

The Land beyond the

BORDER



State Formation and Territorial Expansion
in Syria, Morocco, and Israel

Johannes Becke



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SUNY series in Comparative Politics

Gregory S. Mahler, Editor

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Political struggle is enormously more complex: in a certain sense, it can be compared to colonial wars or to old wars of conquest—in which the victorious army occupies, or proposes to occupy, permanently all or a part of the conquered territory. Then the defeated army is disarmed and dispersed, but the struggle continues on the terrain of politics and of military “preparation.”

—Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the
Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*

When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, it worked feverishly with its Lebanese allies to remake the country in its image, but to no avail. Since 1989, Syria has tried to do the same, with more resolve and success.

—Martin Kramer, “Arab Nationalism : Mistaken Identity”

For my family

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Preface

This book is based on a revised PhD dissertation originally submitted at Freie Universität Berlin in 2014 under the supervision of Markus Jachtenfuchs and Eyal Zisser. The final manuscript would not have seen the light of day without the help, encouragement, and critiques of my friends and colleagues who supported me throughout a postdoctoral fellowship at Oxford University and my first years as assistant professor of Israel and Middle East studies at the Heidelberg Center for Jewish Studies (Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg).

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Introduction

The Paradox of Postcolonial State Expansions

Irredentism, the political project of redeeming lost territories for the nation, is as old as modern nationalism itself.¹ Nineteenth-century Italian nationalists were the first to speak of *terre irredente* (unredeemed lands) situated in the north of what was then the Italian nation-state. Sometimes the claim of redemption was directed at Italian speakers under foreign rule, and sometimes redemption aimed at clearing alien populations from territory that nationalists claimed for the Italian nation alone.² Scholars of entrenched ethnic conflicts have described irredentism as the “Macedonian syndrome,” a seemingly pathological obsession not just with territory but also with history. In the words of Weiner, irredentist conflicts are not exclusively fought over a piece of land but often over “what to an outsider would appear to be trivial historical points: whether a given work of art belonged to one cultural tradition rather than to another, the etymology of place names, and whether a particular deity, architectural form, or ancient social institution is indigenous or was borrowed from another culture.”³

While both the nation and its yet unredeemed territory may seem exceptional to the nationalist eye, there is nothing unique about irredentism from a perspective of global history. As Chazan has shown,⁴ irredentism as an “expansive form of territorial postindependence nationalism”⁵ represents a recurring feature of each global wave of state formation. The first wave of irredentism flared up during nineteenth-century state formation in Europe, when the term was coined in Italy and where the phenomenon structured the Greek-Ottoman confrontation.⁶ A second wave accompanied the establishment of nation-states after World War I following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. The third wave of irredentist conflicts was triggered by decolonization after World War II, and the fourth

came to haunt state formation in the post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav sphere, whether in the Caucasus or the Balkans.

Until today, expansionist statecraft persists in decidedly postcolonial times, even if formal colonization based on conquest and hierarchical inequality has long been prohibited by international humanitarian law,⁷ which has shifted toward an emphasis on formally equal and sovereign nation-states with inviolable borders.⁸ However, indirect forms of external control continue to shape both the postcolonial state⁹ and the transformation of the former imperial metropole into a “normative Empire.”¹⁰ As the Russian takeover of the Crimean peninsula in 2014 illustrates, even the outlawed practice of formal annexation persists.¹¹ In addition, states continue to engage in demographic engineering as a practice of seizing contested territories,¹² including cases such as “the Philippine settlement of the Moros region in Mindanao; Javanese settlement of Sumatra and other islands; Burman settlement of the Bengali-speaking Rohingya areas near the borders of Bangladesh; Bangladeshi settlement of the Chittagong Hill Tracts with its Buddhist population; . . . Bhutanese settlement of southern Bhutan and the forced deportation of Nepali-speaking residents, . . . Moroccan settlement of the disputed territories in the Western Sahara, and Israeli settlements in the Arab populated West Bank.”¹³

This book deals with the third wave of irredentism, a phenomenon that has deeply shaped the process of decolonization and postcolonial state formation. In a closely integrated analysis of irredentist thought and expansionist state practice, the following chapters establish a comparative-historical case study of three state expansions in the modern Middle East: Syria’s domination of Lebanon (1976–2005), Morocco’s annexation of Western Sahara (since 1975) and Israel’s rule over the occupied territories (since 1967). For the purpose of this comparison, state expansions will be defined as the systematic and long-term expansion of state institutions across international borders, resulting in a contested form of rule over a neighboring territory and its population. While all three cases have been described as ghostly recurrences of a bygone colonial era, the comparative case study makes the case for turning this argument on its head: instead of depicting the capture of contested territory, military occupations, and demographic engineering as contradictory to the era of decolonization, we might have to understand expansionism as a constitutive feature of postcolonial state formation.

The book is structured as follows. The introduction discusses the paradox of postcolonial state expansions, both as a state practice and as a topic of discussion in the research literature. Chapter 1 develops a theory

of postcolonial state expansions that consists of three main elements: first, the theoretical framework argues that postcolonial states in the Middle East engaged in expansionist policies as a coping strategy to overcome entrenched crises of legitimacy and sovereignty. Second, the theoretical framework defines different varieties of expansionism¹⁴ by distinguishing between four ideal types of state expansion (patronization, satellization, exclavization, and incorporation) and four corresponding ideal types of state contraction (depatronization, desatellization, deexclavization, and disincorporation). Third, the theoretical framework creates a taxonomy of rule and resistance by linking four types of domination (the coercive apparatus, institutional rule setting, social identities, and historical narratives) with the corresponding types of resistance (counterviolence, counterinstitutions, counteridentities, and counternarratives). In order to apply this theory of postcolonial state expansion to the case studies of Syria, Morocco, and Israel, chapter 2 and chapter 3 analyze the specific institutional legacies that shaped state formation and state expansion in the Middle East. Chapter 4 and chapter 5 discuss the institutional design of state expansions as well as slow-moving institutional shifts over time.

The state expansions of Syria, Morocco, and Israel not only took on a different shape, they also reacted differently to the countermobilization of Lebanese, Sahrawi, and Palestinian nationalists. Chapter 6 compares the dynamics of state contraction: not least as a result of vigorous political resistance, none of the three countries compared throughout the book succeeded in fully normalizing their control over captured territories and populations. Instead, Syria withdrew from its Lebanese satellite state (desatellization), Israel dismantled its settlement exclaves in the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip (deexclavization), and Morocco came close to terminating its control over Western Sahara (disincorporation). Chapter 7 situates the three Middle Eastern case studies into a broader global comparison: based on examples of contested territories (Cyprus, East Timor, Crimea), the chapter presents the case for applying the varieties of expansionism approach to other regional settings. The conclusion reflects on the reversibility of state expansions and discusses the approach of studying the Israeli case in a Middle Eastern context.

From Greater Indonesia to Greater Israel

How do we theorize irredentist fantasy and expansionist practice as integral elements of the postcolonial state? The best way to approach the paradoxical

nature of state expansions after decolonization might be a closer look at one of the crucial debates in UN history: the debate over the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Resolution 1514 (XV), 1960). In popular culture, the debate might be best known for the shoe-banging incident involving the Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev,¹⁵ who became angry when other representatives effectively called for a decolonization of countries under Soviet domination. However, the Soviet Union was not the only country known for its peculiar mismatch between anticolonial rhetoric and expansionist practice. In fact, in the middle of a pivotal UN debate about decolonization, many state leaders had only one thing on their mind: namely, the capture of contested territory.

Rafic al-Asha for instance, the Syrian-born permanent representative of the United Arab Republic (a short-lived union between Egypt and Syria) put the legitimacy of Lebanon into serious question. When describing a “colonial power [that] has on one occasion divided a small land into five independent states,”¹⁶ al-Asha was in fact referring to the political project of “Greater Syria.”¹⁷ Following the template of dissolving smaller ethnosectarian statelets into the unified Syrian Republic in 1936,¹⁸ proponents of Greater Syria called for the next logical step in reunifying this “small land”—the incorporation of Lebanon into Syria. Morocco’s permanent representative, Mehdi Ben Aboud, cautioned that colonialism “though leaving by the front door, comes back through the window.”¹⁹ This warning, however, did not prevent Morocco’s foreign minister, M’hammed Boucetta, from arguing that “Mauritania has at all times formed an integral part of Morocco.”²⁰ In addition to claiming “what is nowadays presented as the independent State of Mauritania,” Boucetta also made the case for Moroccan ownership of additional “territories the populations of which still languish under colonial occupation, such as Ifni, Seguia El Hamra, Rio de Oro, Tindouf, Tidikelt, Ceuta and Melilla”²¹ (i.e., all of Spanish Sahara and significant parts of Algeria). Israel’s foreign minister, Golda Meir, claimed that it was “of course, untrue that Israel pursues expansionist policies of any kind,”²² but her defense of the Zionist return to the Land of Israel/Palestine²³ already foreshadowed Israel’s attempt to incorporate the occupied territories after the Six-Day War: “And did the desert in Israel bloom as long as we were in exile? Did trees cover the Judean hills, were marshes drained? No—rocks, desert, marshes, malaria, trachoma—this is what characterized the country before we came back.”²⁴

Of course, Syrians, Moroccans, and Israelis were not alone in proclaiming their territorial ambitions. Indonesian president Sukarno

denied that Indonesian nationalism would “seek to impose ourselves on other nations” but laid a determined claim to Netherlands New Guinea, which was “the one-fifth of our national territory which still labours under imperialism” and “a colonial sword poised over Indonesia.”²⁵ In a not-so-hidden reference to Ethiopian domination over Eritrea (formally part of a federal framework), the Ethiopian permanent representative, Haddis Alemayehu, suggested that the “peoples in the liberated countries, left alone without interference from foreign intriguers, will settle their differences in no time.”²⁶ The Somalian permanent representative, Hajji Farah Ali Omar, laid claim to the Somali-populated parts of Ethiopia and emphasized the hope of his compatriots “for an early, happy and peaceful unification with our other Somali brothers who are not yet autonomous.”²⁷ Iraq’s permanent representative, Adnan Pachachi, declared his country to be “in the forefront of the fight for the rights of the colonial peoples.”²⁸ Nonetheless, only a few months later, Pachachi would describe Kuwait as “an integral party of our country” since Kuwait was “not more than a small coastal town on the Gulf. There is not and has never been a country or a national entity called Kuwait, never in history.”²⁹ The Palestinian-born ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Ahmed Shukeiry (who would become the first chairman of the PLO), envisioned the day “when the refugees will go back to their homeland, their country emancipated from Zionist occupation; and, with full sovereignty, will join the United Nations as the free and independent State of Palestine.”³⁰

It took only a few years for the visions of Greater Syria, Greater Ethiopia, and Greater Indonesia to become reality. In 1962 Ethiopia formally annexed Eritrea by abolishing the federal framework separating the two countries.³¹ In 1963 Indonesia took over West New Guinea (the former Netherlands New Guinea) and incorporated the territory by force and demographic engineering—a practice that would later be repeated in East Timor after its conquest in 1975.³² In 1967 Israel occupied the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai, and the Golan Heights and launched a large-scale settlement project.³³ In 1975 Morocco and Mauritania invaded Western Sahara (the former Spanish Sahara) and divided the territory among themselves.³⁴ In 1976 Syria intervened in the Lebanese civil war and established a long-term military occupation.³⁵ Colonialism, so it seemed, might be over—but expansionist statecraft was clearly not.³⁶

Facing the normative pressures of the decolonization regime and the political violence of armed insurgencies, most expanding states followed a generic template of renaming and resettling. First, all memories of previous territorial organization were wiped off the map. West New Guinea

became “Irian Jaya”;³⁷ the West Bank was transformed into “Judea and Samaria”;³⁸ the partitioned Western Sahara was reorganized into three Moroccan provinces in the north (El-Ayoun, Smara, Boujdour) and a single Mauritanian province in the south (Tiris El-Gharbia).³⁹ Second, political incorporation was enforced by demographic engineering: in other words, colonization. Whether in Indonesia’s “new provinces,” in the “Moroccan Sahara,” in Israel’s “liberated territories,” or in Chinese-controlled Tibet, expanding states rapidly moved in large numbers of settler-immigrants to permanently claim the newly acquired territories.⁴⁰

For many expansionist states, this deployment of massive state resources in captured territories corresponded to a broader pattern of “authoritarian high-modernist schemes”⁴¹ (according to the diagnosis of James Scott), infused with the spirit of monumentalism, the raw effectiveness of developmentalist state power, and a cult of feasibility. Nonetheless, many state expansions rapidly fell apart. The Somalian-Ethiopian war of 1977–78 put an end to the vision of “Greater Somalia,” and the Iraqi vision of reincorporating Kuwait as its nineteenth province collapsed after only a few weeks during the Gulf War of 1990. Other attempts at territorial incorporation unraveled much more slowly: sometimes expanding states were pushed back by prolonged insurgencies (like the Eritrean war against Ethiopia), and sometimes occupying powers were undermined by transnational mobilization (like the East Timorese campaign against Indonesia; see chapter 7). Some states withdrew their military forces after decades of quasi-permanent occupation (like Syria; see chapter 6), and other states decided to entrench their control over occupied territories even at high diplomatic and financial costs, including Morocco and Israel.

Comparison and Exceptionalism in the Research Literature

When Indonesia, China, Morocco, and Israel adopted wide-ranging policies of territorial expansionism and demographic engineering in midst of the process of decolonization, nationalist movements in the newly conquered territories of East Timor, West Papua, Tibet, Xinjiang, Western Sahara, and the West Bank almost immediately described their insurgencies as a rebellion against neocolonialism, secondary colonialism, or Third World colonialism: Maronite intellectuals described the Syrian occupation of Lebanon as merely the latest stage of a “constant struggle against foreign occupiers”⁴² since the days of the Phoenicians. Facing the Moroccan-Mauritanian invasion

after the departure of the Spanish army, Sahrawi nationalists assailed the “colonialism of the ‘brotherly’ neighbors,” which had come to replace the “colonialism of the foreign enemy.”⁴³ Not to be outdone, the Palestinian National Covenant from 1968 described the Zionist movement as “racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist and colonial in its aims and fascist in its methods.”⁴⁴

Ever since, scholars of postcolonial state formation have been wringing their hands over the question how to deal with the eerie parallels between European colonialism and the postindependence expansionism of newly decolonized countries. Some authors have chosen a strategy of categorical evasion by speaking of “comparable, but somewhat different kinds of anti-colonial struggles in those countries more recently occupied.”⁴⁵ Others have opted for a strategy of categorical stretching by speaking of “secondary colonialism” or “Third World colonialism.”⁴⁶ In order to steer clear of terminological confusion and ideological framing, this book will simply deploy the abstract term *state expansion* wherever possible. The discursive framing of these state expansions, however, will be a crucial element in analyzing the dynamics of legitimization and delegitimization: while the governments of expanding states will speak of territorial “return,” “redemption,” “liberation,” and “unification,” nationalist insurgents in the captured territories will prefer the terminology of “conquest,” “ethnic cleansing,” “imperialism,” and “settler colonialism.”

The desire to transcend partisan modes of writing also stands behind the theoretical framework at the center of this book (see chapter 1), which builds on the three elements of comparative-historical analysis, an emphasis on political resistance, and intraregional case selection. All three elements respond to specific gaps in the research literature on state expansions in the modern Middle East: the approach of comparative-historical analysis seeks to move beyond the fallacy of ahistorical history; resistance is emphasized as a counterweight to the postpositivist fascination with authoritarian rule as an all-powerful Foucauldian panopticon, and the intraregional case selection seeks to overcome a tendency toward exceptionalism.⁴⁷

First, regarding the fallacy of ahistorical history, the close temporal proximity between European decolonization and non-European recolonization has tempted many authors to pursue the colonial analogy.⁴⁸ This approach adopts a historically, culturally, and legally specific framework of expansionism to analyze (as Young puts it) a “comparable, but somewhat different”⁴⁹ process in another period, with another cultural disposition and another legal framework, thereby frequently confusing colonization and colonialism.⁵⁰

The toolbox of expansionist state policies is of course limited, and much can be learned from colonial attempts at “right-sizing and right-peopling the State”⁵¹ for our understanding of postcolonial state expansions. The formation of a nationalist Sahrawi consciousness, for instance, would have been impossible without its framing as an *indigenous* claim to national self-determination, struggling against Spanish and Moroccan colonialism alike. Similarly, the creation of transnational support networks for the Palestinian cause would have been unthinkable without the element of “transcolonial identification,” defined by Harrison as “processes of identification that are rooted in a common colonial genealogy and a shared perception of (neo) colonial subjection.”⁵² Nonetheless, facile depictions of Morocco’s rule over Western Sahara as “colonialism, Moroccan style,”⁵³ accusations of Chinese “genocide” in Tibet⁵⁴ or fashionable depictions of Israel’s settlement project (or the entire Zionist project) as “settler colonialism”⁵⁵ fail to acknowledge the specific normative and institutional context of state expansions *after* decolonization.

By reading Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli expansionism through the lens of European colonialism, the colonial analogy tends to produce ahistorical history, defined by Cooper as “modes of writing . . . which purport to address the relationship of past to present but [which] do so without interrogating the way processes unfold over time.”⁵⁶ While institutional parallels between European colonialism and “Third World colonialism” deserve close scrutiny, a careless parallelization runs the risk of committing an epochal fallacy. Anachronistic equations with European colonialism tend to dislocate postcolonial state expansions from time and space, thereby erasing both the specific historical and regional context.

In terms of *historical context*, fundamental disputes over the nature of the postcolonial state in the Middle East (ranging from its borders to its very existence) can be traced back to its predecessor, the late colonial “self-destruct state.”⁵⁷ The imperial powers of Great Britain, France, and Spain systematically encouraged territorial division and ethnic infighting, thereby creating postcolonial states that were essentially contested (see chapter 2). This historical context created an incentive for irredentist foreign policies: state-building elites systematically leveraged territorial expansion as a strategy to solve fundamental disputes over the basic nature of the nation-state (see chapter 3). In terms of *regional context*, the Middle East’s internal structure as a “perennial conflict formation”⁵⁸ systematically contributed to the region’s “built-in irredentism”⁵⁹: In contrast to the “Pax Asiatica” of East Asia, the “Bella Levantina” of the Middle East provided the ideal opportunity structure

for state expansions, shaped by military occupation, armed insurgencies, and various forms of proxy warfare⁶⁰ (see chapter 4).

Second, regarding the question of resistance, the extreme power inequalities of expansionism often result in analytical frameworks that underestimate the impact of organized political opposition, whether violent or nonviolent. Postpositivist authors in particular tend to elevate the mind-numbing mundanity of Israel's military occupation into an all-encompassing, all-powerful Foucauldian panopticon. According to this approach, Israel's military administration allegedly encompasses an "amalgam of surveillance methods involving Foucauldian 'discipline' and Deleuzian 'control,'"⁶¹ additionally stabilized by the "disparate rationalities and mechanisms of power whose heterogeneity reinforces the overall effectiveness and perseverance of this regime"⁶². More specifically, by understanding institutional changes in Israel's rule over the occupied territories exclusively as a reflection of "the interactions, excesses, and contradictions within and among the controlling practices and apparatuses,"⁶³ all politics of resistance are automatically treated as epiphenomenal.

A certain blind spot for the politics of resistance remains widespread even among more positivist authors, culminating in Lustick's claim that "Morocco . . . has had surprisingly little difficulty proceeding towards the incorporation of [Western Sahara]."⁶⁴ Indeed, the Sahrawi nationalists of POLISARIO might no longer be able to launch armed raids into the Mauritanian capital Nouakchott or far into Morocco itself. Nonetheless, Sahrawi resistance and diasporic Sahrawi state formation clearly *did* have an impact on Morocco's rule over Western Sahara: in contrast to a policy of widespread neglect after the Moroccan expansion into the Tarfaya Strip in 1958,⁶⁵ the challenge of Sahrawi nationalism pushed Morocco into massive investments in occupied Western Sahara, both in terms of military infrastructure, economic development,⁶⁶ and propaganda campaigns in order to persuade domestic and international audiences of the rightfulness of its irredentist claim.⁶⁷

To bring the politics of resistance back into the study of state expansions, this book therefore complements its analysis of expansionist statecraft with a focus on countermobilization, whether in the form of counterviolence, counterinstitutions, counteridentities, or counternarratives (see chapter 5). This focus on resistance should not be misunderstood as a form of symbolic identification with the weaker side: any comparative analysis of expansionism that is blind to organized resistance runs the risk of missing a crucial element of institutional change, including institutional

decay and slow-moving breakdown. Israel's partial state contraction from the occupied territories, for instance, would have been unthinkable without systematic Palestinian resistance throughout two intifadas, culminating in the establishment of a protostate, the Palestinian Authority.

Third, the research literature tends to understand each territorial expansion as a *sui generis* phenomenon. While much can be learned from a detailed historiographic reading of the individual cases, the segmentation of Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli irredentism into single-case country studies forfeits the analytical potential of theorizing their commonalities and differences from a comparative perspective. In the Syrian-Lebanese case, for instance, the Syrian occupation is frequently traced back to a special relationship between the two nations, ranging from metaphors of kinship and courtship⁶⁸ to accusations of a Syrian "war waged against the Lebanese polity."⁶⁹ In the conflict over Western Sahara, *sui generis* approaches tend to read the Moroccan-Sahrawi confrontation through the colonial-era lens of *bilad al-makhzen* (broadly translated as "lands of the government") and *bilad al-siba* ("lands of dissidence"),⁷⁰ thereby adopting a Moroccan royalist reading of restored sovereignty over Western Sahara that was specifically rejected by the International Court of Justice in 1975.⁷¹

Structured comparisons are even less frequent in the Israeli case, still plagued by the "politics of uniqueness," a phenomenon defined by Barnett as the idea that Israel is "unlike any other state," thereby making the state "comparable to none."⁷² When it comes to third-wave irredentism, much of the research literature treats Israeli expansionism and Israeli demographic engineering in the occupied territories unlike any other state expansion from the same period.⁷³ This deep-seated exceptionalism stands out most clearly in comparative case studies that explore the parallels and differences between the Zionist project and European settler colonialism: any case selection that compares Israel's policies to states in another region (Europe) and in another period (the eighteenth and nineteenth century) systematically isolates Israel from the region of the Middle East and from the era of postcolonial state formation.⁷⁴

By contrast, in studying Israel as a Middle Eastern society, this book builds on a comparative research agenda that ranges from earlier works by Migdal (who compared state-society relations in Israel and Egypt)⁷⁵ and Barnett (who studied militarization in Israel and Egypt)⁷⁶ to more recent comparative research on security sectors,⁷⁷ minorities, and diasporas⁷⁸ as well as the question of a shared Middle Eastern cultural identity.⁷⁹ In the context of Israeli expansionism, prominent examples of such a regionalist

approach can be found in an edited volume by Haklai and Loizides, which explores Israel's settlement project in comparison with other examples of demographic engineering in the Middle East, including the cases of northern Cyprus, Western Sahara, and northern Iraq.⁸⁰ Another regionalist approach to Israeli expansionism has been developed by Barak, who compares Maronite demographic decline in "Greater Lebanon" (established in 1920) with the reality of a shrinking Jewish majority in "Greater Israel" (Israel and the occupied territories since 1967).⁸¹ As Barak points out, the structured comparison emphasizes the *differences* between the two cases: "Greater Lebanon" was built on relatively weak state institutions but enjoys high levels of legitimacy (even in areas "captured" in 1920); by contrast, "Greater Israel" stands out for much stronger state institutions but also decidedly lower levels of legitimacy, particularly among the Palestinian population (which came under Israeli military control in 1967).

This regionalist approach does not deny that some elements of Israeli nation building will require a case selection that moves *outside* of the Middle East. For instance, for the study of existential fear and geographic isolation, the comparison with Afrikaner or French Canadian nationalism (developed by Abulof)⁸² points to a number of distinctive parallels. Nonetheless, a regionalist reading of Israeli state formation (and Israeli state expansion, for that matter) will assume that states that were established in a similar period and in a similar region naturally share a large number of commonalities—without, of course, forcing Israel and its Arab neighbors on a Procrustean bed of implausible homogeneity.

Chapter 1

A Theory of Postcolonial State Expansions

In contrast to the politics of uniqueness, typological theory aims at transcending the idiosyncratic. Abstract ideal types replace all claims to exceptionalism, and instead of historiographic exegesis, typological theory constructs a generalized pathway, a reconstruction of “both actual and potential conjunctions of variables, or sequences of events and linkages between causes and effects that may recur.”¹ In order to explore the commonalities and differences that link the “Syrianization” of Lebanon,² the “Moroccanization” of Western Sahara,³ and the “Judaization”⁴ of the occupied territories, this chapter develops a theory of postcolonial state expansions that builds on power-distributional approaches in historical institutionalism.⁵ The theoretical framework consists of three elements: a causal pathway of postcolonial state expansions, a typology of different varieties of state expansion (as well as state contraction), and a taxonomy of rule and resistance. The three elements are linked as follows: the causal pathway theorizes why some postcolonial states in the Middle East engaged in expansionist policies as a coping strategy to overcome entrenched crises of legitimacy and sovereignty, the typology explains why these irredentist projects resulted in very different outcomes, and the taxonomy theorizes expansionism as an interaction between rule and resistance. In combination, the theoretical framework responds to an overarching research question: why and how did postcolonial states in the modern Middle East expand and contract?

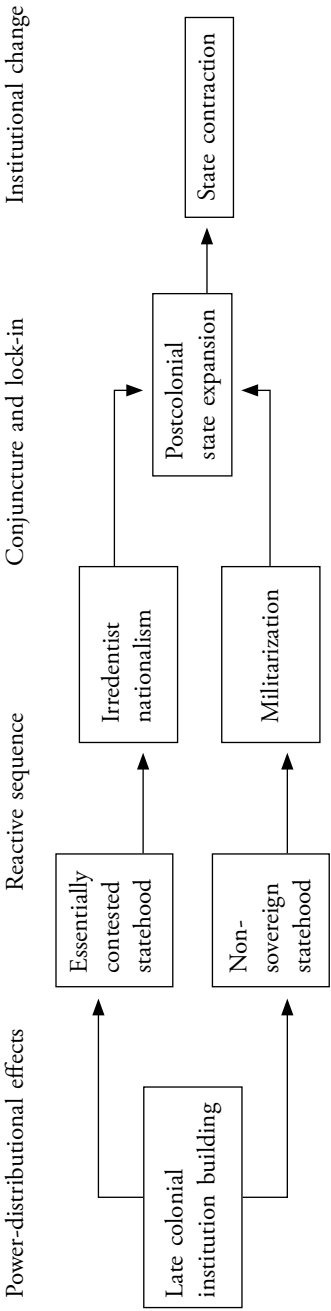
A Causal Pathway of Postcolonial State Expansions

Postcolonial state expansions can be theorized as a causal pathway consisting of four different stages: colonial rule, postcolonial state formation, state

expansion, and state contraction (see table 1.1). The causal pathway operates as follows. First, the model captures two distinct power-distributional effects of late colonial institution-building. After decolonization, the newly independent states were perceived as profoundly illegitimate (essentially contested statehood) without being organized into an effective state apparatus (nonsovereign statehood). Second, in order to counteract these profound legitimacy and sovereignty gaps of newly established states, state-building elites deployed militarization and irredentist nationalism as reactive sequences.⁶ Third, state expansions resulted from a conjuncture of means, motive, and opportunity: political elites did not necessarily aim at territorial enlargement per se, but they strategically grasped the chance to engage in expansionist policies when a regional conflict environment presented them with a convenient window of opportunity. The model understands the resulting state expansions as a form of quasi-permanent institutional lock-in: once expanding states had settled on a specific regime for newly captured territories, the respective type of state expansion became relatively entrenched. Fourth, the model assumes the possibility of slow-moving institutional change (including state contraction), depending on the level of organized political resistance and shifts in domestic coalition building.

This four-stage causal model of postcolonial state expansion can be clarified in greater detail. The power-distributional effects of colonial institution building can be traced back to the late colonial “self-destruct state.”⁷ Unlike earlier forms of European colonialism, the late colonial state (i.e., colonialism after World War I) was shaped profoundly by the Wilsonian moment, the promise of national self-determination as an emerging norm.⁸ Late colonial institution building was consequently “schizophrenic: partially determined by the legal and moral conception of Mandate and partially by self-interest.”⁹ Unwilling to rule by consent and unable to rule by force, institution building in the late colonial state consisted in rule by bricolage, a pattern of constant improvisation, and widespread arbitrariness. This rule by bricolage had two power-distributional effects: a deeply disputed nation building (essentially contested statehood) and a highly fragmented state building (nonsovereign statehood). Instead of concentrating power in a legitimate and robust state apparatus, late colonial rule resulted in a systematic dispersal of power. When the colonial powers abandoned the Middle East, what they left behind was “a state without being a nation-state, a political entity without being a political community.”¹⁰ The causal pathway defines these fundamental disputes over the basic Westphalian features of a nation-state (identity of the state nation, geographic delimitation of the

Table 1.1. A Causal Model of State Expansion and State Contraction



state territory, organizational features of the state apparatus)¹¹ and the overall legitimacy of state existence as *essentially contested statehood*.

This fundamental dispute whether a state should even *exist* in the first place resulted from the ever-changing territorial divisions, fragile political institutions, and systematic favoritism vis-à-vis ethnic and ethnosectarian minorities under late colonial rule. Sometimes these policies followed a strategy of “rule and conquer” (like the French “Berber policy” in Morocco), and sometimes they resulted from a mixture of competing imperial interests, racial resentment, and mere incompetence (like the British policy vis-à-vis the Zionist project).¹² In the absence of stable and legitimate political institutions, late colonial rule raised an entire generation of broad expectations¹³ that did not struggle over public policy or constitutional amendments, but over grandiose plans to launch completely new state projects¹⁴ or (to put it in Gramscian terminology) “a new type of State”¹⁵ from scratch. The political parties carrying these miniature state projects differed on almost everything, including the state’s geographic delimitation, its organizational features, and the identity of the state nation. They could only agree on two things: the illegitimacy of colonial rule—and the illegitimacy of one another.

In addition to being essentially contested, the newly independent states were also *non-sovereign*: colonial administrators were not only wary of creating stable and legitimate institutions, they were even more suspicious of training administrative, police, and judicial personnel or of establishing a national army. Instead, they relied on the systematic recruitment of ethnic and ethnosectarian minorities into auxiliary forces that were fighting alongside the colonial military. However, once the colonial powers withdrew their military, they left behind a polity without a state—or at least, again in Gramscian terminology, a polity without a “State in the narrow sense of the governmental-coercive apparatus.”¹⁶

In order to overcome the historical legacies of essentially contested and nonsovereign statehood, competing political elites in the newly independent states engaged in two reactive sequences—irredentist nation building and militarized state building. Paradoxically, neither of the two policies were necessarily aimed at war making or territorial expansion. Irredentist ideologies sought to anchor fragile and insecure nations in a grandiose past while promising them an even more glorious future, whether Antun Sa’adeh’s “Greater Syria,” Allal al-Fassi’s “Greater Morocco,” or Ze’ev Jabotinsky’s “Greater Israel.”¹⁷ At the same time, militarization aimed at jump-starting the establishment of a governmental-coercive state apparatus, a pattern of militarized state formation described by Perthes “as an end in itself and not

as a prelude to actual war making.¹⁸ In short, while irredentism aimed at building the nation, militarization aimed at building the state.

In most cases, militarization and irredentism did not result in any direct challenges to the regional state system of the Middle East. Often the dream of recovering lost territories simply withered away on the political fringes: the vision of “Greater Egypt” or a “Unified Nile Valley,” thus the unification of Egypt and Sudan, rapidly fell apart when Sudan opted for self-determination instead.¹⁹ None of the plans for a union between Iraq and Syria ever came to fruition: these failed initiatives included Nuri al-Sa’id’s Fertile Crescent plan and Emir Abdullah’s Greater Syria plan.²⁰ However, in a number of significant cases—Syria, Morocco, and Israel (Iraq and Turkey might also be added to this list; see chapter 7)—both reactive sequences became interlinked in a rapid succession of military conflict, territorial expansion, and entrenched ethnoterritorial conflict. This quasi-accidental conjuncture of events²¹ can be described as the unintended consequence of a regional state system of equally militarized and equally irredentist states and nationalist movements. Without a functional pattern of regional integration, Middle Eastern states did not trust one another and rarely recognized their neighbor’s borders. The region had become plagued by both the security dilemma and the Macedonian syndrome.²²

As unplanned conjunctures of dysfunctional decolonization and a regional conflict environment, the initial campaigns of military conquest were surprisingly swift: Israel needed less than a week to capture the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the entire West Bank. Once the reactive sequences of irredentism and militarization had become interlinked, however, they created a lock-in effect that rapidly became quasi-permanent: It took Israel only six days to conquer the West Bank, but core elements of its rule over the occupied territories would remain unchanged for the next fifty years.²³ Despite several regional wars, intense campaigns of guerilla warfare, an unprecedented wave of international terrorism, costly efforts toward conflict resolution and decades of Palestinian state building, at least at the time of this writing, the Israeli military remains firmly in control of the occupied territories for the foreseeable future.

This institutional lock-in was, of course, no coincidence. The initial campaigns of conquest by Syria, Morocco, and Israel might have occurred almost by accident, in another proverbial “fit of absence of mind.”²⁴ However, the strategic institutionalization of territorial expansion in the following years was no “accidental empire”²⁵ but rather reflected the deliberate outcome of a series of strategic decisions. While the Syrianization of Lebanon, the

Moroccanization of Western Sahara and the Judaization of the occupied territories followed different varieties of expansionism, the underlying logic was the exact same strategy of predatory state consolidation: the political elites of expanding states systematically deployed their grasp over newly acquired territories and their populations in order to overcome fundamental disputes over the nature of the state (essentially contested statehood) and ongoing sovereignty gaps (nonsovereign statehood).

Over the years, the initial euphoria of state expansion went sour. Instead of creating uncontested and fully sovereign nation-states, the process of territorial expansion rather accentuated the core dilemmas of each state project. Morocco's denial of a Sahrawi nation exposed a more fundamental unease over other ethnic breaking points, especially the Berber question.²⁶ Israel's control over the occupied territories turned the Palestinian national movement into an international player while confronting the country with the trade-off between a Jewish and a democratic state, or more precisely between a Jewish ethnocracy²⁷ and a Jewish ethnic democracy.²⁸ In addition, one might speculate that Syria's stability as a nation-state lasted only as long as Syrian soldiers were stationed on Lebanese soil: six years after the Assad dynasty was pressured into withdrawing from Lebanon in 2005, Syria almost fell apart in a vicious ethnosectarian conflict.

However, state contraction and existential challenges to statehood were rarely this closely entangled. Instead, state contractions resulted from different forms of organized political resistance and shifts in domestic coalition building. Faced with guerilla warfare, terrorism, international pressure, and mere acts of civil disobedience, expanding states quickly realized that the historical circumstances did not always work in their favor. On the normative level, state expansions violated both the decolonization regime and the territorial integrity norm;²⁹ on the geostrategic level, nationalist movements that rebelled against state expansions had access to a wide variety of state sponsors willing to invest in costly proxy wars.³⁰ In order to lower the costs of occupation, some states fully withdrew from captured territories. Syria removed its military from Lebanon, and Israel disengaged first from the Sinai Peninsula and later from the settlements in the Gaza Strip. In other cases, states offered wide-ranging autonomy proposals (like the Moroccan autonomy plan for Western Sahara from 2003), sometimes reaching the threshold of statehood (like the Palestinian Authority). Tellingly, not a single state expansion occurring *after* the formalization of the decolonization regime resulted in the successful incorporation of captured territories in the modern Middle East, whether in the case of Syria, Morocco, Israel, Turkey, or Iraq.

Varieties of State Expansion

The research literature on state expansions has developed highly nuanced comparative frameworks, especially regarding the interplay of territorial claims and expansionist practices.³¹ In contrast, the institutional diversity of state expansion remains undertheorized: Lustick's seminal model of state expansion and state contraction, for instance, focuses on different modes of contestation but tacitly assumes a linear mode of territorial change based on varying degrees of territorial incorporation and disincorporation.³²

In order to emphasize the variability and reversibility of state expansions, the following typology emphasizes the dimension of diverging institutional pathways, an approach fruitfully applied to the comparative study of capitalism,³³ democracy,³⁴ and autocracy.³⁵ The typology follows Naseemullah and Staniland, as well as Barak, in their emphasis on the different effects of projecting state power across space. While Naseemullah and Staniland focus on different varieties of *indirect* rule (suzerain, hybrid, and de jure governance), Barak develops a typology of *direct* state expansions depending on varying levels of institutional strength and legitimacy, thereby contrasting state expansions that are strong but widely perceived as illegitimate by incorporated populations (like Israel's state expansion after 1967 as "Greater Israel") and state expansions that are weak but widely perceived as legitimate by incorporated populations (like Lebanon's creation as "Greater Lebanon" in 1920).³⁶

In terms of theory building, the varieties of expansionism approach adopts a taxonomy developed by Thelen and Mahoney,³⁷ which conceptualizes institutional change as a function of power resources controlled by change agents and the corresponding political context, which offers certain veto possibilities³⁸ to status quo agents (see table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Contextual and Institutional Sources of Institutional Change

		Characteristics of the targeted institution	
		Low level of discretion in interpretation/enforcement	High level of discretion in interpretation/enforcement
Characteristics of the political context	Strong veto possibilities	Layering	Drift
	Weak veto possibilities	Displacement	Conversion

This broadly applicable taxonomy can be adapted to the context of projecting state power across space by understanding expansionism as a form of institutional change, shaped by the interaction between expansionist states (change agents) and political elites in the captured territory (status quo agents). This asymmetric competition over power and space can be translated into a typology of different varieties of expansionism, based on the relative amount of power resources deployed by the expansionist state and the respective veto capabilities of political elites in the captured territory, operationalized as stateness (see table 1.3).

The typology theorizes diverging institutional pathways of state expansion, defined as the physical projection of a state apparatus across political borders. In contrast to time-based typologies that distinguish between the permanent (annexation) and the temporary (occupation) projection of a state apparatus, the varieties of expansionism approach can be described as an institution-based typology that explores whether state power is projected directly or indirectly on the captured territory (grasp) and whether the projected state power is limited or unlimited (scope) (see table 1.4). By

Table 1.3. A Typology of State Expansion

		Power resources deployed by the expansionist state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	Patronization (institutional layering)	Satellization (institutional drift)
	Low	Exclavization (institutional displacement)	Incorporation (institutional conversion)

Table 1.4. Diverging Institutional Pathways of State Expansion

		Scope of expanding state apparatus	
		Limited	Unlimited
Grasp of expanding state apparatus	Indirect	Patronization Indirect rule by limited projection of state power	Satellization Indirect rule by unlimited projection of state power
	Direct	Exclavization Direct rule by limited projection of state power	Incorporation Direct rule by unlimited projection of state power

including patterns of state expansion that remain below the threshold of territorial inclusion (patronization, satellization, exclavization), the typology emphasizes the fact that the physical projection of a state apparatus across political borders may not always result in full-scale annexation—quite the contrary.

The typology assumes that the amount of power resources deployed by the expansionist state determines the *scope* of state control (discretion in rule enforcement) while the level of stateness in the captured territory determines the *grasp* of external rule (directness of rule enforcement). Power resources operationalize the discretion of an expansionist state to regulate, interpret, and enforce political rules in a captured territory, both formally and informally. At the upper end of the spectrum (high level of power resources), a state is capable of mobilizing the necessary resources to enforce a set of political rules in a specific territory, whether these resources may be economic, military, or symbolic.³⁹ Domestically, an abundance of power resources tends to correspond with Migdal's characteristics of a "strong state," namely "high capabilities to extract, penetrate, regulate, and appropriate."⁴⁰ However, the necessary resources to rule over a contested territory may best be described as a mix of hard and soft power: while the capability to project or "broadcast"⁴¹ hard power across state borders (military, security forces, civilian settler population) depends largely on domestic resource extraction, the capability to successfully justify and defend expansionist state projects in the international arena depends on both soft power and statecraft (or "smart power"),⁴² which can be mobilized based on a state's integration into a regional framework or the support by a great power.

All other things being equal, more intrusive types of expansionism will be more costly (with incorporation as the most resource-consuming ideal type), especially if territorial expansion is perceived by other states as a form of norm violation.⁴³ While stronger states have a higher discretion in selecting their set of expansionist policies than weaker states, there is no automatic correlation between state strength and the selected variety of territorial expansion: strong states may strategically choose to deploy less power-consuming options (often in fear of outside intervention), and weak states may systematically stretch their scarce resources to carry out highly expensive strategies of holding on to captured territory. While the varieties of expansionism framework explores the amount of power resources deployed, it is agnostic on why states may select a certain strategy in the first place. Based on the literature, it is fair to assume that state policy depends largely on the ideological framework that legitimizes state expansion in the first place: if irredentist ideologies put emphasis on territorial indivisibility, even

weak states may prefer the option of incorporation over all others despite exceedingly high costs.⁴⁴ By contrast, if irredentist ideologies emphasize the symbolism of *certain* captured territories over others, even strong states may apply a more selective policy than full-scale incorporation, frequently resulting in the creation of ethnic exclaves in places of high symbolic value, whether in Kaliningrad or in Hebron.⁴⁵

In contrast to the *scope* of rule enforcement by an expanding state, its *grasp* (or the directness of rule enforcement) depends on the preexisting level of stateness in a specific territory, understood as the distinct quality of state rule as opposed to mere effectiveness of control. According to Andersen and colleagues stateness encompasses a monopoly on violence, administrative effectiveness, and the legitimacy of authority.⁴⁶ The level of stateness describes the resistance capacity of political elites to mobilize *against* the capture of a political territory by an expanding state. In the language of veto player theory, stateness stands for the veto capabilities of political elites to block the permanent inclusion of a territory and its population into another state entity, a pattern of formal state death by annexation.⁴⁷ At the upper end the spectrum of stateness would be a centralized state authority with a solid monopoly on violence, complemented by high levels of administrative effectiveness and broad-based legitimacy. Given the international norm of inviolable state borders,⁴⁸ formal statehood provides access to a number of legal and political instruments against the capture of state territory. While external pressure on expanding states will depend on a number of geopolitical factors, a higher level of stateness can frequently be leveraged into more substantial forms of outside support against the capture of territory.

Given the assumption of cost-sensitive expansionist powers, the varieties of expansionism approach assume that political elites with a *higher* resistance capacity (higher levels of stateness) will have a better chance of defending the status quo in a captured territory. As Gerring and colleagues have pointed out, preexisting patterns of internal centralization in a political unit (or in this context, relatively high levels of stateness) indeed tend to result in an *indirect* form of rule over this entity.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, in principle, all state institutions can be captured and converted by expansionist states and insurgents alike,⁵⁰ and even high levels of stateness cannot guarantee protection from a determined revisionist power. As the history of British colonialism in South Asia has shown, expansionist powers may have a high incentive to dismantle strong states (the Maratha Empire, the Sikh Empire) while keeping weak states alive and dependent on their goodwill

(the princely states).⁵¹ Similar to the question of resource deployment, the specific ideology behind state expansions may play an important role in guiding state behavior toward strategies of institutional continuity or institutional rupture. Frameworks that emphasize the principle of equality between states (as legitimate and inviolable entities) may tend toward institutional continuity, and frameworks emphasizing the inequality between states (whether based on revolutionary ideals or colonial ideologies) may be more tolerant of the radical undoing and remaking of statehood. Similarly, while territories with limited levels of stateness can be captured with relative ease (like Morocco's incorporation of Western Sahara), the mere absence of stateness in a territory does not necessarily invite neighboring states to conquer it. On the contrary, the high costs of capacity building in areas of limited stateness may even *deter* potential invaders from capturing and incorporating them, a phenomenon well observed in cases ranging from Afghanistan to Somalia.

