp but is also constituted by the camp and because of its existence. Its prevalence in Israel–Palestine tells the story not only of the camp but also of this unstable territory, its violence and politics, which has affected the lives of many. Though this book analyzes multiple and various camp spaces, its intention is not to present a typology of camps created in Israel–Palestine over the last century (nor does it claim to be an exhaustive collection of types), nor to be an inventory of camps through which the history of the region can be understood. Rather, the book aims to develop an understanding of the camp as a certain logic, which it at once forms and represents. A more generalizable understanding of the common camp would reveal a logic of a spatial and material culture that is constitutive to the political history of Israel–Palestine and beyond to the current evolving global reality of encampment.

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NOTES

Introduction

1. On war on terror camps, see, for example, Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004); and Derek Gregory, “The Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the Space of Exception,” *Geografiska Annaler* 88, no. 4 (2006): 405–27; on the proliferation of camps, see, for example, a variety of chapters in Irit Katz, Diana Martín, and Claudio Minca, eds., *Camps Revisited: Multifaceted Spatialities of a Modern Political Technology* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018); on the return of the camp, see Claudio Minca, “The Return of the Camp,” *Progress in Human Geography* 29, no. 4 (2005): 405–12.

2. Zygmunt Bauman, “A Century of Camps?,” in *The Bauman Reader*, ed. Peter Beilharz (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 230–66.

3. Liisa H. Malkki, “Refugees and Exile: From ‘Refugee Studies’ to the National Order of Things,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, no. 1 (1995): 495–523.

4. Walter Benjamin, “Thesis on the Philosophy of History,” in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968 [1940]), 256. On “spatial violence,” see Andrew Herscher and Anooradha Iyer Siddiqi, “Spatial Violence,” *Architectural Theory Review* 19, no. 3 (2014): 269–77.

5. A subject would establish her “*khaima*” in a territory to claim a living space, for undefined duration, on a particular plot. Other words used are *ma’wa* (مأوى), relating to finding shelter in a situation of emergency or urgency, and *malaja’* (ملاجأ), meaning finding protection in an emergency situation. I thank Aya Musmar for the conversation about the terminological meaning of the camp in Arabic.

6. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998 [1651]), 7.

7. See Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (Wivenhoe: Minor Composition, 2013).

8. Ironically, many of the German World War II work and concentration camps in Europe were transformed into refugee “assembly centers” when the war ended. Malkki, “Refugees and Exile,” 499–500; and Aidan Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism: Britain’s Empire of Camps, 1876–1903* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017). See chapter 1 for camp genealogies in more detail.

9. Hannah Arendt, “We Refugees,” in *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*, ed. Marc Robinson (Boston: Faber and Faber, 1994 [1943]), 111.

10. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1962 [1951]), 284.

11. Silvia Pasquetti, “Negotiating Control: Camps, Cities, and Political Life,” *City* 19, no. 5 (2015): 702–13, 702.

12. Such a camp was called a *castrum*, a word anglicized as “chester” (a camp), a trace that appears in many other names of cities in England, such as Winchester. As architectural historian Joseph Rykwert shows, Roman military camps not only developed into cities but were themselves created as cities, being the diagrammatic evocation of the city of Rome, “an anamnesis of imperium.” See Joseph Rykwert, *The Idea of a Town* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988), 68. On the camp as an improvised city, see Flavius Josephus, “Description on the Roman Army,” <http://www.historymuse.net/readings/Josephusromanarmy.html>.

13. Paul Gilroy, *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race* (London: Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Press, 2000).

14. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, ed. and trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 181. The concept of biopolitics is discussed in chapter 1.

15. Also see Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive* (New York: Zone Books, 1999); and Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). These and related writings were published together in *The Omnibus Homo Sacer* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017).

16. Arendt, quoted in Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 170.

17. See Nasser Abourahme, “The Camp,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 40, no. 1 (2020): 35–42.

18. For example, see Gregory, “The Black Flag.”

19. Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 440.

20. Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 14. The term “shifting borders” comes from Ayelet Shachar, *The Shifting Border: Legal Cartographies of Migration and Mobility* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).

21. See, for example, Adam Ramadan, “Spatialising the Refugee Camp,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 38, no. 1 (2013): 65–77; and Romola Sanyal, “Urbanizing Refuge: Interrogating Spaces of Displacement,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38, no. 2 (2014): 558–72.

22. For more on Agamben’s analysis of the camp as paradigm, see Abourahme, “The Camp.”

23. See Charlie Hailey, *Camps—A Guide to 21st-Century Space* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), for a broad inventory of camp types and formations.

24. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

25. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 [1887]), 51.

26. Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald Bouchard (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), 140, 146.

27. In 1850, of a population of 340,000, only 13,000 were Jews, mostly Orthodox Jews living mainly in Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias, and Hebron. See Gudrun Krämer, *A His-*

tory of Palestine: From the Ottoman Conquest to the Founding of the State of Israel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 135.