The resulting ideal types can be described in greater detail as follows:

1. *Patronization* (institutional layering) describes a form of indirect rule by a limited projection of state power. Patronization is a form of external rule in which an expanding state deploys limited amounts of power resources into its rule over a territory in which substantial levels of stateness provide preexisting political elites with high veto capabilities to mobilize against formal territorial inclusion. Since the expanding state only mobilizes a limited amount of power resources, its discretion in enforcing a new set of political rules in a captured territory is limited as well: basic patterns of political life (constitutional design, economic structure, demographic makeup) cannot be changed, but their implementation might be reshaped by the institutional overlay of foreign tutelage. As an additional layer above the preexisting political system, the expanding state transforms into its patron, slowly developing a dense network of patronage ties with the elite of the captured territory without being directly involved in its governance. Imperial forms of limited external governance would be a classic example for patronization as a type of indirect rule.⁵² More modern forms might be found in unstructured, temporary, and relatively nonintrusive forms of outside intervention by neighboring countries in the context of a civil war.

2. *Satellization* (institutional drift) describes a form of indirect rule by an unlimited projection of state power. In cases of satellization, high levels of stateness in a captured territory represent an effective obstacle against formal territorial inclusion: however, the expanding state deploys such a high level of power resources that the territory under its control slowly drifts into a position of asymmetric dependence as a client polity, both formally and informally. As the term “satellization” indicates, the captured polity slowly moves into the orbit of its external suzerain. While the basic makeup of the political system and its formal symbols of sovereignty remain untouched, the expanding state controls both the interpretation and implementation of political rules, based on its leverage over state organs and the public sphere. The expanding state may even command the capability to rewrite more fundamental rules of the political game, for instance, by changing the constitution or by imposing legal frameworks that formalize the power asymmetry as a semipermanent pattern of dependence. Classic examples for satellization as a pattern of formalized dependence (in the garb of limited independence) include the practice of suzerainty, whether in the case of European colonialism or Ottoman imperialism.⁵³
3. *Exclavization* (institutional displacement) describes a form of direct rule by a limited projection of state power. In the case of exclavization, the relative absence of stateness in a captured territory (limited monopoly on violence, administrative ineffectiveness, lack of legitimate authority) opens up the possibility of annexation; however, the expanding state is either unwilling or unable to carry out this option of full-scale territorial and demographic incorporation. As a consequence, de jure the political rules in the captured territory might not undergo any formal changes, thereby effectively remaining frozen. De facto, however, the preexisting political, economic, and demographic structures will be systematically undermined by the establishment of institutional, legal, and often ethnic exclaves under the exclusive control of the expanding state, thereby resulting in a slow-moving process of partial inclusion and partial displacement. Historical examples of exclavization

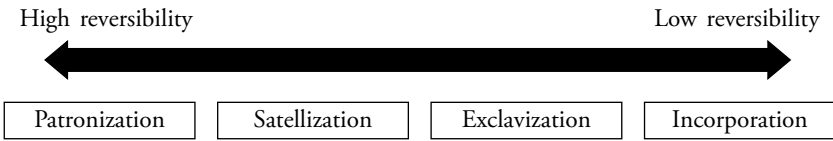
include various patterns of demographic and institutional engineering, including European settler-colonialism⁵⁴ or the Russification of Kaliningrad (since 1945).⁵⁵

4. *Incorporation* (institutional conversion) describes a form of direct rule by an unlimited projection of state power. Cases of incorporation are characterized by a particularly weak level of deterrence against territorial inclusion (low to nonexistent stateness) in combination with an expanding state willing and able to invest high amounts of power resources. As a consequence of this extreme power asymmetry, the expanding state is capable of rewriting the most basic rules of the captured territory, thereby achieving its formal inclusion into a larger body politic. While the procedure of legal annexation may be far from achieving *effective* state rule, at least formally this process effaces preexisting territorial and national borders by projecting the political structure of the expanding state uniformly throughout the captured territory. A classic case of incorporation would be European irredentism throughout the nineteenth century, both for the case of Greater Germany and Greater Italy.⁵⁶

Varieties of State Contraction

All four ideal types of state expansion can be matched with a corresponding ideal type of institutional undoing or state contraction, thereby raising the question of institutional reversibility: not all state expansions can be overturned overnight, and as Lustick's threshold model points out, political actors may invest considerable resources into raising institutional thresholds against state contraction.⁵⁷ In principle, even highly entrenched forms of state expansion can be undone (including formal incorporation), but the process of state contraction will be considerably easier if it consists of undoing a limited and indirect form of external rule. To integrate the logic of increasing threshold effects against state contraction into the typology, the four ideal types of state expansion can be arranged on a continuum of institutional reversibility (see table 1.5).⁵⁸ A foreign power can withdraw from a satellite state within days, but once a state has engaged in systematic policies of incorporation such as demographic engineering, state contraction becomes more difficult.

Table 1.5. State Expansions on a Continuum of Institutional Reversibility



The four ideal types of state contraction are constructed as direct counterparts of the previously discussed ideal types of state expansion, resulting respectively in depatronization, desatellization, deexclavization, and disincorporation (see table 1.6).

The typology theorizes diverging institutional pathways of state contraction, defined as the physical contraction of a state apparatus across political borders. Given the different patterns of state expansion, state contractions as the *undoing* of state expansions follow distinct institutional patterns which reflect whether the contracting state apparatus projected its power directly or indirectly on the captured territory (grasp) and whether this state power was projected in a limited or unlimited form (scope) (see table 1.7).

The four ideal types of state contraction can be described in greater detail as follows:

1. *Depatronization* (institutional unlayering) describes the undoing of indirect rule by a limited projection of state power. Depatronization consists in the removal of a limited level of institutional overlay by an external power that invested limited power resources into its rule over a territory with high

Table 1.6. A Typology of State Contraction

		Power resources deployed by the contracting state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	Depatronization (institutional unlayering)	Desatellization (institutional redrift)
	Low	Deexclavization (institutional replacement)	Disincorporation (institutional reconversion)

Table 1.7. Diverging Institutional Pathways of State Contraction

		Scope of contracting state apparatus	
		Limited	Unlimited
Grasp of contracting state apparatus	Indirect	Depatronization Undoing of indirect rule by limited projection of state power	Desatellization Undoing of indirect rule by unlimited projection of state power
	Direct	Deexclavization Undoing of direct rule by limited projection of state power	Disincorporation Undoing of direct rule by unlimited projection of state power

levels of stateness. Since preexisting patterns of political life (constitutional regime, economic structure, border regime) remained largely untouched, depatronization primarily consists in removing or in rearranging the patronage networks that linked political elites within the captured territory to an overarching patriarchal figure (or a paternalistic foreign power). Classic examples of this pattern can be taken from the literature on decolonization as an end of indirect rule.⁵⁹

2. *Desatellization* (institutional redrift) describes the undoing of indirect rule by an unlimited projection of state power. More specifically, desatellization consists in the undoing of institutional drift, namely the removal of a consolidated polity (with high levels of stateness) from the orbit of an expansionist state that invested high levels of power resources into its expansionist project. Similar to depatronization, desatellization consists in the removal of *indirect* rule—however, the difference in terms of power resources (deployed by the expansionist state) also changes the dynamics of state contraction. Given the higher grasp of the external power to intervene in the interpretation and implementation of political rules, the process of desatellization affects a much broader variety of state institutions than just the higher echelons of a preexisting polity. This undoing of indirect, yet intrusive external rule can be studied based on cases ranging from postcolonial to post-Ottoman statehood.⁶⁰

3. *Deexclavization* (institutional replacement) describes the undoing of direct rule by a limited projection of state power. Deexclavization consists in a form of state contraction where an external power (which invested limited power resources into its expansionist project) withdraws its institutional, legal, or ethnic exclaves from a captured territory with low levels of stateness. This undoing of a direct, yet limited form of external rule revolves primarily around finding an institutional replacement to fill the political vacuum created by the sudden removal of external control (and frequently the removal of implanted populations). Given the combination of low levels of pre-existing stateness and the pattern of limited external rule (outside of the institutional enclaves), a post-exclavization polity is characterized by weak to nonexistent state structures (limited monopoly on violence, weak administrative effectiveness, limited legitimacy of authority).⁶¹ Regarding the history of decolonization, this pattern captures the withdrawal of settler populations from territories with limited levels of stateness that were not fully incorporated—that is, Spanish Sahara rather than French Algeria, which should be understood as a form of disincorporation.⁶²
4. *Disincorporation* (institutional reconversion) describes the undoing of direct rule by an unlimited projection of state power. Disincorporation consists in the withdrawal of a state that invested a significant amount of power resources into its control over a captured territory with limited levels of preexisting stateness. As a relatively irreversible type of state expansion with high threshold effects, the unraveling of this type of expansionism requires substantial outside pressure. However, once the threshold of state contraction has been crossed, previous state investments in transport, education, and the local economy are rather well suited for the purpose of institutional reconversion in the framework of alternative state projects. After withdrawing its security forces (and possibly its settler-migrant population), in an ideal case, the contracting state may leave behind a rather promising set of institutional features, ranging from well-trained local elites to a high-functioning economic infrastructure. For the study

of decolonization, the focus on different forms of economic incorporation and political disincorporation has been used to explain divergences in postcolonial economic performance.⁶³

Taxonomies of Rule and Resistance

Conquest and resistance are closely entangled. Expansionist states will carefully study the population under their control, and the political elites of nationalist insurgencies will seek to exploit the weaknesses of their rulers. Theorists of resistance have long explored this strategic interaction between the powerful and the weak: in a well-known taxonomy, James Scott distinguishes between public and covert forms of resistance, understood as a strategic reaction to certain policies of domination.⁶⁴ The application of Scott's focus on "everyday resistance" has resulted in intriguing case studies on civil,⁶⁵ popular,⁶⁶ creative,⁶⁷ or even *polite* resistance.⁶⁸ However, critics have deplored a certain tendency to "romanticize resistance, to read all forms of resistance as signs of the ineffectiveness of systems of power and of the resilience and creativity of the human spirit in its refusal to be dominated."⁶⁹

In order to move beyond symbolic acts of noncompliance (in the words of Scott, everyday resistance), the following taxonomy of rule and resistance (see table 1.8) builds on Barnett and Duvall⁷⁰ in its theorization of four different types of power—physical power (coercion), institutional power (rule-setting), social power (production of collective identities), and symbolic power (production of meaning).

The taxonomy can be explained in greater detail as follows. Like all forms of domination, state expansion is based on a functional coercive apparatus (physical power) and embedded into a system of regulating,

Table 1.8. A Taxonomy of Rule and Resistance

Type of power	Social practices of rule	Social practices of resistance
Physical power	Coercive apparatus	Counterviolence
Institutional power	Rule setting	Counterinstitutions
Social power	Collective identities	Counteridentities
Symbolic power	Historical narratives	Counternarratives

interpreting, and implementing formal and informal rules (institutional power). This exercise of power is legitimized based on the production of historically and contextually specific collective identities (social power): for instance, the forgiving fatherland that reunites with a long-lost province. These social roles are embedded into broader narratives of historical meaning—what Foucauldians refer to as “regimes of truth”⁷¹ (symbolic power).

Consequently, the resistance against state expansion (or other forms of domination, for that matter) aims at undermining and overturning these individual practices of domination based on a combination of counterviolence, counterinstitutions, counteridentities, and counternarratives. *Counterviolence* confronts the exercise of immediate military domination, either by guerilla warfare directed against the military control of territory or by terrorist attacks on the civilian home front. *Counterinstitutions* aim at obstructing effective rule implementation, especially by establishing alternative institutions of rule setting. *Counteridentities* react to the heteronomous imposition of social identities, frequently through ostentatious expressions of self-worth.⁷² These counteridentities can be based on elaborate “hidden transcripts,” defined by Scott as a collective “critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant,”⁷³ often contradicting or symbolically overturning imposed social roles. Finally, *counternarratives* aim at undermining and dismantling imposed regimes of truth, either by pointing out their inherent instability or by opposing them with historical counternarratives.⁷⁴

A Note on Case Selection

The three cases of Syria, Morocco, and Israel were selected based on the criteria of geopolitical relevance and institutional variety. First, the three cases combine three long-standing territorial conflicts that have shaped the security architecture of the entire modern Middle East and North Africa (the Arab-Israeli confrontation) as well as the two subregions of the Levant (the Syrian-Lebanese question) and the Maghreb (the Moroccan-Sahrawi conflict).⁷⁵ Second, the three cases represent three very different patterns of state expansion and state contraction. The Syrian-Lebanese case was influenced by the historical legacy of Lebanese statehood, which limited Syrian expansionism to an institutional setting somewhere between patronization and satellization. By contrast, Moroccan expansionism benefited from the relative *absence* of Sahrawi statehood, which paved the way for a long-standing policy of territorial and political incorporation. In the Israeli-

Palestinian case, Israeli policymakers shied away from such a strategy. Unable (and unwilling) to carry out a full-fledged policy of territorial, political, and demographic incorporation of the occupied territories and its Palestinian-Arab majority (Israelization), Israel was limited to establishing miniatures of Jewish-Israeli towns and neighborhoods (Judaization), ranging from Labor Zionist *kibbutzim-settlements* (in the Jordan Valley) to American-Israeli *suburb-settlements* (like Tekoa).

By focusing on a specific era (state formation after decolonization) and a specific region (the Middle East), the case selection establishes a regional building block study⁷⁶ of state expansion and state contraction based on the idea of a “close comparison of kindred politics within a geocultural region.”⁷⁷ As the metaphor of a building block indicates, the theoretical framework can be deployed to construct a much larger edifice, namely a global perspective on different varieties of state expansion and state contraction (see chapter 7). For instance, as a type of state expansion that follows the ideal type of incorporation, the “Moroccanization” of Western Sahara shares core features with the “Ethiopianization” of Eritrea⁷⁸ and the “Indonesianization” of East Timor.⁷⁹ As a form of satellization, Syria’s rule over Lebanon resembles the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia (1979–1989).⁸⁰ By contrast, Israel’s policy of Judaization in the occupied territories corresponds to the ideal type of exclavization, with intriguing parallels to Turkish and Armenian practices of maintaining ethnic exclaves in the form of quasi-states in northern Cyprus and Azerbaijan, respectively: the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.⁸¹

Regarding the period of investigation, the analysis begins with late colonial rule and focuses on the process of state formation (after decolonization), state expansion (in the 1960s and 1970s), and state contraction (in the 1990s and 2000s). For the purpose of comparability, the focus of investigation ends around the year 2005 when all three cases underwent a significant level of institutional change in terms of territorial control. First, Syria withdrew from Lebanon; second, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip; third, Morocco succeeded in subverting the referendum on Western Sahara and proposed an “autonomy plan” instead.

As discussed in the introduction, the inclusion of Israel into a Middle Eastern case selection is in no way self-evident. The treatment of the Israeli case is closely connected to culturalist arguments about the question of who *truly* belongs to the region of the Middle East and North Africa—and more importantly, who does not. If the Middle East is understood to be a homogenous space that is both Arab and Muslim (the “Arab World” as

part of the broader “World of Islam”), Israel as a primarily non-Arab and non-Muslim society cannot possibly claim to be part of the region. By contrast, if we understand the Middle East and North Africa as complex and multifaceted regions, due in no small part to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the study of Israeli society firmly belongs in the realm of Middle Eastern politics.⁸² Instead of venturing into the cultural minefield of “belonging,” “rootedness,” and “authenticity,” the case selection at the core of this book follows the pragmatic logic of historical institutionalism. Israeli society will be compared to its neighbors because it went through similar stages of state formation: colonial favoritism toward ethnic minorities, an unstable period of late colonial rule, a pattern of essentially contested statehood, and the irredentist swagger of postcolonial exuberance, followed by a series of regional wars, state expansion, and long-standing territorial conflicts, whether in the West Bank or in Western Sahara.

Contribution to the Literature

Given the historical variety and the puzzling endurance of state expansions, the theoretical framework developed in this chapter aims to make three conceptual contributions to the study of state expansions and state contractions—analytical differentiation, a dynamic understanding of institutional change, and a theory-guided exploration of the effects of shifting opportunity structures over time.

First, by developing a distinct analytical vocabulary, the theoretical framework presents an alternative to the problem of conceptual stretching. By relying on European colonialism for comparative case studies and theory-building alike, the research literature tends to understand expansionism in other regions and periods as a reflection or a subtype of the European model, resulting in derivative labels such as “secondary colonialism,” “Third World colonialism,”⁸³ “new imperialism,”⁸⁴ or “modern imperialism.”⁸⁵ In response, critics have argued that this analogical framing might underestimate historically and regionally specific contexts. Despite undeniable parallels between colonial and contemporary practices of claiming and colonizing contested territory in the name of history, religion, and Realpolitik, the framing of expansionism as “colonialism” frequently reflects a rhetorical strategy rather than a disinterested form of institutional analysis.⁸⁶ Consequently, the theoretical framework builds an analytical vocabulary that

focuses on the abstract conceptualization of institutionalizing state control over territories and populations. This attempt to move up the ladder of abstraction⁸⁷ should not be misunderstood as a form of apologetics but as an attempt to produce an alternative vocabulary for discussing expansionism without having to rely on European colonial history or the international law of occupation, which expansionist states rarely apply.⁸⁸

Second, by conceptualizing state expansions and state contractions as slow-moving and gradual institutional shifts, the theoretical framework understands the projection of political power across space (as well as its unraveling) as a dynamic and open-ended process. Consequently, the theoretical framework emphasizes the role of political and social actors in maintaining or, respectively, in *undoing* state expansions. In contrast to tipping-point models, this focus on the fragility of expansionism emphasizes the notion that all contested political institutions demand a constant flow of resources and an energetic political coalition that mobilizes in their support—otherwise, they may easily be exposed to processes of institutional decay.⁸⁹

Third, by understanding different patterns of institutionalized state control as a consequence of changing opportunity structures, the theoretical framework theorizes the strategic behavior of expanding and contracting states as a function of available power resources (deployed by the expanding state) and the relative level of stateness (in the captured territory). This assumption of strategic state behavior does not assume that expansionist foreign policies follow a rational, if cynical, risk assessment. As Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 shows, irredentist nationalism and territorial expansionism are frequently shaped by patterns of brinkmanship and strategic miscalculation.⁹⁰ Instead, the approach merely assumes that states are cost sensitive in institutionalizing and maintaining their control over a captured territory and its population. Consequently, the approach assumes that state expansions will last *longer* if their institutional setup corresponds closely to the capabilities and limitations of an expansionist state and *shorter* if expansionist states are subject to shrinking power resources and increasing nationalist countermobilization (operationalized as stateness).

By exploring different forms of resistance (counterviolence, counter-institutions, counteridentities, and counternarratives), the theoretical framework provides a toolkit to study the politics of undoing expansionism. If states are sensitive to shrinking power resources and increasing nationalist countermobilization, political and social actors have substantial agency in

disrupting the flow of resources or in dismantling the political coalitions that make expansionism durable in the first place. After all, if expansionist state projects are subject to the same forces of institutional decay like other political settings, there is no reason why this process of decay could not be hastened by energetic forms of countermobilization.

Chapter 2

The Late Colonial State in the Middle East

A glance at the map of the modern Middle East reveals the enduring legacy of colonial rule. Political borders continue to reflect the power struggles between European imperial powers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Colonial architecture still shapes the boulevards of Algiers, Cairo, and Jerusalem. Even the linguistic frontiers still reflect the imprint of European rule, dividing, for instance, French-influenced Morocco from Spanish-influenced Western Sahara. This chapter analyzes a less tangible legacy of European colonial rule, namely its power-distributional impact: colonial rule did not just reshape the physical, architectural, and linguistic setting of the region but also revolutionized the rules, cultures, and institutions of the political landscape.

In its comparison of three colonial settings (the French mandate in Syria and Lebanon, the Franco-Spanish protectorate in Morocco, the British mandate in Palestine), the chapter emphasizes the unique effects of late colonialism. While French, Spanish, and British colonialism engaged in different patterns of institution building, all three cases can be characterized as a form of colonial rule that was self-consciously temporary. The French annexation of Algeria in the nineteenth century had already responded to a “crisis of colonial legitimacy”¹ triggered by both the French and the Haitian revolutions, but after the Wilsonian moment² in the aftermath of World War I, colonialism could no longer be reconciled with the emerging norm of self-determination. Self-rule could no longer be denied; it could only be delayed.

Based on a historical-institutionalist analysis of the late colonial “self-destruct state,”³ the colonial minority policy and emerging protostates for state-evading communities, this chapter argues that late colonial rule resulted in a pattern of deeply disputed nation building and highly frag-

mented state building. Instead of concentrating power in a legitimate and robust state apparatus, late colonial rule resulted in a systematic dispersal of power and legitimacy. When the colonial powers abandoned the Middle East, what they left behind was “a state without being a nation-state, a political entity without being a political community.”⁴

The Legacy of Self-Destruct Colonialism in the Maghreb and the Levant

Darwin describes the logic of late colonial rule after World War I as a “self-destruct state.”⁵ Haunted by its own normative contradictions, the late colonial state operated as a “self-consciously transitional institution bridging ‘real’ colonialism and the coming age of independent statehood. . . . The very act of promising self-government had snapped the colonial state’s ideological backbone.”⁶ Specifically designed as a *temporary* form of external rule over (as the Covenant of the League of Nations put it) “peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world,”⁷ the French mandate for Syria and Lebanon, the Franco-Spanish protectorate in Morocco, and the British mandate for Palestine consisted essentially in “something of a hybrid, a half-way house between colonial rule and independence.”⁸ Late colonial institution building was consequently “schizophrenic: partially determined by the legal and moral conception of Mandate and partially by self-interest.”⁹

THE FRENCH MANDATE IN SYRIA AND LEBANON

At the San Remo conference of 1920, the Allied Supreme Council (consisting of France, Great Britain, Italy, and Japan) granted France a League of Nations mandate to govern Syria, a territory largely determined by its separation from Palestine and Mesopotamia, which would come under British rule. The mandate, which reflected the division of French and British spheres of influence in the Middle East according to the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement,¹⁰ was ratified by the League of Nations in 1922, came into force in 1923, and lasted until 1946.¹¹ Despite the specification of the San Remo Agreement that Syria and Mesopotamia would be “provisionally recognized as independent States, subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone,”¹²

French rule initially consisted in the rapid division of Syria. By the time of the ratification of the French mandate in 1922, the French had in fact established five different states: Greater Lebanon, the State of the Alawites, the State of the Druze, the State of Damascus, and the State of Aleppo (with a special autonomy statute for Alexandretta).

As a colonial government established after the spread of Arab nationalism from the salons of secret societies into the streets,¹³ the French mandate stood little chance of establishing widespread legitimacy. From the start, the French mandate was in no position to deny the underlying “palimpsest of [its] origins in conquest”;¹⁴ French rule over Syria and Lebanon resulted not only from a secret agreement with Great Britain to divide the Middle East into spheres of influence but more precisely from defeating the first pan-Arab army (at the battle of Maysalun) and crushing the first pan-Arab protostate (the Syrian Arab Kingdom). As a relatively late arrival on the Middle Eastern scene, French rule was also hampered by a lack of military capabilities, trustworthy allies (outside of the Catholic Uniate community) and basic ethnographic knowledge. Unsurprisingly, French rule consisted in a policy of constant improvisation, widespread arbitrariness, and a peculiar combination of lofty ideals and decidedly illiberal practices.¹⁵ Commenting on French colonial interventions in the political and judicial process in “Mandatory Syria,” Houry describes this rule by bricolage as an ongoing “contradiction between what the French claimed to be the establishment of a greatly improved judicial system and the stark reality of life in a garrison state in which the French arrested and jailed or exiled scores of their political opponents, using specially constituted military tribunals headed by Frenchmen.”¹⁶

While the contradictory institution building under French rule reflected the colonial logic of “divide and rule,” the overall authoritarian instability of the French also resulted from bureaucratic infighting, domestic instability in the French metropole, and a constant fear of contagion effects between different regions of the empire. Frequent policy shifts and ongoing institutional experimentation reflected an administration known as “the dumping ground of undesirable functionaries,”¹⁷ plagued by the “politically inspired and undesirably frequent”¹⁸ turnover of key personnel. Between 1924 and 1926 alone, the high commissioner was replaced three times. Attempts to establish an indigenous façade to French rule frequently fell apart. Between 1922 and 1925, the French authorities experimented with various local and federal chambers of representatives, ending up with a

tightly controlled presidential system accompanied by a representative council. However, “after the second elections to the council, the incoming French High Commissioner, Henri de Jouvenel, unable to find anyone deemed suitable to head a notional Syrian government, suspended the constitution. Syria reverted to direct rule.”¹⁹

Erratic institution building was further encouraged by French domestic unrest, particularly the defeat of Léon Blum’s Popular Front government in 1937: a French-Syrian independence treaty that had been negotiated in 1936 was never ratified.²⁰ In addition, the fear of contagion effects between different colonial possessions added to the zigzag course of the mandate: France effectively ruled over Syria “with one eye . . . fixed on North Africa,”²¹ fearful that concessions in the Levant might trigger political upheaval in the Maghreb. Geostrategic reasons also stood behind the decision to cede an entire Syrian district (the sanjak of Alexandretta) to Turkey to win its assistance against Italian encroachment in the eastern Mediterranean—a crucial moment for early Syrian irredentism.²²

While some of the unstable institution building was unintentional, the French authorities systematically intended to prevent the hegemonic rise of a unified nationalist movement by dispersing power, thereby following some of the policies applied in Morocco.²³ Positions in the colonial administration were used to co-opt elements of the factionalized elite of notables; land reforms were deployed to cut the patronage ties between rural areas and urban landowners; the division of geographic Syria into several smaller states was designed to pit ethnosectarian minorities against the Sunni Arab majority.²⁴

Despite these efforts, the French minority policy collapsed in a series of uprisings, frequently emerging in the country’s periphery among minorities who resented increasing levels of French intervention. In the aftermath of the Great Syrian Revolt (1925–1927), the strategy of the French mandate shifted from wide-ranging autonomy plans for Syria’s compact minorities²⁵ toward administrative centralization to co-opt the country’s urban political elite. This co-optation of the mainstream nationalists organized within the “National Bloc” artificially kept a social class on life support whose economic base, lack of ideological convictions, and overall habitus dated back to the politics of the notables of Ottoman times.²⁶ After the French withdrawal, this anachronistic and deeply factionalized political elite would rapidly prove to be incapable of organizing mass politics in a modern nation-state. In sharp contrast to this propped-up elite past its prime, the French modernization of the education system created a radicalized intelligentsia

whose alternative claim to political power would ultimately crystallize in counterhegemonic state projects like the Ba'ath Party.²⁷

Limited French attempts to build a robust state apparatus reflected the transitory nature of late colonialism. Following previous patterns of French colonialism in Tunisia and Morocco, the French mandate over Syria consisted in indirect rule according to the "Moroccan formula" developed by General Lyautey, resident-general of the Moroccan protectorate: "Rather than seeking to assimilate the colonized people to French culture, as earlier French imperialists had attempted to do, the Lyautey system was associationist, that is, it sought to associate the colonized with French rule, and foresaw the day when France would leave the country and new native elites would take over."²⁸ Nonetheless, French rule rarely aimed at the systematic training of local elites for future leadership roles. The logic of indirect rule called for the systematic exploitation of economic, ethnosectarian, and regional cleavages so that French predominance could be upheld with minimal coercion and economic resources.²⁹ The domestic intelligence service (the *Sûreté Générale*) always remained exclusively French with only a minor support role for a small urban police force and a somewhat unreliable local *gendarmérie*.³⁰ French judges supervised large parts of the Syrian judiciary (particularly in cases involving foreign nationals).³¹ Both in Beirut inside the administration of the high commissioner, on the level of the separate states and further down on the district level, French advisors and administrators either headed governmental departments or exercised substantial veto powers so that in contrast to British-ruled Iraq, Syria did not enter into independence fully equipped with an experienced administrative elite.³²

In the end, late colonial rule under the French Mandate left behind a weakly consolidated state apparatus, troubled by profound questions over the core features of Syria as a nation-state. Numerous territorial partitions and reattachments had made the exact geographic delimitation of the state territory more than questionable. Constant institutional improvisation in terms of representative institutions and uncertainty over administrative centralization resulted in highly disputed organizational features of the state apparatus. The promise of self-rule for the region's compact minorities and their recruitment into the colonial auxiliary forces put the identity of a Syrian nation-state in serious jeopardy.³³ Unsurprisingly, political life after independence in 1946 continued only for a short while according to the republican constitution of 1930 (formally reinstated in 1943). After the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, the political system collapsed in 1949 with the first of many military coups. Syria would never fully recover.

THE FRANCO-SPANISH PROTECTORATE IN MOROCCO

The Franco-Spanish protectorate in Morocco lasted from the Treaty of Fez (1912) to Morocco's independence in 1955. Reflecting earlier zones of influence, the Sharifian Empire³⁴ was divided into a French protectorate (covering the Moroccan heartland) and a Spanish protectorate, which included the Rif mountains and the Mediterranean coast in the north and the Tarfaya Strip (Cape Juby) in the south. While Ifni, the Spanish exclaves, and the international zone of Tangiers were governed under separate legal frameworks, the territory south of the Franco-Spanish protectorate had already come under Spanish control as the "Spanish Sahara" at the Berlin Conference in 1884.³⁵ While the French protectorate and the Spanish protectorate were formally distinct, the Spanish authorities repeatedly relied on the French military to quell anticolonial uprisings, not least in their war against the Rif Republic. After the French withdrawal in 1956, the territories of the Spanish protectorate came under Moroccan control in a first wave of state expansion (see chapter 4)—the Spanish Sahara, however, remained a territorially and politically distinct entity.

Although French rule over Tunisia and Algeria lasted 75 and 132 years, respectively, the protectorate in Morocco lasted only 44 years.³⁶ In fact, French rule was so short lived that it was outmatched by the tenure of Morocco's Grand Vizier Mohammed El Mokri, who had previously served in this position even *before* the French protectorate (in 1908) and would continue as grand vizier for almost the entire period of the protectorate until 1955: "[For] the first time since 1917, Mohammed El Mokri was not involved in the government, and the hundred-year-old *grand vizier* died soon afterwards."³⁷ French colonial rule was not only relatively short lived, it was also supposed to be relatively nonintrusive. In contrast to the doctrine of colonial assimilation in Algeria, the French protectorate in Morocco adopted the associationist model of French rule over Tunisia. Under the Treaty of Bardo (1881), the French protectorate in Tunisia formally preserved the sovereignty of the Ottoman *bey* while putting the country under full colonial control.³⁸ In Morocco, the doctrine of legal dualism³⁹ stipulated a colonial administration strictly separated from the state institutions of the precolonial Sharifian Empire, consisting of the sultan, the royal bureaucracy known as the *makhzan*, the army, and the rural administration.⁴⁰

On the ground, however, colonial rule over Morocco was highly intrusive, frequently contradictory, and left behind a weakly consolidated and essentially contested nation-state. The principle of administrative dualism

clashed with the reality of a hypertrophic colonial Leviathan⁴¹ that could only be imposed after long decades of bloody counterinsurgency warfare (“pacification”).⁴² Colonial authorities created the first modern representative structures (a council of government consisting of French settler representatives and co-opted Moroccans)⁴³ while keeping an archaic “Old Morocco” (“vieux Maroc”⁴⁴) on artificial life support. The French minority policy promoted a decidedly premodern Berber particularism (and systematically recruited Berbers into the auxiliary forces), but the colonial authorities shied away from encouraging Berber protonationalism, most notably by crushing the Berber Republic in the Rif. After the departure of the French forces, the position of the king (and former sultan) seemed to reflect a sense of institutional continuity. But behind the façade of an eternal Morocco, late colonial rule left behind profound conflicts over the territory, the organizational features, and the national identity of the Moroccan state.

This instability of institution building reflected the political frailty of two empires past their prime: suffering from imperial overstretch and political upheavals in the metropole, both France and Spain suffered humiliating defeats against anticolonial insurgents such as the victory of the Rif Republic over Spanish forces in 1921 (commemorated in Spain as the “disaster of Annual”).⁴⁵ When the authorities of the French Republic were replaced by a Vichy administration in Morocco, the invasion of Allied forces in 1942 “shattered the myth of French power, not just on the battlefield of Europe, but on the beaches of Morocco where all could see and talk about it.”⁴⁶ Instead of supplying a façade of legitimacy to colonial rule, the protectorate’s dual structure severely undermined the sultan’s charismatic claim to power. A revolt against the sultan after the conclusion of the Treaty of Fez, led by El Hiba, largely followed in the footsteps of earlier insurgencies (some of which had been led by El Hiba’s father), in a combination of precolonial millenarianism and anticolonial rebellion.⁴⁷ A few years later, the establishment of the Rif Republic pointed to a much deeper crisis of the sultan’s Sharifian authority⁴⁸: while alternative pretenders like El Hiba still attempted to capture the throne, Abdelkrim al-Khattabi, the founder of the Rif Republic, no longer saw any relevance in monarchism.

French rule over Morocco relied on a sizeable number of over three hundred thousand European settlers, even if the ratio between settlers and Moroccans was considerably lower than in neighboring Algeria.⁴⁹ Initially, applying the Tunisian model of indirect rule (which leveraged the legitimacy of precolonial institutions) might have aimed at a cost-efficient alternative to the French colonization of Algeria. After all, in contrast to mandatory

rule in Syria, the Treaty of Fez did not declare the French presence to be temporary. Gershovich argues that it might be “reasonable to assume that in 1912 [the first resident-general of Morocco] Lyautey was not very troubled by the remote future and could easily have envisaged the French presence in Morocco lasting many decades, if not indefinitely.”⁵⁰ After World War I, however, the preservation of precolonial state institutions was rapidly reinterpreted as a first step toward self-determination, first by colonial authorities such as Lyautey himself⁵¹ and then increasingly by urban nationalists.⁵²

This increasing reliance on precolonial authorities came at the price of a severely limited institution building. Over time, the logic of administrative dualism systematically “emptied the authority of the sultan and the makhzan of all substance and created alongside their authority a highly ramified protectorate government with complete control in all the areas which counted.”⁵³ Once the centralized colonial administration⁵⁴ was withdrawn, French rule left behind a “colorful makhzan, overflowing with an abundant court of royal officials and ‘ulema [religious scholars],”⁵⁵ a rural elite of Berber officials and soldiers, and a small and factionalized group of urban nationalist intellectuals, often “better versed in public oratory than in mass organization.”⁵⁶ None of them had been trained in running the affairs of the state, including the coercive apparatus. The army of the Sharifian Empire had already been disbanded by 1912,⁵⁷ and various auxiliary and regular units composed of Moroccan soldiers were under complete French or Spanish control and either deployed against recently submitted tribes, on battlefields in Europe, in other colonial settings, and in 1953 even against the sultan himself.

After decolonization, the lack of institution building resulted in a prolonged crisis of the Moroccan nation-state.⁵⁸ Both the division of the Sharifian Empire into French and Spanish zones of influence as well as anticolonial insurgencies in the Berber periphery had put the geographic delimitations of the state territory into question. Algerian attempts to promote secessionism in the Rif⁵⁹ and Allal el-Fassi’s grandiose doctrine of “Greater Morocco” down to the River Senegal perpetuated the question over Morocco’s borders (see chapter 3). In the conflict over the organizational features of the state, the political alternatives ranged from monarchical absolutism (the preference of the crown prince and future king Hassan II) to a single party state with a weak monarchy (Istiqlal) to a revolutionary option without a monarchy (Union Nationale des Forces Populaires [UNFP]). The identity of the state nation was undermined by Jewish nationalism (which resulted in the almost total “emptying of Morocco of its once vibrant Jewish community”⁶⁰ by migration to France and Israel) and the legacy of

ethnoseparatist secessionism in the periphery. While rural rebellions in the Berber-dominated north could be crushed in the first years after Morocco's independence,⁶¹ Sahrawi nationalism in the south would come to haunt Moroccan state formation for decades to come.

THE BRITISH MANDATE IN PALESTINE

At the 1920 San Remo conference, Britain acquired a League of Nations mandate to rule over the Land of Israel/Palestine. Formally ratified by the League of Nations in 1922, the British mandate came into force in 1923 and lasted until 1948. The political goal of the mandate was structured around the Balfour Declaration of 1917, and its preamble recognized the "historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and . . . the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country."⁶² While the Palestinian nationalist historiography tends to interpret the British mandate as "a kind of iron cage for the Palestinians . . . from which they never succeeded in escaping,"⁶³ British rule largely failed to produce any meaningful governmental infrastructure in the first place: "[When] the mandate was given up in 1948, there was no government to which power could be handed over. . . . In short, the British, after thirty years, had failed to create a viable indigenous government of any sort and could only evacuate the country and leave its future to be decided by civil war."⁶⁴

On paper, British rule in Mandatory Palestine was established as a temporary regime to facilitate Jewish self-determination based on "the establishment of the Jewish National Home . . . and the development of self-governing institutions," as long as this would not conflict with "safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion."⁶⁵ In reality, the British authorities quickly opted for a level of Jewish self-determination considerably below the threshold of statehood: after the first violent clashes between Jews and Arabs in 1921, the Churchill White Paper of 1922 clarified that the term "Jewish National Home" did *not* mean that "Palestine is to become 'as Jewish as England is English.'"⁶⁶ Instead, the British shifted toward "creating a 'composite state,' Arab and Jewish."⁶⁷ When this policy of binational bricolage fell apart under the impact of the Arab Revolt (1936–1939), the British colonial authorities initiated a long series of policy proposals for alternative state projects based on cantonization, partition, and federation.

British colonial institution building was necessarily schizophrenic. Even a minimalist implementation of the Balfour Declaration, in itself a

curious expression of Christian Zionist sentimentalism and conspiratorial anti-Semitism, would have to clash with Britain's imperial interests in the Middle East:⁶⁸ the idea of a "national home for the Jewish people" collided with the demographic reality of an Arab majority between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, even if this demographic ratio shifted from 1:10 (66,500 Jews and 600,000 Arabs in 1920) to approximately 1:2 (600,000 Jews and 1,300,000 Arabs in 1948) throughout the mandate.⁶⁹ The irreconcilable contradictions of Mandatory Palestine were crystallized in the curious absence of a national flag and the bewildering eclecticism of the colonial postage stamp, which evoked both the Christian Zionist notion of *Palestine*, the Arabic *Filasṭīn* and the Hebrew *Eretz Israel* (Land of Israel), even though the latter could only be used as an abbreviation ("EI") following the Hebrew transliteration of *Palestina*.⁷⁰

This failure of an Arab-Jewish "composite state" repeated itself throughout the process of colonial institution building: the education system was never integrated,⁷¹ plans for a binational army and police force rapidly fell apart,⁷² the administrative apparatus was plagued by competing loyalties of its employees,⁷³ and the project of joint political institutions (that could have served as the basis for a shared civic Palestinian identity⁷⁴) had already collapsed by 1923. Since the draft constitution would have created national institutions only under the condition of full compliance with the Balfour Declaration, an electoral boycott by the Arab majority effectively ended the setup of a representative legislative assembly; no organizational substitute could be imposed by the British.⁷⁵ Consequently, "Palestine, though an 'A' Mandate on paper, was now ruled like a 'C' Mandate conceived for more backward areas. It became, for all practical purposes, a British colony in the Middle East."⁷⁶ Similar to other colonial settings, the British ultimately turned to recruiting the Jewish minority as an auxiliary force. Following the outbreak of the Arab Revolt in 1936, British authorities recruited Jewish police officers (*notrim* or guardsmen, divided into the Jewish Supernumerary Police and the Jewish Settlement Police) and created a joint British-Jewish counterinsurgency force, the Special Night Squads, under the leadership of Charles Orde Wingate.⁷⁷

Nonetheless, British authorities continued to believe in a binational solution until the end of the mandate, and clearly late colonial improvisation was not the *sole* factor in the failure of Jewish-Arab integration. Both the leadership of the Zionist movement and their counterparts among the Palestinian Arab notables stood out for high levels of factionalist infighting and militarized outbidding.⁷⁸ In addition, the deliberate Zionist policy of

enforcing a split labor market (“Hebrew labor”)⁷⁹ divided the vision of the “Arab-Jewish composite state” at its sociopolitical basis. Finally, the issue of land sales shifted the balance toward interethnic conflict in the late 1920s.⁸⁰ Within the Yishuv, the new Jewish-Zionist community in Mandatory Palestine, the proponents of Hebrew ethnoseparatism were probably most perspicacious in their assumption that Jewish settlement in a majority-Arab environment would inevitably result in armed conflict.⁸¹

By the end of the British mandate, as a consequence of ever-changing territorial divisions (both implemented and merely envisioned),⁸² fragile political institutions, and overall “colonial bungling,”⁸³ basic Westphalian features of Mandatory Palestine had become essentially contested. The identity of a civic Palestinian nation (comprising both Jews and Arabs) was seriously put into question by almost every major political movement except for the strongly anti-Zionist Palestine Communist Party⁸⁴ and the tiny community of Zionist bi-nationalists (predominantly academics from a German-Jewish background). The geographic delimitations of the state territory were contested by neighboring states with annexationist plans,⁸⁵ by Palestinian Arab notables willing to *be* annexed, by the “Greater Israel” wing of Revisionist Zionism (see chapter 3), and a long series of policy proposals toward territorial reorganization, ranging from the Peel Commission⁸⁶ to the 1947 UN Partition Plan.⁸⁷ Concerning the organizational features of the state, the predominant forces within the Yishuv and the Palestinian Arab community were strictly opposed to an Arab-Jewish “composite state”—and at the political fringes, radical counter-hegemonic state projects had long turned violent, whether in the Arab Revolt or the Hebrew Resistance Movement. When the British mandate came to an end in 1948, in the absence of a legitimate and robust state apparatus, both Palestinian Jews and Palestinian Arabs faced “the prospect of a Hobbesian state of nature in which power was the only relevant factor.”⁸⁸

Jews, Berbers, Alawites: The Colonial Minority Policy

The late colonial “self-destruct state,” keen on dispersing political power and legitimacy, relied on the mobilization of peripheral ethnic and ethnosectarian communities. The protection of “minorities” (a concept largely alien to the self-understanding of these communities)⁸⁹ could be deployed to prolong the colonial presence; peripheral groups could be leveraged politically against the precolonial establishment—and when the colonial military needed fresh

auxiliary troops, new recruits could often be found among the disenfranchised. While the colonial minority policy gained its effectiveness from leveraging precolonial tensions, the offer of limited self-rule for peripheral groups remained ambivalent. Promises of autonomy could be revoked, prostatohood could be abolished, and given the *temporary* nature of the late colonial state, collaboration with colonial authorities had to be weighed against future ramifications.

As a policy of power dispersion, the colonial minority policy contributed to the creation of postcolonial states that were essentially contested and nonsovereign. The option of self-rule for stateless communities ruptured precolonial traditions of state evasion, and the recruitment of minority communities into the colonial military systematically undermined its cohesiveness. The power-distributional impact of the colonial minority policy became only apparent after decolonization, when former allies of the colonial powers rose to high-ranking positions in the military (Morocco), captured the state apparatus (Syria), or successfully established an ethno-separatist minority state (Israel).

CREATE TWO, THREE, MANY LEBANONS

The initial project of French rule over *bilād al-shām* (Greater Syria) consisted in projecting the logic of Lebanon as a minority state across Syrian lands. Clearly colonial rule did not cause the deep ethnic, economic, and religious cleavages running through Syrian society,⁹⁰ but it made them politically *relevant*. After creating Greater Lebanon, composed of a Maronite core and four additional Muslim-majority districts, the French authorities divided the rest of Greater Syria into four separate states, namely the Alawite State, the Druze State, the State of Aleppo, and the State of Damascus, while treating Alexandretta as a separate region and putting the northeastern Jazira region under direct military rule.⁹¹ In fact, the original plans of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs had aimed at establishing eight to nine even smaller statelets (in addition to Lebanon), a plan narrowly prevented by French High Commissioner Henri Gouraud.⁹²

Although this colonial policy of ethnoterritorial division would be abandoned in the 1930s, the military structures catering to Syria's minorities remained in place, especially through the recruitment of rural minority groups into the "Troupes Spéciales," which would form the backbone of the Syrian Army after independence.⁹³ As a counterbalance to Sunni Arab nationalists, the French authorities systematically promoted entrance into

the officer corps (trained in the military academy, located first in Damascus, later in Homs) as a vehicle for the social advancement of minorities: "Many of the officers who graduated from the Academy were Christian Arabs, Armenians, Alawites, Circassians, Druzes and Sunni Arabs from rural districts. Similarly, the rank and file of the Syrian Legion had a significant minority component. There were infantry battalions and cavalry squadrons composed exclusively of Alawites, Kurds, Circassians, Armenians, Isma'ilis, and Druzes."⁹⁴

While the French carefully recruited from the more loyal segments of individual minorities, they also attempted to engineer a balance of power between the different groups by ensuring an unequal level of representation in the various branches of government: "If one group was dominant in politics, other groups had to be placed in positions of dominance in the military. In 1944, for instance, Sunni Arabs were dominant in Syria's politics, the officer corps, the gendarmerie, and the police, but were underrepresented in the military's rank and file. . . . The 'Alawis were overrepresented among the soldiers but poorly represented in politics, the officer corps, the gendarmerie, and the police."⁹⁵

The most obvious effect of the French minority policy consisted in enabling the rise of the Alawites:⁹⁶ after decolonization, Alawite officers linked to the Ba'ath Party began to play a dominant role in Syrian politics when higher-ranking officers were purged from the military in a long series of coups and countercoups.⁹⁷ Haddad counts fifteen military coups between 1949 and 1969, thus ushering in the 1970 "Corrective Movement," which brought Hafiz al-Assad to power in the sixteenth military coup after independence.⁹⁸

THE BERBERS, THE SULTAN, AND "OLD MOROCCO"

In contrast to the compact minorities of Mandatory Syria, the Moroccan Berbers were never promised independent statehood by the French protectorate: in fact, the French military was responsible for crushing the first modern Berber protostate, the Rif Republic, in 1926. Instead, the colonial minority policy consisted in advocating for Berber particularism, not least by promoting legal separatism based on customary tribal law in the Berber Dahir (Berber Decree) of 1930.⁹⁹ In addition, the colonial military systematically recruited Berber auxiliary units, sometimes based on colonial theories that accorded Berbers the qualities of a "martial race."¹⁰⁰ A harsh campaign of colonial conquest that lasted until 1934 (euphemistically described as

“pacification”¹⁰¹ relied on Berber *goumiers* and higher-ranking intelligence officials in the service of the protectorate, often graduates of the Collège Berbère in Azrou.¹⁰² Once these auxiliary forces turned on their colonial commanders in the 1950s to join the Berber-dominated Army of Liberation, the French hold on Morocco loosened almost immediately: “The movement of disaffection must have grown at tremendous speed, for the collapse was almost unbelievably sudden and complete.”¹⁰³

The Berber policy fit snugly into the French strategy of leveraging the precolonial institutions of “Old Morocco,” composed of the sultan and his makhzan (royal bureaucracy), Sufi brotherhoods (*tariqas*), tribal chiefs (*qaids*), feudal lords (*pashas*), and Berber auxiliary units (*goumiers*) from the mountainous periphery, increasingly relying on a “fantasy of the ‘good countryside’ that opposed the nationalism of the towns.”¹⁰⁴ In 1953 French colonial authorities even attempted to exploit their rural network of tribal chiefs (the Moroccan counterparts of French “Indigenous Affairs” officers¹⁰⁵) in order to break up the proindependence alliance between the sultan and the urban Arab nationalists of the Istiqlal (Independence Party). After carrying out a decapitation strike¹⁰⁶ against the workers’ movement and the urban nationalists in the aftermath of severe riots in Casablanca in 1952, in a second step the French attempted to mobilize the Sufi brotherhoods, tribal chiefs, and feudal lords like Thami El Glaoui against the sultan: “This strange combination of rural *chefferies* [chiefdoms], French administration, and the supporters of an antediluvian Islam did not simply try to undermine the national movement, but they also did their best to make this countermobilization appear as a spontaneous revolt, led by the ‘real’ forces of Morocco, against a heretic and partisan sultan.”¹⁰⁷ When the sultan refused to abdicate under public pressure and threats to march on the royal palace, he was captured by French policemen at gunpoint and forcibly exiled to Madagascar.¹⁰⁸

THE OTHER NATIVES: BRITISH AMBIVALENCE TOWARD ZIONISM

British support was crucial for Zionist institution building. Even highly restrictive British policies against Jewish immigration and land purchases, like the White Paper of 1930 and (even more so) the White Paper of 1939,¹⁰⁹ could not subvert the “establishment of the Jewish National Home” enshrined in the League of Nations mandate. The British understanding of “Jewish National Home” shifted repeatedly, but the outright dismantling of Zionist institution building was never an option—unlike the Alawites in

Syria or the Berbers in Morocco, the Zionist movement had succeeded in acquiring a legal title and international diplomatic backing for its political project.

Understandably, Palestinian Arab nationalists came to understand this entanglement of European imperialism and Zionist colonization as a form of settler colonialism, not least given the undeniable parallels in projecting power and population across space.¹¹⁰ Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the Russian-Jewish founder of Revisionist Zionism, tended to agree. In his two essays, *The Iron Wall* and *The Ethics of the Iron Wall* (1923), he famously argued that the Jewish community in the Land of Israel/Palestine would have to rely on the logic of military force precisely *because* of the colonial dimension of the Zionist project: "Natives, be they cultured or uncultured, have always stubbornly fought against colonizers, be those cultured or uncultured. . . . Every people struggles against colonizers, as long as there is at least a spark of hope for getting rid of the threat of colonization."¹¹¹ While Jabotinsky highlighted the colonial dimension of the territorial conflict as a rhetorical weapon against bi-nationalists and "Arabo-philes"¹¹² alike, he refused to concede that this insight about the institutional means of Zionism (colonization) could in any way be deployed to delegitimize the movement's political goal (Jewish sovereignty): "The principle of self-determination does not mean that if someone has seized a stretch of land it must remain in his possession for all time, and that he who was forcibly ejected from his land must always remain homeless. Self-determination means revision—such a revision of the distribution of the earth among the nations that those nations who have too much should have to give up some of it to those nations who have not enough or who have none, so that all should have some place on which to exercise their right of self-determination."¹¹³

In Jabotinsky's eyes, the Zionist colonization of the Land of Israel/Palestine closely matched the British colonization of Australasia: "A civilized Jew immigrates to Asia in the same way that a civilized Englishman immigrates to Australia, he transports 'Europe' within himself to the Land of Israel and contributes to the development of the two-thousand year-old . . . European heritage which is close to his heart, absorbed into his blood."¹¹⁴ From a British perspective, however, Zionism differed substantially from European settler colonialism. In New Zealand for instance, British rule followed the isomorphic logic of institutional emulation through the implantation of white settlers, aiming at the establishment of "a new British nation in the South Pacific, with its own empire in miniature."¹¹⁵ In contrast, "Palestine had no White settler communities in the colonial sense."¹¹⁶ Despite

the ambitions of the Revisionist Zionist right,¹¹⁷ Mandatory Palestine was never governed as a European settler colony. Given the pattern of initial favoritism toward the ethnosectarian minority, increasing ambivalence and an eventual volte-face toward accommodating the Arab nationalist majority, British-Zionist relations in Mandatory Palestine closely mirrored the French minority policy in Syria and Morocco: “[The] British did not conceive of the Jews as white European settlers confronting Arab natives. The truth of the matter is that they saw them as *another category of native*, exceptionally troublesome, with unreasonable demands and pretensions. The British officials in Palestine, trained in a colonialist tradition that it was necessary to preserve the well-being of the natives, openly preferred the Arabs, who were authentic Orientals, mysterious and charming, to the loud and uncouth Jewish immigrants.”¹¹⁸

From State Evasion to State Formation

The colonial minority policy consisted in an ambivalent offer of limited self-rule, but it had a lasting impact on state-evading communities, peripheral groups with a history of circumventing the grasp of the premodern state. By introducing these peripheral groups to the tools and concepts of the modern nation-state, the colonial minority policy ruptured the precolonial power asymmetry between state-making societies and state-evading societies. The distinction goes back to James Scott, who argues that state-evading societies share the features of physical dispersion, mobility, segmentary kinship, pliable ethnicity, and prophetic leaders, all of which seek to evade “incorporation into states and to prevent states from springing up among them.”¹¹⁹ By contrast, state-making societies typically feature a densely settled, agricultural population disciplined by taxation, conscription, and centralized religion. While Fortes and Evans-Pritchard define segmentary societies as “stateless societies” that “lack centralized authority, administrative machinery, and constituted judicial institutions—in short which lack government,”¹²⁰ Scott’s framework focuses not on the absence of the state but on strategies of evading its immediate grasp. Consequently, state-evading societies follow the segmentary logic of “divide that ye need not be ruled”.¹²¹ “Their subsistence routines, their social organization, their physical dispersal, and many elements of their culture, far from being the archaic traits of a people left behind, are purposefully crafted both to thwart incorporation into nearby

states and to minimize the likelihood that statelike concentrations of power will arise among them.”¹²²

In the Middle East, this categorization fits the case of Berber tribes in Morocco, Moorish tribes in Spanish Sahara (as the origin of Sahrawi nationalism),¹²³ the compact minorities of Greater Syria (the Maronites, the Druze, and the Alawites¹²⁴) and, to a great extent, the Jewish community in the Land of Israel/Palestine.¹²⁵ Of course, as the following overview points out, the colonial minority policy affected these communities in different ways, ranging from ambivalent support for a Zionist protostate in the Land of Israel/Palestine to outright military intervention against a Berber protostate in the Rif.

THE ALAWITE STATE AND THE ALAWITE RISE TO POWER

While the Alawite State contributed to a politicization of Alawite particularism, its institutions did not produce any relevant Alawite statesmen—in contrast, future Alawite politicians rather emerged from their recruitment into the auxiliary forces of the French colonial army. In both “ephemeral states”¹²⁶ of Mandatory Syria, the Druze State and the Alawite State, political structures remained notoriously underdeveloped: the institutionalization of minority self-rule in the Syrian periphery remained haphazard, and after a series of insurgencies, both the Druze State and the Alawite State were formally reincorporated into the Syrian state apparatus in 1936 in a first wave of state expansion (see chapter 4). Interestingly, this new alliance between colonial authorities and urban Arab nationalists raised suspicions among rural minority elites. In a famous petition to French Prime Minister Léon Blum, Alawite notables (including Sulayman al-Assad, the grandfather of Hafiz al-Assad) rejected this political incorporation by drawing a parallel between the Alawite and the Jewish minority status in the region:

The Alawites refuse to be annexed to Muslim Syria because, in Syria, the official religion of the state is Islam, and according to Islam, the Alawites are considered infidels. . . . The spirit of hatred and fanaticism imbedded [sic] in the hearts of the Arab Muslims against everything that is non-Muslim has been perpetually nurtured by the Islamic religion. . . . The conditions of the Jews in Palestine is the strongest and most explicit evidence of the militancy of the Islamic issue vis-à-vis those

who do not belong to Islam. These good Jews contributed to the Arabs with civilization and peace, scattered gold, and established prosperity in Palestine without harming anyone or taking anything by force, yet the Muslims declared holy war against them and never hesitated in slaughtering their women and children, despite the presence of England in Palestine and France in Syria. Therefore, a dark fate awaits the Jews and other minorities in case the mandate is abolished and Muslim Syria is united with Muslim Palestine.¹²⁷

While this generation of Alawite notables still put their hopes in the colonial minority policy, the Alawite rise to power would be built on the paradoxical denial of Alawite particularism. Socialized in radical counterhegemonic state projects like the Ba'ath Party and the SSNP, the Alawite officers that first captured the military section of the Ba'ath Party,¹²⁸ and later the Syrian state apparatus would systematically refrain from referencing their status as a heterodox minority ruling a Sunni majority.¹²⁹ Under the Alawite-dominated Ba'ath regime, the classic "Jacobinist banner against tribalism, particularism, confessionalism and separatism"¹³⁰ seemed to conceal the legacy of Alawite particularism—until its haunting return in the Syrian civil war of 2011.

THE RIF REPUBLIC: A HOME FOR ALL BERBERS?

The Rif Republic, a short-lived Berber-dominated republic in the Spanish protectorate in northern Morocco (1921–1926), reflected the severe crisis of sharifism: instead of presenting a counterclaim to the sultan's charismatic legitimation as a *sharif*, a descendant of the Prophet, the leader of the Rif Republic decided to establish a decidedly modern nation-state: "As an organized movement with relatively clear objectives, the Rif struggle, under the leadership of Mohammed ben Abdelkrim al Khattabi, introduced modern reforms and founded a republic without any reference to sharifism. Its popularity and the degree to which it inspired others in Morocco indicated a weakening of sharifian legitimacy."¹³¹

The Rif Republic had its origins in the military weakness of the Spanish protectorate, crystallized in the "disaster of Annual" in 1921: "The Moroccan tribes under the able leadership of Abd-el-Krim gathered together their forces and fell on the Spanish troops led by [general] Silvestre at the outpost of Annual. Deserted by their Moroccan regulars, the demoralized

and outnumbered Spanish conscripts fled into the countryside. Silvestre himself was reported to have committed suicide. During the following days, 10,000 Spanish soldiers were massacred as the Moroccans fell on the fleeing troops.”¹³²

The state model practiced throughout the next five years within the Rif Republic might best be understood as a modernizing Islamic Berber Republic, not a *Berberist* (or Berber nationalist) republic per se: strictly limited to the Berber tribes in the Rif, the political program of Abdelkrim al-Khattabi had no pan-Berber agenda, and both in its Arabization of the education system and the strict implementation of Islamic law (instead of customary Berber law), the Rif Republic tends to contradict the contemporary Berber nationalist agenda.¹³³

To some extent, the Rif Republic followed the traditional makhzan model of the Sharifian Empire, particularly regarding the fact that most ministerial positions were staffed with Abdelkrim’s immediate family and that tribal leaders swore a *bay’a* or personal oath of loyalty to Abdelkrim. By contrast, in terms of administrative and military centralization as well as regarding governmental intrusion (particularly in the field of religion, where the obligation to attend the five daily prayers was vigorously imposed), the Rif Republic was undoubtedly modern: the tribal assembly was rebaptized into a parliament, there was an attempt to introduce a Rifian currency (the Rifiyya), and the state had a flag with a clear Islamic agenda.

Since the Rif Republic was ultimately crushed by French colonial forces as soon as its expansion toward Fez began to threaten the French protectorate, its relevance is sometimes downplayed as a “provisional wartime measure” (and not an attempt of state formation) by a “Salafiya-oriented reformer” (and not a Rifian nationalist).¹³⁴ But the Rif Republic’s protonationalism came close to transforming Morocco’s north into an Islamic Berber Republic: “[There] was a sense in which a specifically Rifi identity did exist. There was a heartland, which formed its core: the mountains.”¹³⁵ At least for the state-building elite of the Rif Republic, the nascent protostate was considerably more than a short-lived jihadist war effort against Spanish colonialism but rather (at least according to Abdelkrim himself) a systematic attempt of state formation: “I wanted to make the Rif an independent country like France and Spain, and to set up there a free state with full sovereignty and not an Amirate, subject to the regulations and ordinances of the Protectorate. . . . I wanted my people to know that they had a nation (watan) as well as a religion (din).”¹³⁶

THE ZIONIST PROJECT AS THE LAST MINORITY STATE

Most proto-states that were established by state-evading societies in the modern Middle East were doomed to fail, including the Rif Republic (1921–1926), the Druze State, and the Alawite State (1920–1936), Maronite-dominated Lebanon (until the Lebanese civil war), and two short-lived Kurdish statelets (the Republic of Ararat, 1927–1930, and the Mahabad Republic in 1946).¹³⁷ Typically these protostates were either crushed by colonial authorities (the Rif Republic); dismantled by Turkish, Persian, and Arab nationalists (the Druze State, the Alawite State, the Republic of Ararat, and the Mahabad Republic); or condemned to the status of a ghostly protostate (the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic). So how did the Zionist protostate emerge from British rule over the Land of Israel/Palestine without sharing the fate of comparable minority states?

A closer look finds this comparison pointing to significant differences in the case of Zionist state formation (see chapter 3). First, the Balfour Declaration resembled the colonial minority policy of “divide and conquer,” but it produced a solid legal title to self-determination that anchored the Zionist project in international law. In all other cases, favoritism toward state-evading communities (Berber tribes in Morocco, Sahrawi tribes in Spanish Sahara, the compact minorities of Greater Syria) produced patterns of secessionism and semifunctional state-making but never a formal agreement and international diplomatic backing. By contrast, even highly restrictive British policies against Jewish immigration and land purchases (like the White Paper of 1930 and especially the White Paper of 1939) could not subvert the “establishment of the Jewish National Home” enshrined in the League of Nations mandate.¹³⁸ The British understanding of a “Jewish National Home” shifted repeatedly, but the outright dismantling of Zionist institution building in Mandatory Palestine was never an option.

Second, in contrast to the short-lived Republic of Mahabad and other “would-be kingdoms,” the robustness of the Zionist project consisted in its institutional hybridity, which combined the dynamic ethnoseparatism of the Rif Republic with the colonial projection of European power, populations, and institutions to Aotearoa (New Zealand).¹³⁹ In sharp contrast to European settler colonialism, Zionism aimed at diaspora restoration instead of imperial expansion; nonetheless, Zionist statecraft systematically emulated European patterns of colonization in terms of planning, financing, and execution. As a consequence, the Zionist project not only survived the process of decolonization but quickly accumulated the necessary power resources to grow from a fragile minority state to an expansionist power in its own right.

Conclusion

The late colonial “self-destruct” state resulted in a pattern of deeply disputed nation building and highly fragmented state building. Instead of concentrating power in a legitimate and robust state apparatus, late colonial rule resulted in a systematic dispersal of power and legitimacy as a consequence of *rule by bricolage*, a policy of constant improvisation and widespread arbitrariness. Ever-changing territorial divisions, fragile political institutions, and systematic favoritism vis-à-vis ethnic or ethnosectarian minorities (the colonial minority policy) resulted in states that were essentially contested. At the same time, the failure to train administrative, police, and judicial personnel in combination with the systematic recruitment of ethnosectarian minorities into the armed forces resulted in states that were fundamentally nonsovereign. Without a legitimate and robust state apparatus, without a basic agreement on the rules of the political game, and frequently without a consensus whether the state should even *exist* in the first place, the ensuing political conflicts consisted in radical attempts to dismantle the entire colonial structure to launch completely new state projects.

Chapter 3

After Empire

Colonial Legacies and Postcolonial State Formation

The late colonial state created fragile and illegitimate institutions, ever-changing territorial divisions, and a severe crisis for precolonial power relations, not least based on the minority policy. After decolonization, political elites in the newly independent states had to confront the legacy of essentially contested and nonsovereign statehood: core features of statehood remained disputed, and radical counterprojects questioned the basic legitimacy of state existence (essentially contested statehood). At the same time, many emerging nation-states were barely recognized by their neighbors, failed to prevent outside interference in domestic politics, and struggled to enforce political authority over the state territory and the security apparatus (nonsovereign statehood).

State-building elites deployed two basic counterstrategies to overcome these birth defects of postcolonial statehood. While irredentist nation building aimed at legitimizing fragile nation-states, militarized state building was aimed at jump-starting the establishment of a governmental-coercive state apparatus. Both policies aimed at institutional consolidation instead of geographic expansion: the call to retrieve “Greater Morocco” did not necessarily aim at capturing all of Mauritania, and the rapid militarization of Syria under the Alawite-dominated Ba’ath regime did not primarily seek to project state power across the border.¹ Nonetheless, in a chain reaction of unintended consequences, the region’s militarized “built-in irredentism”² would ultimately contribute to shaping the Middle East into a “perennial conflict formation,”³ thereby creating the opportunity structure for Syria, Morocco, and Israel to engage in long-term projects of state expansion.

Essentially Contested Statehood: Challenges to State Legitimacy

THE CASE AGAINST SYRIA

Syria's national elections of 1943 prefigured the struggle between competing state projects that would dominate political life after independence. The elections produced a government of urban notables under the leadership of Shukri al-Quwwatli and the National Bloc (renamed the "Nationalist Party"), but the fringes of their parliament were filled with the "generation of broad expectations"⁴ typical for late colonial rule: populist radicals like Akram Hawrani, "a new type of opposition in Syria,"⁵ militated against feudalist privilege; the Communist Party challenged the country's economic structure, the Muslim Brotherhood rebelled against secularism and Westernization, the Syrian National Socialist Party mocked the territorial fragmentation of "Smaller Syria," and Pan-Arab nationalists (later organized in the Ba'ath Party) challenged Syria's right to exist as an independent nation-state.⁶ Late colonial rule had created a multitude of competing state projects, ready to tear down the Syrian Republic and replace it with a new body politic based on ethnosectarian fragmentation (Alawite and Druze secessionism), pan-Arabism (the Ba'ath Party), pan-Syrianism (the SSNP), pan-Islamic solidarity (the Muslim Brotherhood), and finally class affiliation (the Syrian Communist Party).

After the French military withdrawal in 1946 and the Arab-Israeli war in 1948, the political system collapsed in 1949 in a series of military coups. Each one of the three consecutive military coups in that year was closely connected to designs to alter the most basic Westphalian features of the state. The first coup by Chief of General Staff Colonel Husni al-Za'im attempted to establish a new type of government, resulting in a short-lived one-man military dictatorship with largely quixotic features (including the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies and all political parties as well as a presidential referendum in which Za'im was the only candidate).⁷ More dramatically, the second coup by Colonel Sami al-Hinnawi brought the country to the brink of dissolution into a political union with Iraq under the reign of the Hashemite Prince 'Abd al-Ilah. The project of an Iraqi-Syrian union promoted most vociferously by the leadership of the pro-Iraqi People's Party seemed imminent when the newly elected constituent assembly voted for an oath (to be taken by the Head of State and members of the Assembly), which called for the "the achievement of union of Arab countries" without

mentioning Syria's republican regime.⁸ In return, the third military coup by Colonel Adib al-Shishakli was engineered as a countercoup in order to banish the specter of republican Syria being dissolved into a union with monarchical Iraq under British control.

After two additional military coups, a prolonged period of indirect military rule and considerable foreign meddling, “[by] the late summer of 1957 Syria was on the verge of disintegration as an organized political community. Not only was there no general agreement on the rules governing political behavior but, worse still, many Syrians had lost confidence in the future of their country as an independent entity.”⁹ A few months later, at the occasion of the sixth military coup, Syria merged with Nasserist Egypt into the United Arab Republic (UAR) only to disappear from the map as the UAR's so-called Northern Province.¹⁰

ALTERNATIVES TO ALAWISM

In sharp contrast to French Algeria, Moroccan independence initially presented itself as a smooth transition of power from the colonial authorities of the French protectorate to a constitutional monarchy, headed by Mohammed V after his return from French-imposed exile in Madagascar in 1955.¹¹ In his first speech, the new king (and former sultan) promised “that an independent government would set up ‘democratic institutions that were the product of free elections, and founded on the principle of the separation of powers under a constitutional monarchy.’”¹² Under the patronage of the king, bourgeois urban nationalists from the Istiqlal (Independence Party) seemed poised to take over the state apparatus, turning Morocco into a constitutional monarchy dominated by moderate Arab nationalists.

Yet the urban nationalists rapidly demonstrated their lack of internal cohesion, organizational capability, and charismatic appeal. The *Fassi* (Fez-based) bourgeoisie did not possess the necessary administrative training or the unified ideological framework to organize mass politics in a modern nation-state. Having been excluded from administrative tasks under the French protectorate, the urban nationalists rapidly fell apart after their unsuccessful attempt to capture the Moroccan state institutions by suppressing competing nationalist parties, liquidating the Berber-led Army of Liberation (in some cases by assassinating Berber leaders like Abbes Messaadi)¹³ and by staffing local government positions exclusively with urban nationalists. The sudden imposition of a French-speaking administration dominated by Istiqlal loyalists¹⁴ resulted in a severe backlash from the Berber

countryside against “Fassi colonization.”¹⁵ After massive Berber revolts in the rural periphery, the king’s control over the FAR (Forces Armées Royales) resulted in the downfall of the urban nationalists and their formal split (encouraged by the king) into a left wing (the newly established UNFP under Mehdi Ben Barka, the Union Nationale des Forces Populaires) and a right wing (the Istiqlal under Allal al-Fassi)¹⁶.

Facing competing state projects like ethnoseparatism in the Rif, the Istiqlal’s preference for a single-party state and the UNFP’s “revolutionary option,” the Moroccan palace began to present its own charismatic claim to monarchical absolutism: as a hierocratic form of rule (rule by *sacred* rulers, namely “sacred kings, representatives of God and the Prophet”¹⁷), the ideology of Alawism claimed a divine mandate bestowed upon the Alaouite dynasty.¹⁸ The eclectic ideological framework of Alawism thereby merged elements of Islamic law (the primacy of the descendants of the Prophet) with the missionary election myth¹⁹ of the Idrisid dynasty, based on Morocco’s establishment as a state in the far west (*al-maghrib al-aqsa*) of the Islamic world.²⁰ As a decidedly modern ideology, Alawism claimed a divine mandate for the Alaouite dynasty precisely because of the contested nature of Morocco, arguing that “in the absence of a leader whose religious standing places him above civil society and its power struggles, divisions between townsfolk and country people, Arabs and Berbers, the bourgeoisie and the populace could break up the nation-state. . . . As a descendent of the Prophet, the monarch incarnates . . . the miracle of his ancestor, namely the emergence of a community which restores the primordial Word and builds a new order.”²¹ According to Alawism, fundamental disputes over the nature of the Moroccan nation-state could only be solved by recognizing the king’s unconditional and sovereign supremacy. For instance, the new constitution of 1962 would be instituted as a sovereign act of octroi.²² While it still needed the confirmation of a referendum, it no longer required a constituent assembly.

However, Alawism struggled to overcome the legacy of competing state projects. The Istiqlal dream of a single-party state under a weakened monarchy had been defeated,²³ but the palace was still facing powerful competitors against the hegemony of Alawism, even if their attempts to capture the state apparatus were less than promising: the UNFP’s Third Worldism saw little use in a monarch, but the 1973 insurgency by its revolutionary wing failed spectacularly.²⁴ Berber praetorianism appealed to the more established generals who stood behind two different military coups of 1971 and 1972,²⁵ while younger officers (who became involved in these putsch attempts) were

increasingly tempted by pan-Arabism,²⁶ but in the end, both coups fell apart. An emerging Islamist movement, Al Adl Wal Ihsane,²⁷ carefully criticized the religious legitimization of Alawism but followed a decidedly quietist agenda. In contrast, to the South of Morocco's borders, Sahrawi nationalism slowly began to fashion itself as a form of ethnoseparatist republicanism: Similar to the Rif Republic, the Sahrawi protostate would come to challenge the very core of Alawism.

ONE STATE, TWO STATES, NO STATE

In the case of Mandatory Palestine, the fundamental dispute over the nature of the state produced a unique constellation: Jewish and Arab nationalists disagreed over the question how to institutionalize politics both between and *within* the two communities. The failure of the Arab-Jewish composite state not only produced a long series of alternative British policy proposals (cantonization, partition, federation, internationalization)²⁸ but also a colorful array of radical counterproposals to replace Mandatory Palestine with a completely new body politic, an Arab-Islamic "historic Palestine" almost free of Jews (Islamist Palestinian nationalism),²⁹ a Greater Syria reunited with "Southern Syria" as part of pan-Arab unification (Pan-Arab Syrian nationalism),³⁰ a "Greater Israel" ranging far across the Jordan (Revisionist Zionism; see chapter 4),³¹ a bi-national Jewish-Arab Palestine as part of an Arab federation (Zionist binationalism),³² or a Hebrew kingdom centered on a reestablished temple (Maximalist Revisionism).³³

Within the nascent State of Israel, many of these conflicts were not solved but merely deferred: A status quo agreement between the prestate Jewish Agency and the non-Zionists from Agudat Israel temporarily solved conflicts over the relationship between state and synagogue;³⁴ colonial-era emergency regulations and a military government were deployed to regulate the life of the Palestinian Arab minority,³⁵ and emerging ethnosectarian tensions between Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews were supposed to be solved by the "ingathering of exiles" and their merger into native-born Israelis.

Under Ben Gurion's leadership, political life in postindependence Israel was increasingly dominated by MAPAI (Mifletet Po'alei Eretz Israel, Workers' Party of the Land of Israel), but radical forms of opposition to the emerging MAPAI state could never be silenced. The expansionist left and the Revisionist right disagreed with the territorial partition of the Land of Israel/Palestine, the Ultra-Orthodox parties rejected the Zionist state apparatus (while enjoying the benefits of political autonomy), Mizrahi Jews rebelled

against their political and economic marginalization, and the Palestinian Arab minority struggled to recognize the legitimacy of a state they considered responsible for the mass flight and expulsion of Palestinian Arabs between 1947 and 1949.

While the legitimacy of various Middle Eastern states was put into question after decolonization, Arab opposition to the Zionist project was particularly harsh and uniquely *politicidal*, revolving around the idea of a “murder of the *politeia*, the political entity.”³⁶ The undoing of Zionist state building had become a rallying cry for Palestinian Arab nationalism long before the creation of the State of Israel: Amin al-Husseini, the British-appointed Great Mufti of Jerusalem, had rejected any political solution that endangered the status of Palestine as an Arab state, only allowing for “a Jewish minority composed only of those who had lived in the country before 1914 (or, in a variant, 1917). Thus he marked out all Jews who had arrived in the country after World War I and their progeny for, at the very least, noncitizenship or expulsion—or worse.”³⁷ After the Arab defeat at the hands of Israel in 1948–49, politicidal anti-Zionism thrived among the hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees living in the neighboring Arab states: for the first generation of diasporic Palestinian Arab nationalists, the motif of vengeance trumped the political goal of state formation.³⁸

Nonsovereign Statehood: Challenges to Stateness

THE STRUGGLE FOR SYRIA

The radical case against Syria might never have moved from the political fringes onto center stage without severe challenges to the stateness of Syria, defined as its monopoly on violence, its administrative effectiveness, and its international recognition.³⁹ Without an effective state monopoly on the legitimate use of violence (*domestic sovereignty*),⁴⁰ the struggle between competing state projects moved quickly from the parliament, the public sphere, and the judiciary to the security apparatus. Long before the Ba’athist monopolization of power after 1963, which made “the politics of the Syrian army . . . almost indistinguishable from the politics of the Ba’th Party,”⁴¹ the history of postcolonial Syria was essentially a history of coups, countercoups, and military purges.

Within Syria, the political struggle took place between competing state projects, frequently organized into miniature states-in-the-making. While

participating in elections, political parties did not aim at electoral victories or the inclusion into coalition governments but at more fundamental processes of transformation: the Ba'athist slogan of *inqilab* (meaning "overthrow," or "coup") was originally understood by Ba'ath founder 'Aflaq as "changing people rather than system"⁴² and in a sense not as a political revolution but "first and foremost a spiritual phenomenon, a revolution in Arab values, in the Arab way of thinking."⁴³ But the Ba'ath Party was not the only one that began to understand political transformation more and more as seizing power via military coup: the SSNP was involved in an aborted coup attempt in Syria in 1956⁴⁴ and in a similar misadventure in Lebanon in 1961. Concerns over a military-based Communist takeover were among the principal motivations for the merger of Syria into the UAR.⁴⁵

The absence of *international legal sovereignty* (formal recognition as a state in the international arena) was reflected in various schemes by neighboring states to formally incorporate the territory of Syria. As typical expressions of "expansionist unionism" by Arab monarchies,⁴⁶ the two most prominent plans called for a union between Iraq and Syria, which might include additional Arab states in the future (Nuri al-Sa'id's Fertile Crescent plan) and the incorporation of the Syrian Republic into a Hashemite kingdom (Emir Abdullah's Greater Syria plan).⁴⁷ After the 1948–49 Arab-Israeli war, the question of international legal sovereignty in the sense of territorial integrity also came to shape the conflict over demilitarized zones between Israel and Syria, creating "a festering wound, a constant source of contention, during the following years."⁴⁸

Under the geostrategic conditions of the Cold War, the Syrian lack of *Westphalian sovereignty* (the capability of excluding outside intervention from domestic politics) turned the country into an embattled arena of proxy warfare between the Great Powers and their respective regional clients. This "Arab Cold War"⁴⁹ allowed regional powers to pursue their own hegemonic ambitions. The struggle for Syria consisted of foreign support for military coups,⁵⁰ political assassinations,⁵¹ numerous threats of invasion by Iraq,⁵² and even the detachment of Egyptian troops to the Syrian coastal town of Latakyya in 1957 in order to deter American-Iraqi plans to bring down a leftist regime.⁵³

DEFENDING MOROCCO IN THE RIF

The rapid outbreak of rural guerilla warfare, urban terrorism, and frequent bloody feuds with a criminal background immediately after Moroccan

independence had a simple cause: “There was no police or army to stop them.”⁵⁴ After the return of the sultan in 1955, the most obvious aspect of Morocco’s nonsovereign statehood was the lack of an effective state monopoly over the legitimate use of violence (*domestic sovereignty*): Rural *qajids* (tribal chiefs) and their units had been involved in a coup against the sultan in 1953, the Berber-dominated Army of Liberation professed a fierce loyalty to the sultan but was not integrated into any meaningful national command structure, and the only police on the streets were party militias run by the Istiqlal.

Without a functional apparatus of coercion, the newly independent state struggled to establish control over transborder movements (*interdependence sovereignty*), which increased the country’s domestic and geopolitical instability. The economic effect of border closures contributed to uprisings in the Rif, and the porous border’s ongoing susceptibility to Algerian guerillas of the ALN (Armée de Libération Nationale) led to fears that France might expand its military operations into Moroccan territory.⁵⁵ After all, despite Morocco’s formal independence, its Westphalian sovereignty remained severely limited. It took six years for the last of five major American air bases on Moroccan soil to be evacuated, and the French control over Morocco’s security sector remained substantial: France not only transferred large parts of its Moroccan soldiers to the Moroccan government but also provided considerable military equipment and hundreds of military advisors to train the newly established army.⁵⁶

To recover Moroccan stateness, the Royal Armed Forces (FAR) were rebuilt around the principle of monarchical absolutism: “There was no Moroccan army or police until the late spring of 1956, but when they finally came into existence, the king saw to it that they were entirely loyal to the throne.”⁵⁷ The first mission of the Royal Armed Forces would be the defeat of ethnoseparatism in the Rif in 1958–59, under the personal command of the Crown Prince Moulay Hassan (and future king Hassan II): “Fatalities most likely numbered in the thousands, many incurred through wholesale indiscriminate bombings of villages, the rape of Rifian women by the FAR was said to have been ‘semi-systematic,’ and . . . interrogation methods were notoriously chilling.”⁵⁸ Challenges to Morocco’s territorial sovereignty, so it seemed, would increasingly come to be understood as a form of sacrilege against Alawism.

HUNTING SEASON IN PALESTINE

The rapid collapse of the “Arab-Jewish composite state” into civil war after the adoption of the UN partition plan in November 1947⁵⁹ vividly illus-

trated that British colonial institution building in Mandatory Palestine had resulted in a state that was not only essentially contested but also fundamentally *nonsovereign*: Mandatory Palestine had neither a binational judiciary, a binational police, nor a binational army.

This institutional legacy of nonsovereign statehood would be particularly devastating for the Palestinian Arabs: since their only protostate institutions were almost exclusively formed around Amin al-Husseini (who was mistrusted by both the Arab League and the British), they stood little chance against preventing the *de facto* partition of the Land of Israel/Palestine between the British-commanded Arab Legion of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Zionist protostate and its militias turned army: “The Palestinians . . . had no functioning national-level institutions, no central para-state mechanisms, no serious financial apparatus, and no centralized military force.”⁶⁰

But *nonsovereign statehood* would also characterize the newly established Jewish nation-state. The seemingly smooth shift from the state-on-the-way to the State of Israel could barely hide the fact the newly established state represented a conflicting amalgam of competing state projects: “The new state was born with relatively well-developed organs of self-maintenance, education, and self-defense. The difficulty was that it had not one but many well-staffed agencies for absorbing immigrants, not one but many full-scale school systems, and, worst of all, not one but many military organizations, each seeking to establish and defend the Jewish state according to its own strategic and tactical plans.”⁶¹

The nascent State of Israel thus stood out for its highly fragile state monopoly over the legitimate use of violence. In the famous “generals’ revolt,” the Haganah as the main militia of the Yishuv resisted the direct control of David Ben Gurion, who feared political competition from left-wing generals who were not members of Ben Gurion’s MAPAI but instead adhered to the more radical socialist MAPAM (Miflegat HaPoalim HaMeuchedet, United Workers’ Party).⁶² Ben Gurion proceeded to “dismantle the Palmach, the elite ‘striking force’ that had its own command structure, because of its close links with the left-wing socialist party MAPAM and its affiliated kibbutz movements.”⁶³ Domestic sovereignty over two right-wing militias (ETZEL and LECHI) and their ultimate integration into the chain of command of the newly established Israel Defense Forces could only be imposed by force. Throughout the “hunting season,” the Haganah collaborated with British authorities to clamp down on the Revisionist underground; throughout the War of 1948–49, Ben Gurion then took the dramatic decision of attacking the Irgun’s independent access to weaponry by bombing one of their supply ships in June 1948 (the *Altalena* incident).⁶⁴

The lack of state control over transborder movements would become a central point of friction between Israel and its neighboring states, both in the form of low-level interstate confrontations (especially at the Israeli-Syrian border)⁶⁵ and the deployment of nonstate militias for cross-border raids (primarily at the Israeli-Egyptian border): Palestinian Arab refugees frequently attempted to cross the border back into Israel, both in order to carry out acts of terrorism and sabotage as well as to regain properties left behind.⁶⁶ While Egyptian authorities vacillated between arming the militias and limiting cross-border raids, tensions at the border of the Gaza Strip would serve as the formal justification for the 1956 Sinai War as the “second round” in the Israeli-Arab military confrontations.⁶⁷

Since Israel could rely on the financial backing (and to a limited degree the additional military manpower) of the Jewish diaspora in the 1948 war,⁶⁸ the state’s dependence on external patrons was initially relatively limited. Moshe Sharett, second prime minister of Israel and chief rival of Ben Gurion, attempted to preserve this relatively high level of Westphalian sovereignty by pursuing a policy of nonalignment given the advantages of Israel’s ties to the Soviet bloc.⁶⁹

The most problematic element of nonsovereign statehood, however, would soon become Israel’s lack of formal recognition as a state in the international arena (*international legal sovereignty*). Since the 1949 Lausanne Conference did not result in formal peace treaties between Israel and its Arab neighbors, Israel’s de facto borders remained armistice lines closed to cross-border movement. The symbolic nonrecognition of Israel (most visibly expressed in its notorious absence on Arab maps of the Middle East) was accompanied by a campaign of delegitimization (both within the Arab world and the nonaligned movement) as well as a formal economic and political boycott organized by the Arab League.

Irredentist Nation Building: The Land beyond the Border

GREATER SYRIA: FROM CYPRUS TO THE EUPHRATES

According to Antun Sa’adeh, the founder of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, Greater Syria stretched all the way from southern Turkey to the Suez Canal, including Syria, Mandatory Palestine, large parts of Iraq and Transjordan, as well as Cyprus.⁷⁰ While the SSNP’s radical irredentism remained in the margins of Lebanese and Syrian politics, more moderate versions of this pan-Syrianism were adopted by the Alawite-dominated Ba’ath regime

after its consolidation in the early 1970s. In contrast to the SSNP, Ba'athist Syria limited its territorial claims to Jordan, Lebanon, and the Land of Israel/Palestine.⁷¹ The call for Greater Syria marked a clear ideological shift from pan-Arabism to "Syro-centric Arabism"⁷²: initially, the Ba'ath Party might have harbored irredentist designs toward areas inhabited by non-Arabs or ruled by non-Arab governments⁷³ but only as part of its broader "struggle to gather all the Arabs in a single state" covering the entire "Arab fatherland . . . inhabited by the Arab nation which stretches from the Taurus Mountain, the Pocht-i-Kouh Mountains, the Gulf of Basra, the Arab Ocean, the Ethiopian Mountains, the Sahara, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Mediterranean."⁷⁴ In early Ba'athist parlance, the notion of territorial nationalism (*qutriyya* as opposed to pan-Arabist *qawmiyya* or *wataniyya*)⁷⁵ was used to describe "the antithesis of Arabism and unity and to connote divisiveness, isolationism, . . . separatism (*infisal*), dissent, fanaticism, and egotism, all of which militated against the all-Arab cause."⁷⁶

Against the background of the Ba'ath Party's initial pan-Arabism, it is particularly ironic that the pronounced ideological change of the Syrian Ba'ath Party from pan-Arabism to pan-Syrianism was the unintended consequence of the first systematic pan-Arabist experiment, the United Arab Republic (UAR). The split between Ba'athist "nationalists" (*qawmiyyun*, i.e., pan-Arabists) and "regionalists" (*qutriyyun*, i.e., Syrian nationalists), which later turned into a source of friction between the "nationalist" Iraqi Ba'ath regime and the "regionalist" Syrian Ba'ath regime,⁷⁷ resulted from the policies of Egyptian domination over the UAR's "Northern Region" (formerly known as Syria). The resentment over the disbandment of the Syrian Ba'ath Party (in Ba'athist terminology, the Syrian "Regional Command") by the Ba'ath Party's National Command according to Nasser's wishes resulted in the secret organization of civilian "regionalists" inside Syria. At the same time, the forced transfer of Ba'athist Syrian officers into Egypt led to the minority-dominated Military Command, equally secret and equally "regionalist."⁷⁸ Of course, the Syrian Ba'ath Party's formula of success consisted not in its partial abandonment of pan-Arabism but in the strong appeal of its secularism to ethnosectarian minorities in the Syrian military, thereby creating an "army-Ba'ath nexus."⁷⁹ After the dissolution of the UAR in 1961 and the Syrian coup of 1963, the close cooperation between Ba'athist officers and Ba'athist politicians paved the way for a reestablishment of the Syrian nation-state as a Ba'ath state under Hafiz al-Assad.