28. See, for example, the projects discussed by James Scott in *Seeing Like a State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

29. On Zionism as a self-described colonial project, see Nur Masalha, *The Palestine Nakba: Decolonising History, Narrating the Subaltern, Reclaiming Memory* (London: Zed Books, 2012), and chapter 2. See also Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and Daiva Stasilius and Nira Yuval-Davis, *Unsettling Settler Societies* (London: Sage, 1995). While traditional colonial structures are based on exploitation by major powers for economic gain, Oren Yiftachel and Avinoam Meir suggest that Israel is an “ethnic-survival” form of colonization, based on a particularly national and then territorial, rather than economic, colonization, with a specific ethnic character because it was established a priori as an ethnonational project. See Oren Yiftachel and Avinoam Meir, *Ethnic Frontiers and Peripheries: Landscapes of Development and Inequality in Israel* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1998), 7; and Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 53–54. Importantly, however, Zionist settling institutions were initially highly selective in giving permits to those who wished to come, rejecting requests of pogrom survivors begging to find refuge if they were not “productive elements” capable of “building and being built by” the Land of Israel. See Gur Alroey, “‘Between the Straits’: Jewish Immigration to the United States and Palestine, 1915–1925,” *East European Jewish Affairs* 47, nos. 2–3 (2017): 150–68, 165.

30. Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*, 14.

31. *Aliyah* (meaning “ascent”), a basic notion of Zionist ideology, is the immigration of Diaspora Jews to the Land of Israel. The opposite action, emigration from Israel, is referred to as *Yerida* (descent). Anti-Jewish laws, persecutions, and economic problems were the main causes of Jewish immigration from eastern Europe during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There were six *Aliyah* waves before Israel was established.

32. See Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism*.

33. The historical studies for this book rely on literature and on data gathered in Israeli and other archives, housing relevant historical documents, such as photographs (including aerial photography), construction plans and planning documents, newspaper articles, and formal letters and official documents. These archives include the Yeruham Archive; a variety of kibbutz and private photo collections; the Zionist Archive (Jerusalem); the Israel State Archives (Jerusalem); the Israeli National Photo Collections; the Haganah Archive (Tel Aviv); the Yad Tabenkin Archive of the Kibbutz Movement (Ramat Ef'al); the Israeli Defense Force Archive (Tel Ha'shomer); ActiveStills archives; ICRC Audiovisual Archives; UNRWA's online photo and film archive; and the British National Archives.

34. The research for this book includes more than sixty interviews conducted with government and municipal officials, planners, local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and residents of current and past camps.

35. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

36. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin Books, 2001 [1963]), 40.

37. Achille Mbembe, “The Power of the Archive and Its Limits,” in *Refiguring the Archive*, ed. Carolyn Hamilton et al. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 20.

38. See, for example, chapter 4 on the classification of Israeli documents from the 1950s immigrant transit camps. During recent processes of digitization of archives, documents that were open to the public are being actively concealed to hide evidence on actions conducted by the Israeli army and other militant groups, including massacres of Palestinians during the 1948 war and the Nakba. See Hagar Shezaf, “Burying the Nakba: How Israel Systematically Hides Evidence of 1948 Expulsion of Arabs,” *Ha’aretz*, 5 July 2019, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-how-israel-systematically-hides-evidence-of-1948-expulsion-of-arabs-1.7435103>.

39. Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography* (New York: Zone Books, 2008), 22.

1. The Camp Reconfigured

1. Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism*, 1; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 174–75; Michel Agier, “Between War and City towards an Urban Anthropology of Refugee Camps,” *Ethnography* 3, no. 3 (2002): 317–41, 332; and Claudio Minca, “Geographies of the Camp,” *Political Geography* 49 (2015): 74–83, 74.

2. On the regulation of human movement, particularly in relation to Israel–Palestine, see Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 40–47; and Hagar Kotef, *Movement and the Ordering of Freedom: On Liberal Governances of Mobility* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2015).

3. Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 9–10, 112–14.

4. Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, 3–7.

5. Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 281–82. The state–people–territory triad has also been adopted by other scholars (though sometimes in different words), such as Agamben, as discussed in the introduction, and Swiss geographer Claude Raffestin, who sees “population, territory and authority” as the three elements of the state, saying, “The entire geography of the state derives from this triad.” Quoted in translation from French in Stuart Elden, *The Birth of Territory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 5.

6. See Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. Hans Heinrich Gerth and Charles Wright Mills (Abingdon: Routledge, 1991 [1919]), 77–128, 78.

7. Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 174–75.

8. For more on sovereignty and its paradoxes, see Brown, *Walled States*, 65–66.

9. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 82.

10. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 84.

11. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 114.

12. Jean Bodin, *On Sovereignty: Four Chapters from the Six Books of the Commonwealth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992 [1576]), 46.

13. Michael Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 241; see also in Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

14. Claude Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988).

15. See Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat, *Sovereign Bodies: Citizens, Migrants, and States in the Postcolonial World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

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