Throughout this second-generation reestablishment of Syria, the irredentist appeal of Greater Syria reemerged from the political margins. The Alawite-dominated Ba'ath regime not only restored the state's monopoly

on coercion by means of militarized state building but also assembled a new domestic coalition and provided it with an overarching ideological consensus. A “military-mercantile complex”⁸⁰ formed the core of Syria’s new state-building coalition. Led by the Assad clan, their Sunni confidants and high-ranking Alawite military officers, this alliance brought together ethno-sectarian minorities and Sunnis from the rural periphery (both in the armed forces) together with the country’s urban commercial bourgeoisie.⁸¹

This eclectic coalition was legitimized by a similarly eclectic ideology. The shift from “Syria first” territorial nationalism (after the neo-Ba’athist coup of 1966) to clear-cut *irredentist* nationalism under Hafiz al-Assad (after the “Corrective Movement” coup of 1970) was more than a diversionary ploy (to distract from minority rule by heterodox Alawites over a Sunni majority) or mere rhetoric (in the service of *raison d’état* or *raison du régime*).⁸² In the Syrian struggle between competing state projects, the Alawite Ba’ath regime was keen to eliminate political competitors (often quite literally) like the land-owning and merchant elites of the Syrian Republic, the Syrian Communist Party, the SSNP, and the Muslim Brotherhood (while adopting a strong line against the heresies of the Iraqi regime, allegedly “Ba’thi only in name”⁸³). At the same time, the Syrian nationalism of the Ba’ath state presented itself as a *synthesis* of political alternatives, combining elements of pan-Syrianism, pan-Arabism, pan-Islamic solidarity, and socialism. In order to overcome the challenge of essentially contested statehood, the Ba’ath regime systematically sought to *decontest* the Syrian nation-state:⁸⁴ suppressing alternative state projects while also adopting their core ideological principles aimed at removing the core features of Syrian statehood from contest, not least to introduce a “personality cult around the President that makes Assad the source of and the measure of the party’s ideological discourse.”⁸⁵

While the Assad regime proved remarkably successful in restoring domestic sovereignty, the same could not be said about overcoming the fundamental dispute over the most basic Westphalian features of the Syrian nation-state. Alternative state projects did not simply disappear because the Ba’ath regime publicly co-opted their ideological principles or arrested and imprisoned their proponents. While left-wing opponents could be crushed with relative ease, the confrontation with the Muslim Brotherhood would later become the regime’s most formidable challenge. The regime’s strained efforts to banish all references to sectarianism from the public sphere indicated the shortcomings of this attempt to overcome essential contestation within the authoritarian framework of a “presidential monarchy.”⁸⁶ The

understandable obsession with only partially suppressed historical alternatives explains the Assad regime's policy of presenting the Ba'ath state as the culmination of Syrian *salvation history*, a notion that became the leitmotif of carefully staged public spectacles, historiographic revisionism, and even doubtful attempts to shore up the Islamic legitimacy of a decidedly heterodox leadership.⁸⁷ In his public persona as the heir to Salah al-Din,⁸⁸ Hafiz al-Assad could present a legitimate claim to all of geographic Syria (*bilad al-sham*). At the same time, Alawite predominance turned the scenario of ethnosectarian fragmentation into the Achilles' heel of the Ba'ath regime, and perhaps the fear of being infected by Lebanese-style confessionalism might have been at the core of Syria's initial intervention in the Lebanese civil war.⁸⁹

GREATER MOROCCO: DOWN TO THE SENEGAL RIVER

According to Istiqlal founder Muhammad Allal al-Fassi, Greater Morocco encompassed not just the territory of the Franco-Spanish protectorate but also Spanish Sahara (which would later become known as Western Sahara), large parts of Algeria, Mali, and all of Mauritania.⁹⁰ These wide-ranging territorial claims were presented throughout the slow-moving decolonization of the Maghreb: Mauritania and Mali gained their independence four years later than Morocco (1960), Algeria six years later (1962)—and Western Sahara's independence would have followed nineteen years later (1975).⁹¹ After Morocco's military invasion and the subsequent Green March in 1975, Moroccan irredentism became closely identified with the fate of the Alaouite dynasty as a "royal nationalism in the colors of Islam."⁹² However, the original vision of "Greater Morocco" was not developed by the palace but almost exclusively by Allal el-Fassi during a period of intense infighting over the leadership of the Istiqlal after independence:⁹³ "The extravagance of el-Fassi's proposals at first surprised most Moroccans. 'Originally,' he said in October 1957, 'I was the only person to call for the liberation of the Sahara and I was greeted with laughter.'"⁹⁴

The palace quickly adopted the outlandish territorial claims (which would have multiplied the territory of postcolonial Morocco by several times) in its nationalist outbidding with the Istiqlal. Since the boundaries of Greater Morocco were modeled after precolonial conquests of the Sharifian Empire, irredentist nationalism seemed to resonate with the notion of Alaouite continuity based on a claim to uninterrupted sharifian descent from the Prophet. In reality, the doctrine of Greater Morocco rather expressed

the profound *rupture* introduced by the Franco-Spanish protectorate. Radical changes to the state's geographic delimitations did not seem more improbable than the abolition of the sultanate itself: without the Army of Liberation's fierce loyalty to the sultan, postcolonial Morocco might very well have turned into something completely different than a monarchy.⁹⁵ Indeed, as the ideology of a future Istiqlal single-party state, irredentist nationalism began its career as an alternative to monarchical absolutism.

In contrast to the Istiqlal's focus on the territorialization of the Moroccan nation-state, early Alawism focused instead on its *sacralization* as a "sanctified order . . . believed to mirror and embody the celestial order on earth."⁹⁶ Formally the palace adopted the doctrine of Greater Morocco, but for decades its irredentist policy consisted largely in co-opting the Istiqlal (for instance by nominating the cousin of Allal el-Fassi as "director of Saharan and frontier affairs" in the Ministry of the Interior⁹⁷), by symbolically refusing to recognize the independence of Mauritania for nine years (until 1969) and by funding marginal loyalists militating for the unification of Western Sahara with Morocco.

Alawism, in other words, meant unconditional allegiance to the king rather than to the ethnoscape⁹⁸ of Greater Morocco: the central ritual of national unity, the *bay'a* (oath of allegiance), was first and foremost an expression of sacred hierarchy, not of sacred territory. As a reinvented tradition, under Hassan II the *bay'a* was transformed from a rare and ambiguous residue of caliphal contractualism to a yearly celebration of Alawism. The oath of allegiance was no longer sworn by religious scholars but by functionaries of the state—and it was no longer establishing a contractual relationship of temporary and conditional allegiance that accompanied the investiture of a new sultan but an annual renewal of transhistorical and unconditional allegiance that concluded the celebrations of the Feast of the Throne.

Similar to the Ba'athist rediscovery of pan-Syrianism, the ethnospatial turn of Alawism in the early 1970s sought to decontest the Moroccan nation-state. The palace's strategy of relying on the Berber-dominated military to crush competing state projects fell apart in the military coups of 1971 and 1972: Hassan II had put his trust in General Mohammed Oufkir, a classic representative of Berber predominance in Morocco's security apparatus, as "the strong man of the regime."⁹⁹ When the military turned on the monarchy, Hassan II grasped the opportunity of reshuffling both the state-building elite and the country's overarching ideological framework. The "Saharan Consensus," which came to dominate the restructuring of Morocco

after the capture of Western Sahara, formed an amalgam of irredentist, anti-colonial, and Islamic motifs, reorganized under the figure of the monarch as “sacred and inviolable,” a label that entered the Moroccan constitution in 1970.¹⁰⁰ In the words of Hassan II, the Green March “allowed Us first of all to recapture our Sahara and then to dedicate Ourselves to the establishment of a new Morocco.”¹⁰¹

GREATER ISRAEL: ON BOTH BANKS OF THE JORDAN RIVER

Israeli irredentism became best known as the territorial expression of national Messianism.¹⁰² After the trauma of near defeat in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the national-religious movement Gush Emunim (Bloc of the faithful) launched a wide-ranging settlement drive. According to its founding manifesto, Gush Emunim sought to renew Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel/Palestine to restore the religious roots of Zionism and the ethno-territorial origin of the Jewish people, or as the manifesto puts it, “to clarify and explain who is the People of Israel, where does it come from, where does it go, what is its function, and what is the location of the Land in the fulfilment of its mission.”¹⁰³

The origins of Israeli irredentism, however, were decidedly secular: instead of focusing on the West Bank of the Jordan River, they focused on its *East* Bank. Gush Emunim’s religious irredentism followed “the covenantal model of ancient Israel, with its ideals of unity, mission, and sacred territory.”¹⁰⁴ By contrast, Ze’ev Jabotinsky, the founder of Revisionist Zionism, presented his case for Greater Israel throughout the British mandate as a pragmatic and secular argument for improving the viability of a future Jewish state by extending Zionist settlement to Transjordan.¹⁰⁵ By contrasting the Revisionist program of Greater Israel to Gush Emunim’s ethnoterritorial messianism, Shavit points out that “Jabotinsky never talked about Jewish settlement of the Arab-populated areas of Judea and Samaria, or about the need to ‘reclaim the ancient patrimony.’ On the contrary, he recognized that certain areas of western Palestine were already populated, and therefore did not come into consideration for Jewish settlement.”¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Jabotinsky’s preference for settling Transjordan *instead* of the biblical heartland would almost sound heretical to modern-day national-religious settlers. In the words of Jabotinsky, “[From] the practical standpoint of mass immigration trans-Jordan is perhaps even more important than western Palestine [i.e. Mandatory Palestine]. Its land area is nearly the same, but has two or three times fewer inhabitants. Also, it possesses more fertile land and more streams.”¹⁰⁷

The focus on economic utility instead of biblical promise was a common feature of territorial claims throughout the mandate era. When the Zionist Organization presented the map of a future Palestine to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, its geographic outlook aimed at the creation of a functional economy with sufficient access to water and both maritime and land-based transportation networks (the Hejaz railway and the Gulf of Aqaba). The map, which had been closely coordinated with Emir Faisal so as not to conflict with the territorial ambitions of a future Arab state, stretched across the Jordan River and encompassed both the Litani River (in modern-day Lebanon) and the Hermon (in the Israel-occupied Golan Heights) while ultimately reaching down to the Red Sea.¹⁰⁸ Transjordan was quickly excluded from the authority of the British mandate and formally put under Hashemite rule as the Emirate of Transjordan at the Cairo Conference of 1921. Nonetheless, its exemption from the Balfour Declaration (as the Emirate of Transjordan) created a lasting impact on Revisionist Zionism, which claimed that Transjordan had been formally partitioned from Mandatory Palestine.¹⁰⁹ Jabotinsky's hymn "The Left Bank of the Jordan" (a reference to Transjordan) popularized the vision of Greater Israel among Revisionist Zionists, and its chorus famously claimed, "There are two banks to the Jordan/ This one is ours, and that one as well."¹¹⁰

In the logo of the Revisionist militia "ETZEL" (an acronym of the Hebrew term for "National Military Organization"), Jabotinsky's map of Greater Israel found its most iconic expression: ETZEL's logo superimposed an outstretched arm with a rifle across the map of Greater Israel (encompassing Mandatory Palestine and Transjordan), combined with the slogan "only thus"—only in these geographic limits and only by force.¹¹¹ Jabotinsky's irredentism was not at the core of Revisionist Zionism, but the ideology of territorial maximalism effectively translated the agenda of ideological maximalism. Revisionist Zionism called for a Jewish nation-state at a time when neither the British colonial authorities nor the Jewish Agency were willing to use this terminology.

In the first decades of postcolonial Israel, the Revisionists of the *Herut* (Freedom) Party were the only ones to advocate claims to "Greater Israel," a term that had become inseparable with the person of Menachem Begin, former commander of ETZEL.¹¹² Under the Labor-Zionist hegemony of MAPAI, state formation took precedence over irredentist ideology, with the possible exception of the Jordanian-annexed Old City of Jerusalem (to which Jews were barred from entering).¹¹³ Radical alternatives to Labor Zionism only reemerged from the political fringes after the Six-Day War,

when the conquest of immense territories reignited the fundamental dispute over the political, geographic, and cultural features of Israeli statehood. While MAPAI governments were the first to build Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, the ideology of Greater Israel became closely identified with the rise of a counterhegemonic state project dominated by Israel's Revisionist Right, even though there had always been a strain of left-wing territorial maximalism.¹¹⁴ When Menachem Begin was elected as Israel's first right-wing prime minister in 1977, the expansion of Jewish settlements echoed Jabotinsky's vision of Greater Israel; however, in contrast to Jabotinsky, territorial expansion had taken on a very different meaning. In a campaign of decontestation, the Likud's ideology presented itself as a synthesis of competing state projects, borrowing heavily from both the Zionist left (especially the notion of the "village as military outpost"¹¹⁵) and the Zionist right (especially the cult of conquest in nationalist messianism).¹¹⁶ Based on a combination of territorial maximalism (both secular and religious), ethnic nationalism, and neoliberal economic reforms, this new "Land of Israel" consensus sought to unite a broad political alliance, ranging from new middle classes via disenfranchised Mizrahi Jews to national-religious Zionists: The settlement project might not have been the primary goal of this political coalition, but it was ultimately held together by the shared appeal of retrieving a lost ethnoscape.

Militarized State Building: Putting the State on the Map

THE SYRIAN NATION-IN-ARMS

By projecting Syrian nationhood back into history and far beyond the border, the Assad regime struggled against radical challenges to the state's legitimacy gaps. At the same time, a systematic militarization campaign sought to overcome the state's protracted sovereignty gaps. Based on a rapid expansion of military power,¹¹⁷ Hafiz al-Assad restored the state's monopoly of violence and transformed Syria from an arena of proxy warfare into a regional player in its own right. A key strategy of militarized state building consisted in effective coup proofing.¹¹⁸ Ethnosectarian loyalties and family ties within Assad's Kalbiyya tribe were exploited to create an innermost circle of family members and Alawite security barons.¹¹⁹ Parallel military units (like the Republican Guard or the "Defence Companies" under the control of Hafiz al-Assad's brother, Rif'at al Assad) were created as a praetorian

counterbalance against the regular military, not least given the limited effectiveness of Ba'ath control via its party branches within the armed forces.¹²⁰ Quite a few security agencies were created to spy on the individual components of the security sector (including on one another). Military professionalism within the officer corps was boosted¹²¹ not only to enhance the armed forces' fighting power after the humiliating defeat against Israel in 1967 but also as a mechanism against military insubordination. In addition to privileged access to imported goods, housing, and luxury items such as limousines,¹²² high-ranking officers were also granted considerable leeway to engage in illicit economic activities, both as a mechanism of reward and for the purpose of potential blackmail.¹²³

This systematic monopolization of the means of organized violence was defined by the regime as "a 'unification of command'—that is, unification of state, party, and military."¹²⁴ As part of this militarized "unification of command," the Ba'ath Party was reorganized into a strictly hierarchical organization with its own party militia (similar to the militias of other mass-based semistate organs, mobilizing for instance workers and peasants).¹²⁵ Besides the armed forces and militias, the ultimate deterrence against questioning the state's monopoly of violence consisted in a dense network of secret intelligence agencies (*mukhabarat*) with far-reaching authorities to gather information, carry out arrests, detain, and torture prisoners or even make them disappear without public accountability.

As these elements of authoritarian excess indicate, the process of militarization created a robust coercive apparatus that was deeply enmeshed with the personal survival of the "presidential monarchy."¹²⁶ The resulting security sector might have been coup proof—but only at the price of a deep and often very personal commitment to the survival of the Assad clan. At the same time, militarized state building was highly effective in excluding external actors from Syria's domestic politics. The Assad regime even leveraged geostrategic competition between the Cold War superpowers for its militarization, without ever becoming fully dependent on its patron.¹²⁷

After Egypt's defection from the Soviet orbit in 1972, Syria's militarization as a Soviet client state reached unprecedented levels in terms of the quality of equipment, social incorporation (by establishing linkages into the education sector) and basic manpower: "On the eve of the [1967] war, the Syrian army numbered about 50,000 men, while on the eve of the 1973 war, it already numbered 170,000 men."¹²⁸ In contrast to neo-Ba'athist "messianic revisionism"¹²⁹ (which had suffered a crushing defeat in 1967), this considerable military arsenal was put into the service of a decidedly *realist* regional foreign policy that aimed first and foremost at

restoring Syria's territorial integrity by recovering the Israel-occupied Golan Heights.¹³⁰ From a perspective of basic military geography, Israeli control over the Golan Heights turned the defense of Damascus into a geostrategic nightmare. The control of Mount Hermon gave Israel "a clear visual and electronic view of Syrian troop movements and communication traffic in the south throughout the plains that surrounded Damascus."¹³¹

Syria's effort to build up a military deterrent against Israel proved to be a successful strategy of alliance formation. As a regional challenge against Israel, Syria was able to attract Soviet military hardware, financial support by the Arab Gulf States, and Egyptian approval to enter into a military alliance for the 1973 war. In addition, despite representing very different models of state ideology, the shared opposition to Israel as a form of "resistance"¹³² would later turn into the cornerstone of the Iranian-Syrian alliance.

At the same time, the project of reestablishing Syrian territorial sovereignty over the Golan was not just a matter of personal honor and geostrategy, it also represented an imperative for the regime's struggle against ethnosectarian fragmentation. The proximity of the Golan Heights to both Maronite-dominated Lebanon and the Druze-dominated Jabal al-Druze inside Syria had formed part of Israel's initial motivation to conquer the mountain plateau in 1967: Yigal Allon, at the time minister of labor, argued "for a bold thrust across southern Syria with a view to reaching Jabal Druze. If Israel were to do so, Allon presumably believed, the Druzes could be detached from Syria and induced to form their own state that would be in alliance with Israel. Syria would thus be reduced in size and in stature. . . . And a new order based on an Israeli alliance with the Christians in Lebanon, the Druzes in Syria, the Kurds in Iraq (and Syria) and ultimately a reduced Jordan could be created."¹³³ To prevent such a scenario, militarized state building provided the backbone for the regime's ideological synthesis of "anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist, pan-Arab, pan-Syrian, and residual irredentist sentiments."¹³⁴ In the end, it was the robustness of the Syrian security apparatus that turned the nation-state into "the *qibla* of politics [the Islamic direction of prayer], even for a dissident Ba'thi nationalist [i.e., a pan-Arabist] from eastern Syria, or a traditional Druze from the Jabal al-'Arab [i.e., a potential supporter of independent Druze statehood]."¹³⁵

THE ROYAL ARMED FORCES AND THE PALACE

Despite Morocco's irredentist rhetoric and its policy of strategic brinkmanship vis-à-vis Algeria, the Moroccan military was initially not built as an instrument of territorial conquest but as a tool of domestic control. In the

same way that irredentist nationalism was adopted by the palace for the purpose of hegemonic consolidation at home, Morocco's militarized state building served the purpose of overcoming the country's protracted sovereignty gaps instead of expressing an agenda of regional revisionism. This strongly domestic focus of Morocco's military apparatus explains its limited effectiveness (and near defeat) against POLISARIO forces in the first years of desert warfare over Western Sahara: the FAR was simply unprepared to engage in actual military combat.¹³⁶

Crucial episodes of Morocco's early foreign policy indicate this mismatch between expansionist rhetoric and a decidedly domestic focus on state building: when Morocco had the chance to capture Spanish Sahara in 1958, the FAR preferred to watch on the sidelines as Franco-Spanish counterinsurgency forces crushed the Sahrawi wing of the Berber-led Army of Liberation (Operation Ouragan). While Spain ceded the southern part of its protectorate (the Tarfaya Strip) to Morocco, Operation Ouragan effectively halted Morocco's territorial advance at the northern border of what would later become known as Western Sahara.¹³⁷ Five years later, the Moroccan-Algerian confrontation of the Sands War in 1963 was less driven by a contested border but rather by the desire of Hassan II to break any ties between revolutionary Algeria and its potential ally within Morocco, the UNFP.¹³⁸

Morocco's militarization was tightly integrated into the project of controlling the domestic security apparatus. The institutional continuity between colonial and postcolonial state building extended to ongoing French military assistance as well as to the army's social structure (rural Berber officers) and military function (domestic control instead of external defense): "The stationing of soldiers in Meknes, Kenitra and Marrakech is revealing of the army's real function: it was in fact replacing the colonial troops, whose geographic distribution had been motivated by domestic security concerns rather than the defense of the territory."¹³⁹

Until the military coups of 1971 and 1972, militarized state building served the purpose of defending Alawism against any alternative state projects, not least by bringing the military under the control of the palace. Given urban riots and rural uprisings after independence, only the rapid formation of a police force and a military reestablished the state's monopoly over the legitimate use of violence. By staffing the police apparatus with close confidants of the king and by selecting the Crown Prince as the chief of staff of the FAR, the palace made sure that this monopoly would be a *royal* monopoly on violence.¹⁴⁰ Based on a policy of skillful ambiguity,

Morocco's militarization was supported by hardware from both the West and the Soviet Union.¹⁴¹ Over time, Morocco successfully transformed from an arena of European power struggles into a regional player in the Maghreb. The FAR restored state control over the country's rural periphery, defeated Algerian attempts at intervention, and deterred both left-wing and right-wing challenges to Alawism: "The simple presence of FAR as a coercive arm is never forgotten by any political participants. On the one hand it implements programs of a social and economic nature and thereby steals the thunder of the opposition, and on the other lies ready to nip in the bud any extra-legal political maneuvers."¹⁴²

The shock of the coup attempts of 1971 and 1972 must be measured against the backdrop of an increasing royal dependency on the military. With two swift military strikes against Hassan II, first against his summer palace Skhirat and then against his plane, the close link between the king and the Berber-dominated officer corps had collapsed. While the two coup attempts were not Berberist (in the sense of following a Berber-particularist or Berber-nationalist agenda), both coups were clearly *Berber* coups by virtue of the military's ethnic composition: "Had the uprising succeeded, Morocco would, without any doubt, have been ruled by Berbers."¹⁴³

In response, the palace shifted to a paradoxical strategy of coup proofing by militarization. A larger Moroccan military would find it harder to organize itself against the king¹⁴⁴—and a military engaged in a far-off conflict, over a thousand kilometers away from the capital, would simply be too busy to engage in coup preparations. Even *before* the conquest of Western Sahara, Moroccan military manpower was slightly expanded (from 57,000 to 61,000 total armed forces) while military spending almost doubled (from US\$97 million to US\$190 million, mostly based on investments in armored vehicles, an expansion of the air force and the two new battalions of the Royal Guard).¹⁴⁵ In the aftermath of the Green March, after fifteen years of desert warfare, in 1991 defense expenditures had skyrocketed to US\$1.34 billion while military manpower had more than tripled to 195,500 total armed forces.¹⁴⁶

A systematic expansion both in terms of hardware and manpower was thus an integral part of a broader reorganization of the security sector—other policies of coup proofing involved decidedly *public* purges of an entire generation of leading military officers: "The King asked that each family that had lost a member at Skhirat [the king's summer palace] send a representative to watch the executions. Several cadets, their hands on their shaven heads, were made to sit close to the area where the executions were taking place. The

entire government was there, and the King watched at a distance through binoculars.”¹⁴⁷ In addition, coup-proofing measures included institutionalized police patrols,¹⁴⁸ a centralization of command and control functions exercised by the palace,¹⁴⁹ ethnic stacking in order to limit Berber predominance,¹⁵⁰ as well as additional economic privileges for the officer corps. The most obvious technique of coup proofing by militarization, however, consisted in the policy of sending the armed forces on missions abroad in order to keep them busy and as far away from the palace as possible: Syria and the Egyptian Suez Front in the war effort against Israel in 1973, Zaire in 1977, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Equatorial Guinea throughout the 1980s—and of course Western Sahara in 1975.¹⁵¹

THE ORIGINS OF ISRAELI MILITARISM

Israel’s offensive military doctrine and the predominance of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) as the key bureaucratic player in the country’s foreign and security policy decision making have been traced back to a strategic culture of *ayn breva* (“there is no alternative”),¹⁵² shaped by postgenocidal trauma,¹⁵³ the Zionist ethos of self-defense,¹⁵⁴ and the state’s problematic geostrategic location.¹⁵⁵ However, throughout the early decades of Israeli independence, militarization and state building were closely intertwined: in a struggle between David Ben Gurion and Moshe Sharett,¹⁵⁶ the military option would ultimately emerge triumphant as the policy choice for most of the country’s protracted sovereignty gaps—competing militias, concerns about turning into a client state, border incursions, and the lack of formal recognition by even a single neighboring country.

Based on the example of the Sinai War in 1956, the impact of militarized state building on Israel’s regional standing can be judged as mixed at best. While the offensive against Egypt (and the temporary occupation of the Gaza Strip) succeeded in reducing the level of incursions by Palestinian militants, the confrontation effectively put an end to Israel’s initial policy of nonalignment (including considerable military ties to the Soviet bloc).¹⁵⁷ By establishing itself as a Middle Eastern ally for Western offshore balancing (initially in the service of French interests) and as a broker of pro-Western coalitions (in the case of the subsequent “alliance of the periphery”), Israel unwillingly contributed to inner-Arab coalition building, culminating in Egypt’s establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization in 1964.¹⁵⁸ In addition, by “taking ‘temporary de facto control’ for an unspecified

period,”¹⁵⁹ Israel’s rule over the Gaza Strip in 1956 created a clear precedent for military rule in the occupied territories after 1967.

Nonetheless, militarization was highly successful in establishing an effective monopoly on violence. In contrast to most of its Arab neighbors, Israel did not go through a series of coups and countercoups resulting ultimately in state collapse, even though Ben Gurion was paranoid about a MAPAM-orchestrated military coup.¹⁶⁰ The origins of this effective control over the military go back to the Zionist protostate: establishing a cohesive and greatly expanded security sector aimed at disbanding and merging right-wing and left-wing militias into the common framework of statism (*mamlachtiyut*)¹⁶¹ under Labor-Zionist leadership, effectively as a strategy of decontestation by militarization. The success of Labor-Zionist control over the security apparatus consisted not only in the successful elevation of the Israel Defense Forces to the status of a “charismatic institution” (for instance by organizing prominent military parades at annual Independence Day celebrations)¹⁶² but in classic tactics of coup proofing—purges, patronage, and ethnic stacking. In addition to harsh measures against non-MAPAI members within the IDF leadership, the suppression of political rivals had already begun *before* state foundation, especially throughout the “hunting season” directed against ETZEL. After independence, the IDF’s alleged “depoliticization” consisted largely in entrenching the institutional capture by MAPAI¹⁶³ in combination with systematic discrimination against Mizrahi immigrants (as well as the full-scale exclusion of Israel’s Arab and ultra-Orthodox Jewish citizens). In the end, despite the country’s heterogeneous and highly factionalized population, the military leadership remained ethnically and ideologically cohesive—namely, under the control of Labor-Zionist secular Ashkenazi Jews.

The state’s monopoly on violence would be enforced particularly harshly over the country’s Palestinian Arab minority, based on a system of military administration¹⁶⁴ over contested territories outside of the borders of the UN partition plan, which had been captured in a first wave of state expansion (see chapter 4): “Nearly all the land in these border areas was also Arab. Because sovereignty over the border regions was uncertain, it was necessary to establish firm, uncontested, and unquestioned control over them.”¹⁶⁵ While the military government enforced land expropriations,¹⁶⁶ the IDF’s settlement branch as well as NACHAL (a unit combining military service and settlement) were also involved in settling the captured territories,¹⁶⁷ typically with Mizrahi immigrants.¹⁶⁸ The military value of this settlement

drive into Israel's border regions was questionable¹⁶⁹, but it perfectly matched the ideology of Labor Zionism, which understood Jewish settlement as the ultimate guarantee to hold on to contested territory.

Military rule over captured territories was a common practice among postcolonial states, and Israel's initial decision to install a military administration over conquered territories did not differ significantly from Morocco's military rule over the Rif following the 1958 Rif Rebellion.¹⁷⁰ In addition, Israel was not the only country to capture contested territory that had once formed part of Mandatory Palestine: Israel's coercive rule over its Arab citizens, and the attempt to denationalize them by assimilating them into Israel's state institutions, resembled the Jordanian capture and annexation of the West Bank but with a crucial difference: the "Israeli political leadership worked consciously to nullify the Arabs' Palestinian identity. But its approach differed from Jordan's in having no goal of integrating them into a larger state identity. As Israeli Arabs, they were designated as neither Israeli—in the ways that Jews could be Israeli—nor Palestinian."¹⁷¹ In contrast to the Jordanian incorporation of the West Bank¹⁷² and the Egyptian satellization of the Gaza Strip (in the form of Egyptian patronage over Amin al-Husseini's "All Palestine Government"),¹⁷³ Israel's rule over territories captured in 1948–49 vacillated between establishing Jewish settlements as territorial exclaves and a policy of ambivalent incorporation toward the Palestinian Arabs under its control. In the end, the military administration would only be dismantled in 1966, one year before the Six-Day War.¹⁷⁴

Conclusion

In retrospect, the processes of irredentist nation building, militarized state building, and subsequent expansionism by Syria, Morocco, and Israel have been interpreted as an uninterrupted causal chain of events. According to this post hoc fallacy, territorial claims aimed at geographic expansion, and war preparation aimed at war making, resulting (in Morocco's case) in the conquest of Western Sahara as "premeditated invasion."¹⁷⁵ In the Syrian case, Maronite nationalists in particular suspected that "Syria's role in Lebanon, since 1975, has been to perpetuate a war waged against the Lebanese polity."¹⁷⁶ In the Israeli case, "Arab observers, in particular, were inclined to believe that Israel provoked the Six-Day War in order to fulfil its long-standing territorial ambitions."¹⁷⁷

However, irredentist claims were often isolated in the political margins, and war preparation rarely aimed at geostrategic revisionism: state-building elites integrated irredentist motifs of Greater Syria, Greater Morocco, and Greater Israel into overarching ideological frameworks, but they were primarily interested in putting an end to fundamental disputes over the state's internal organization and overall legitimacy. At the same time, emerging states invested heavily in militarization but frequently with a focus on domestic consolidation instead of foreign adventurism. When both irredentism and militarization were joined in a conjuncture of regional conflict, political elites were often surprised at the rapid success of their military campaigns—and not always sure how to proceed with the land beyond the border that had just come under their control.

Chapter 4

Varieties of State Expansion

When the Israel Defense Forces captured vast territories throughout the Six-Day War in 1967, policymakers and military officials agonized over the question of how to deal with the land and the population that had come under their control. In a famous anecdote, Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol quipped that Israel might well be interested in the dowry (i.e., the land) but less so in the bride (i.e., the Palestinian population).¹ Policymakers assumed that Israeli control would be contemporary, and Israel's rule over the occupied territories started out with a two-month budget.² When Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs was tasked with providing political options in dealing with the territories, seven strategic options were discussed in a policy paper, ranging from a full military withdrawal to the establishment of a Palestinian state, including the option of creating an Israeli-Palestinian confederation.³ What the Israeli diplomats did not foresee was the muddled scenario that would actually emerge during fifty-plus years of Israeli rule over the occupied territories—a complex combination of *de jure* annexation (East Jerusalem), *de facto* annexation (Golan Heights), ethnic exclaves (the settlements), territorial withdrawal based on the dismantling of ethnic exclaves (Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip) as well as the creation of a Palestinian protostate (the Palestinian Authority).⁴ Based on a comparative study of the Syrianization of Lebanon, the Moroccanization of Western Sahara, and the Judaization of the occupied territories, this chapter studies how these state expansions became semipermanent over time—and which factors shaped their differences.

Institutional Lock-In: The Logic of Predatory State Consolidation

SYRIA: ONE NATION IN TWO STATES

Syria's initial motivation to intervene in Lebanon's civil war was shaped by geopolitical considerations rather than irredentist adventurism. It would take

several years for the Assad regime to discover the advantages of systematically leveraging its military presence in Lebanon as a coping strategy to overcome entrenched crises of legitimacy and sovereignty. Over time, the enforcement of Syria's order in the form of a "strategic tutelage"⁵ over Lebanon slowly transformed into a pattern of predatory state consolidation: by becoming Lebanon's unchallenged patron (in a first step) and by rebuilding the country as a modern-day satrapy (in a second step), the Assad regime could consolidate both its legitimacy (against competing state projects) and its hard-won sovereignty (against geostrategic challenges) at the expense of Lebanon's political independence, economic well-being, and territorial integrity.

Syria fully entered Lebanon's civil war in June 1976 with a limited military contingent of twelve thousand soldiers⁶ to intervene in the Palestinian-supported challenge to the Maronite-dominated status quo. A few months earlier, Syria had sent its first troops to protect PLO forces and Palestinian camps.⁷ When the PLO and the left-wing Lebanese National Movement (LNM) achieved considerable military advances, Syria was unable to impose a peace plan that foresaw only moderate changes to Maronite control within the framework of "Syrian political hegemony buttressed by a military presence."⁸ Faced with the alternatives of Lebanon's ethnosectarian fragmentation or a PLO-dominated Lebanon (which would have provoked an early Israeli invasion), Syria decided to throw its military and political weight behind the Maronites.

The following months were marked by prominent public references to the irredentist vision of Greater Syria by Hafiz al-Assad and other Syrian leaders: "Assad proclaimed a month later that 'throughout history, Syria and Lebanon have been one country and one people. . . . Our history is one, our future is one and our destiny is one.' Days later, a Syrian general was quoted as saying that 'what is taking place presently in the region is the undoing of the Sykes-Picot agreement.'⁹ While this propaganda campaign seemed to confirm the irredentist motivation behind Syria's intervention, it was primarily aimed at providing a justification for the surprising alliance between Damascus, the self-proclaimed "beating heart of Arabism," and the Maronite "isolationists."¹⁰

Indeed, despite the irredentist rhetoric, the first years of Syria's presence in Lebanon followed the template of a purely *temporary* military intervention. The subsequent institutional lock-in of Syria's control over Lebanon emerged as a response to the severe crises that shook the Ba'ath regime throughout the following years. What had begun as a series of sporadic assassinations

of senior Ba'ath Party members and prominent Alawites turned into a full-blown defiance of the Ba'athist state by guerillas connected to the Muslim Brotherhood, which sought to establish an Islamic Republic in Syria. A civil war ensued after the 1979 massacre of Alawite officer cadets at the Aleppo Artillery School, culminating in assassination attempts against Hafiz al-Assad himself and finally "full-scale urban warfare against 'Alawis, against Ba'ath party officials, party offices, police posts, military vehicles, barracks, factories and any other target the guerillas could attack."¹¹ The brutal suppression of this rebellion by heavy artillery fire on Hama (resulting in somewhere between ten thousand and thirty thousand deaths) was proof that the Assad regime had become an "Alawite military dictatorship which was feared and hated by large sections of the population."¹²

Even the regime's control over the security apparatus began to slip. In 1983 Assad's brother Rif'at attempted to mount a military coup while his brother Hafiz suffered a prolonged health crisis. Meanwhile, Israel's military invasion in Lebanon was aimed not only at the expulsion of the PLO but also at the systematic transformation of Lebanon into an Israeli satellite state. Lebanon increasingly became "Assad's Vietnam":¹³ in the late summer of 1982, both Syrian and PLO forces were evacuated from Beirut in the aftermath of Israel's military victory. The Maronite-Likud alliance culminated in the election of Bashir Gemayel to the Lebanese presidency. One year later, an Israel-Lebanese agreement was signed with far-reaching gains for the Israeli side, including a formal Israeli diplomatic presence and an Israeli security zone in South Lebanon.¹⁴ With the PLO relegated to the distant shores of Tunisia, the United States shifted toward a conflict resolution without a Palestinian state by restoring Jordanian control over the West Bank (the "Reagan Plan").¹⁵

The subsequent turnaround of Syria's position in Lebanon from periphery to predominance has been described by Ma'oz as a "remarkable political resurrection" based on "a war of attrition, state-run terrorism and guerilla warfare carried out by the army, by intelligence agents and by surrogates."¹⁶ Syria's counteroffensive had already begun with the assassination of Lebanese President Bashir Gemayel, but it took a much more concerted effort to force his successor (his brother Amin Gemayel) to formally abrogate the May 17 Agreement with Israel in early 1984.¹⁷ Throughout the following years, Syria systematically established itself as the undisputed patron of Lebanese politics, based on a mixture of co-optation, blackmail, and political assassinations. Syria's tightening control over Lebanon could be deployed successfully against radical challenges to

the state's legitimacy and monopoly on violence. The Syrian occupation of Lebanon allowed the regime to buy off its own military officers (who became rich through smuggling and drug trafficking)¹⁸ and kept a sizeable number of military and intelligence personnel busy and at a safe distance from Damascus. In addition, the military presence in Lebanon provided the Assad regime with a valuable bargaining chip to regain the Golan Heights. While the immediate Syrian-Israeli border remained calm, Hezbollah could be deployed as a Syrian-Iranian proxy force to harass IDF units in the remaining Israeli "security zone" in southern Lebanon. The establishment of Hafiz al-Assad as Lebanon's "godfather"¹⁹ resonated throughout Syria itself. The regime propaganda portrayed Syria's role within Lebanon with the typical eclecticism of pan-Syrian, pan-Arab, and pan-Islamic elements,²⁰ but the true message for domestic challengers was the effective imposition of a "logic of force"²¹ on the Lebanese arena.

MOROCCO: THE SAHARAN CONSENSUS

Despite Morocco's wide-ranging territorial claims, the earliest stationing of troops close to the border of Western Sahara dates back to mid-1974.²² The escalation of the conflict over Western Sahara was initially launched as a convenient outlet for the economic, military, and ideological competition between Morocco and Algeria,²³ triggered by the collapse of late Spanish colonialism and the death of Franco. Both Morocco and Mauritania laid claims to Spanish Sahara as part of Greater Morocco or respectively Greater Mauritania,²⁴ but under late Spanish colonialism, Moorish tribalism in the territory had slowly transformed into a fledgling independence movement that would soon attract Algeria's interest.

Initially, the territory had been neglected for decades, even though Spanish rule had already been established at the 1884 Berlin Conference:²⁵ Spain's colonial activity only became more systematic with the beginning of phosphate exploration at the mine of Bou Craa in the late 1950s. Based on a combination of industrialization, urbanization, and increasing sedentarization, the nomadic pastoralists of Spanish Sahara came to see themselves as *Sahrawis*. The protonationalist movement POLISARIO (established in 1973) soon presented its case for national self-determination. While Spanish authorities violently suppressed the first wave of early Sahrawi nationalism, by 1975 they had come surprisingly close to decolonizing Western Sahara and bringing about independent Sahrawi statehood. After carrying out a census in 1974, only Morocco's consultation of the International Court

of Justice delayed a referendum on Sahrawi independence. During a visit in 1975, a mission of inquiry on behalf of the UN Decolonization Committee encountered widespread public support for full independence under POLISARIO leadership; its report concluded that “there was an overwhelming consensus among Saharans within the territory *in favor of independence and opposing integration with any neighboring country.*”²⁶

Morocco’s staging of the “Green March” in November 1975, a colorful spectacle of over three hundred thousand civilians marching toward Morocco’s borders, was organized first and foremost to preempt the decolonization process of Western Sahara. Morocco’s claim to the territory was in clear violation of the decision of the International Court of Justice,²⁷ and the UN Security Council had explicitly warned against the Green March.²⁸ Spain’s subsequent policy reversal from encouraging Sahrawi statehood to agreeing to the territory’s partition between Morocco and Mauritania (in the Madrid Accords) was closely connected to its domestic transition crisis: given the terminal illness and impending demise of Franco (who died just days after the signing of the Madrid Accords), Prince Juan Carlos depended on the approval of the Spanish officer corps for his succession to power.

With Spanish approval (facilitated by considerable American pressure),²⁹ both Morocco and Mauritania invaded Western Sahara with the clear intent of annexation based on the partition plan of the Madrid Accords. Mauritania declared the southern third of Western Sahara as its thirteenth province (named “Tiris El-Gharbia”); in the northern two thirds of Western Sahara, Morocco carried out similar policies of incorporation by reorganizing the territory into three Moroccan provinces (El-Ayouun, Smara, and Boujdour). While Mauritania’s rule over Tiris El-Gharbia collapsed after only four years under the onslaught of POLISARIO guerilla warfare, Morocco’s policy of systematic territorial incorporation would continue to show a remarkable level of continuity.

Throughout the next decades, Morocco’s ongoing legitimacy crises and sovereignty gaps were resolved by reorganizing Morocco’s domestic and foreign policy around the question of Western Sahara. The *geographic* removal of the Moroccan military from domestic politics turned out to be a surprisingly effective tactic of restoring the royal monopoly on violence. By imposing a “Saharan Consensus,” Morocco’s state expansion effectively linked the country’s territorial sovereignty with the Alaouite throne. For the Sahrawis, this predatory state consolidation came at a heavy price, including denial of decolonization and national self-determination, long-term displacement into refugee camps in the Algerian desert of about half

of the territory's population (initially over thirty thousand from around seventy-five thousand inhabitants),³⁰ harsh measures of repression against Sahrawi nationalists resisting Moroccan occupation, the Moroccan capture of phosphate production and fisheries, and the beginning colonization of the territory by Moroccan settlers.

The capture of natural resources in Western Sahara (phosphate mining and fisheries) significantly enhanced Morocco's commercial ties to the Soviet Union.³¹ At the same time, despite its increasing isolation within African and Maghreb politics, Morocco successfully deployed its military confrontation with a Third Worldist insurgency to seek Western support for its irredentist project. As Damis argued in 1984, "Morocco has been a moderate voice in Middle Eastern politics, and Hassan's support is still necessary in efforts to make the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty work. The United States will have to provide money, arms, and food to help Morocco in the struggle against the Polisario. It is worth the price to *keep Morocco friendly and stable*."³²

Most importantly, the capture of Western Sahara "marked the beginning of a spectacular restoration of monarchic legitimacy."³³ The Saharan Consensus firmly established Alawism as the state's overarching ideology and cemented the king's new sociopolitical alliance with the rising urban middle classes (instead of the military). Even before the Green March, representatives of Morocco's opposition parties and the country's dwindling Jewish community traveled abroad to make the case for Greater Morocco, and Sahrawi loyalists (like the president of the Spanish-established tribal council, the Djemaa) publicly pledged allegiance to the king.³⁴ The irredentist spectacle surrounding Morocco's capture of Western Sahara would be inscribed into the country's national calendar, which came to celebrate the Green March (November 6) and Morocco's capture of Tiras el-Gharbia (Oued ed-Dahab Day, August 14).³⁵ From now on, the entanglement of a sacred territory and a sacred monarchy could be deployed against Moroccans and Sahrawis alike. In the words of Hassan II: "I have always said that human rights end when it comes to the question of the Sahara's Moroccanness. Any person which claims that the Sahara is not Moroccan could not benefit from human rights."³⁶

ISRAEL: THE RETURN TO THE SOURCES

After years of being under military siege, ominous threats of extinction, and outright terror in the weeks preceding the war, Israeli society reacted to the news of victory and military conquest in 1967 with a wave of euphoria and

messianic frenzy, sometimes bordering on sheer madness. After capturing the Old City and the Temple Mount, General Uzi Narkiss was contacted by Shlomo Goren, the chief rabbi of the IDF, who suggested “that this was the moment to blow up the Dome of the Rock. ‘Do this and you will go down in history,’ Goren said, and explained that such a thing could only be done under cover of war: ‘Tomorrow might be too late.’ Narkis threatened to throw the rabbi in jail if he did not drop the idea.”³⁷

Despite a clear legacy of irredentist nationalism at the fringes of Israel’s political spectrum, the war had not been caused by Israeli revisionism, but rather by a clear policy of Soviet-Egyptian brinkmanship.³⁸ Immediately after the Six-Day War, both the messianic wing of the national-religious camp³⁹ and territorial maximalists within the Revisionist and the Labor-Zionist camp⁴⁰ publicly made the case for holding on to the captured territories for ideological, religious, and geostrategic reasons. Nonetheless, except for the almost immediate incorporation of the Old City and East Jerusalem (initially by extending Israel’s civil jurisdiction, a form of *de facto* annexation)⁴¹, Israel’s rule over most of the occupied territories was institutionalized as a *temporary* form of military occupation, even if Israel applied an idiosyncratic reading of international law. By arguing that West Bank and Gaza had a unique status as “territories with no existing sovereign governments,” Israel rejected the *de jure* applicability of the Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention, but declared to conform to a *de facto* application of unspecified “humanitarian provisions” of the Fourth Geneva Convention. As Benvenisti points out, even this limited application of the law of occupation was exceedingly rare for expansionist states: “Until the occupation of Iraq in 2003 . . . this was the only occupation since World War II in which a military power has established a distinct military government over occupied areas under the framework of the law of occupation.”⁴² But how did a temporary military occupation with a two-month budget become systematically entrenched over time?

Throughout the first years of Israel’s occupation, the justification for holding on to the occupied territories was their value in helping Israel overcome its sovereignty gaps. By putting vast mountain ranges, an entire arid peninsula, and the Suez Canal between Israel and the surrounding Arab armies, wide-ranging buffer zones were supposed to ensure the country’s territorial sovereignty by establishing defensible borders: “On all three fronts, considerable room for strategic maneuver had been created. The Arab armies were now much farther away, ‘Old’ Israel was beyond the range of hostile artillery fire, and even the air force had gained precious warning time—in

the south, at any rate.”⁴³ In addition, the territories could be deployed as a valuable bargaining chip in negotiations over the country’s full recognition by its neighbors. This principle was first established by UN Security Council Resolution 242, which established the principle of the “termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area” in exchange for “withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict.”⁴⁴ In addition, Israel’s strong showing against Soviet-trained armies transformed the country into a significant regional player and an attractive Cold War ally for the United States, yet without fully becoming a client state.⁴⁵

Even the first Jewish settlements in the occupied territories were supposed to contribute to the country’s territorial defense, especially by keeping the Jordan Valley under Israel’s control (according to the Allon Plan).⁴⁶ The Yom Kippur War of 1973, however, shattered the hope that additional strategic depth might solve Israel’s protracted sovereignty challenges: “The fronts were now much further away, allowing only a few units to be transferred from the Golan Heights to the Sinai while hostilities lasted. Even the air force discovered that it was unable to operate as a unified force and during the initial days found itself trying to stem the Arabs on two fronts simultaneously. . . . In this way much of the advantage of occupying additional space was wasted, the more so because the attempt to hold on to every last inch of territory took away available room for maneuver.”⁴⁷

In the soul-searching process after the Yom Kippur War, the national-religious settler movement Gush Emunim pioneered a strategy of deploying Israel’s capture of the occupied territories to redefine the Zionist project from within:⁴⁸ Labor Zionism had built the state apparatus that conquered the occupied territories, but Revisionist Zionism would devise the counterhegemonic coalition, the political instruments, and the overarching ideology to hold on to them for good. After the Revisionist rise to power in 1977 (known in Hebrew as the *mahapach* or reversal), the settlement project turned into the overarching ideology of a coalition dominated by the Likud, the “cohesion” party that brought together Revisionists (Herut), centrists (Free Centre), liberals (Liberal Party), and even a few Labor-Zionist maximalists.⁴⁹ On the sociopolitical level, this new state project represented a coalition of the periphery, encompassing most political movements and population segments (particularly Mizrahi Jews)⁵⁰ that had previously been excluded under Labor-Zionist dominance.

This wide-ranging coalition was highly conflict ridden from the beginning, and it became even more heterogeneous with the rise of ethnic parties that became affiliated with it over time, including the Mizrahi ultra-Orthodox spectrum (Shas)⁵¹ and the Russian Ashkenazi secularist right (Israel ba-Aliya and Israel Beitenu).⁵² To some extent, the heterogeneity of this coalition explains the salience of Greater Israel: while some of the most dramatic political changes enacted by Likud-led governments might have been at the socioeconomic level, the question of holding on to the occupied territories (whether for religious, nationalist, or security-guided reasons) was the only bridging frame holding together this highly disparate sociopolitical coalition.⁵³ By capturing the hilltops of the occupied territories (or “Judaea and Samaria”), the Land of Israel coalition inscribed its state project into the landscape of the Land of Israel/Palestine with a much more long-term strategy than merely winning elections. In this way, the settlement project was highly effective as a subversive return to the ideological sources of the Zionist project: by adopting and reframing the pioneering ethos of Labor Zionism⁵⁴ into a messianic-irredentist ideology, the settlement project made itself immune to criticism by fashioning itself as the legitimate heir to the Zionist project: “[Arguments] against settlement sounded like a loss of faith in the Zionist enterprise. If the original settlers had been so easily discouraged, would Israel ever have come into existence?”⁵⁵.

From a Palestinian perspective, the institutional lock-in of Israel’s occupation represents a paradigmatic case of predatory state consolidation. The Palestinian population of the occupied territories came under a capricious form of ethnocratic rule by a military administration⁵⁶ that carried out harsh measures of repression (house demolitions, mass arrests, administrative detention, and deportations) as well as less immediate forms of sanctions (closures of schools and businesses, confiscations, curfews, travel restrictions).⁵⁷ In addition to this coercive form of rule by “the carrot and the stick,”⁵⁸ Israel established Jewish settlements as ethnoterritorial exclaves on expropriated land,⁵⁹ a clear-cut violation of international humanitarian law.⁶⁰ At the same time, Israel successfully leveraged its control over the occupied territories into a regional foreign policy of strategic decontestation, a process that was tellingly initiated by the Likud-led government in the 1979 Camp David Accords with Egypt.⁶¹ Over time, Israel’s formidable military arsenal and its strategy of limited territorial compromise in exchange for full recognition resolved radical challenges against the state’s existence *by force*. In the words of Avi Shlaim, “[The] history of the State of Israel is

a vindication of Jabotinsky's strategy of the iron wall. The Arabs—first the Egyptians, then the Palestinians, and then the Jordanians—have recognized Israel's invincibility and been compelled to negotiate with Israel from a position of palpable weakness."⁶²

Syrianization, Moroccanization, and Judaization

PATRONIZATION: THE RISE OF THE SYRIAN GODFATHER

Syria's rise to predominance in Lebanon's domestic affairs (1976–1989) was shaped by the classic features of patronization as a limited, informal, and largely indirect form of paternalistic rule by an external power based on its patronage ties to local elites. Despite the Lebanese civil war, high levels of stateness had produced a relatively high veto potential for Lebanon's political and military elites to block the country's formal annexation by *any* of the two neighbors, whether Syria or Israel. Throughout the civil war, some Lebanese state institutions splintered (like the national army), yet others remained largely intact (like the presidency). While the militia system severely challenged the state's monopoly on violence and its administrative effectiveness,⁶³ the overall legitimacy of the Lebanese state remained intact. Even at the height of Lebanese infighting under the influence of several foreign armies on Lebanese territory, only the most radical elements within the Maronite camp considered the establishment of a secessionist Christian state.⁶⁴

Syria's patronization (which shifted into satellization after the Ta'if Agreement in 1989) can be traced back to the country's initial lack of relevant power resources.⁶⁵ Syria was simply too weak to rewrite the basic political rules of war-torn Lebanon, resulting in a type of state expansion that combined a limited scope (discretion in rule enforcement) and a limited grasp of external rule (directness of rule enforcement). In a process of institutional layering, the Ba'ath regime imposed a "logic of force"⁶⁶ on the Lebanese arena by pushing out alternative patrons, promoting factionalism, and assassinating politicians and militia leaders alike. At the end of this process, by 1989 Assad was the undisputed patron (or in fact the "godfather") of Lebanese politics, who would govern the country by receiving delegations in the presidential palace in Damascus without ever setting foot in Lebanon:⁶⁷ at the moment of Hafiz al-Assad's passing, he was on the phone giving instructions to the Lebanese president and Syrian

protégé Emile Lahoud, a telling symbol of Lebanon's "transformation into a protectorate responsive to the dictates of Damascus."⁶⁸

The establishment of Syrian rule over Lebanon can be described in greater detail by distinguishing between physical power (the coercive apparatus), institutional power (rule setting), social power (collective identities), and symbolic power (historical narratives; see chapter 1). In terms of *physical power*, Syria systematically deployed military force (typically in the form of long-range artillery bombardments and targeted political assassinations) to establish its status as Lebanon's patron. In a first step, recalcitrant militias and political movements were forced into submission through assassination or blackmailing of their leaders. The raw effectiveness of this approach was best illustrated by the 1977 assassination of Kamal Jumblatt, the charismatic Druze leader of the left-wing National Lebanese Movement, which turned his son Walid Jumblatt into a loyal defender of the Syrian cause.⁶⁹ In a second step, alternative patrons were systematically driven out of the country or pushed to the margins by deployments of proxy militias. The Israeli forces withdrew to a "security zone" after a series of guerilla attacks; a Western peacekeeping force, the Multinational Force (MNF), left the country when a series of suicide bombings targeted the American embassy in Beirut and the barracks of US Marines and French paratroopers, thereby tipping the balance towards Syria.⁷⁰ In a third step, Syria systematically weakened the individual Lebanese communities by encouraging factionalism, encouraging, for instance, breakaway factions of the Lebanese Army (the "Arab Lebanese Army"), Amal ("Islamic Amal"), and the PLO (the Abu Musa faction).⁷¹ In a fourth step, Syria made sure that a final round of Maronite infighting (between the Geagea-led Lebanese Forces and Aoun loyalists in the Lebanese army⁷²), finished off the last potential clients of anti-Syrian powers. By transforming the fragile balance of power between Lebanon's confessional groups into a "balance of weakness,"⁷³ Syria had successfully become the indispensable patron of Lebanon's postwar order.

In addition to the crucial element of blackmail and retaliation, this process of patronization was more than mere racketeering. In terms of *institutional power*, informal patron-client networks were embedded into a formal framework that emphasized the legality of Syria's intervention. In a remarkable insistence on the façade of due process, the Syrian army units inside Lebanon were formally legalized as a regional peacekeeping force (the Arab Deterrent Force, or ADF) at the 1976 Arab League Summit in Riyadh and complemented with minor contingents from other Arab

countries. On the ground, the formal command of the Lebanese president over the ADF was limited at best,⁷⁴ and in the midst of Israel's invasion in 1982, the ADF's mandate formally expired. When the non-Syrian ADF contingents were withdrawn from the country, the Lebanese government dissolved the command of the ADF and formally requested the withdrawal of the remaining Syrian troops in 1983—but to no avail.⁷⁵

While Syria's military presence increasingly resembled a *de facto* occupation, the insistence on the legality of Assad's intervention formed a core element of the country's *social power* over its Lebanese client: Syria's unification nationalism redefined the relationship between the Assad regime and the Lebanese population from a belligerent occupant and an occupied population to "one nation in two states." More specifically, the patriarchal logic of Syria's "metaphorical family"⁷⁶ defined the relationship as a form of patronage between a benevolent patriarch and his prodigal son, entailing a clear expectation of allegiance toward Assad as the "*savior of Lebanon*"⁷⁷ who had only intervened because of the special historical circumstances of the civil war. If Lebanese clients failed to produce formulaic tributes to their Syrian patron, these displays of allegiance were sometimes simply fabricated: in one case, Syrian governmental newspapers quoted pro-Syrian Lebanese President René Moawad as saying that "'Lebanon and Syria are one people in two states, part of one Arab nation dismembered by the colonial powers.' The office of the president stated that he had given no interviews, nor had he made any statements."⁷⁸

This redefinition of Syrian-Lebanese relations was embedded into a broader framework of *symbolic power*, which interpreted the process of patronization according to a highly specific historical narrative. By insisting on Lebanon's *Arabness*, the Ba'ath regime sought to undermine more eclectic forms of Lebanese self-understanding, ranging from Maronite nationalist ethno-separatism to the more inclusive frameworks of Phoenicianism⁷⁹ and Mediterraneanism.⁸⁰

According to Lebanon's National Pact of 1943, an unwritten power-sharing deal between the country's Christian and Muslim leaders, the conflict over Lebanon's cultural location could be solved by the compromise formula of "a homeland with an Arab face seeking the beneficial good from the culture of the West."⁸¹ Under Syrian rule, these displays of Lebanese exceptionalism were systematically replaced by prominent references to Arabism as the overarching justification for Syria's intervention. According to this logic, even more puzzling Syrian tactics (like the initial Syrian-Maronite alliance against the Palestinians) could be justified from a larger perspective

of nationalist salvation history. In 1976, Hafiz al-Assad argued that “[we] in Syria will always remain the heart of Arabism. . . . Because we are the heart of Arabism, we cannot understand how a Palestinian Arab citizen and a Palestinian fedayeen can stand up in Lebanon to tell the Syrian soldier, Get out of Lebanon.”⁸²

From this perspective, Lebanon’s patronization seemed only natural. The 1985 Militia Agreement contained a paragraph stating that “Lebanon’s Arabism found its true expression in its distinctive relationship with Syria. History and geography provided ‘crucial causes’ for these relations. These relations had to be ‘translated in each of the two countries into legal frameworks’ so as to place them above the ‘whims of any political faction,’ above ‘caprice and interests’ and above ‘regional influences.’”⁸³ Lebanon’s cultural ambivalence seemed to challenge the rise of the Syrian godfather, not least by providing historical alternatives to the Lebanese status as a Syrian client. Whenever Syria’s role in Lebanon was questioned, Arabism provided convenient answers: “Assad . . . [remarked] to a group of Lebanese parliamentarians in February 1978 that while the Lebanese army amounted to no more than gangs, Syrian troops in Lebanon constituted the legal army of Lebanon. He reiterated this point in October 1983, telling a Swiss journalist that “there is only one foreign army in Lebanon, namely Israel’s. The Syrians and Lebanese are one people, they are Arabs. We have the same language and the same history.”⁸⁴

INCORPORATION: MOROCCO’S SAHARAN PROVINCES

Morocco’s capture of Western Sahara followed the pattern of incorporation, the systematic conversion of a conquered territory and its population into a larger state framework. While Morocco’s expansion was made possible by a high level of power resources, Sahrawi stateness in the territory was weak and fragile. As a consequence, Morocco was able to engage in a policy of systematic Moroccanization, which extended to the politics, culture, economy, and demographics of Western Sahara, reflecting both a high scope (discretion in rule enforcement) and a high grasp of state control (directness of rule enforcement).

Morocco’s military invasion preempted the decolonization of Western Sahara, and in response, large numbers of postcolonial states recognized the Sahrawi protostate. In 1984 the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), was even granted full membership in the Organization of African Unity, followed by Morocco’s withdrawal from the organization until 2017.⁸⁵

Morocco's policy of incorporation systematically sought to delegitimize the Sahrawi claim to national self-determination. If the Sahrawi population under Moroccan occupation could be transformed into royal "subjects of the Sahara" that differed from their "brethren from the North" merely based on a few local customs,⁸⁶ Morocco's conquest would not be a violation of national self-determination since there was no Sahrawi nation to begin with. Morocco's transformation of Western Sahara into Morocco's Saharan provinces was therefore based on a triple denial—the denial of a Sahrawi territory (which was split into four provinces, blurring the borders between Western Sahara and Morocco proper),⁸⁷ the denial of a Sahrawi state apparatus (by mocking the SADR as an Algerian "puppet state"),⁸⁸ and of course the denial of a Sahrawi nation, described by Hassan II as a "so-called people" led by a "so-called nationalist movement."⁸⁹

This policy was made possible by Morocco's overwhelming advantage in terms of power resources. On *one* side of the equation, Hassan II enjoyed strong domestic support and stable Great Power backing by the United States, France, and Spain without Soviet counterpressure; on the *other* side, except for a limited number of Sahrawis serving in the colonial gendarmerie (the *Policía Territorial*) or the colonial auxiliary troops (the *Tropas Nómadas*), Spain failed to leave behind the nucleus of a protostate. Spain's last military governor of the territory was well aware of this oversight. On the very day before the conclusion of the Madrid Accords (which split Western Sahara into Moroccan and Mauritanian provinces), he argued that any Spanish withdrawal from the territory "should be put into effect after a referendum on self-determination and the creation of a Saharawi army capable of defending the territory's integrity."⁹⁰ Without basic attributes of stateness, Sahrawi nationalists were unable to present their case during the deliberations of the International Court of Justice in 1975.⁹¹ In addition, once Morocco's invasion had preempted the process of self-determination, the Sahrawi protostate would not have access to the same legal protections as a state under belligerent occupation. Until today, the UN decolonization regime treats Western Sahara as a non-self-governing territory, administered *de jure* by Spain and *de facto* by Morocco, instead of applying the international law of occupation.⁹²

On the ground, Morocco's incorporation policy comprised a strategy of comprehensive transformation (instead of a temporary military occupation). Pro-Spanish tribal elders were co-opted as Saharan loyalists to the Alaouite throne,⁹³ the education system suppressed the teaching of Spanish and Hassaniya, the Mauritanian-Sahrawi dialect of Arabic, and the

Saharan landscape would be Moroccanized by monumental infrastructure development projects.⁹⁴ Based on large-scale investments in public infrastructure (accompanied by a massive influx of Moroccan settlers and soldiers), Morocco converted the towns of Western Sahara from Spanish colonial settlements (surrounded by the ramshackle housing of recently sedentarized Sahrawi tribesmen) into urban centers of an emphatically Moroccan appearance. La'ayoune, claimed by the SADR as its future capital, was rebuilt around the "Place of Allegiance" in memory of a 1985 visit by Hassan II to receive the *bay'a* (oath of allegiance) by loyalist tribal leaders. While Western Sahara became more Moroccan, Morocco portrayed itself as becoming more Saharan: according to Hassan II, there could be no such thing as a Sahrawi nation since he himself had ancestors who descended from Saharan tribes.⁹⁵ Until today, La'ayoune hosts a somewhat rundown "Museum of Saharan Arts" celebrating the artistic contribution "of our Southern provinces . . . to the preservation of our identity."⁹⁶

Morocco's incorporation policy systematically deployed *physical power* to capture the territory and to pressure the remaining Sahrawi population into allegiance to the Alaouite throne. After a wave of ethnic cleansing against Sahrawi refugees on their way to the Algerian desert,⁹⁷ Moroccan forces concentrated on capturing the "useful Sahara."⁹⁸ This territory encompassed only one sixth of the Western Sahara, but it contained both the phosphate mines of Bou Craa and the important urban centers of Western Sahara. In the territory under Moroccan control, harsh measures of repression against Sahrawi nationalists (torture, "disappearances," and long-term incarcerations without due process)⁹⁹ were combined with economic incentives for Sahrawi loyalists and a steady influx of Moroccan settlers. Outside of the garrisoned urban centers, Morocco fought an intense fifteen-year counterinsurgency campaign against POLISARIO forces.¹⁰⁰ After embarrassing setbacks for the Moroccan military, the construction of a massive network of defensive desert walls proved highly effective in slowly expanding the territory under Moroccan control from about one sixth of the territory (1983) to two thirds (1987). In its final stage, this desert wall ("berm") reached a length of 2,400 km, protected by regular garrisons of Moroccan soldiers, thereby dividing the territory into a Moroccan-controlled part (two thirds of Western Sahara) and a POLISARIO-controlled zone (one third).¹⁰¹

On the level of *institutional power*, Morocco invested considerable efforts into establishing the legality of incorporation: Morocco called on the International Court of Justice to preempt a referendum on Sahrawi independence, concluded the Madrid Accords with Spain and Mauritania

(to legalize the territory's partition), staged an ersatz plebiscite by a rump gathering of the Spanish-established tribal council (the Djemaa) as a form of self-determination, and agreed to an acclamatory referendum in Western Sahara in the early 1980s (to confirm the territory's Moroccanization). In addition to Morocco's theological argument for its rule over Western Sahara, which consisted of a heavily Alawist reading of Islamic law,¹⁰² this insistence on a façade of due process indicated the country's desire to formalize its incorporation of Western Sahara, despite its status as an "illegal annexation internationally recognized as such."¹⁰³ While the promised referendum never took place, the three previous attempts to legalize Morocco's incorporation were also fruitless. The International Court of Justice rejected Morocco's claims to precolonial sovereignty over Western Sahara (despite Hassan II's assertions to the contrary),¹⁰⁴ the Madrid Accords could not transfer a sovereign title to the territory to Morocco and Mauritania, and the "Secretary-General of the United Nations, through his Special Representative, Olof Rydbeck, refused to put the UN imprimatur on the 'act of free choice' by a 'rump' Djemaa that was hastily organized by the Moroccans at the end of February [1976]. Thus, the international requirement that the Saharawi people exercise their right to self-determination remains unfulfilled to this day."¹⁰⁵

Morocco's incorporation policy aimed at subverting the Sahrawi claim to national self-determination by imposing a specific form of *social power*, not least by denying the existence of a Sahrawi nation. According to Hassan II, "Any inhabitant of the Sahara can be called Sahrawi. . . . There is the Moroccan Sahara, the Mauritanian, the Algerian, the Malian . . . so let's talk about a Sahrawi people in this case. From the Atlantic to the Red Sea, not just for 75,000 people."¹⁰⁶ Consequently, in the king's official discourse, the struggle over Western Sahara did not represent a clash between two nationalist movements but merely the latest plot in a long line of conspiracies hatched against Morocco ever since the establishment of the Idrisid dynasty in the eighth century.¹⁰⁷

Morocco's unification nationalism depicted Moroccan-Sahrawi relations as a benevolent and forgiving fatherland reunited by none other than God with its grateful subjects who enthusiastically reclaimed their long-lost Moroccaness. Since Moroccans and Sahrawis were depicted as "family," "brothers," and "one body," the Moroccan conquest of Western Sahara increasingly took on the form of a sacred mission. In 1978 Hassan II expressed this sacralization of the Saharan ethnospace in the form of a prayer: "O Lord, you know that we have not entered the Sahara as conquerors or as usurpers, but rather to renew the family ties with our

brethren, in order to raise your word and to restore your traditions. . . . O Lord, you know that when we walked this sacred ground, we did not enter it as conquerors or as usurpers, but rather in order to recover a sacred right and to accomplish a sacred duty.”¹⁰⁸

In contrast, Sahrawi nationalists were portrayed at best as “Morocco’s children who have gone astray and rebelled against their fatherland”¹⁰⁹ and at worst as foreign mercenaries and imposters who merely *pretended* to be Sahrawis while keeping the real Sahrawis (or rather the real Moroccans of the Sahara) in POLISARIO prison camps in the Algerian desert. When Hassan II met a POLISARIO delegation in 1989, he refused to speak of negotiations, insisting instead that he had granted an audience “to listen to the Polisario’s grievances, just as he would for any of his subjects.”¹¹⁰

This denial of a Sahrawi nation was embedded into a broader framework of *symbolic power*, which interpreted Morocco’s capture of Western Sahara within an Alawist theology of sacred hierarchy. According to Morocco’s royalist historiography, the Green March reflected the peaceful return of the Prophet into Mecca in 628, so that the incorporation (or reincorporation) of the Sahrawis could be interpreted according to Islamic salvation history.¹¹¹ This theology of allegiance was staged throughout public spectacles that celebrated the renewal of the *bay’a* (oath of allegiance) to the king. When Morocco captured the Mauritanian-controlled part of Western Sahara in 1979, 360 tribal notables were flown into the Moroccan capital to swear allegiance to the throne.¹¹² In 1981, Hassan II suggested the project of an acclamatory referendum on Morocco’s incorporation of Western Sahara. In his description, the plebiscite (a legal instrument of the decolonization regime) took on the unmistakable shape of an oath of allegiance: “When it comes to the referendum, the point is not to ask Moroccans whether they intend to stay Moroccans. . . . The question is the following: ‘Do you confirm the acts of allegiance (the *bay’a*) which link you to His Majesty the King, [Commander of the Faithful], and which entail your belonging to the Kingdom of Morocco?’”¹¹³

EXCLAVIZATION: JEWISH SETTLEMENTS AND THE DYNAMICS OF MINIATURIZATION

Israel’s rule over the occupied territories was shaped by the pattern of exclavization, a form of institutional displacement in which a relatively weak expansionist state (with a limited scope of state control) establishes institutional, legal, or ethnic exclaves (controlled directly with a high grasp

of state control) on specific parts of a captured territory with limited levels of stateness. While the exclaves of the settlements relied on the metropole for support, from a legal and institutional perspective they operated as formally distinct entities. The Jewish settlements were established by Israeli state authorities, protected by Israeli soldiers, and settled by Jewish-Israeli citizens, but they remained functionally, legally, and institutionally separate from Israeli territory.

Israel's exclavization policies in the occupied territories reflected the opportunity structure throughout the first decades of Israeli rule, consisting of low levels of preexisting stateness combined with a relatively weak expansionist state. Given the path dependence of denied Palestinian state formation under Egyptian and Jordanian rule, the factionalized Palestinian national movement in the diaspora¹¹⁴ was initially in no position to mobilize significant political, military, or symbolic resources against Israel's expansion. Israel's power resources were far too limited to fully incorporate the territories, not least for obvious demographic reasons. Given a clear veto by the great powers against formal annexation,¹¹⁵ a full territorial incorporation was never a realistic option. While some elements of the previous Jordanian and Egyptian administrative structure remained frozen, particularly at the level of municipal governance and clerical oversight over the Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem,¹¹⁶ Israel established an apparatus of military occupation that slowly began to protect a growing network of Jewish-Israeli exclaves among the occupied Palestinian population.

Throughout the first decade of Israel's occupation,¹¹⁷ various types of expansionist statecraft were discussed, including patronization (the "enlightened occupation"),¹¹⁸ satellization (the Allon Plan's vision of a demilitarized Palestinian nonstate, or an "Arab civil administration"),¹¹⁹ exclavization (the settlement plan by Ra'anana Weitz, head of the Jewish Agency's settlement division),¹²⁰ and incorporation (Moshe Dayan's plan for economic integration).¹²¹ On the ground, Israeli rule combined all four elements, resulting in a paternalistic type of rule by the military government, repeated attempts to create a local administration based on the co-optation of urban notables, the limited establishment of settlements (first in the form of resettling sites of ethnic cleansing, namely Gush Etzion and Hebron) and the partial economic incorporation of the Palestinian population of the territories, primarily as cheap labor.¹²² While the rise of the national-religious movement Gush Emunim after the Yom Kippur War signaled the first shift toward large-scale exclavization, its messianic-irredentist ideology would have remained largely inconsequential without the Likud's rise to

power in 1977. Based on a systematic capture of Israel's state apparatus,¹²³ financial and symbolic resources were shifted toward the settlement project in the occupied territories.¹²⁴

Derek Penslar has described the Zionist project before 1967 as “historically and conceptually situated between colonial, anti-colonial, and post-colonial discourse and practice.”¹²⁵ This analytical matrix also deserves to be applied to the settlement project *after* 1967. The Judaization of the occupied territories—whether in the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, or the West Bank and Gaza—combined a decidedly *colonial* disregard for national self-determination, an *anticolonial* obsession with redeeming usurped ancestral homelands, and the *postcolonial* monumentalism inherited from high modernism. Palestinian nationalism quickly capitalized on the colonial dimension of Israel's settlement project, and indeed one would be hard-pressed to ignore the colonial logic behind coercive rule, demographic engineering, and the systematic suppression of national and basic human rights that have shaped Israel's rule over the occupied territories. However, despite frequent and obvious emulations of colonial statecraft as well as the decidedly Western architectural style of the increasingly Americanized suburban settlements,¹²⁶ Israel's state expansion was paradoxically shaped by a deeply *anticolonial* sense of restoring a lost sense of honor and recovering a lost sense of precolonial authenticity. A closer look at the idiosyncrasies of Gush Emunim's messianic irredentism reveals the relevance of Edward Said's scathing critique of anticolonial nativism for the study of Israel's settlement project: “[Often] this abandonment of the secular world has led to a sort of millenarianism if the movement has had a mass base, or it has degenerated into small-scale private craziness, or into an unthinking acceptance of stereotypes, myths, animosities, and traditions encouraged by imperialism.”¹²⁷

At the same time, Israel's settlement project was shaped by postcolonial high modernism: driven by authoritarian state power and a cult of feasibility, Israel's settlement project reproduced the architectural brutality of “new cities” like Brasília and Chandigarh but on a much smaller scale. Consequently, Scott's insightful analysis of “authoritarian high-modernist schemes”¹²⁸ might be fruitfully applied to Israeli expansionism: “In sum, the legibility of a society provides the capacity for large-scale social engineering, high-modernist ideology provides the desire, the authoritarian state provides the determination to act on that desire, and an incapacitated civil society provides the leveled social terrain on which to build.”¹²⁹ From this perspective, Israel's settlement project should be read through the prism

of “huge development fiascoes in poorer Third World nations and Eastern Europe,”¹³⁰ typically producing “the debris of huge agricultural schemes and new cities . . . that have failed their residents.”¹³¹

Indeed, crucial cases of Third World colonialism were breathing the unfiltered air of high modernism. The Indonesianization of East Timor, the Moroccanization of Western Sahara, and the Sinicization of Tibet were made possible by the same raw state power and the same cult of feasibility as other large-scale projects of the 1960s and 1970s, whether hydroelectric dams, desalination projects, or massive networks of frontier villages. Tellingly, Morocco’s monumentalist reconstruction of La’ayoune in occupied Western Sahara was centered on a “square of allegiance,” built in the unmistakable style of architectural brutalism.¹³²

In terms of the political, economic, and symbolic resources invested in the settlement project in the last fifty years, Israel’s massive state policy of demographic engineering indeed matches the same unbridled monumentalism as other large-scale projects launched by postcolonial states in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, its architectural policy of exclavization (the establishment of Jewish settlements as ethnoterritorial exclaves)¹³³ points to a fusion of monumentalism and miniaturization as the distinctive element of Israeli expansionism. Unable to carry out a full-fledged policy of territorial, political, and demographic incorporation of the occupied territories and its Palestinian-Arab majority, Israel was limited to establishing small-scale miniatures of Jewish-Israeli towns and neighborhoods, including outposts of national-religious messianism (Yitzhar), Labor-Zionist exclaves (the kibbutzim in the Jordan Valley), Haredi exclaves (Betar Ilit), Middle Eastern Jewish exclaves (large parts of Ma’aleh Adumim), Russian Jewish exclaves (large parts of Ariel), and of course American-Israeli outposts (Tekoa). Instead of incorporating Nablus as an Israeli town, Israel surrounded it with the Jewish-Israeli exclave settlements of Elon Moreh, Itamar, and Yitzhar.

To an extent, this policy of exclavization since 1967 has followed the historical precedent of previous Zionist settlement efforts, not least the wall and tower settlement drive throughout the British mandate.¹³⁴ Other historical role models range from the covenantal “miniature commonwealths”¹³⁵ of Jewish-Diasporic history to the Cossack military outpost.¹³⁶ However, from a comparative perspective, Israel’s strategy of miniaturization primarily expresses the limitations of Israeli statecraft. According to Scott, miniaturization could also be interpreted as a tacit sign of defeat:

The pretense of authoritarian high-modernist schemes to discipline virtually everything within their ambit is bound to encounter intractable resistance. . . . Those who have their hearts set on realizing such plans cannot fail to be frustrated by stubborn social realities and material facts. One response to this frustration is a retreat to the realm of appearances and miniatures—to model cities and Potemkin villages, as it were. . . . The effect of this retreat is to create a small, relatively self-contained, utopian space where high-modernist aspirations might more nearly be realized. The limiting case, where control is maximized but impact on the external world is minimized, is in the museum or the theme park.¹³⁷

Outside of the neo-Zionist Potemkin villages of the settlements, Israel's rule over the occupied territories consisted primarily in the projection of *physical power*: the military administration in charge of the occupied territories carried out a wide range of harsh counterinsurgency measures (house demolitions, mass arrests, administrative detention, and deportations) as well as less immediate forms of sanctions (closures of schools and businesses, confiscations, curfews, travel restrictions).¹³⁸ This policy of coercive rule by “the carrot and the stick”¹³⁹ formed the backbone of the settlement project. The immediate use of military force was crucial for enforcing the expropriation of land and deterring political violence against the newly established ethnic exclaves. At the same time, the economic integration of the occupied territories based on labor migration, a one-sided customs union (which protected Israel's agriculture), an imposed customs union, and the capture of resources (particularly water) aimed at preventing the establishment of a viable Palestinian economy that could serve as the basis of an independent polity.¹⁴⁰ Initially, this form of coercive rule was designed as an “invisible administration”¹⁴¹—however, with the mass uprising of the first intifada (1987–1991), the level of repression escalated dramatically, both in the form of spectacular violence (systematic violent attacks by soldiers on protestors and widespread torture) as well as curious technological innovations including gravel throwers (deployed against demonstrators) and nonconducting telescopic flag-removal poles to remove Palestinian flags from electricity wires.¹⁴²

Long before this escalation of Israel's rule within the occupied territories, military force was already deployed outside of the occupied

territories, notably against Palestinian militias and terrorist organizations within the Middle East (especially in Jordan and Lebanon) and rapidly on a global scale.¹⁴³ Israel's grasp over the occupied territories was not primarily enforced in the streets of Hebron but by crushing the military infrastructure of Palestinian nationalism abroad, most prominently by invading Lebanon in 1982: "[Peace] to the Galilee' was not the real objective of the war. The war was aimed to destroy the nationalist sentiments in the West Bank and Gaza, inspired primarily by the PLO."¹⁴⁴

On the ground inside the occupied territories, Israel's *institutional power* imposed a "complex legal system . . . composed of Ottoman, British Mandatory (particularly the emergency regulations of 1945), Jordanian, and Egyptian law (depending on the region), and Israeli military orders."¹⁴⁵ In a highly selective reading of both international humanitarian law and preexisting layers of land law, this legal system primarily served the purpose of enabling the settlement project. Throughout the first decade of Israel's occupation, land for Jewish settlements was requisitioned for alleged military purposes; after 1977, Palestinian-owned land was increasingly expropriated as "state land," based on an idiosyncratic reading of Ottoman land law.¹⁴⁶ In some cases, Israel's judiciary intervened against the state policy of deploying the international law of occupation against its original intent¹⁴⁷ but rarely without a significant effect on settlement expansion. While the law of occupation aims at keeping military administrations temporary, Israel's rule increasingly took on decidedly *permanent* features, and while the law of occupation seeks to outlaw demographic engineering, Israel's settlement project systematically produced a network of civilian Jewish exclaves with no discernable military function.

Behind the relatively flimsy façade of due process, the primary attempt to formalize Israel's control over the occupied territories consisted in seeking the tacit approval of the great powers and key Arab states. In this context, the Camp David Agreement of 1979 (which foresaw limited autonomy for the Palestinians in exchange for a return of the Sinai Peninsula) came relatively close to making "Greater Israel" a permanent reality by excluding Egypt from any potential anti-Israel coalition.¹⁴⁸ However, with the Reagan Plan of 1982, which favored a return of the West Bank to Jordanian rule,¹⁴⁹ Israel's efforts to gain formal Great Power backing for its expansionism effectively collapsed.

In terms of *social power*, the establishment of ethnic exclaves (Judaization) represented the polar opposite of an incorporation of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories (Israelization).¹⁵⁰ For

demographic reasons, their coercive inclusion inevitably would have resulted in a demographic overthrow of the Jewish nation-state, resulting instead in a return to the conflict-ridden Arab-Jewish composite state of colonial times (Palestinization). In sharp contrast to state policies of incorporation, Israel's rule was not based on the imposition of social identities but rather on the denial of permanent territorial expansion. Under the façade of a *temporary* form of military rule, Israel was able to control the Palestinian population through its military apparatus without extending its legislation to the Palestinian population outside of the ethnic exclaves of the settlements, thereby effectively creating a permanent state of emergency.

While Israel's military rule was frequently justified as a temporary security measure, the settlement project expressed a specific pattern of *symbolic power*, a historical narrative that followed a covenantal understanding of exclusive Jewish ownership of the land (in the words of Chaim Gans, "proprietary" Zionism).¹⁵¹ The covenantal logic of the settlement project was best captured in the Hebrew term *hitnachlut* deployed by the national-religious settler movement for settling Jewish exclaves in the occupied territories: "Hitnachalut was the term used in the Bible to describe Joshua's conquest of the Land following the return from Egyptian exile. . . . [The] settlers themselves view this . . . term as denoting the tradition of continuity between the biblical narrative of a Promised Land and its translation into new tangible realities expressed through contemporary notions of Zionism, statehood, and sovereignty."¹⁵² The resettlement of Hebron in particular was not envisioned as a form of imperial conquest, but as the recovery of a covenantal ethnoscape: under the cover of a *temporary* military occupation, the return to the burial site of Abraham anchored the Jewish exclaves in the occupied territories in the Abrahamic covenant.¹⁵³

A New Type of State? Comparing First-Wave and Second-Wave State Expansions

As the three case studies show, territorial expansion was practiced as a policy of strategic decontestation, as the *physical* lock-in of a particular state project. Expansionism not only served as a tool of state suppression (for instance, of a Sahrawi state or a Palestinian state) but as a predatory form of state consolidation. While expanding states successfully leveraged captured territories to overcome entrenched crises of legitimacy and sovereignty, populations under occupation paid a heavy price in terms of population

displacement, the denial of national self-determination, and harsh measures of repression. Interestingly, in all three cases two distinct waves of territorial expansion could be distinguished, a first-wave state expansion at the occasion of state establishment and a second-wave expansion at the occasion of state *re*establishment. As the comparison shows, states followed very *similar* policies throughout first-wave and second-wave expansions; however, shifting opportunity structures, especially the normative shift toward territorial inviolability, produced very different institutional outcomes.

FROM THE DRUZE MOUNTAIN TO MOUNT LEBANON

The institutional lock-in of Syria's rule over into Lebanon echoed an unmistakable historical precedent: a first wave of territorial expansion from the Sunni Arab heartland to the ethnosectarian periphery was at the center of the first-generation establishment of postcolonial Syria. The Treaty of Independence of 1936 (never fully ratified) initiated a process of incorporating the formerly independent Druze and Alawite states into the Syrian Republic. The newly annexed regions maintained a certain degree of administrative autonomy under French protection, but leading political functions were systematically staffed with Sunni Arab nationalists from Damascus.¹⁵⁴ At the time, Lebanon was excluded from this incorporation policy by the French colonial authorities who signed a treaty with the country "guaranteeing its territorial integrity and its existence as an independent state."¹⁵⁵ Forty years later, the patronization of Lebanon under Hafiz al-Assad seemed to reproduce the effects of Syria's first-wave expansion—once again, the capture of a peripheral minority state was deployed to consolidate a new type of state in the Syrian heartland.

A closer look at the differences between the two waves of territorial expansion reveals the normative and institutional shifts that had taken place between 1936 and 1976. In contrast to the smooth annexation of the Druze and Alawite states in 1936, a formal Syrian annexation of Lebanon in 1976 would have violated "the basic premise of the law of occupation, namely that the use of force does not confer sovereignty over a territory."¹⁵⁶ Instead, Syrian rule over Lebanon followed the widespread practice of simply denying the applicability of the international law of occupation. While the Hague Regulations would have required Syria to establish a temporary system of direct military administration, Syria chose a distinct pattern of patronization instead.

In addition, Lebanese stateness clearly had an impact on Syria's state expansion: Syria's first-wave territorial expansion incorporated fragile and weakly institutionalized statelets without a strong sense of identity, a national economy, or a fully fledged set of governmental institutions (much less an army). At the time of Syria's second-wave territorial expansion, however, formal political incorporation was simply no longer a viable option. After decades of state building, Lebanese state structures might have splintered throughout the civil war, but the very idea of Lebanese nationhood and the legitimacy of independent state institutions remained remarkably consistent.¹⁵⁷

FROM THE RIF TO THE SAHARA

A crucial precedent to Morocco's capture of Western Sahara in 1975 can be found in the country's expansion from 1955 to 1958.¹⁵⁸ Alawism could only be imposed against urban Arab nationalists and rural Berber tribal uprisings by the systematic military conquest of the former Spanish protectorate both in the North (the Rif and the Mediterranean coast) and the South (the Tarfaya Strip between Morocco and Western Sahara).

In contrast to Morocco's first-wave expansion in 1956–58, by 1975 a number of crucial parameters had changed. On a *normative* level, by 1975 the decolonization regime (nonexistent at the time of Morocco's first-wave expansion) strongly favored national self-determination based on preexisting colonial borders. Indeed, the logic of *uti possidetis*¹⁵⁹ ("as you possess") prescribing the inviolability of colonial borders—a principle formally enshrined in the Organization of African Unity's Cairo Declaration of 1964¹⁶⁰—might have been similarly applicable to the Spanish protectorate in the Rif. Had the Rif been decolonized in the 1970s, one can easily imagine that Berber nationalists would have based their claim to national self-determination on the decolonization regime, a crucial element of pan-African support for Sahrawi self-determination.

On a *geopolitical* level, in sharp contrast to 1956–58, by 1975 Algeria had acquired national independence from French colonial rule. As Morocco's primary rival for regional hegemony in the Maghreb,¹⁶¹ Algeria had a considerable stake in providing shelter, political assistance, and military support to Sahrawi nationalists for both ideological and strategic reasons. While Sahrawi stateness was too weak to oppose Morocco's initial incorporation campaign, POLISARIO provided an institutional nucleus of

state formation that was flexible enough to transform from an anticolonial guerrilla movement into the single party of a diaspora-nationalist protostate in exile.

In the end, the key difference might have been demographic. The residues of Rifian ethnoseparatism collapsed irrevocably with the Moroccan capture and incorporation of both the territory and the population of the Rif during the state's first-wave expansion (1956–58). By contrast, following the large-scale Sahrawi flight and expulsion from Western Sahara, POLISARIO took on the responsibility of organizing, protecting, and settling the mass exodus of refugees in the Algerian desert around the city of Tindouf. By organizing Sahrawi refugees in a protostate in exile, POLISARIO made sure that Morocco's policy of coercive incorporation could be extended to the territory of Western Sahara but not to the majority of its population.¹⁶²

FROM THE GALILEE TO THE JUDEAN MOUNTAINS

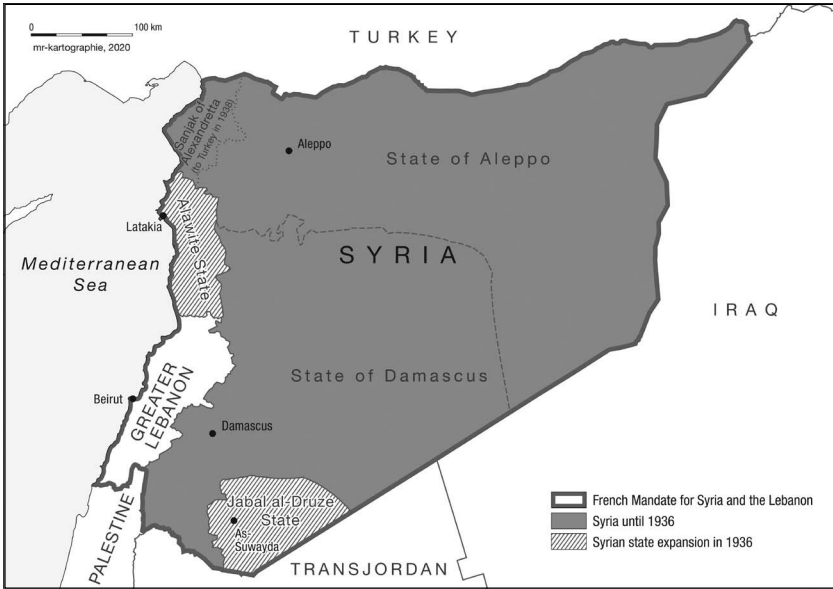
Similar to Syria and Morocco, the lock-in of Israel's rule over the occupied territories became permanent as a second-generation reestablishment of the postcolonial state. Israel's state-founding elites under Labor-Zionist dominance had successfully suppressed competing state projects, but they refrained from settling the fundamental conflicts at the core of the Zionist project, including the final delimitations of state territory, membership criteria of the state nation, and core features of the state apparatus such as the separation between religion and state. Throughout the process of Israel's second-generation *r*establishment after 1977, the Likud successfully built a peripheral coalition that coalesced around the idea of a different state territory but in fact carried a much broader counterhegemonic state project.

In this context, Israel's first-wave expansion in 1948–49 created an important precedent for the institutionalization of the state's second-wave expansion in 1967. In contrast to the Jordanian incorporation of the West Bank¹⁶³ and the Egyptian satellization of the Gaza Strip (in the form of Egyptian patronage over Amin al-Husseini's "All-Palestine Government"),¹⁶⁴ Israel's rule over territories captured in 1948–49 vacillated between exclavization and ambivalent incorporation—the military government would only be abolished in 1966, precisely one year before the Six-Day War. In sharp contrast to Israel's first-wave expansion in 1948–49, by 1967 a number

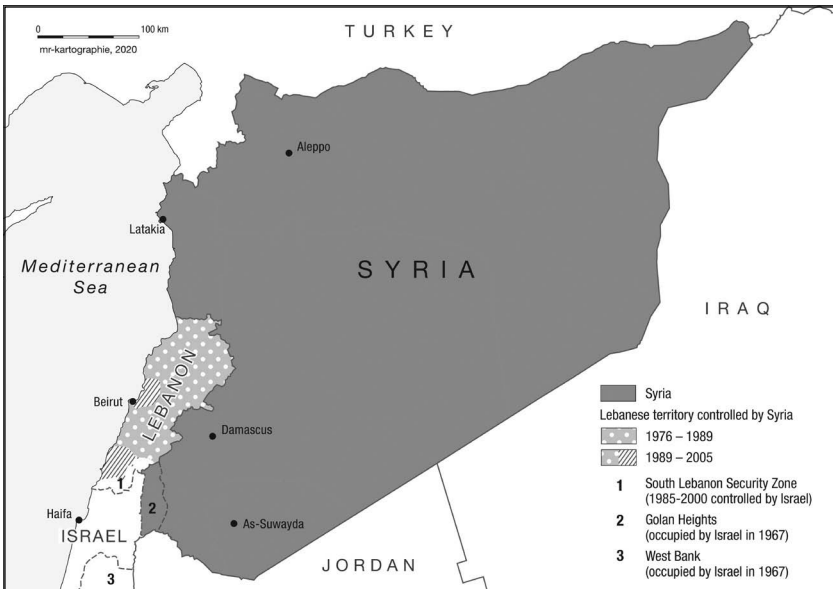
of crucial parameters had shifted in favor of Palestinian resistance against the incorporation of the occupied territories. After the defeat of the conventional Arab armies in 1967, asymmetric proxy warfare by Palestinian guerillas and terrorist organizations represented an attractive strategy of military containment against Israel.¹⁶⁵ In contrast to Egypt's initial patronization of the All-Palestine Government and similar policies of control over the PLO, by 1967 Palestinian nationalism had matured into a relatively independent political and military infrastructure, especially in the case of Fatah, the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, which had been established in 1964.¹⁶⁶ In addition, the formalization of the decolonization regime (which did not exist in 1948)¹⁶⁷ and the rise of political Third Worldism¹⁶⁸ made sure that the territorial expansion by a Western-aligned country would meet unanimous condemnation within the UN system.

Conclusion

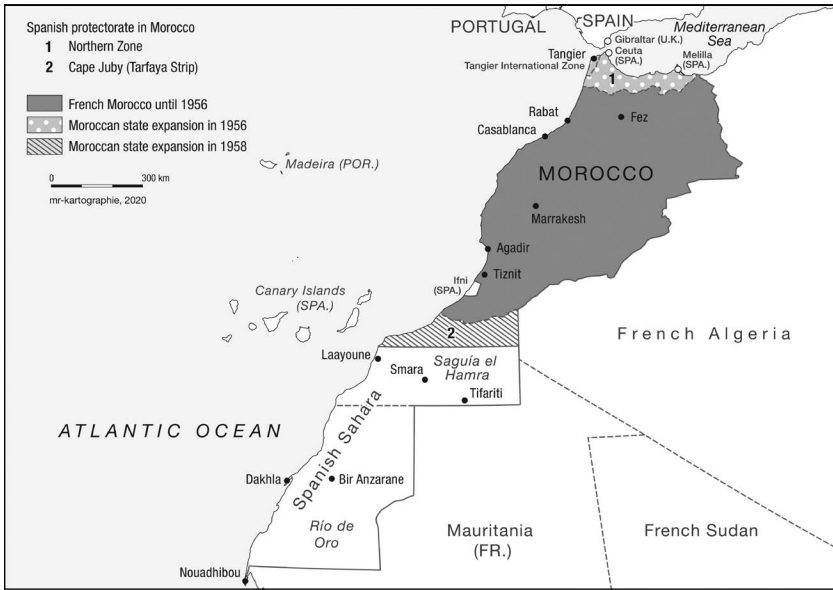
Once Syria, Morocco, and Israel had conquered neighboring territories, their control over the land beyond the border rapidly turned semipermanent. At the time of writing, Israel's rule over large parts of the occupied territories has stood for over fifty years, and Morocco's rule over Western Sahara has endured for over forty years—while Syria's control over its neighbor Lebanon continued for almost thirty years until the Syrian withdrawal in 2005. However, despite shared patterns of coercive rule, in all three cases very *different* forms of state control were established. Syria slowly transformed Lebanon into a satellite state, Morocco sought to transform Western Sahara into its Saharan provinces, and Israel established a network of Jewish settlements as ethnoterritorial exclaves. Despite clear parallels in the historical causation and subsequent institutional lock-in, the comparative case study points to very different forms of institutionalization, depending on the power resources of the expanding state and the level of stateness in the captured territory. While the Syrianization of Lebanon¹⁶⁹ established Hafiz al-Assad as Lebanon's patron, the Moroccanization of Western Sahara¹⁷⁰ aimed at the comprehensive incorporation of the territory and its population. In contrast, Israel's rule over the occupied territories did *not* aim at their incorporation—instead, the policy of “Judaization”¹⁷¹ established a dense network of ethnic exclaves that combined the elements of museums, theme parks, and model cities.



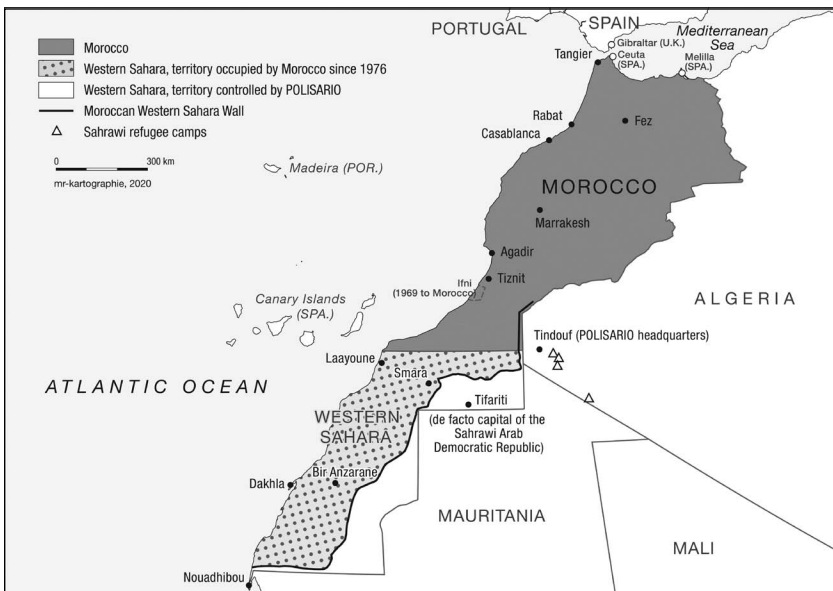
Map 4.1. First Syrian state expansion (1936)



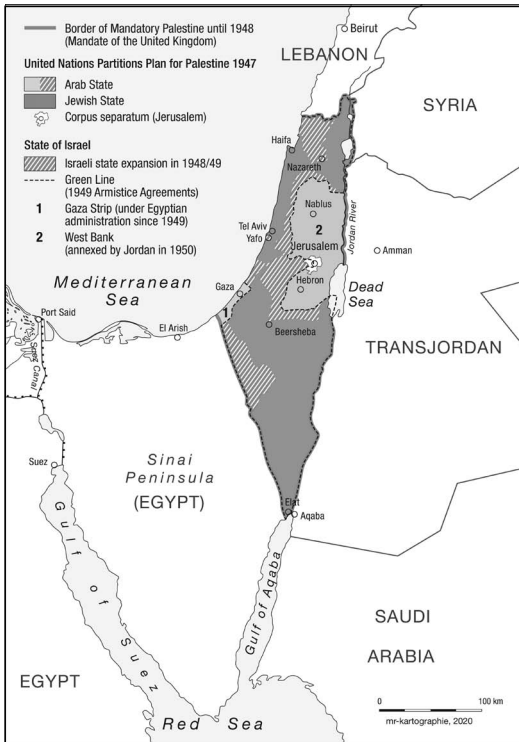
Map 4.2. Second Syrian state expansion (1976)



Map 4.3. First Moroccan state expansion (1956–1958)



Map 4.4. Second Moroccan state expansion (1975)



Map 4.5. First Israeli state expansion (1948–1949)



Map 4.6. Second Israeli state expansion (1967)

Chapter 5

Resistance and Institutional Change

The state expansions of Syria, Morocco, and Israel followed different institutional pathways, but all three countries encountered high levels of resistance, ranging from armed insurgencies to transnational campaigns of delegitimization. This chapter offers a closer look at the first decades of Lebanese, Sahrawi, and Palestinian countermobilization, from the beginning of the various state expansions to the end of the Cold War. As the comparative case study shows, different varieties of resistance ranged from counterviolence to the establishment of counterinstitutions, often complemented by counteridentities and counternarratives (see chapter 1). More precisely, the social practices and ideological frameworks of resistance responded strategically to the specific type of state expansion. In response to Syrian patronization, Lebanese actors sought alternative patrons. In response to Morocco's incorporation efforts, POLISARIO developed the institutional and ideological framework for a fundamentally unincorporable Sahrawi nation. By contrast, in response to the exclusive territorial claims that sustained Israel's exclavization efforts, the PLO turned toward a radical counteridentity of exclusive indigeneity, a counter-Zionism (or "Palestinian Zionism"¹) that pledged to dismantle the entire State of Israel. Following a discussion on how these different varieties of resistance responded to specific forms of expansionist rule, this chapter provides an overview of the institutional changes that had occurred by the end of the Cold War.

Varieties of Resistance

LEBANESE RESISTANCE AND MARONITE COUNTERIDENTITIES

Few self-descriptions were as popular in the Lebanese civil war as the label of "resistance." The nationalist Maronite camp fought in the name

of a “Lebanese resistance”² or a “Christian resistance,”³ the PLO struggled in the name of “Palestinian resistance,”⁴ the Lebanese and the Palestinian left coalesced into a “Lebanese National Resistance Front,” and both the Shi’a militia Amal (“Lebanese Resistance Detachments”) and its competitor Hezbollah fought in the name of an “Islamic resistance.”⁵ While most of the fighting took place between (and frequently *within*) different sectarian communities, Syria’s patronization policies were met with considerable levels of *counterviolence* to evade the grasp of immediate Syrian control, complemented by counterinstitutions, counteridentities, and counternarratives (see table 5.1).

Due to the extensive militia economy, the various “autonomous sectarian ‘statelets’”⁶ and the Palestinian camps could be defended against Syrian forces (or Syrian proxies) with relative success, at least initially. The first to fall under Syrian control was the Palestinian community in 1983, after Arafat’s second expulsion from the country. They were followed by the Druze in 1987, when Syria prevented a Druze-leftist victory over Amal in Beirut and expanded its control over the port of Khalde, the economic lifeline of the “Druze canton.” The last semiautonomous Shi’a areas in southern Beirut and southern Lebanon (outside of Israel’s “security zone”) came under Syrian control after Amal routed its rival Hezbollah in 1987, leading to severe Syrian-Iranian tensions.⁷ The final territory to lose its status of semiautonomy was the Maronite heartland, when the Christian civil war in 1990 put an end to General Aoun’s “war of liberation” against Syria.

Most of these confrontations took place in the form of clashes between different militias, frequently within the same camp. Between the massive Syrian shelling of Christian residential neighborhoods of Beirut in 1978 and the final Syrian advance toward the presidential palace in 1990, Syrian forces preferred to instigate proxy wars before moving into contested territory, sometimes accompanied by guerilla attacks. The most dramatic form of counterforce against Syria’s patronization policy, General Aoun’s “war of liberation,” was remarkably short lived.

As both commander of the Lebanese army and prime minister, Aoun controlled the remnants of autonomous Lebanese statehood—a cabinet free of Syrian influence, a territory without a foreign military presence (the Maronite enclave), and the Lebanese army as the country’s last nonsectarian fighting force. In his somewhat quixotic attempt to restore Lebanese statehood, Aoun wrested control over Beirut’s harbor from Syria’s clients and then launched a full-scale “war of liberation” to undermine the legiti-

macy of Syria's occupation by "forcing Syria to expose itself as a direct and aggressive participant in Lebanese hostilities . . . to discredit its propaganda about playing a peacekeeping role."⁸ However, only a few months later, the Ta'if Agreement would establish the informal recognition of Syrian predominance (both by the Arab League and the great powers) as well as the formal "legalization of the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon."⁹

Given Syria's military predominance, an alternative form of counter-mobilization consisted in the establishment of *counterinstitutions*, frequently by building ties to alternative patrons such as Israel or Iraq. The most prominent example of this strategy was the election of Bashir Gemayel to the Lebanese presidency in 1982, resulting in his assassination by Syrian proxies. Other forms of resistance against Syria's patronization tackled its legal framework. By formally dissolving the command of the "Arab Deterrent Force" and requesting the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon in 1983, the Lebanese government officially turned Syrian troops into "an occupying force under no Lebanese political or military command."¹⁰ An additional form of mobilization against Syria's rise consisted in the establishment of cross-sectarian ties, a form of horizontal consultation that circumvented the Syrian patron. These cross-sectarian forms of coalition building were met with swift punishment by Hafiz al-Assad: when Sunni Grand Mufti Hassan Khaled attempted to negotiate a reconciliation between the two competing government cabinets of Michel Aoun and Selim Hoss, he was quickly assassinated as a public warning to all.¹¹

In the struggle against Syrian patronization, *counteridentities* played an important role within the Maronite camp, especially in confronting Syria's unification nationalism. In contrast to Syria's logic of "one nation in two states," Maronite nationalism took a decidedly ethnic turn within the embattled Christian enclave, which came to understand itself not as yet another confessional group but as a nation. Despite public calls for cultural pluralism and federalism as tools of conflict resolution, earlier notions of an inclusive and cosmopolitan Phoenicianism increasingly turned into an ethnically exclusive Maronite separatism.¹² This Maronite separatism built on a number of conspiratorial hidden transcripts, which understood Syria's military intervention not only as an occupation but also as part of a much larger conspiracy¹³ to formally incorporate Lebanon once and for all.¹⁴

These counteridentities were embedded into larger frameworks of *counternarratives*, frequently in opposition to Arabism as the overarching

justification of Syrian patronization. In contrast to Ba'athist Arabism and its civic religion of the Arab nation, Maronite nationalists explicitly espoused the missionary election myth of “defending the sacred realm”¹⁵ of Mount Lebanon as part of a cosmological battle against “the Islamic threat to the Christian minorities in Lebanon and the Middle East.”¹⁶ Maronite public intellectuals, scholars, and clergymen at the Université Saint Esprit de Kaslik established the foundations of a radicalized Christian nationalism that reinterpreted Maronite history as “a constant struggle against foreign occupiers,”¹⁷ a single epic “resistance of Mt. Lebanon’s inhabitants against Arab and Turkish occupation.”¹⁸ In some cases, this counternarrative even sought to build common ground between Lebanon’s Maronites and Syria’s Alawites by referring to the shared interests of all Middle Eastern minorities. As Bashir Gemayel put it in 1980: “Why would the Palestinians, who have other problems, place so much effort, so much energy, so much thriving to fight us?! . . . Because a Christian, like a Jew, a Druze, and [an] Alawite, is not a full citizen, and cannot exercise political rights in the countries that have been conquered by Islam. This is the Middle Eastern question in its cruel simplicity.”¹⁹

Table 5.1. Syrian Rule and Lebanese Resistance (1976–1989)

Type of power	Social practices of rule	Social practices of resistance
Physical power	Syria’s coercive apparatus carries out assassinations, disappearances, blackmail	Counterviolence against Syria’s coercive apparatus
Institutional power	Legalization of Syrian presence as peacekeeping (“Arab Deterrent Force”)	Counterinstitutions in the form of cross-sectarian coalition building and the search for alternative patrons
Social power	Unification nationalism (“one nation in two states”)	Counteridentities, e.g., ethnic turn in Maronite nationalism
Symbolic power	Pan-Arabism	Counternarratives of defending the sacred realm of Mount Lebanon

THE SAHRAWI ARAB DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AS
A COUNTERINSTITUTION

Sahrawi resistance against Morocco's incorporation policies (see table 5.2) relied heavily on the establishment of a Sahrawi countersociety in the large, increasingly semipermanent refugee camps in the Algerian desert. While the refugee camp economy depended considerably on foreign aid and Algerian patronage,²⁰ their inhabitants were at a safe distance from Morocco's grasp over the resources and the remaining populations of Western Sahara. Based on this territorial refugium, POLISARIO launched a systematic counterforce campaign of guerilla attacks against the Moroccan-Mauritanian capture of Western Sahara. Based on generous Algerian military aid,²¹ Sahrawi guerilla operations slowly evolved into long-range attacks targeting military and strategic installations like the phosphate industry in Western Sahara, the mining industry in Mauritania, and even the Mauritanian capital: "During the second part of 1976 and the first part of 1977 Polisario attacks were remarkably effective, and on two occasions raids into Mauritania reached the outskirts of Nouakchott and enabled the Polisario forces to shell the presidential palace."²²

Based on a combination of traditional forms of nomadic warfare and modern military technology, POLISARIO guerilla operations reached a remarkable level of military effectiveness:²³ Sahrawi strikes against Mauritania were so powerful that the military and political collapse of the fragile Mauritanian state could only be prevented by a large-scale intervention of the French air force against POLISARIO and the stationing of Moroccan troops deep inside Mauritania. By 1979 POLISARIO guerilla warfare had successfully eroded Mauritanian efforts to incorporate the southern third of Western Sahara (renamed "Tiris al-Gharbia"). After a coup by military officers, who were frustrated by guerilla harassment and an increasing Moroccan presence, Mauritania formally withdrew any territorial claims to Western Sahara, signed a Sahrawi-Mauritanian peace accord (the Algiers Agreement), and pledged to transfer the previously annexed part of Western Sahara to POLISARIO.²⁴ Despite heavy setbacks (including the death in battle of POLISARIO's secretary-general and the first president of the SADR, El Ouali Mustapha Sayed,)²⁵ and the swift occupation of Tiris al-Gharbia by Moroccan troops, the Algiers Agreement established an important precedent for Sahrawi counterforce against the Moroccan incorporation effort. While POLISARIO was clearly unable to defeat Morocco in open battle, guerilla

warfare might slowly break the political will of either the Moroccan officer corps or the Moroccan population to shoulder the military and economic weight of Western Sahara's ongoing Moroccanization. However, by limiting itself to "hard targets" like Moroccan military and strategic installations without targeting the obvious "soft targets" of Morocco's tourism industry, POLISARIO ultimately failed to overcome Morocco's classic counterinsurgency strategy of border interdiction. Over time, Morocco was able to systematically expand its system of desert walls throughout the captured territory.

By contrast, POLISARIO was more successful in subverting the legal framework of Morocco's incorporation efforts. Shortly after the Moroccan-Mauritanian invasion, in November 1975, POLISARIO organized the dissolution of the Spanish-established tribal council, the Djemaa, even before it could be pressured into rubberstamping the Madrid Accords. In the Declaration of Guelta Zemmour, the majority of the Djemaa declared its dissolution, called for the formation of a provisional Sahrawi National Council, and threw its political support behind POLISARIO.²⁶ From then on, while Morocco attempted to *denationalize* Sahrawi institutions in order to incorporate them into the larger Moroccan body politic, Sahrawi nationalists engaged in a vigorous campaign of *nationalization* by proclaiming their status as a nation-state (not just a nationalist movement), establishing a national army (not just a guerrilla movement), building a national Red Crescent (not just a medical emergency service), and observing national holidays (not just special occasions tied to a nationalist movement).

The observance of national holidays encapsulates the logic of building Sahrawi counterinstitutions (and perhaps a Sahrawi counterstate) diametrically opposed to the Moroccan incorporation project. Within Morocco and Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara, irredentist nationalism became integrated into the liturgical year of national holidays—the "Saharan Consensus" was not only celebrated on the anniversary of the Green March (November 6) but also on the anniversary of Morocco's capture of Tiras el-Gharbia (Oued ed-Dahab Day, August 14).²⁷ By contrast, within the protostate of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, national holidays celebrate the chronology of Sahrawi state formation, including pre-POLISARIO nationalism (June 17, Day of Insurrection), the foundation of POLISARIO (May 10), the first guerrilla attack against Spanish forces (May 20), the establishment of supratribal national unity (October 12, Day of National Unity), the proclamation of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (27 February), and

the guerilla war against Morocco and Mauritania (June 9, Martyrs' Day).²⁸ Even the settlement pattern of Sahrawi refugees was designed after the territory of Western Sahara: by naming each administrative area after towns that had been left behind (La'ayoune, Awserd, Smara, Dakhla), the refugee camps sought to reproduce the geography of Western Sahara in the Algerian desert, "not as a totally foreign land, but as a miniature of Western Sahara, a temporary substitute for the homeland."²⁹

The Moroccan denial of a Sahrawi nation, a Sahrawi territory, and a Sahrawi state apparatus was thus confronted by Sahrawi counterinstitutions, culminating in the declaration of a protostate, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, even if its leadership was virtually identical to that of the POLISARIO.³⁰ In contrast to the Palestinian experience, the SADR had the crucial symbolic advantage of actually controlling parts of the claimed homeland: "Polisario did not enjoy the diplomatic support of the Arab states. But it found it easier than the PLO to liberate territory."³¹ Key events of Sahrawi state formation (proclamation of the SADR, party congresses of POLISARIO) thus took place on the territory of Western Sahara, or in the language of Sahrawi nationalism, the "liberated zone." Beyond its symbolic value, the Sahrawi Republic represented an important tool against the formal legalization of Morocco's incorporation policy: as a Sahrawi protostate, the SADR operated as the tangible fulfillment of the abstract Sahrawi right to self-determination, as proclaimed by annual declarations of the UN General Assembly.³² The formal recognition of the SADR, at one point extending to over eighty states,³³ meant recognizing its *de jure* sovereignty over the entire territory of Western Sahara, including those areas under *de facto* Moroccan control.

In Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara, state authorities carried out a systematic campaign of denationalization, which sought to incorporate the local population into the larger body politic of the Moroccan nation. By contrast, the Sahrawi protostate emphasized the qualitative distinction between "Sahrawiness" and "Moroccanness," thereby confronting the Moroccan incorporation effort with the notion of a fundamentally *unincorporable* Sahrawi nation. Throughout this process of nationalization, Sahrawi nationalism in Moroccan-held territory took a distinctly *ethnic* turn by distinguishing between Sahrawis as nomadic Arabs and Moroccan settlers as sedentary Berbers invading the territory primarily based on economic opportunism.³⁴ This ethnic turn also found its expression in an increasingly *pan-Sahrawi* nationalism: while POLISARIO's official "Western Saharan"

nationalism was strictly limited to the territory of Western Sahara for its former inhabitants, the pan-Sahrawi appeal of this state project finds its expression in the migration of ethnic Sahrawis from northern Mauritania and southern Morocco to the refugee camps.³⁵

Within the Tindouf camps, this Sahrawi counteridentity merged various folkloric elements of local nomadic pastoralism into a distinct national Sahrawi culture, based on “the *hassaniya* language, nomadic tradition, religious practice, social structure, the place of the women, the clothing—the *melhfa* for women and the *drâa* for men—and last but not least, the influence of the language and the culture of the former colonial rulers, France for Morocco and Spain for the Sahrawis.”³⁶ In the effort to shape a postsegmentary national consciousness, the SADR also engaged in efforts to combat tribalism—or, given the relatively obvious dominance of the Reguibat tribe within the POLISARIO leadership, to simply deny it.³⁷

As a counternarrative to the Moroccan incorporation effort, Sahrawi nationalism depicted Morocco’s rule over Western Sahara as a form of colonialism. This framing effort dates back to the earliest written documents of Sahrawi nationalism like the proclamation of the first SADR government in March 1976, which spoke of “our people, which today defies the colonialism of our nearby ‘brothers’ after . . . the colonialism of the far-away enemy.”³⁸

In 1987, Hassan II saw himself forced to publicly respond to this accusation as follows:

Peace and quiet . . . reign in La’ayoune, Smara, Boujdour, Dakhla and all around. . . . There are schools and hospitals for everyone. Furthermore, which is unprecedented in both ancient and contemporary history, . . . not a single armed soldier is patrolling the cities and villages of the Sahara. Those who pretend that Morocco is acting there as a colonizer have lived through the colonial period themselves. How can they delude themselves to this extent? How is it conceivable to compare their life under colonialism and the current life of the Sahrawis allegedly under Moroccan colonialism? Thank God, in the Sahara, the trader, the student, the craftsman and the farmer can work in peace.³⁹

As part of their revolt against Moroccan Alawism, Sahrawi nationalists formally established Islam as the state religion of the SADR.⁴⁰ While Alawism

proclaimed a cult of allegiance to the Alaouite throne, Sahrawi nationalism celebrated a cult of martyrs who had died in battle *against* Alawism.⁴¹ This celebration of Sahrawi martyrdom was embedded into a civic religion of revolutionary egalitarianism, which was presented to external patrons either as a form of revolutionary Third Worldism (Algeria), grassroots democracy via popular committees (Libya),⁴² anti-Zionist pan-Arabism (Syria), or a “kind of indigenous socialism,”⁴³ espousing progressive forms of gender equality (Western and especially Spanish support networks).⁴⁴ The emerging Sahrawi nationalist historiography even began to challenge Alawist claims of benevolent patronage ties between the Alaouite throne and Saharan tribes in precolonial times, depicting the (decidedly modern) Sahrawi protostate as merely the latest stage of an ongoing struggle between nomadic egalitarianism and feudal expansionism: according to Sahrawi nationalist historiography, Morocco’s sultans sought a “route leading to gold mines . . . and slaves” and therefore “attempted to capture our national territory since the 13th century,” only to be “rebuffed thanks to the resistance organized by our people.”⁴⁵

Table 5.2. Moroccan Rule and Sahrawi Resistance (1975–1991)

Type of power	Social practices of rule	Social practices of resistance
Physical power	Morocco’s coercive apparatus carries out ethnic cleansing, counterinsurgency, repression	Counterviolence against Morocco’s coercive apparatus, guerilla warfare in Western Sahara and parts of Morocco and Mauritania
Institutional power	Attempts to legalize Moroccan annexation (Madrid Accords)	Counterinstitutions in the form of a protostate (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, SADR)
Social power	Unification nationalism (“our subjects of the Sahara”)	Counteridentities form the core of an unincorporable Sahrawi nation; struggle against tribalism
Symbolic power	Sacred allegiance between Saharan tribes and Alaouite throne	Counternarratives of revolutionary egalitarianism; cult of martyrs

COUNTERFORCE AND COUNTERNARRATIVES IN THE
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Palestinian mobilization against Israel's state expansion (see table 5.3) crystallized in the notion of counterforce. After the defeat of the conventional Arab armies in 1967, the warrior ethos of the Palestinian struggle captured the attention of Arab world. The Palestinian insurgency, which combined elements of guerilla warfare with spectacular forms of international terrorism, quickly gained the support of Third Worldism, the New Left, and crucial players within the Soviet Union.⁴⁶ Western leftists joined Fatah camps to train for their own revolutionary endeavors; the Palestinian uprising energized the Palestinian diaspora, and the *ṣumūd* (steadfastness) shown by Fatah guerilla fighters against the Israeli military in the Battle of Karameh (1968) seemed to confirm the parallels between the Algerian civil war and the Palestinian uprising.

On the ground, the Palestinian insurgency quickly hit a dead end. In contrast to their historical role models in Algeria or Vietnam, the Palestinian forces struggled against a major disadvantage in terms of military geography: "The West Bank is small and has little vegetation; even a few people can be seen for miles, so the Palestinians could neither move in large numbers nor set up permanent or semipermanent bases without being detected and attacked by the Israeli Defense Forces."⁴⁷ Palestinian guerilla fighters not only failed to recapture parts of the occupied territories but also proved unable to do significant damage to Israel's military apparatus. Even the Battle of Karameh, portrayed as the first Palestinian victory against Israeli forces, ended in military defeat and the destruction of a Fatah military camp on Jordanian soil.⁴⁸

After the PLO's expulsion from Jordan in 1970, the territorial focus of the Palestinian insurgency shifted to Lebanon while its strategic focus shifted to spectacular incidents of international terrorism, ranging from aircraft hijackings to the lethal attack on Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich.⁴⁹ Palestinian guerilla fighters and terrorists took hostages in Israeli schools (the Ma'alot Massacre in 1974), hijacked Israeli buses (the Coastal Road Massacre in 1978), or entered Israel on gliders to attack military camps (the Night of the Gliders in 1987).⁵⁰ Palestinian militias were partly responsible for drawing Israel into the Lebanese civil war, and violent clashes between Palestinian guerillas and the IDF in Lebanon seemed to confirm that the struggle over the occupied territories would be fought in neighboring Arab countries. However, after the PLO's expulsion from

Lebanon, the Palestinian insurgency struggled to regain a territorial foothold close to Israel's borders—and the Reagan Plan of 1982 seemed to confirm that the occupied territories might rather return to Jordan instead of serving as the territorial core of a future Palestinian state.

Palestinian counterforce seemed to express the politicidal goals of the “Palestinian National Covenant,” which was explicitly aimed at dismantling Israel altogether instead of liberating the occupied territories.⁵¹ The Palestinian counterinstitutions, however, rapidly shifted to much more moderate goals: within the PLO and its protostate institutions (including the Research Department, based in Beirut until 1982),⁵² discussions over a political compromise along the lines of territorial partition date back to the late 1970s. In addition to PLO institution building in the diaspora, Palestinian counterinstitutions within the occupied territories focused on building up alternatives to Israel's coercive rule, particularly in the domains of health care and higher learning⁵³ as a form of “peaceful resistance.”⁵⁴ During the years of the First Intifada, these organizational networks would serve as much more effective protostate institutions than the distant apparatus of the PLO in Tunis: “In virtually every locality in the occupied territories, popular neighbourhood committees established themselves, assuming responsibility for public hygiene, health, education (after schools were closed), maintaining a watch on the streets for the approach of Israeli troops or settlers, organizing household production, distributing agricultural produce to the needy and reclaiming land.”⁵⁵

Cultural associations in particular became crucial sites of a Palestinian counteridentity, which rebelled against Israel's irredentist claims to the occupied territories. In response to the exclusive territorial claims that sustained Israel's exclavization efforts, Palestinian nationalism underwent a *telluric* turn, producing a renewed focus on exclusive indigeneity. The emerging sacralization of the Palestinian Arab soil, often symbolized in the olive tree as “the ultimate symbol of rootedness,”⁵⁶ consisted in a nativist emphasis on “staying on the land at all costs to avoid a repetition of the 1948 *nakba*.”⁵⁷ The “resistance literature”⁵⁸ of Palestinian diaspora nationalism in particular merged motifs of peasant life and the aesthetic celebration of national attachment to soil, thereby in many ways mirroring earlier cultural productions of the Yishuv.⁵⁹

These aesthetic productions popularized a crucial counternarrative of Palestinian nationalism, namely the depiction of the Zionist project as a form of European settler colonialism. In a puzzling display of nativist outbidding, Jewish settlers claimed to restore Jewish life to the biblical homeland, while

Palestinian nationalists proclaimed that (in the words of Edward Said) that “so far as the Arab Palestinian is concerned, the Zionist project for, and conquest of, Palestine was simply the most successful and to date the most protracted of many such European projects since the Middle Ages.”⁶⁰ While most nationalist insurgencies after decolonization described themselves in the jargon of anticolonial liberation, Palestinian nationalism not only aimed at eroding Israel’s claim to the occupied territories but sought to undermine the legitimacy of the Zionist project altogether. Consequently, article 22 of the Palestinian National Covenant described Zionism as “a political movement organically associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to all action for liberation and to progressive movements in the world. It is racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist and colonial in its aims and fascist in its methods.”⁶¹

The same article elevated the Palestinian struggle to a secular election myth⁶² by arguing that the PLO not just defended a particular Arab cause but in fact a universal mission: “Israel is a constant source of threat vis-à-vis peace in the Middle East and the whole world. Since the liberation of Palestine will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence and will contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East, the Palestinian people look for the support of all the progressive and peaceful forces and urge them all, irrespective of their affiliations and beliefs, to offer the Palestinian people all aid and support in their just struggle for the liberation of their homeland.”⁶³

In addition, Palestinian Islamism would counter Israel’s claim to the occupied territories with a decidedly religious election myth. As a counter-theology to Israel’s historical narratives of a return to a sacred ethnoscape, Hamas (or Islamic Resistance Movement, the major representative of the “third phase” of Palestinian nationalism)⁶⁴ claimed the territory of Palestine as an Islamic *waqf* (religious endowment): “The Islamic Resistance Movement believes that the land of Palestine is an Islamic Waqf (endowed) to all Muslim generations until the day of resurrection. It is not right to give up it or any part of it. . . . This is the rule (of the land) in the Islamic Shari’a, and the same (rule) applies to any land that the Muslims have conquered by force, because at the time of conquest the Muslims consecrated it for all Muslim generations until the day of resurrection.”⁶⁵

To an extent, Palestinian nationalism thereby engaged in the formulation of a counter-Zionism or “Palestinian Zionism,”⁶⁶ designed to undermine the Zionist project by meticulous emulation. In some cases, this counternarrative consisted in sly civility,⁶⁷ a form of mimicry that aimed at eroding the logic of a Jewish return to the Land of Israel/Palestine. In the

Table 5.3. Israeli Rule and Palestinian Resistance (1967–1993)

Type of power	Social practices of rule	Social practices of resistance
Physical power	Israel's coercive apparatus carries out counterinsurgency, repression, assassinations	Counterviolence against Israel's coercive apparatus, guerilla warfare in Jordan and Lebanon, campaign of international terrorism
Institutional power	Attempts to legalize settlement project	Counterinstitutions in the form of a national movement of liberation (PLO), local networks (First Intifada)
Social power	Façade of temporary military rule	Counteridentities express exclusive Palestinian indigeneity
Symbolic power	Narratives of return to a sacred ethnic landscape	Counternarratives emphasize global relevance of struggle against Zionism

1988 trial that would lead to his deportation from East Jerusalem, Mubarak Awad, a prominent activist for Palestinian nonviolence, publicly threatened to convert to Judaism and thereby gain Israeli citizenship as a Jew based on the Law of Return.⁶⁸ In other cases, this counternarrative sought to use the Zionist logic of ethnic return migration against itself. The calls for a “right of return” of the Palestinian refugees and their descendants,⁶⁹ a crucial symbol of Palestinian diaspora nationalism, first and foremost aimed at subverting the normalization of a Jewish nation-state in the Land of Israel/Palestine.

Institutional Change and Institutional Inertia

With the end of the Cold War, the Syrianization of Lebanon, the Moroccanization of Western Sahara and the Judaization of the occupied territories underwent significant institutional changes (see also chapter 6). Syria's informal control over Lebanon became much more formalized, thereby advancing from patronization to satellization.⁷⁰ A UN-supervised referendum moved the Moroccan-Sahrawi confrontation from the battlefield to

the diplomatic arena, even if Morocco ultimately succeeded in entrenching its incorporation efforts.⁷¹ In the Land of Israel/Palestine, the Oslo Accords seemed to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive peace agreement and Israel's territorial withdrawal—instead, Israel's exclavization efforts became even more pronounced.⁷²

In none of the three cases did nationalist countermobilization succeed in fully reversing the process of state expansion through a process of state contraction. Nonetheless, different varieties of resistance clearly did have an impact on the institutionalization of external state control. In Lebanon, a high level of stateness prevented much earlier and much deeper forms of Syrianization. Formal Syrian annexation was never an option, and even throughout the period of Syria's "tutelage" over Lebanon after the Ta'if Agreement, Syria's involvement in Lebanese affairs was always mediated, frequently involving both Lebanese political actors and outside powers. In Western Sahara, relatively high levels of Sahrawi stateness *outside* of the territory (especially the recognition of the SADR as a Sahrawi protostate) made sure that Morocco's incorporation policy never became fully formalized. By agreeing to a UN-supervised referendum, Morocco had to grudgingly acknowledge that Western Sahara had never become sovereign Moroccan territory, even if it had to find new ways of subverting the referendum. In the case of the occupied territories, the successful mobilization of the First Intifada made it clear to Israeli authorities that local elites had achieved such a high level of veto capabilities (or, indeed, stateness) that *direct* forms of military rule would become increasingly untenable. Instead of withdrawing from the exclaves of the Jewish settlements, Israeli rule shifted to an *indirect* form of rule that deployed the Palestinian Authority as an additional layer of authority and legitimacy.

LEBANON AFTER 1989: FROM PATRONIZATION TO SATELLIZATION

The critical juncture of 1989–90 transformed the organizational mode of Syria's state expansion from patronization to satellization. Before 1989–90, Syria's domination followed the logic of institutional *layering* by imposing Hafiz al-Assad as the undisputed patron of the Lebanese arena via a "logic of force."⁷³ After 1989–90, Syria's satellization of Lebanon followed the logic of institutional *drift*, characterized by the typical dynamic of "stability on the surface"⁷⁴ in sharp contrast to significant "slippage between rule and practices on the ground."⁷⁵

On the level of formal state organs, the process of postconflict reconstruction was based on the 1989 Ta'if Agreement, a peace deal negotiated by the Arab League that restored the basic constitutional characteristics of prewar Lebanon except for changes to the confessional formula of power sharing followed by a dense network of new Syrian-Lebanese treaties.⁷⁶ However, underneath the surface of restored state sovereignty, Lebanese politics, culture, and economy were increasingly drawn into a Syrian orbit. Strong veto capabilities prevented any attempt of formal incorporation (territorial annexation), but given the considerable Syrian power of discretion over regulating and enforcing the new rules of the game, Lebanon slowly drifted toward informal incorporation or “de-facto federalism between Syria and Lebanon.”⁷⁷

How exactly was the opportunity structure of Syria's rule over Lebanon affected by the critical juncture of 1989–90? Despite the breakdown of the Maronite enclave in the intra-Christian civil war of 1990, Lebanon's veto capabilities against formal territorial inclusion remained significant enough to deter any formal incorporation into Syria: “[All] all the power brokers in Lebanon opposed annexation to Syria and the loss of their country's independence. . . . [All] the Arab states, as well as the international community, with the U.S. and France in the lead, were opposed to any Syrian move in Lebanon that would jeopardize that country's independent existence.”⁷⁸ But while full-scale annexation was precluded by high levels of Lebanese stateness and a veto by the great powers, significant changes in Syria's power resources allowed an institutional shift toward satellization: the critical juncture of 1989–90 consisted in *both* the collapse of Maronite nationalist resistance and widespread international recognition of Syrian predominance over Lebanon, particularly after Syria's decision to join the US-led coalition in the Gulf War against Iraq.

First, Syria's rise by default resulted from the decline of Lebanon's militia economy⁷⁹ and even more so from the breakdown of the Maronite camp after the infighting between Michel Aoun's contested government and Samir Geagea's Lebanese Forces, resulting in “the ultimate collapse of Christian Lebanese nationalism. . . . The Ta'if Accord (1989) not only brought about the conclusion of the war but also marginalized the sociopolitical forces within Lebanese society that advocated for a distinct, non-Arab identity. Moreover, the text of the accord begins and ends with assertions of the Arabness of Lebanon, implicitly declaring that after lengthy years of civil war, Arabism triumphed and non-Arab tendencies were defeated.”⁸⁰

Second, while the Ta'if Accord (negotiated by the “troika” of the kings of Saudi Arabia and Morocco and the president of Algeria) reflected the Arab League’s efforts to *salvage* Lebanese independence,⁸¹ the Gulf War provided Hafiz al-Assad an opportunity to make sure that this “independence” would be confined to the limited autonomy of a modern-day satrapy. After Michel Aoun’s alliance with Saddam Hussein, the United States (and Israel) tacitly acquiesced in Lebanon’s satellization under Syrian predominance in exchange for Syria’s participation in the war effort against Iraq. US-Syrian rapprochement over Lebanon’s reconstruction as a Syrian client state thus reflected one of the ripple effects of a more fundamental critical juncture of 1989–90, which was the collapse of the Soviet Union: “The USSR was no longer willing or able to act as a counterweight to American power in the region, which left the USA as crucial power broker.”⁸²

WESTERN SAHARA AFTER 1991: ENTRENCHED INCORPORATION

Morocco’s military conquest, annexation, and incorporation of Western Sahara had been launched explicitly in order to preempt a Spanish-organized referendum on the territory’s decolonization—nonetheless, a renewed referendum process was at the core of the second phase of Morocco’s rule over the territory. Based on the OAU’s guidelines for such a mechanism (including an interim UN administration and a substantial withdrawal of Moroccan troops),⁸³ in 1988 both Morocco and POLISARIO approved the framework⁸⁴ of what was to become the “settlement plan”:⁸⁵ approved by the UN Security Council in 1990⁸⁶ and put into action after a 1991 ceasefire, a referendum supervised by MINURSO (Mission des Nations Unies pour l’Organisation d’un Référendum au Sahara Occidental) was supposed to result in a referendum on the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara by early 1992. However, similar to the acclamatory referendum plan of 1981,⁸⁷ this referendum never took place: Morocco would only accept the terms of a referendum that it could expect to win with a broad majority. Already in 1991, Hassan II presented the settlement plan as a victory of Morocco’s incorporation efforts: “The bet is won: The Sahara is Moroccan.”⁸⁸

Regarding the institutionalization of Morocco’s rule over Western Sahara, 1991 did not represent a critical juncture. After a Moroccan-Sahrawi ceasefire, desert warfare was replaced by diplomatic warfare,⁸⁹ but Morocco’s incorporation efforts became even more intensified, both in terms of infrastructure development and demographic engineering. In a “second Green

March” in 1991, Morocco considerably increased the presence of Moroccan settlers. Mundy estimates that in 2004, this settler population of approximately three hundred thousand Moroccans represented up to 80 percent of the overall population of Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara (excluding the sizeable military presence). While this settler population clearly included speakers of Berber dialects and Moroccan Arabic (*darija*), Mundy argues that large parts might actually comprise ethnic Sahrawis from southern Morocco: their questionable loyalty to the Alaouite throne might be one reason why Morocco rejected a 2003 UN peace deal that would have allowed Moroccan settlers to vote in a referendum on the political future of Western Sahara.⁹⁰

The increasing irreversibility of this slow-moving incorporation process (or rather reincorporation process, according to the Moroccan nationalist narrative) was publicly celebrated by Hassan II: “The Sahara has become Moroccan again in the way as it has always been. . . . It can not be given another stamp, another nature or another legal framework than the return to the motherland, the return to the origins proceeding from authenticity.”⁹¹

A closer look at Morocco’s power resources and Sahrawi veto capabilities explains this institutional lock-in. Given the clear French-American veto in the Security Council, POLISARIO was unable to transform the SADR from a protostate (with a large number of recognitions in the postcolonial world—despite high-level derecognitions like India’s in 2000)⁹² into a full UN member state with very different means of protection against belligerent occupation. The ongoing application of the decolonization framework eventually became a pretext for the Security Council’s refusal to apply the international law of occupation to Morocco’s rule over Western Sahara, despite clear evidence to the contrary:⁹³ recognizing Moroccan rule over Western Sahara as a case of belligerent occupation and unlawful annexation (instead of a transient state of “de facto administration” over a “non-self-governing territory”) would have transformed the colonization of Western Sahara with Moroccan settlers into a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.⁹⁴

POLISARIO’s stateness also underwent a process of erosion. Since Morocco remained in firm control of Western Sahara and did *not* withdraw its armed forces and omnipresent security apparatus during the referendum process (unlike in the case of Namibia),⁹⁵ POLISARIO initially found it hard to mobilize within the Moroccan-occupied territory beyond largely symbolic gestures like nightly graffiti spraying.⁹⁶ At the same time, while the 1991 ceasefire was meant to make the referendum possible in the first place, the absence of a military confrontation largely facilitated Morocco’s

incorporation efforts. It is doubtful to what extent POLISARIO would have been capable of renewing its guerilla warfare. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the decline of political Third Worldism, Algeria was preoccupied with the devastating impact of its own civil war. At the same time, the patron of the Sahrawi state project increasingly favored the economic integration of the Maghreb (in the framework of the “Arab Maghreb Union”) over a military-ideological confrontation with Morocco.⁹⁷ After all, in purely military terms, Morocco had largely *won* the desert war against POLISARIO and was able to establish its deterrence based on the 1991 Tifariti offensive right before the implementation of the ceasefire.⁹⁸

In sharp contrast to decreasing Sahrawi veto capabilities, Morocco’s power resources improved throughout the entire referendum process, which translated into a generous amount of discretion regarding the ongoing Moroccanization of the occupied territory. Domestically, the “Saharan Consensus” remained unchallenged. When Morocco’s co-opted opposition parties (the Istiqlal and the USFP) entered an opposition-led government (with largely administrative powers) as an attempt by Hassan II to build national cohesion before his son’s accession to the throne, the first speech of Abderrahmane Youssoufi, the new USFP prime minister, reconfirmed the “Saharan Consensus.”⁹⁹ Internationally, Morocco continued to enjoy stable Great Power patronage based on French economic interests (frequently interwoven with transnational elite networks)¹⁰⁰ and US geopolitical considerations in return for loyal services as an American client in the region: Morocco joined the US coalition against Iraq in 1990, supported the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and cooperated with US counterterrorism efforts in the Maghreb. Most importantly, Morocco’s relative stability (closely connected to its rule over Western Sahara) turned it into a particularly attractive US ally in the region¹⁰¹: “Throughout the 1990s, Morocco was able to capitalize on the rise of Islamist movements especially in Algeria, Sudan, Lebanon, and Egypt. US apprehension about a rise in hostile, anti-US governments rendered the Moroccan monarchy a likely candidate for continuing support.”¹⁰²

Given these geopolitical shifts in the Moroccan-Sahrawi confrontation, full-scale state contraction was highly unlikely from the beginning of the referendum process. Given the obvious limitations of the 1991 settlement plan, considerable doubts have been voiced whether both the UN secretariat¹⁰³ and Morocco’s Great Power patrons¹⁰⁴ ever fully supported the referendum process or would have credibly enforced Morocco’s departure from Western Sahara within “24 hours after the results of the voting are confirmed, if the outcome of the referendum so requires” (as initially agreed upon in 1988):¹⁰⁵

“From the moment MINURSO was created, abandoning the referendum was never a question of if, but of when.”¹⁰⁶

THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AFTER 1993: INTEGRATING EXCLAVIZATION AND SATELLIZATION

The critical juncture of the Oslo Accords in 1993 should not be understood as a form of state contraction but rather as a shift from exclavization (the settlement project) to an integration of exclavization and satellization based on the geographic separation between areas A, B, and C. Israeli control over the occupied territories would be shared with the Palestinian Authority, resulting in full civil and security control for the Palestinian Authority (Area A), civil control for the PA and security control for Israel (Area B), and full civil and security control for Israel (Area C). On the ground, however, “traveling from one Palestinian area to another actually became more difficult, requiring multiple passes and permits and the navigation of various checkpoints and roadblocks. In practice, Palestinians could no longer travel freely through the West Bank, and many found themselves cut off from family, employment, or schools only a few miles away.”¹⁰⁷ While most of the Palestinian population was concentrated in Area A, in terms of territory this separation clearly favored Israeli control: “Area A meant the populated areas including six of the main Palestinian towns comprising about 1% of the West Bank. Area B included most of the Palestinian villages and environs comprising about 27% of the West Bank. And Area C included the Jewish settlements comprising about 72% of the West Bank.”¹⁰⁸ Within Area C, the number of Jewish settlers increased dramatically. Without taking into account the population of Jerusalem (formally incorporated into Israeli state territory), the number of settlers in the occupied territories increased from 150,000 in the mid-1990s to 400,000 two decades later.¹⁰⁹ Within Area A and B however, the Oslo Accords established a Palestinian client-state (or rather client nonstate) governed by the PLO, an administrative solution relatively close to the initial Allon Plan from the early days of Israel’s territorial expansion.¹¹⁰

To an extent, this outcome of a failed conflict resolution can be traced back to the weak transnational coalition behind the Oslo Accords. On the Israeli side, the narrow Labor-Zionist government of Yitzhak Rabin included the Mizrahi ultra-Orthodox Shas Party but failed to break away a single core constituency of the political coalition that had carried the rise of the Likud.¹¹¹ On the Palestinian side, the PLO had suffered from its

support for Saddam Hussein in the First Gulf War, the rise of Palestinian Islamism, and the growth of independent grassroots activism during the first intifada.¹¹² As a temporary agreement between two narrow domestic coalitions who intentionally deferred negotiations on the core issues of the conflict (Jerusalem, refugees, final borders), the Oslo Accords proved to be an attractive target for spoilers on both sides.¹¹³

The institutional transformation to satellization on the one hand and entrenched exclavization on the other reflected the paradoxical power shifts in Palestinian-Israeli relations. As a form of indirect rule, satellization reflected a substantial increase in Palestinian stateness (or veto capabilities against direct Israeli rule), whether in the form of local grassroots initiatives (the First Intifada) or diasporic protostate organizations (the PLO). In sharp contrast to the early years of Israeli rule over the occupied territories, the Palestinian diaspora had successfully built a fully fledged national movement that could no longer be ignored. Even if the Palestinian militias had failed to dislodge Israel from the occupied territories, the PLO had successfully mobilized a broad international coalition in support of Palestinian self-determination based on an Israeli territorial withdrawal from the occupied territories. The First Intifada had successfully precluded any potential shift from military administration and demographic engineering to formal territorial inclusion. In contrast to Israel's first-wave state expansion (see chapter 4), the country's second-wave state expansion could no longer be normalized.

At the same time, Israel benefited substantially from the end of the Cold War and the launching of a regional peace process, particularly in terms of formalizing its ties both to neighboring Arab states (like the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty) and powers from the disintegrating camp of political Third Worldism.¹¹⁴ Similar to Syria's rule over Lebanon in the aftermath of the Tà'if Agreement, Israel's rule over the occupied territories after the Oslo Accords therefore followed the logic of institutional *drift*, a form of institutional change characterized by "stability on the surface"¹¹⁵ in sharp contrast to significant "slippage between rule and practices on the ground."¹¹⁶ While the Oslo Accords were initially designed to serve as an *interim agreement* launching a process of full-scale Israeli state contraction, their implementation slowly drifted toward making Israel's territorial expansion more permanent.

Conclusion

In contrast to an epiphenomenal understanding of resistance, ongoing forms of countermobilization *did* have an impact on the institutionaliza-

tion of state expansions. Based on different varieties of resistance, including counterforce, counterinstitutions, counteridentities, and counternarratives, continuous forms of countermobilization either prevented more intrusive forms of state expansion or made the normalization of territorial expansion impossible.

In the Syro-Lebanese case, Lebanese resistance successfully operated as a deterrent against more far-reaching forms of political incorporation (like the Iraqi attempt to annex Kuwait). As an ongoing defiance of Syrianization efforts, Lebanese countermobilization forced the Syrian Ba'ath regime to employ harsh measures of repression despite the two nations' alleged "brotherly and distinctive bonds."¹¹⁷ In the Moroccan-Sahrawi case, the challenge of Sahrawi resistance against territorial incorporation forced Morocco into massive infrastructure investments in Western Sahara, high levels of military expenditures, and an international propaganda campaign designed to persuade international audiences of the rightfulness of its irredentist claim. When Morocco agreed to a referendum on the self-determination of Western Sahara, POLISARIO seemed confident of its victory and shifted its resources to abandoning the refugee camps in the Algerian desert.¹¹⁸ In the Israeli-Palestinian case, the Palestinian countermobilization against Israel's occupation regime severely undermined the country's standing among core supporters of the Zionist project, including the transnational left and major European nation-states. More importantly, the Palestinian national movement successfully deterred a shift from exclavization to incorporation. While the Palestinian militias could be defeated militarily, the mass mobilization of the First Intifada made the continuation of military rule over a civilian population so expensive (both financially and in terms of international legitimacy) that Israel grudgingly agreed to the establishment of a Palestinian protostate.

Chapter 6

State Expansions and State Contractions after the End of the Cold War

The proxy wars of the Cold War had contributed to making state expansions semipermanent. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, a wave of UN missions and diplomatic initiatives began to tackle entrenched ethnoterritorial conflicts across the globe. In the Middle East, the Ta'if Agreement (1989), the Moroccan-Sahrawi Settlement Plan (1991), and the Oslo Accords (1993) seemed to indicate a shift toward permanent conflict resolution. The Ta'if Agreement described a phased redeployment of Syrian forces; the Moroccan-Sahrawi Settlement Plan offered the possibility of a formal de-Moroccanization of Western Sahara, and the Oslo Accords were explicitly designed “for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338”¹—in other words, a permanent settlement based on the principle of land for peace.

At the same time, the end of the Cold War provided expansionist states with an opportunity to strengthen their control over captured territories: After the collapse of the Maronite camp, Syria rebuilt Lebanon into a satellite state. While POLISARIO recovered from its near defeat in the Moroccan-Sahrawi desert war, Hassan II successfully undermined the UN referendum process and expanded the policy of demographic incorporation. In the Israeli-Palestinian case, the settlement project was never abandoned: after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and a wave of suicide bombings, the “transitional period” of the Oslo Accords became permanent with the election of Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996. Instead of serving as the protostate for a future two-state solution, the Palestinian Authority increasingly turned into an Israeli satellite state, an additional layer of protection for Israel's ethnoterritorial exclaves.

However, renewed forms of countermobilization undermined the normalization of these territorial entrenchments. In Lebanon, cross-sectarian coalition building and the ripple effects of the US invasion of Iraq drove the Syrian forces out of Lebanon in 2005, resulting in a process of *desatellization*. In Western Sahara, the failure of the referendum process triggered a search for alternative diplomatic solutions, almost resulting in a shift toward *satellization* in 2003 (the Baker II peace plan). In the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation, the Second Intifada triggered a process of limited *deexclavization*. While the evacuation of the Gaza settlements resulted in full-scale state contraction, the construction of the West Bank barrier signaled both the permanence of Israel's exclavization effort and a tacit recognition of its political failure.

Patterns of Territorial Entrenchment

SYRIA'S RULE OVER LEBANON AFTER THE TA'IF AGREEMENT (1989)

Syria's policy of satellization was explicitly designed as an *indirect* form of control over the regulation, interpretation, and enforcement of the political rules of postwar Lebanon. Formally, Lebanese state organs in charge of legislation, jurisdiction, and law enforcement remained independent. Informally, however, political decisions were taken by Syria's local vice-regent Ghazi Kana'an, the head of Syria's military intelligence apparatus in Lebanon.² The judiciary carried out harsh sentences against anyone seeking to undermine Syria's military presence, and the different branches of Lebanon's domestic intelligence apparatus were busy carrying out orders from Damascus, "keeping Syria in the background, preserving a mystique of Syrian coercion more fearful for seldom being used."³

Physical power remained at the center of Syria's rule: despite somewhat vague passages in the Ta'if Agreement about a phased redeployment of Syrian forces,⁴ Syria's sizeable military presence of thirty thousand soldiers in 1990 was only downgraded to twenty-two thousand by the year 2000,⁵ complemented by a considerable presence of Syrian military intelligence officers. The Syrian "logic of force" was carried over into the postwar era. Prominent opponents of Lebanon's satellization were assassinated, forced into exile, imprisoned, or blackmailed with mafia-style tactics. When Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri expressed his support for Arab-Israeli negotiations in 2003, the TV station of his political movement came under

rocket attack, likely with the approval of Syrian military intelligence.⁶ Syria's military intelligence ran its own prison inside Lebanon (close to the seat of the Syrian vice-regent in Anjar), but a high number of Lebanese were also imprisoned inside Syria or simply "disappeared."⁷

In contrast to the patronization policy throughout the civil war, core functions of Syria's coercion were delegated to Lebanese state organs. For most Lebanese civilians, Syrian soldiers represented merely a source of nuisance and petty extortion at checkpoints: key military operations like the disarming of the sectarian militias (except for Hezbollah as a trump card in Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations) or the suppression of local Islamist uprisings were carried out by the Lebanese army itself.⁸ Previous instruments of Maronite privilege like the higher ranks of the Lebanese armed forces and the domestic intelligence apparatus were purged of anti-Syrian officers, stacked with Assad loyalists, and retrained in Syria.⁹

This satellization of Lebanon's security sector was crystallized in a Syrian-Lebanese security network formed around the commander of the army, Émile Lahoud, and the deputy director of military intelligence, Jamil al-Sayyid, who rose through the ranks thanks to Syrian patronage: "Under Lahoud and Sayyid, the creeping intelligence colonization of state institutions, economic cartels, the media, the courts, the universities and the professional associations reached its zenith."¹⁰ Another powerful instrument of Syrian coercion was the control over the economic reconstruction of Lebanon, which became dominated by nepotism and widespread corruption.¹¹ Syria leveraged its control over the reconstruction effort into considerable economic privileges, "including labor arrangements to ease the flow of Syrian workers into Lebanon, a water agreement under which Syria took 78% of the Orontes River flow, a transit agreement that outraged Lebanese truck drivers, and a proposed customs union that meant little to the Lebanese in view of the facts that Syrian goods already flooded into Lebanon and Syrian industrial and administrative regulations nullified free trade."¹²

On the one hand, this policy resembled a "mafia-style racketeering operation in which Lebanon was treated as a 'milking cow,' in the words of a former minister, a pool of reconstruction cash to be plundered at will."¹³ On the other hand, Syrian control over economic reconstruction was a formidable instrument of coercion based on Syria's control over the "troika," the politicians holding the three key positions of post-Ta'if Lebanon (Maronite President Elias Hrawi, Sunni Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, and Shi'i Speaker of the Parliament Nabih Berri): "In the configuration that prevailed under Syrian tutelage, each member of the Troika maintained

an individual fief within the state apparatus that was used to promote his individual power and to extract personal revenues.”¹⁴

Syria's raw military and economic power represented the cornerstone of an elaborate system of *institutional power* that defined “the political rules of the game for the Lebanese players and, more precisely, [laid] down the boundaries that could not be crossed.”¹⁵ Formally, Syria's control over Lebanon was legalized as a temporary military presence by the 1989 Ta'if Agreement in order to “assist the legitimate Lebanese forces” in extending their authority over the territory of Lebanon.¹⁶ Tellingly, the treaty did *not* speak of a military withdrawal but of a phased redeployment of Syrian forces that would take place within the following two years in coordination with the Lebanese government.¹⁷ While the Ta'if Agreement remained valid throughout the following years, its implementation was characterized by a substantial slippage between the stipulated rules and their respective enforcement. This slow-moving but deliberate shift consisted not only in the intentional deferral of its more ambitious reform agenda (like the abolition of confessionalism) but also in the comprehensive Syrian control over its interpretation and implementation.

An important step in engineering this institutional drift was the formalization of the Syrian implementation rules of the Ta'if Agreement, crystallized in the 1991 Syrian-Lebanese Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination, which was signed on the symbolic date of the first anniversary of the reunification of Yemen. While the Ta'if Agreement stipulated “the establishment of ‘privileged relations’ with Syria . . . ‘in all areas,’”¹⁸ the Treaty of Brotherhood fleshed out the organizational form of these “privileged relations” via a dense network of treaties and joint committees steered by a Syrian-Lebanese Higher Council, thereby formalizing the “*de jure* satellization of Lebanon by Syria.”¹⁹

The increased Syrian control over the interpretation and implementation of the Ta'if Agreement also shifted the original two-year timetable of a phased Syrian military redeployment toward a seemingly open-ended temporary presence. Considerable control over the Lebanese government allowed the Syrian regime to exploit loopholes in the Ta'if Agreement: guarantees by the Arab League to provide mediation in negotiations over a post-Ta'if Syrian military presence in Lebanon could be easily outmaneuvered because they required shared Syrian-Lebanese approval. This provision effectively provided the Syrian regime with full veto powers over its own military withdrawal—and since Lebanese defense ministers dutifully declared that the Lebanese army was “not yet” ready to fulfill its post-Ta'if missions, Syria's presence remained *de jure* temporary (according

to the Ta'if Agreement) but became de facto permanent (according to the Treaty of Brotherhood).

Below the surface of interstate relations, Syria's informal rule-setting powers included the selection of political personnel in the case of parliamentary elections, for instance by screening candidates, encouraging electoral coalitions, and gerrymandering individual districts.²⁰ For more senior positions like the commander of the armed forces or the Lebanese president, Syria effectively handpicked the candidates without further ado: "On October 5, Assad and [Lebanese President] Hrawi met in Damascus and afterwards announced that Lahoud would be the next president of Lebanon, even though the army commander had never formally announced his candidacy. Nine days later, 118 of Parliament's 128 MPs gathered to vote unanimously for Lahoud in a light-hearted session that barely lasted 20 minutes. It was the first time since the election of President Bishara Khoury in 1949 that a candidate received every vote cast."²¹ In addition to selecting the political personnel of Lebanon's formal state apparatus, Syria's military intelligence apparatus functioned as an informal shadow state that regulated intra-Lebanese conflicts outside of the state institutions and the public sphere. From his headquarters in Anjar in the Bekaa Valley near the Syrian border, Ghazi Kana'an (the head of Syria's military intelligence apparatus in Lebanon) ruled the country "effectively [as] a head of state"²² with insights into the innermost conflicts of Lebanese politics (based on extensive wiretapping) and a wide-ranging mandate to enforce Syrian rule.

The imposition of Syria's *social power* continued to follow the leitmotif of a paternalistic unification nationalism. At the signing ceremony of the Treaty of Brotherhood in Damascus, Hafiz al-Assad repeated the claim of "one people in two separate states."²³ Syria's defense minister, Mustafa Tlass, "stressed the approach of 'unity between Lebanon and Syria,' while Foreign Minister Faruq al Shar' flatly observed that: 'The majority of people in Lebanon and Syria are with unification, but [Damascus] is content for the present time with coordination.'"²⁴ However, the more Lebanon's institutional satellization progressed, the more Syria's clients took pains to publicly and formally deny any plans of incorporation, a rhetorical strategy best captured in the formulaic mantra of a "Syrian military presence" (not occupation!) that was "necessary, legal and temporary."²⁵ Lebanese political actors did not dare to mention Syria's coercive rule, sometimes reaching Orwellian levels of self-denial. After the Syrian conquest of the Maronite enclave, which was characterized by massacres and widespread looting (including of the presidential palace), the Lebanese President Hrawi commented that "snatching an earring from here and a car from there should not be allowed to hinder government efforts to

promote national reconciliation with the sisterly assistance of Syria.”²⁶ Upon the signing of the Treaty of Brotherhood, Prime Minister Omar Karami of Lebanon “felt obliged to make such statements as: ‘It is clear to all that Syria has no ambitions in Lebanon and does not wish, as some see it, to swallow Lebanon and to colonize it and take its revenues.’”²⁷ Syria’s military presence was systematically kept out of the public sphere in both the parliament and the media.²⁸ In 1991 Lebanon’s chief public prosecutor formally informed the Lebanese Journalists Association that antidefamation laws to protect the Lebanese president (as well foreign heads of state) would be applied more strictly, a move “widely understood by journalists . . . to stop criticism of Syrian policies in Lebanon.”²⁹

In terms of *symbolic power*, Syria sought to reshape Lebanon according to the historical narrative of Arabism. The Ta’if Agreement declared Lebanon to be “an Arab country, both by kinship and identity,”³⁰ thereby establishing Arabism as the guiding principle of Lebanese statehood. Cultural Arabization became particularly prominent in the education system. The Lebanese government adopted a law to implement the charter of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) aiming at “monolithic ‘Arab’ education, with standardized interpretations of Arab culture and displacement of foreign languages to the maximum feasible extent.”³¹ After protests by Lebanon’s private school sector (frequently teaching in French or English), this policy was never fully implemented. In another prominent case, a newly developed history textbook was suspended by the Ministry of Education for including a section on *previous* occupations of Lebanon, including the Arab conquest.³² The question of Lebanon’s Arabness touched a sensitive point for Syria’s attempt to impose a careful distinction between the legitimate Syrian “military presence” and an illegitimate “Israeli occupation.” In the text of the Ta’if Agreement, the text explicitly called for “an act of ‘liberation’—the acquisition of sovereignty by Israel’s unilateral and unconditional renunciation of its occupation of South Lebanon.”³³ In addition, the text contained an ominous reference calling for “the adoption of ‘all’ measures to liberate all the Lebanese territory from the Israeli occupation.”³⁴ Throughout the period of Syria’s tutelage, this notion of legitimizing “all measures” against Israel’s occupation turned into an all-encompassing narrative of “resistance,” especially as a justification for the systematic militarization of Hezbollah (while all other sectarian militias were disarmed) and the political persecution of potential Israeli clients: Whoever opposed Syria’s presence in Lebanon could be blamed (and often formally prosecuted) for “serving Israeli interests” or “being Israeli lackeys.”³⁵

MOROCCO'S RULE OVER WESTERN SAHARA AFTER THE SETTLEMENT PLAN (1991)

Morocco's *physical power* and its overwhelming military advantage shaped the beginning of the referendum process, which was overshadowed by a new military offensive: "Although a de facto ceasefire had been in effect since 1989, Moroccan fighter jets levelled the POLISARIO-held outposts closest to the front, Tifariti and Bir Lahlou, and razed new facilities built by the POLISARIO for UN observers. The attack was meant to signal to the UN that there was no peace to be kept and that the operation should not deploy."³⁶ Even after a renewed ceasefire, Morocco carefully maintained its grasp over the territory. Since the Settlement Plan entailed neither sanctions-based enforcement mechanisms (under chapter VII of the UN Charter) nor any transitional administrative structure, Morocco refused to reduce its troop strength in the territory and only allowed a severely limited MINURSO mission size of 240 UN observers (instead of over two thousand as initially scheduled).³⁷ MINURSO had been established as "nearly the only peacekeeping unit under UN auspices that has no human rights monitoring component,"³⁸ so despite a UN presence on the ground, the nature of Moroccan rule could not be subject to any substantial monitoring.

Throughout the referendum process, Moroccan repression against Sahrawi nationalists continued in the form of disappearances, incarcerations, torture, and police brutality.³⁹ More specifically, the Moroccan security apparatus focused on manipulating the outcome of voter registration, not least by bringing a new influx of Moroccan settler immigrants to Western Sahara. In addition to economic incentives that had aimed at slowly transforming the demographic setup of Western Sahara, Morocco organized a systematic population transfer of allegedly eligible voters willing to participate in the referendum. Several waves of Moroccan settler immigrants, some of them ethnic Sahrawis from southern Morocco, were thus implanted in Western Sahara, many of them housed in semitemporary "unity" or *wahda* camps in Laayoune and Smara.⁴⁰

These coercive measures formed the backbone of a systematic effort to entrench Morocco's *institutional power*: Morocco expanded its patronage network of loyalist "palace Sahrawis" by encouraging high-level defections of POLISARIO leaders, including the former SADR ambassador to Algeria.⁴¹ Both tribal elders and ex-POLISARIO functionaries were deployed by the monarchy to make the case for regional autonomy instead of self-determination, a mission that became institutionalized in the Royal Advisory

Council on Saharan Affairs CORCAS [Conseil royal consultatif pour les affaires sahariennes] in 2006.⁴²

The referendum process formally put into question the legality of Morocco's incorporation efforts so that Moroccan rhetoric emphasized the continuity of Moroccanization despite the presence of UN observers. In the words of Hassan II, "Moroccan sovereign prevails in the Sahara, Moroccan laws are in place, . . . and justice is served in the name of His Majesty the King of Morocco."⁴³ While Moroccan rule continued uninterrupted (including national elections and constitutional referendums), the Moroccanization efforts focused on the delay, obstruction, and manipulation of the referendum process. While POLISARIO insisted on a referendum based on an updated version of the 1974 Spanish census, Morocco argued for the inclusion of what it described as ethnic Sahrawis from southern Morocco: "In the process, Morocco presented 176,533 voters where only oral testimonies existed, of which only a fraction was accepted by MINURSO officials. . . . [Applicants] often did not speak the local Arabic dialect, nor did they have any knowledge of tribal or regional characteristics that could be expected from 'real' Sahrawis. This led to Moroccan frustration and an impasse over the voter-identification process. It appeared that Morocco was trying to inflate the numbers of pro-Moroccan voters, causing likewise frustration among MINURSO officials."⁴⁴

In 1994 Morocco stalled the Settlement Plan based on a flood of new voter applications. When these new voter applications were rejected, Morocco engineered the collapse of the referendum process in 2000 based on mass appeals against noninclusion, even though MINURSO had successfully finalized a precise list of eligible voters: "By the time identification was eventually finished, a grand total of 195,589 individuals had been interviewed. The final figure for those found eligible to vote came to 86,412—a moderate percentage increment to the 72,370 on the revised 1974 census list, marginally exceeding the extra 10 percent originally envisaged."⁴⁵ The subsequent Moroccan "autonomy plan" of 2003⁴⁶ followed a long series of Moroccan attempts to replace self-determination (according to the decolonization regime) with a political solution based on incorporation complemented by a moderate degree of decentralization.

In terms of *social power*, Morocco continued to deny the existence of a Sahrawi nation and instead imposed a notion of all-encompassing Moroccanness throughout the captured territory. In addition to ongoing Moroccanization campaigns throughout the governmental education system in Western Sahara,⁴⁷ Morocco undertook systematic efforts to blur any distinctions between Moroccans and Sahrawis, not least by shifting

the formal designation of Moroccan-held Western Sahara from “Saharan provinces” to “Southern provinces” in 1997. During the referendum process, Moroccan authorities apparently trained noneligible voters from southern Morocco to act as Sahrawis,⁴⁸ and in 1996 Hassan II himself claimed to be of tribal Sahrawi origin: “The roots of Morocco’s history can be found in the Southern Provinces . . . and its illustrious tribes, which I have the honour to belong to on my mother’s side.”⁴⁹

This denial of a Sahrawi history was embedded in Morocco’s *symbolic power*, crystallized in the historical narrative of sacred and transhistorical links between Saharan tribes and the Alaouite throne. Hassan II called on nationalist Sahrawis to vote for their integration with Morocco as a form of religious penitence and accepted the *bay’a* from ex-POLISARIO defectors. In his first speech following his accession to the throne in 2000, his son Mohammed VI formally based his rule on the sacralization of Morocco’s rule over Western Sahara by referring to “the sacred cause of our territorial integrity, and the attachment which the children of our Saharan provinces have shown to the glorious Throne and to the Sovereign Alaouites, having been among the first to swear allegiance to our Majesty and to the symbiosis between the Throne and the people.”⁵⁰

ISRAEL’S RULE OVER THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AFTER THE OSLO ACCORDS (1993)

After the Oslo Accords, Israel’s rule over the Palestinian population shifted from direct military rule to *indirect* rule via the apparatus of the Palestinian Authority. Although limited Palestinian self-rule inside Area A lowered the level of immediate friction between Israel’s military government and the civilian population, the deployment of Israel’s *physical power* did not undergo significant changes. In fact, the complex geographic separation even introduced a new layer of restrictions on movement, including a policy of checkpoints and frequent closures.⁵¹ While the influx of Jewish settlers increased significantly (exclavization), now key functions of Israel’s immediate control could be delegated to the security apparatus of the Palestinian Authority (satellization).⁵² This close security cooperation collapsed during the Second Intifada (2000–2005), a substantial escalation of political violence on both sides that resulted in a full-scale militarization of Israel’s counterinsurgency measures in order to “‘*burn into the Palestinian consciousness*’ the pointlessness of resorting to terrorism and violence.”⁵³

Israel’s military operations during the Second Intifada operations stood out for their offensive posture and the systematic deployment of harsh

measures of collective punishment. Besides the systematic destruction of infrastructure belonging to the Palestinian Authority or Palestinian militias by artillery, airborne attacks, or armored Caterpillar D9 bulldozers, the most characteristic IDF tactic included targeted killings of political and military leaders on the Palestinian side by air strikes and camouflaged explosive charges. Throughout these operations, the IDF benefited from its qualitative edge in terms of weapons technology and intelligence. In a way, the military confrontation could be characterized as “case studies in the law of comparative advantage. Israel, where labor is expensive and capital is cheap, invests in assassinations, a high-tech strategy that requires lots of equipment but does not risk Israeli lives. By comparison, Palestinians . . . have adopted a labor-intensive strategy—literally throwing bodies at the problem.”⁵⁴

In terms of *institutional power*, the Oslo Accords paradoxically formalized Israel’s territorial expansion. On the level of international humanitarian law, the status of belligerent occupation (based on effective control) did not undergo any significant changes by the mere establishment of the Palestinian Authority.⁵⁵ However, by shifting the question of settlements to future status negotiations and by establishing a clear-cut legal framework of segmented rule, the satellization of the Palestinian Authority was closely integrated into preserving and expanding Israel’s ethnoterritorial exclaves of the settlement project. In the words of Shehadeh, “[What] distinguishes Israel’s efforts . . . is the constant attention paid to the legal aspects. As a result, Israel was able to transform an unfavourable legal reality. Israel’s efforts at creating facts operated on two levels: altering the physical conditions on the ground and developing the legal reality to serve its purpose.”⁵⁶

On the ground, higher levels of Palestinian stateness were systematically deployed in order to lower the military and administrative costs of Israel’s control, not least by outsourcing the costs of Palestinian state building to international donors and a growing network of civil society organization. While Palestinian institution building advanced, the fledgling protostate of the Palestinian Authority seemed to contribute to the lock-in of Israel’s territorial expansion. Given the vested interest of the PLO in governing a protostate (even at the cost of accepting its limited autonomy), the post-Oslo reality came to resemble the Allon Plan—military control and Jewish settlement for the Israeli side, carefully engineered autonomy in a nonstate for the Palestinian side.

In terms of *social power*, the legitimation of Israel’s ongoing rule over the occupied territories thereby underwent a profound transformation: the denial of permanent state expansion based on the fiction of an allegedly

“temporary” military occupation (as a permanent state of emergency) was replaced with the much more appealing notion of a peace process, or a permanent state of negotiations.⁵⁷ With the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin in 1995 and the subsequent election of a Likud government under Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996, the transitional nature of the Oslo Accords became increasingly questionable: when the attempt to conduct final status negotiations collapsed in 2000 (Camp David II), the interim framework of the Oslo Accords became permanent.⁵⁸

Within the Israeli exclaves, the settler movement underwent a significant crisis of faith at the realization of having failed to settle “in the hearts” of the Jewish-Israeli majority. Increasing levels of political violence against the Palestinian population (like the massacre in the Cave of the Patriarchs in 1994) and the assassination of Yitzchak Rabin indicated a significant radicalization of the movement’s messianic fringes. This radicalization contrasted with a notable shift toward suburbanization. Particularly the settlement blocks in the vicinity of Jerusalem attracted very different audiences than the Labor-Zionist settlers in the Jordan Valley and the national-religious settlers of Gush Emunim. Instead, new settlement communities were composed of Jewish Israelis with a nonideological outlook, complemented by non-Zionist settlements catering to the Ultra-Orthodox segment of society. Nonetheless, in terms of *symbolic power*, the underlying logic of exclusive territorial ownership over a sacred ethnic landscape remained unchanged: Israel’s control over the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron remained crucial as a justification for an ongoing settler presence, and even the massacre by Baruch Goldstein could not be leveraged into evacuating the city’s Jewish exclave. In addition, the intricate question of sovereignty over the Temple Mount contributed to the collapse of the 2000 Camp David peace talks:⁵⁹ the talks ultimately failed because of more pressing issues (like the Palestinian refugees), but Israel’s claim to the religious site at the core of Jerusalem would turn into the symbol of the Second Intifada.

Shifting Dynamics of Countermobilization

LEBANESE RESISTANCE AGAINST SYRIAN SATELLIZATION

For a prolonged period of “high hegemony,”⁶⁰ Syria’s policy of satellization operated relatively smoothly as a strategy of predatory state consolidation.

In fact, Syrianization operated so smoothly that even Lebanon's public space was increasingly covered with statues and posters typical for the Ba'athist personality cult. Yet in 2005, these visible indicators of Lebanon's status as a satellite state were hastily removed on the occasion of Syria's sudden military withdrawal: "[The] security forces in Lebanon, in coordination with the departing troops, systematically dismantled all the statues, monuments, memorial plaques, signs and pictures showing the likeness of Bashar al-Assad and his father, Hafiz al-Assad. In locations where crowds of young Lebanese had preceded them, the statues had been smashed, the memorial plaques destroyed and the pictures of those who had been the masters of Lebanon for the preceding 30 years torn up, truly marking the end of an era."⁶¹

Was this the final outcome of years of Lebanese resistance (see table 6.1)? The initial consolidation of Syria's state expansion into Lebanon had been made possible by a tectonic shift in geopolitics, including the downfall of the Soviet Union, the first US invasion of Iraq, and the subsequent US-Syrian rapprochement. Arguably the 2005 state contraction and the end of Lebanon's satellization were triggered by a similar critical juncture for Syria's relative power position. The US hegemonic reengagement after 9/11 and the second US invasion of Iraq might have played a bigger role in the US-Syrian falling out over the control of Lebanon⁶² than the inner-Lebanese protests after the Syrian assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, frequently simplified as a prodemocratic uprising (the "Cedar Revolution").⁶³ Nonetheless, in its terminology, its cross-sectarian outreach, and its international support structure, the "Cedar Revolution" did indeed build on years of countermobilization against Syria's control over Lebanese affairs. In contrast to the "war of liberation" of the civil war era, however, by now Lebanese resistance consisted in building a shared counternarrative that bridged a diverse coalition of political actors, united primarily by their rejection of Syrianization.

After the systematic demilitarization of all potentially anti-Syrian forces, *counterviolence* did not represent a relevant option. In contrast, the postwar reconstruction effort provided Lebanese actors with ample opportunities to leverage their economic networks against Syrian satellization efforts. While the Lebanese security apparatus came under full Syrian domination, Lebanon's economy, with its strong ties to the Lebanese diaspora, proved considerably more difficult to control. In addition to various schemes of personal enrichment, Syria's domination over Lebanon was highly profitable

as an “economic safety valve”⁶⁴ based on the export of cheap Syrian labor and agricultural produce. At the same time, the career of longtime prime minister al-Hariri, who had built up his economic empire in Saudi-Arabia, also demonstrated that transnational economic networks could be employed to co-opt Syrian representatives in building up ties to alternative patrons and to establish a political counterweight to the logic of satellization.⁶⁵

Another compelling (and perhaps counterintuitive) example of evading the grasp of Syrian military control was represented by Hezbollah. Officially, the Shi’i militia was encouraged in its guerilla warfare against Israel’s control over the “security zone” as part of Syria’s negotiating strategy in peace talks over the Golan Heights, even if this insurgency provoked two major Israeli military incursions. In 1993, Operation Accountability targeted both military and civilian infrastructure in southern Lebanon, resulting in the mass flight of civilians.⁶⁶ In 1996 Operation Grapes of Wrath culminated in the mass exodus of up to five hundred thousand civilians from southern Lebanon, attacks on Beirut, and the killing of one hundred Lebanese civilians by Israeli artillery in the Qana UNIFIL base.⁶⁷ At the same time, due to its privileged access to Iranian financing and military equipment, Hezbollah was far from being a mere Syrian proxy (like its Shi’i rival Amal) but in fact was the only Lebanese mass movement that could avoid direct Syrian domination. Syrian attempts to discipline the insubordinate militia included the violent suppression of Hezbollah demonstrations via the Lebanese army and repeated manipulations of the electoral process to Hezbollah’s disadvantage.

While the Syrian army was never confronted militarily, political violence was directed against defenseless Syrian workers. Frequently sought after by Lebanese employers as cheap labor, in combination with a wave of naturalizations⁶⁸ and land sales in the Christian heartland, the hundreds of thousands of Syrian workers were sometimes perceived as part of Lebanon’s creeping demographic Syrianization. Lebanese suspicions over Syrian plans of long-term demographic engineering became particularly acute when Syria formally opened polling stations for Syrian workers in Lebanon on the occasion of inner-Syrian presidential referendums. Particularly in the years of declining Syrian control over Lebanon, Syrian workers in Lebanon became the target of incitement, violent attacks, and even cases of murder.⁶⁹

Counterinstitutions sought to subvert the rule-setting attempts of Syrian tutelage sometimes by simply evading them. An early attempt to avoid participation in the Syrian-controlled state apparatus was represented

by the Christian boycott of the 1992 parliamentary elections: “If the Syrians were able to subordinate Lebanese sovereignty to Syrian influence, then the last Syria’s opponents might do would be to avoid complicity in the electoral charade.”⁷⁰ Yet while this boycott pushed overall voter turnout to less than 25 percent,⁷¹ it failed to fully delegitimize Syria’s satellization of Lebanon’s state organs: “The Lebanese winners in the 1992 election were the more militant Shi’i factions; the effective losers were the Christians. But the real winner was Syria.”⁷²

Consequently, the resistance against Syria’s satellization policy migrated out of the political system and (especially in the case of the Maronite nationalist camp) literally out of the country: “Michel Aoun, Amin Gemayel, Raymond Eddé and Dory Chamoun were not in parliament, but *in exile*.”⁷³ The effectiveness of Syria’s all-encompassing control of the Lebanese arena shifted the focus of anti-Syrian activism to the diaspora. Particularly in the American Lebanese community, Maronite nationalist groups like the World Lebanese Organization reached out to other lobby groups championing the rights of Christian minorities in the Middle East (like the Assyrian National Congress or the Coptic International Association) as well as to the pro-Israel lobby.⁷⁴

Inside Lebanon, Maronite parties were increasingly integrated into the Syrian-dominated Ta’if regime—in the case of the Kata’eb for instance by co-opting the party’s pro-Syrian faction under the leadership of Karim Pakradouni.⁷⁵ Consequently, anti-Syrian activism shifted outside of the political system and into the realm of the Maronite church. Under pressure by the Vatican to leave the political and cultural ghetto of self-inflicted isolation, the Maronite church under the leadership of patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir worked on cross-sectarian coalition building via a series of interfaith dialogues, outreach to the Sunni community, as well as highly publicized reconciliation attempts with the Druze leadership, such as the patriarch’s visit to the Shouf Mountains.

After Israel’s military withdrawal from the “security zone” and the death of Hafiz al-Assad in 2000, a transnational and cross-sectarian coalition slowly began to tackle the Achilles’ heel of Syria’s tutelage: despite the political reality of “*de-facto* federalism between Syria and Lebanon,”⁷⁶ Syria’s *de jure* rule was based on the notion of a temporary military presence according to the Ta’if Agreement. After 2000, both a US-based transnational Maronite-Likud coalition (uniting Maronite nationalists and elements of the pro-Israel lobby in the “Lebanon Study Group”⁷⁷) and an inner-Lebanese

anti-Syrian coalition (coalesced around a Druze-Maronite core in the “Bristol Gathering”⁷⁸) began to mobilize against this “slippage between rule and practices on the ground.”⁷⁹

Based on policy recommendations by the Lebanon Study Group, in 2003 the US House of Representatives passed the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Restoration Act encompassing a series of economic sanctions on Syria for its ongoing military presence in Lebanon as well as for its military support to Hezbollah.⁸⁰ After a series of particularly heavy-handed Syrian attempts to maintain exclusive control over its Lebanese satellite (like the pressure for an unconstitutional extension of President Lahoud’s mandate),⁸¹ in an unusual show of French-American cooperation, the 2004 United Nations Security Council resolution 1559 called for the full implementation of the original Ta’if agenda, or the “withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, disbandment of remaining militias—most notably the armed wing of Hezbollah—and holding a Lebanese presidential election free from external pressure. To ensure passage, Resolution 1559 did not mention Syria by name, but the target was clear.”⁸²

This geostrategic turnaround culminated in the Syrian-orchestrated assassination of former prime minister Hariri to prevent an anti-Syrian electoral victory in the 2005 elections.⁸³ At the same time, it also formally marked the Syrian failure to impose the notion of “one people in two separate states.”⁸⁴

During the period of Syrian tutelage, examples of *counteridentities* against Syrian unification nationalism had taken the form of a religious revival with elements of a defiant Phoenicianism in the Maronite camp:

[When] Pope John Paul II visited Lebanon in May 1997, his hosts, led by the highest echelons of the Maronite clergy, used the most visual Phoenician symbol to assert Christian presence in Lebanon. The Pope gave a mass in front of hundreds of thousands of Christian believers at Our Lady of Lebanon Basilica at Harissa. On stage, behind the seat of the Pope, the producers of the event constructed a large Phoenician vessel made out of red and yellow flowers. Yellow represented the colors of the Vatican, whereas red was the color that endowed the Phoenicians with their Greek appellation. In front of the highest Lebanese dignitaries and in the presence of the Maronite patriarch, Nasrallah Butrus Sfeir, the event sent a message of Maronite defiance in the face of a post-civil war political reality.⁸⁵

In terms of *counternarratives*, the most effective instrument of resistance might have been the reframing of Syria's allegedly benign "military presence" as a hostile occupation. Early examples of this hidden transcript include the final document of the 1995 Catholic Synod on Lebanon, which denounced the occupation of Lebanon by *all* foreign troops.⁸⁶ The tipping point for the public diffusion of this counternarrative occurred after Israel's military withdrawal in 2000, crystallized in a particularly harsh communiqué by the Council of Maronite Bishops⁸⁷ and a series of critical editorials by the general manager of the Lebanese paper *An-Nahar*: "In March 2000, in an open letter to then heir apparent Bashar al-Assad of Syria, Gebran Tuani broke a standing taboo in Lebanese politics by making a vocal criticism of Syria. While hailing Bashar al-Assad as 'the representative of a new young and progressive generation' in Syria, Tuani's letter politely expressed a desire for the full implementation of the Ta'if Agreement and the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon."⁸⁸

In a similar vein, in 2001 the Maronite patriarch formally refused to accompany Pope John Paul II on a pilgrimage to Syria: "In an interview in *La Croix* magazine explaining his decision not to go to Damascus, the patriarch said, 'I can already hear their comments. 'Look, the patriarch came. There are no problems.' But I insist there is a problem: the Syrian occupation."⁸⁹ Indeed, after Israel's full military withdrawal in 2000, Syria's claim of engaging in resistance against the occupation of Lebanese territory (in the form of the Shebaa Farms) became dubious at best.⁹⁰ As a counternarrative to Syria's ideology of resistance, anti-Syrian activism not only borrowed from practices of Eastern European color revolutions⁹¹ but also specifically from the vocabulary of Palestinian nationalism. When it came to labeling the mass demonstrations of 2005, instead of using the terminology of a Cedar Revolution, "the political allies of [assassinated former Prime Minister] Hariri, who were demanding an end to Syrian hegemony, came up with the alternative name of Independence Intifada, which was regarded as more meaningful to an Arab audience, particularly a Sunni Muslim audience, because of the connotations it had with the Palestinian uprising against Israel."⁹² The underlying message was clear: Syria was not "resisting" Israel on Lebanese soil but instead was accused of *emulating* Israel's behavior vis-à-vis the Palestinians under occupation.

Additional counternarratives questioned the imposition of Syria's Arabism. In a 1997 speech at Beirut's St. Joseph University, its rector, Father

Selim Abou, denounced for instance “what he called the ‘sacralization’ of the word ‘Arabic’ and its derivatives: Arabism, Arabity, Arabization. . . . Abou said that political reality was hidden behind a ‘manipulated discourse’ of ideological content. He ridiculed the official description of the Syrian troops in Lebanon that refers to them as the Syrian ‘presence’ and Syrian ‘hosts.’ . . . Abou enunciated as the necessary condition for Christians that the assertiveness of Lebanon’s Arabic identity does not mean ‘subordination’ of their state to another state in the name of the ‘Arab nation’s unity.’”⁹³

Similar counternarratives directly addressed the gap between the lofty rhetoric of Arabism and the political reality of racketeering. During the electoral campaign of 2005, “Junblatt escalated his criticism of the Syrian regime. He dismissed the Syrian concept of ‘one people in two states,’ condemned Syria’s refusal to have diplomatic relations with Lebanon, and demanded the ‘sweeping-out’ of intelligence agencies. In a January 26 speech at Beirut’s St. Joseph’s University, he identified ‘a very dangerous Syrian-Lebanese mafia. . . . Our task is to break up this mafia. . . . We must close the gate of Anjar [Syrian military intelligence headquarters in Lebanon] for good.”⁹⁴

Table 6.1. Syrian Rule and Lebanese Resistance (1989–2005)

Type of power	Social practices of rule	Social practices of resistance
Physical power	Syria’s coercive apparatus carries out assassinations, disappearances, blackmail	Counterviolence in the form of attacks against Syrian workers
Institutional power	Legalization of Syrian presence through the Ta’if Agreement	Counterinstitutions in the form of cross-sectarian coalition building and the search for alternative patrons
Social power	Unification nationalism (“one nation in two states”)	Counteridentities (e.g., Maronite Phoenicianism)
Symbolic power	Pan-Arabism	Counternarratives of a shared struggle against Syrian occupation

SAHRAWI RESISTANCE AGAINST MOROCCAN INCORPORATION

Throughout the referendum process (and after its collapse in 2000), the most effective form of Sahrawi countermobilization against the coercive Moroccanization of Western Sahara (see table 6.2) consisted in maintaining and expanding the Tindouf refugee camps based on humanitarian aid, remittances from the diaspora, and an increasingly semisufficient garden-based agriculture. *Counterviolence* was mostly limited to repeated threats to return to guerilla warfare that never materialized, although POLISARIO continued to maintain a relatively well-equipped and motivated military force.⁹⁵ While POLISARIO prides itself on its history of “clean” guerilla warfare, given Morocco’s overwhelming advantage in terms of conventional military capabilities, these threats included a shift to political violence against civilians: “Our soldiers are free, it would be easy to go inside the Moroccan territory, to infiltrate, and to bomb hotels or civilians, or to mine roads or the airport. We know that their main source of income is tourism. But we wait for a legal solution because we are a pacific and responsible government. We always respect the rules dictated by the UN and international organizations.”⁹⁶

In terms of *counterinstitutions*, POLISARIO successfully managed to prevent the Moroccan scenario of an acclamatory referendum based on the systematic demographic engineering of the electorate, a policy that would have formalized the incorporation of Western Sahara. Based on a complex and tedious system of including tribal elders into the MINURSO-led voter registration process,⁹⁷ the Moroccan takeover of the settlement plan could be prevented (even though the referendum ultimately failed to materialize): “Out of the 244,643 applications the UN mission received, the vast majority was either fielded from Morocco proper (99,225) or from the Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara (83,971). . . . Out of the candidates from Morocco proper, only 5 percent qualified to vote, and a little less than half of Moroccan-sponsored candidates from the occupied Western Sahara qualified to vote.”⁹⁸

POLISARIO also aimed at undermining the normalization of Morocco’s incorporation effort. Diasporic and transnational activists mobilized successfully against the Moroccan exploitation of the natural resources of Western Sahara.⁹⁹ The single biggest success of this campaign might have been the “Corell opinion” of 2002 in which the UN under-secretary-general for legal affairs determined that “if further exploration

and exploitation activities were to proceed in disregard of the interests and wishes of the people of Western Sahara, they would be in violation of the principles of international law applicable to mineral resource activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories.”¹⁰⁰

In addition, Sahrawi nationalists *within* the Moroccan-controlled territory successfully subverted the façade of idyllic tranquillity once described by Hassan II as follows: “Under Divine Protection, we are well-established in our Sahara, where we enjoy relaxing with a water, a tea or a fruit juice—all together—enjoying the rule of law, the quietness, the good life and the respect of democratic rights and individual and collective liberties.”¹⁰¹

Two large-scale episodes of popular mobilization in 1999 and 2005 (described by Sahrawi nationalists as *intifadas*)¹⁰² spread to all major cities of Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara. Both cases stood out for well-mediatized episodes of police brutality and increasingly open displays of nationalist imagery that ruptured the Moroccanization of the public space: “The killing of Hamdi Lembarki, the *intifada*’s first martyr, put a pall over Western Sahara and the protest movement. Following the release of his body by Moroccan officials, Lembarki’s funeral in early 2006 became a silent, though massive demonstration; RASD’s flag draped his coffin. Then Aminatou Haidar was released from prison, an activist who had served seven months for her participation in the uprising. . . . Her release was met with a massive display of RASD flags, pictures of RASD founders, and, provocatively, Palestinian-style headscarves (*kufiya*).”¹⁰³

As *counteridentities*, these displays of ostentatious Sahrawiness (like the inclusion of Sahrawis from Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara in public functions of POLISARIO/SADR¹⁰⁴) were directed against the imposition of Morocco’s paternalistic unification nationalism. Other practices of strategic essentialism included aesthetic expressions of a diasporic Sahrawi consciousness¹⁰⁵ (in the Sahrawi refugee camps) and defiant displays of the Spanish language or Sahrawi nationalist symbolism (in Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara) in order to “disrupt and deny such alleged normality . . . [and] make it quite explicit that the Western Sahara is neither ‘normal,’ nor yet under control.”¹⁰⁶

As a *counternarrative* to the normalization of Moroccan control, POLISARIO attempted to subvert the Moroccan practice of demographic engineering by framing the Moroccan practice of colonization as a form of settler colonialism (despite the fact that many Moroccan settlers were ethnic

Sahrawis and might be sympathetic to an independent Sahrawi republic).¹⁰⁷ In his initial critique of the 2003 Baker II peace plan, the secretary-general of POLISARIO described the suggested inclusion of “the bona fide residents of Western Sahara”¹⁰⁸ as follows: “Accepting the Moroccan flag, currency and stamps in the Western Sahara is tantamount to giving in to the colonizer’s claim that it has sovereignty over the Territory. . . . [The] composition of the electorate envisaged under the proposal is both unfair and fatal to the Saharan people . . . because the fate of the colonized Saharan Territory would be determined through a referendum in which 86,425 Saharans and . . . Moroccan settlers four to five times that number would participate.”¹⁰⁹

As part of this counternarrative, Sahrawi nationalists continued to engage in an elaborate cult of martyrs. In 2004 this practice was publicly claimed by a more radical faction within POLISARIO known as “The Line of the Martyr”:

With one foot in the camps and another among Sahrawi militants in the occupied territory, and strong support from the diaspora community in Europe, *Khatt al-Shahid* became the first known faction within Polisario, claiming elected members of SADR among its members. After failing to achieve reforms quietly, the members of *Khatt al-Shahid* publicly called for a return to the basic principle of the movement (i.e. “all the homeland or martyrdom”), more changes and new faces in the political leadership (especially the diplomats and ambassadors), a re-invigorated military capacity, and a complete separation of Polisario from the SADR, especially at the top.¹¹⁰

As an expression of this “resistance identity,”¹¹¹ Sahrawi nationalists continued to draw from the aesthetic repertoire of nomadic state evasion to confront the ongoing process of Moroccanization. Just weeks before the Arab Spring, in 2010 Sahrawis in Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara organized the Gdeim Izik protest camp outside of Laayoune:¹¹² by moving from the Moroccanized city into a tent camp in the desert, Sahrawi activists symbolically reenacted the escape from the Moroccan-Mauritanian invasion in 1975, which stands at the origin of the Sahrawi protostate in exile.

Table 6.2. Moroccan Rule and Sahrawi Resistance (1991–2005)

Type of power	Social practices of rule	Social practices of resistance
Physical power	Morocco's coercive apparatus carries out ethnic cleansing, counterinsurgency, repression	Threats of counterviolence against Morocco's coercive apparatus
Institutional power	Attempts to legalize Moroccan annexation (referendum process, settlement plan)	Counterinstitutions in the form of a proto-state (Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, SADR)
Social power	Unification nationalism ("our subjects of the Sahara")	Counteridentities form the core of an unincorporable Sahrawi nation; struggle against tribalism
Symbolic power	Sacred allegiance between Saharan tribes and Alaouite throne	Counternarratives of revolutionary egalitarianism; cult of martyrs

PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AGAINST ISRAELI EXCLAVIZATION

With the establishment of a protostate, Palestinian resistance against Israel's exclavization initially shifted from guerilla warfare, terrorism, and popular mass mobilization to the field of diplomacy, civil society, and world opinion (see table 6.3). However, the collapse of the final status negotiations at Camp David in 2000 resulted in the Second Intifada, the highest level of Palestinian *counterviolence* against Israeli rule inside the occupied territories since the initial state expansion in 1967. Palestinian militias and terrorist organizations carried out attacks both against IDF soldiers as well as high-profile terrorist attacks against the civilian home front, particularly suicide bombings against prominent targets like the Dolphinarium discotheque at Tel Aviv beach or the Sbarro pizza restaurant in the heart of downtown Jerusalem. In March 2002 alone, within a single month 132 Israeli civilians were killed, among them thirty participants at a Passover seder in Netanya. Overall, "in the course of over 20,000 recorded attacks of various sorts, 764 civilians were killed, and another 3,100 seriously injured (the figures amongst IDF personnel were 215 and 532 respectively)."¹¹³

An earlier wave of terrorist attacks by Hamas between 1994 and 1996 was not necessarily aimed at undermining Israel's rule over the occupied territories but reflected a struggle between competing state projects within the Palestinian political sphere. Fatah's centralization of power in the Palestinian protostate (particularly its capture of the security apparatus) mirrored the Labor-Zionist practice of decontestation by exclusion, so that Hamas's terrorism was aimed first and foremost at deterring the suppression of the Islamist opposition:

On April 6 and 13, 1994, shortly before the signing of the Cairo agreement on the establishment of a self-governing Palestinian authority in Gaza and Jericho, two suicide operations were carried out in 'Afula and Hadera, two Jewish towns in Israel, by the Battallions of 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam, Hamas's military wing. Publicly, these operations were portrayed as avenging the massacre in Hebron of thirty Palestinians by a Jewish settler on February 25 of that year. Although this argument was directed to the Palestinian people, these operations also were aimed at enhancing Hamas's bargaining position regarding the anticipated PLO-based PA, by pressuring Arafat to reckon with Hamas and seek political coexistence with it.¹¹⁴

The newly established protostate structures of the Palestinian Authority provided a wide range of opportunities in terms of *counterinstitutions*. In order to evade its satellization as an Israeli client-state, the Palestinian Authority systematically built up political, military, and economic ties to alternative patrons. While the PA's security sector received training by US military advisors,¹¹⁵ the European Union provided high levels of support in building up a viable economic and political infrastructure: "[The] EU took on the main financial burden of supporting the Palestinian Authority. Over the period from 1994 to 1999, the EU provided over US\$2 billion of support to the Palestinians and became the economic lifeline for the administrative operations of the Palestinian Authority. Indeed, it is questionable whether the Palestinian Authority could have survived over this period without this European financial support."¹¹⁶

Based on these ties to external patrons, state formation within the occupied territories followed the logic of territorializing Palestinian nationalism.¹¹⁷ In order to erode the institutional drift from an interim administration to an Israeli client state, the Palestinian Authority engaged in a vigorous campaign of symbolic nationalization:

Palestinian political terminology departs slightly but significantly from that of the Oslo Accords—the term used in official documents for the body is the *Palestinian National Authority* (PNA). . . . Despite its history, the PNA presents itself to Palestinians not as a body created by bilateral agreements, but as an authority deputized by the PLO to administer those areas of the West Bank and Gaza controlled by Palestinians, pending the formal declaration of a Palestinian state by the PLO.¹¹⁸

The newly established protostate structures provided ample space to promote Palestinian *counteridentities* based on a nationalized cultural industry, encompassing for instance a ministry of culture, a ministry of tourism, a national theater, and a fledgling film industry.¹¹⁹ The escalation of the Second Intifada popularized a new framing aimed at undermining Israel's justification of preserving the settlement exclaves as part of a seemingly permanent state of negotiations. By depicting the geographic separation between areas under limited Palestinian self-government and Israel's ethnic exclaves as a form of "apartheid,"¹²⁰ this *counternarrative* (which built on a long legacy of Occidental motifs in Palestinian nationalism) aimed at unmasking the "peace process" as pure mythmaking, frequently embedded in calls for a "South African scenario" (in other words, the dismantling of the Jewish nation-state). The potentially explosive potential of this hidden transcript (diffused for instance by annual "Israel apartheid weeks") was summarized by Ehud Olmert in 2003 as follows: "We don't have unlimited time. More and more Palestinians are uninterested in a negotiated, two-state solution, because they want to change the essence of the conflict from an Algerian paradigm to a South African one. From a struggle against 'occupation,' in their parlance, to a struggle for one-man-one-vote. That is, of course, a much cleaner struggle, a much more popular struggle—and ultimately a much more powerful one."¹²¹

In many ways, this counternarrative reformulated the Third Worldist election myth of secular Palestinian nationalists, who equated their territorial struggle against Israel's expansionism with a global fight against "racism" (as displayed prominently at the 2001 UN World Conference against Racism).¹²² By linking Israel's second-wave expansion in 1967 to its first-wave expansion in 1948, the counternarrative of an enduring *nakba* (catastrophe) became embedded in a powerful form of counterirredentism, frequently promoted by the cultural industry of the Palestinian Authority: "A number of geography books portray Palestine as one geographic-political unit, including all heretofore Arab cities that became part of Israel—Jaffa,

Table 6.3. Israeli Rule and Palestinian Resistance (1993–2005)

Type of power	Social practices of rule	Social practices of resistance
Physical power	Israel's coercive apparatus carries out counterinsurgency, repression, assassinations	Counterviolence against Israel's coercive apparatus, campaign of terrorism throughout the Second Intifada
Institutional power	Attempts to legalize Israeli control as a never-ending "peace process"	Counterinstitutions in the form of a protostate (Palestinian Authority)
Social power	Façade of temporary military rule	Counteridentities express exclusive Palestinian indigeneity
Symbolic power	Narratives of return to a sacred ethnic landscape	Counternarratives emphasize global relevance of struggle against Zionism as a fight against apartheid

Beisan (Bet She'an), Beersheba—while disregarding Israel's existence or any of the cities founded by the Jews. . . . Similarly, history books abound with expressions of longing for destroyed localities."¹²³

Varieties of State Contraction

DESATELLIZATION: SYRIA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON

Both the beginning of Syria's satellization policy (the Ta'if Agreement) and its termination (Security Council Resolution 1559) reflected ripple effects of American hegemonic reengagement in the region, in both cases centered on military invasions of Iraq. Nonetheless, Lebanese resistance against Syrian control (ranging from Michel Aoun's "war of liberation" to the self-proclaimed "Independence Intifada") had a clear impact on the Syrian system of rule and contributed to the final military withdrawal in 2005.

While Syria's extensive control over Lebanon had once been described as a semipermanent form of "de-facto federalism between Syria and

Lebanon,¹²⁴ the satellization project ultimately fell apart under the combined pressures of inner-Lebanese coalition building and geostrategic shifts in the region, especially following the US invasion of Iraq.¹²⁵ When Syria was forced to withdraw from Lebanon in 2005, almost thirty years of indirect, yet highly intrusive external control left behind a significant legacy. Even after the Syrian withdrawal, Lebanon's political parties remained split into pro-Syrian and anti-Syrian camps, thereby reflecting the long-term impact of Syrian satellization. In addition, "Lebanon's political system and practices have been 'syrianised.' The increasing influence of the security apparatus and practices such as the banning of politicians, the detention of political prisoners, and the presence of political exiles were alien to political practice in prewar Lebanon."¹²⁶ Having enabled the rise of Hezbollah as a military actor in its own right, Syria also continued to exercise considerable leverage over its neighbor even without a formal military presence: "Syria retained a vast patronage network among Lebanese elites, including strong relations with members of the Lebanese security and intelligence apparatus. It is widely believed that Syria drew on this network over the following years in attempts to destabilize the new status quo in Lebanon (and thereby to show that peace could not be maintained without Syrian arbitration)."¹²⁷ Echoing the death of Rafiq al-Hariri, the immediate months after Syria's military withdrawal even brought back the civil-war practice of assassinations of high-level critics of Syrian tutelage, probably indicating an ongoing presence of Syrian military intelligence inside Lebanon: "By provoking a new round of civil war, the purpose would have been to prove that Lebanon's peace could not survive without the Syrian arbiter."¹²⁸

While both Syria and Israel had developed their own pattern of indirect rule over Lebanon, Syria's superior control of relevant power resources resulted in a much more formalized and intrusive pattern of external control—with a significantly more permanent imprint on Lebanese politics and society. Inside Syria itself, this first wave of state contraction might have helped awaken the specters of essentially contested statehood, thereby raising the scenario of ethno-sectarian fragmentation: based on a "pattern of Saudi-Syrian accommodation in Lebanon . . . symbolized by the political role granted to Rafiq al-Hariri, Saudi Arabia's 'Lebanon-man,'" ¹²⁹ Syria's rule over its neighbor implied considerable deterrence against a Sunni challenge to the Assad dynasty. Six years after the withdrawal from Lebanon, the Syrian civil war quickly escalated into a renewed "struggle for Syria," ¹³⁰ not least given the confrontation between the country's Sunni periphery and the Alawite-dominated Ba'ath regime. By pitting the Sunni majority

against the Alawite minority regime, the civil war effectively threatened to undo the outcome of Syria's first-wave state expansion, thereby raising the specter of a return ethnoconfessional fragmentation.

SCENARIOS OF SATELLIZATION IN WESTERN SAHARA

Morocco successfully subverted any scenario of disincorporation (or de-Moroccanization) in Western Sahara. In fact, given the limitations of Sahrawi countermobilization, Morocco even prevented a much less drastic scenario, namely an institutional shift from incorporation (as "Morocco's Southern Provinces")¹³¹ to satellization (governed by a "Western Sahara Authority"). In 2000, the referendum process at the core of the Settlement Plan collapsed. After a scathing report of the secretary-general on the deadlock in the referendum process, the Security Council no longer called for national self-determination according to the decolonization regime but for a negotiated *political* solution between the two parties: in other words a "durable and agreed resolution of their dispute."¹³² Three years later, the 2003 "Baker II" peace plan (named after the plan's author, James Baker, in his function as the personal envoy of the UN secretary-general for Western Sahara) foresaw the creation of a transitional satellite administration under full Moroccan control (Western Sahara Authority [WSA]). While elections for its protostate organs (a legislative assembly, a supreme court, a chief executive) would have been based on an all-Sahrawi electorate, a new referendum on self-determination would have included "the bona fide residents of Western Sahara"¹³³—in other words, the majority population of Moroccan settler immigrants.¹³⁴

In addition, the peace plan would have effectively transformed the POLISARIO leadership from leaders of a protostate in exile (SADR) to agents of a Moroccan *satellite nonstate*.¹³⁵ While the Western Sahara Authority would have been responsible for law enforcement, fisheries, and industry,¹³⁶ Morocco would have remained in charge of foreign relations, defense, and (curiously enough) "the preservation of territorial integrity against secessionist attempts, whether from within or outside the Territory."¹³⁷

POLISARIO saw itself forced to accept the peace plan under Algerian pressure,¹³⁸ although it would have effectively dismantled both the RASD and POLISARIO.¹³⁹ By contrast, Morocco rejected the satellization project of Baker II: "[The] Peace Plan raised the very possibility that Polisario officials and their supporters would dominate the WSA. The idea of [RASD president] Mohammed Abdelaziz as the WSA executive must have sent

chills down the spine of Moroccan Interior Ministry officials. Furthermore, Western Sahara's most important economic aspects would come under WSA control, including future petroleum prospects, fisheries, and raw phosphate exports."¹⁴⁰

Instead, Morocco offered a vague "autonomy plan" in order to formalize its incorporation of Western Sahara—inside the Moroccan-occupied territory, this abandonment of the referendum process triggered the Independence Intifada of 2005. While Sahrawi resistance failed to prevent the *de facto* incorporation of Western Sahara, the ongoing existence of a protostate in exile successfully blocked the *de jure* incorporation of the territory. Ongoing acts of defiance against Moroccanization efforts continued to interrupt the normalization of unlawful annexation. When walking through Moroccan-occupied Laayoune, one cannot fail to notice large rectangles of fresh black paint on ordinary house walls. Instead of blocking out the graffiti that depicts the flag of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, these black rectangles remain a vivid reminder of the ongoing conflict over the territory.

DEPATRONIZATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, DEEXCLAVIZATION IN GAZA

Two different patterns of state contraction occurred in Israel's rule over captured territories in the decade after the Oslo Accords, both of which were triggered by prolonged campaigns of organized countermobilization. In the case of Israel's limited rule over South Lebanon, the withdrawal of the Israeli patron in 2000 followed the pattern of unraveling patronage ties to local proxy forces (depatronization). By contrast, Israel's withdrawal from the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip in 2005 followed the pattern of dismantling ethnoterritorial exclaves (deexclavization).

Israel's establishment of a "security zone" in South Lebanon was shaped by the classic features of patronization as a limited, informal, and largely indirect form of paternalistic rule by an external power based on its patronage ties to local elites. Following the logic of institutional layering, Israeli rule consisted in a limited military presence (largely as a buffer against hostile incursions), shifting forms of support for local militias (especially the South Lebanon Army [SLA]) and varying degrees of economic incentives for the population of South Lebanon.¹⁴¹ While ties between the Israeli army and Maronite-dominated militias in South Lebanon dated back to earlier joint attempts to rein in the PLO presence in the region,¹⁴² the establishment

of the Israeli army as the patron of South Lebanon in 1985 resulted from Israel's failure to establish a much more intrusive form of control over its northern neighbor: the patronization of South Lebanon reflected the failure of Israel's attempt to satellize Lebanon in its entirety.

Following Israel's intervention in the Lebanese civil war in 1982, the Israeli-Lebanese agreement of May 17, 1983, would have ended the state of war between the two countries, established a formal Israeli diplomatic presence in Lebanon (a "liaison office," i.e., not yet a full-fledged embassy), and confirmed the establishment of an Israeli-dominated security zone in South Lebanon. In addition, Lebanon would have been systematically detached from the orbit of the Arab League by abrogating any treaties in violation of the agreement in addition to closing off its territory and airspace to "any state hostile to the other Party," or almost every single Arab country except for Egypt.¹⁴³ Under Syrian pressure, the Israeli-Lebanese agreement of 1983 fell apart, thereby paving the way for Syria's ascent in Lebanon.

Based on Israel's failed satellization attempt, the opportunity structure that shaped the patronization of Israel's security zone in South Lebanon can be analyzed in greater detail. Due to high levels of stateness and a clear preference by the Great Powers for the territorial status quo, the more intrusive options of state expansion in the form of territorial incorporation (Lebanon as part of "Greater Syria") or exclavization (the establishment of Jewish-Israeli settlements in South Lebanon) were never under serious consideration. Instead, both Israel and Syria struggled over the question of who would be able to force the Lebanese polity into its orbit. When Syria ultimately succeeded in its satellization of Lebanon, Israel grudgingly withdrew to South Lebanon and continued to rule the region in a much more informal and improvised manner than originally planned.

The relatively unintrusive and haphazard approach of Israeli patronization also stands out when it comes to the question of institutional reversal (depatronization): when Israel's rule over the "security zone" was abandoned in 2000 after a largely unsuccessful counterinsurgency campaign against Hezbollah,¹⁴⁴ Israel's military presence fell apart within hours. In a sudden unilateral move, Israel abandoned both the region and its local SLA allies, while Hezbollah forces and civilians rushed into the space that had suddenly opened up. "The commander of the SLA Eastern brigade abandoned his headquarters, collected his family and fled to Israel, and soon after, the SLA Thirtieth Druze battalion collapsed and abandoned its outposts, thus forcing the Israelis to abandon their own outposts in order to

avoid becoming isolated in the area. By 5 p.m. the SLA had ceased to exist as an organized military body, and Israel's security zone in southern Lebanon was no more.¹⁴⁵ Except for the limited military infrastructure of the SLA (whose members often fled to Israel), Israel's patronization effort would not leave behind any significant traces—except of course those confirming Hezbollah's standing as a significant regional player.

In sharp contrast to Lebanon, Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005 was considerably more intrusive. As a particularly harsh form of coercive rule combining drastic measures of military counterinsurgency (best encapsulated in the "Hausmanization of Gaza")¹⁴⁶ and the establishment of ethnic exclaves based on land expropriation¹⁴⁷ (a clear-cut violation of international humanitarian law),¹⁴⁸ Israel's exclavization project in Gaza represented a paradigmatic case of predatory state consolidation. However, despite the clear power imbalance, Palestinian resistance played a crucial role in challenging the institutionalization of territorial expansion over time. Both the establishment of a separation fence in 2003¹⁴⁹ and finally Israel's full-scale state contraction from the Gaza Strip in 2005¹⁵⁰ resulted from a substantial increase in Palestinian stateness that had become apparent during the Second Intifada. While the First Intifada precluded the option of territorial incorporation, the Second Intifada ruptured the seemingly smooth integration of satellization and exclavization that had characterized Israel's rule over the occupied territories in the aftermath of the Oslo Accords. Israel's Disengagement Plan, carried out in 2005, followed an earlier pattern of withdrawing Jewish-Israeli settlers from the Sinai Peninsula,¹⁵¹ in both cases territories with weak to nonexistent levels of stateness: the unilateral unraveling of Israel's infrastructure in the Gaza Strip left behind a significant power vacuum, which would contribute significantly to the rise of a Hamas protostate only two years later.

Conclusion

The end of the Cold War resulted in a mixed scenario, combining a pattern of ongoing territorial entrenchment (Israeli rule over the West Bank, Moroccan rule over Western Sahara) with episodes of state contraction (Israeli withdrawal from Southern Lebanon and Gaza, Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon). As the comparative case study shows, state expansions were only *semipermanent*, whether in the case of Syrianization, Moroccanization, or Judaization. In Lebanon, the pattern of satellization could be broken

based on a combination of Great Power pressure and cross-sectarian coalition building. In Western Sahara, despite large-scale efforts at incorporation, Morocco's rule over the territory remains contested and almost shifted toward a pattern of satellization that might have looked similar to the post-Oslo scenario in the West Bank. In the occupied territories, as a consequence of two popular uprisings, Israeli state institutions demarcated a future border of Israel proper (the separation barrier) and carried out a full withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Despite the entrenchment of ethnoterritorial exclaves in the West Bank, this scenario of a limited deexclavization continues to shape the debate over the future of the settlement enterprise in the occupied territories until today.

Chapter 7

Varieties of Expansionism in Global Comparison

The long-standing state expansions of Syria, Morocco, and Israel reflect a unique regional setting. The irredentist visions of “Greater Syria,” “Greater Morocco,” and “Greater Israel” might have remained in the margins of domestic politics without the conflict-driven regional setting of the Middle East and North Africa. Expansionism reflected both the regional context of a “perennial conflict formation”¹ and contributed to its entrenchment. However, both the nationalist fantasies of third-wave irredentism and the political practice of postcolonial state expansions represented a truly *global* phenomenon. This chapter applies the varieties of expansionism approach to a much broader universe of cases. Following a global overview of state expansions and state contractions after World War II, the chapter provides three additional case studies of territories that became contested as a result of expansionist statecraft: Cyprus, East Timor, and Crimea.

State Expansions after World War II

State expansions after World War II can be broadly divided according to their respective waves of irredentism. As Chazan has argued, irredentism coincided with four crucial waves of state formation, resulting in a first wave (European state formation in the nineteenth century), a second wave (after World War I), a third wave (decolonization after World War II), and a fourth wave (newly emerging states in the post-Soviet and the post-Yugoslav sphere).² According to this categorization, we might distinguish between postcolonial state expansions like the Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli cases (third-wave irredentism) on the one hand and post-Soviet state expansions like the Armenian-Azerbaijani struggle over Nagorno-Karabakh or the Russian-Ukrainian confrontation over Crimea (fourth-wave irredentism).

Based on the varieties of expansionism approach previously discussed (see chapter 1), we could broadly categorize state expansions after World War II according to the following ideal types (see table 7.1).

Table 7.1. State Expansions after World War II in Global Comparison

		Power resources deployed by the expanding state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	<p>Patronization (institutional layering)</p> <p>—Indian military presence in Sri Lanka (1987–1990) and Bangladesh (1971–1972)</p> <p>—Israeli military presence in South Lebanon (1982–2000)</p> <p>—Turkish military presence in Northern Syria (since 2016)</p>	<p>Satellization (institutional drift)</p> <p>—Soviet rule over East European satellite states (1947–1991)</p> <p>—Syrian rule over Lebanon (1989–2005)</p> <p>—Israeli rule over Palestinian Authority (since 1994)</p> <p>—Vietnamese rule over Cambodia (1979–1989)</p> <p>—Ethiopian rule over Eritrea (1952–1962)</p>
	Low	<p>Exclavization (institutional displacement)</p> <p>—Russification of Kaliningrad (since 1945)</p> <p>—Turkification of Northern Cyprus (since 1974)</p> <p>—Judaization of the occupied territories via the Israeli settlement project (since 1967)</p> <p>—Armenianization of Nagorno Karabakh (since 1991)</p>	<p>Incorporation (institutional conversion)</p> <p>—Sovietization of the Baltic States (1940–1991)</p> <p>—Indonesianization of East Timor (1975–1999), West Papua (since 1969)</p> <p>—Moroccanization of major parts of Western Sahara (since 1975)</p> <p>—Sinicization of Tibet (since 1951)</p> <p>—Israelization (partial) of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights (since 1967)</p>

The ideal type of *patronization*, defined as a form of indirect rule by a limited projection of state power, captures a number of relatively unstructured and temporary forms of outside intervention by neighboring countries in the context of civil wars: for instance, India's military presence in Sri Lanka (1987–1990) and Bangladesh (1971–1972),³ Israel's military presence in South Lebanon (1985–2000, see chapter 6),⁴ or Turkey's military presence in Northern Syria (since 2016).⁵

The label of *satellization*, defined as a form of indirect rule by an unlimited projection of state power, fits for highly structured and long-term patterns of indirect rule like Israel's rule over the Palestinian Authority (since 1994, see chapter 6) or the Soviet establishment of satellite states in Eastern Europe.⁶ Less permanent forms of satellization might include Vietnamese rule over Cambodia (1979–1989),⁷ Ethiopian rule over Eritrea during the Ethiopian-Eritrean Federation (1952–1962)⁸ and Syrian rule over Lebanon after the Ta'if Agreement (1989–2005, see chapter 6).⁹

The process of *exclavization*, defined as a direct form of rule based on a limited projection of state power, not only describes Israel's policy of Judaization in the occupied territories (the settlement project since 1967, see chapter 4)¹⁰ but also the Turkification of Northern Cyprus (since 1974)¹¹ and the Armenianization of Nagorno-Karabakh (since 1991).¹²

The ideal type of *incorporation*, defined as a direct form of rule based on an unlimited projection of state power, encompasses the Moroccanization of major parts of Western Sahara (since 1975, see chapter 4)¹³ as well as the partial Israelization of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights (since 1967, see chapter 4).¹⁴ In addition, the term applies for the Sovietization of the Baltic States,¹⁵ the Indonesianization of East Timor (1975–1999) and West Papua (since 1969),¹⁶ and the Sinicization of Tibet.¹⁷

State Contractions after World War II

By applying the same typology to state contractions after World War II, we get the following overview (see table 7.2).

The term *depatronization*, defined as the undoing of indirect rule by a limited projection of state power, can be deployed for a number of military withdrawals after the end of civil wars.¹⁸ In addition to Israel's withdrawal from South Lebanon (in 2000, see chapter 6), a similar pattern could be observed in the Indian withdrawal from Sri Lanka (1990) and Bangladesh (1972).

Table 7.2. State Contractions after World War II in Global Comparison

		Power resources deployed by the contracting state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	Depatronization (institutional unlayering) —Indian withdrawal from Sri Lanka (1990) and Bangladesh (1972) —Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon (2000)	Desatellization (institutional redrift) —Soviet withdrawal from East European satellite states (1991) —Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon (2005) —Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia (1989)
	Low	Deexclavization (institutional replacement) —Israeli withdrawal from settlements in Sinai (1982), Gaza Strip, and parts of the West Bank (2005)	Disincorporation (institutional reconversion) —De-Sovietization of the Baltic States (1991) —De-Indonesianization of East Timor (1999) —Failed de-Israelization of the Golan Heights (negotiated during 1990s)

The ideal type of *desatellization*, defined as the undoing of indirect rule by an unlimited projection of state power, fits for the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon (2005, see chapter 6). Other examples of states that have escaped from the orbit of strong expansionist powers can be found in the Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia (1989) or more prominently in the Soviet withdrawal from Eastern European satellite states (1991).¹⁹

The pattern of *deexclavization* can be defined as the undoing of direct rule by a limited projection of state power. In addition to the withdrawal of Jewish-Israeli settlers from the Sinai Peninsula (1982) and the Gaza Strip (2005),²⁰ this ideal type might be a useful label for the conflict resolution plans proposed for the question of Northern Cyprus (see the paragraph “Exclaves and Satellite States: Comparing Cyprus, East Timor, and Crimea”)

Disincorporation, defined as the undoing of direct rule by an unlimited projection of state power, describes the process of de-Sovietization in the Baltic region or in Central Asia (1991)²¹ as well as the de-Indonesianization of East Timor (1999, see the paragraph “Exclaves and Satellite States: Comparing Cyprus, East Timor, and Crimea”). At the same time, the label also fits for a potential de-Israelization of the Golan Heights, which was discussed in extensive Syrian-Israeli peace talks throughout the late 1990s but ultimately failed to materialize.²²

Exclaves and Satellite States: Comparing Cyprus, East Timor, and Crimea

In order apply the varieties of expansionism approach in greater detail, the following case studies will analyze ethnoterritorial conflicts shaped by expansionist statecraft after World War II, namely Cyprus, East Timor, and Crimea.

FROM EXCLAVIZATION TO DEEXCLAVIZATION: TURKISH RULE OVER NORTHERN CYPRUS (SINCE 1974)

Turkish rule over Northern Cyprus (established by a military invasion in 1974) follows the pattern of exclavization, a form of institutional displacement in which an expansionist state establishes institutional, legal, or ethnic exclaves on a captured territory with limited levels of stateness. While these exclaves rely on the metropole for support, from a legal and institutional perspective they tend to be formally distinct: the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus may be a contested and widely unrecognized quasi-state²³ held together by Turkish troops, Turkish investment, and considerable Turkish in-migration²⁴, but it remains functionally, legally, and institutionally separate from Turkish territory, even if Greek Cypriots and many international observers would describe this distinction as mere window dressing. In contrast to the Greek Cypriot project of irredentist *enosis* (union) with mainland Greece, the Turkish Cypriot polity after 1974 was systematically established as a territorial exclave, organized as an autonomous administration (1974–1975), a federated state (1975–1983), or an autonomous republic (since 1983)—but never as part of mainland Turkey.

Turkey’s exclavization policies in Northern Cyprus can be traced back to the opportunity structure which was theorized for this ideal type, namely low

levels of preexisting stateness combined with an expansionist state that deploys only limited power resources. After gaining independence from Britain, the two ethnic communities of Cyprus failed to establish a functional system of power sharing. The shared state institutions were marked by a fragmented monopoly on violence, limited administrative effectiveness, and an ongoing legitimacy crisis since both ethnic communities mobilized within much stronger nonstate institutions. When the Cypriot state structures collapsed in the rapid succession of a military coup, a Turkish invasion, and a large-scale population exchange between the South and the North in 1974–1975, the unification between Turkish-ruled Northern Cyprus and mainland Turkey could have been an option—but only in theory. In reality, Turkey’s capability to reshape Northern Cyprus was severely limited by domestic instability, high levels of international pressure, and a veto by the Turkish Cypriot community against its incorporation.²⁵ De jure, the status of Northern Cyprus remained frozen as occupied territory; de facto, Turkey systematically created facts on the ground by forming a well-established political exclave, which in many ways mirrored its metropole without ever being fully part of it.²⁶

The legacy of exclavization (as opposed to incorporation) also continues to shape the process of conflict resolution in Cyprus, frequently conceptualized as an institutional undoing of Turkey’s policies in Northern Cyprus (deexclavization) in order to re-create shared institutions within a consociational framework.²⁷ While Turkish exclavization policies in Northern Cyprus created an effect of systematic political, cultural, and demographic displacement, conflict resolution in Cyprus tends to revolve around the question of finding institutional alternatives to the logic of territorial partition. Historically, the various conflict resolution projects in Cyprus have differed in their understanding of how the Turkish exclave in the north should be dismantled, for instance, regarding thorny issues like the withdrawal of the Turkish military, the reintegration of Turkish Cypriot state institutions into a joint framework, and the repatriation of Turkish settler immigrants to mainland Turkey. In this context, the Annan Peace Plan of 2004 could best be understood as a failed deexclavization initiative. In a joint referendum, Turkish Cypriots agreed to a reunification procedure that would have safeguarded relatively *high* levels of political autonomy for the Turkish Cypriot exclave, while Greek Cypriots rejected the peace plan for precisely the same reason. In other words, while the peace plan vowed to dismantle the de jure structure of a Turkish Cypriot quasi-state, the formula would have guaranteed the continuity of a de facto Turkish exclave.²⁸ Consequently, the island remained just as divided as before.

FROM INCORPORATION TO DISINCORPORATION: INDONESIA'S CAPTURE OF EAST TIMOR (1975–1999)

While the logic of exclavization projects the state institutions of an expansionist state into separate and legally distinct political entities, incorporation aims at the institutional conversion of a captured territory with limited levels of preexisting stateness into a larger state framework. Indonesia's policies in East Timor corresponded precisely to such a pattern of systematic incorporation aimed at the political, cultural, and demographic Indonesianization²⁹ of the territory and its population at all levels. These policies followed an established pattern that had been implemented by the Indonesian state apparatus in other disputed regions such as West Papua³⁰ and of course within the Indonesian archipelago itself. While Indonesia's incorporation policies ultimately fell apart, the circumstances of Indonesia's initial capture of the territory corresponded to a seemingly ideal opportunity structure for expansionism, namely relatively low levels of stateness (limited monopoly on violence, administrative ineffectiveness, lack of legitimate authority)³¹ in combination with a strong and determined expansionist state that received at least tacit approval for its territorial revisionism by both the Great Powers and most of its neighbors: "During the late 1970s and 1980s, increasing numbers of governments effectively recognized Indonesia's take-over, most crucially Australia, which had offshore oil interests in the Timor Gap. The United States, the ASEAN nations and most Islamic countries also threw their support to the Indonesians."³²

Indonesia's incorporation policies openly aimed at leveling the political, cultural, and demographic differences that separated East Timor (transformed into Indonesia's twenty-seventh province) from the rest of the country. By co-opting assimilationist local elites, suppressing East Timorese nationalism, and reeducating the population in the language of *Bahasa Indonesia* and in the spirit of *panca sila* (the five principles of Indonesian nationalism), the incorporation policy was aimed at making East Timor's unification with Indonesia permanent.³³

Demographic engineering in particular aimed at creating close linkages between East Timor and Indonesia: the implantation of Indonesian settler immigrants (euphemistically described as "transmigrants") created a political and economic elite with a vested interest in close ties between the captured territory and the Indonesian state apparatus.³⁴ All of these policies were backed up by Indonesian security forces, which were frequently deployed against East Timorese nationalists. The most notable incident was the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre, in which the Indonesian military killed over

250 proindependence protesters despite the presence of the international media.

To outside observers, the policy of Indonesianization seemed largely successful. In 1981, Weatherbee commented that “it is difficult to come to any other conclusion but that the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia is ‘irreversible.’ Indonesia’s ‘permanent’ security interests require it. In terms of capabilities there does not appear to be an internal or external challenge that is credible. There is not a realistic U.N. role, particularly in the light of waning urgency.”³⁵ However, when Indonesia’s authoritarian regime became increasingly unstable in the late 1990s, the option of East Timor’s *de-Indonesianization* suddenly reemerged. Given the highly intrusive, coercive, and ultimately costly policy of converting the territory into an Indonesian province, the process of institutional undoing or disincorporation had to cross substantially higher thresholds than a mere evacuation of military personnel. Following a referendum on national self-determination, East Timor’s formal disincorporation in 1999 involved substantial levels of political violence and a sudden mass withdrawal of Indonesian security forces and settler immigrants, thereby removing “70,000 military personnel and other non-Timorese, and 180,000 Timorese.”³⁶

While the rupture of disincorporation weighed heavily on the subsequent process of East Timorese state formation,³⁷ at least in some cases the legacy of Indonesian institution building could be successfully reconverted for the process of Timorization. In contrast to Portuguese colonialism, Indonesia left behind a “much better-educated [populace]. It has more international experience, mainly in Indonesia, which a surprising number of younger Timorese have visited, worked in or studied in for extended periods. Quite a few of them have tasted rising prosperity for two decades, albeit under highly authoritarian circumstances.”³⁸

STAGING INCORPORATION AS REINCORPORATION: RUSSIA’S CAPTURE OF CRIMEA (2014)

Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 followed the pattern of full-scale incorporation. In a series of swift maneuvers that included pro-Russian demonstrations, an irregular military presence (the “little green men” in unmarked Russian uniforms), and a questionable referendum process, Russia successfully exploited the turmoil of the Ukrainian crisis in 2013–14 to annex the Crimean Peninsula. Ever since, despite repeated rounds of Western sanctions, Russia continues to govern Crimea as an integral element

of its territory. While the Republic of Crimea is administered as a republic within the Russian Federation, the city of Sevastopol (home of the Russian Black Sea Fleet) is treated as a federal city, a special status otherwise only accorded to Moscow and Saint Petersburg.³⁹

A number of parallels can be discerned between the Israeli *de facto* annexation of the Golan Heights and Russia's capture of Crimea.⁴⁰ First, in both cases the policies of annexation (or *de facto* annexation) represent a clear violation of international law and continue to be treated as such by large parts of the international community. Second, in both cases expansionist state policies were primarily driven by geostrategic motives, aiming at the geographic "high ground" over the Syrian military (in the Israeli case) and naval dominance over the Black Sea (in the Russian case). Third, both state expansions continue to enjoy broad-based domestic support. In the Russian case, a 2019 poll found 88 percent support among Russians for the idea that Crimea had been legally incorporated into the Russian Federation.⁴¹ In the Israeli case, a 2012 poll (in light of the Syrian civil war) found 84 percent support among Jewish Israelis for the idea that the Golan Heights should *not* be returned to Syria, even in the framework of a peace agreement. At the time, around a third of Arab Israelis (32 percent) described the future of the Golan Heights in similar terms.⁴²

By contrast, while the Golan Heights never attracted the same level of irredentist fascination as the West Bank, Russia consistently framed its incorporation of Crimea as a *reincorporation*. According to the Russian narrative, Crimea had been Russian territory since 1783, with two relatively brief exceptions: the Nazi occupation (1941–1944) and the incorporation into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (1954–1991). Consequently, the formal "Russification" of Crimea was portrayed as the mere reestablishment of Russian sovereignty, not just for geostrategic reasons (e.g., to prevent the deployment of NATO troops in Crimea) but also based on the claim to a special historical link between Crimea and the Russian nation.⁴³ Interestingly, this claim to a special historical link found significant support among the population of Crimea, some of whom had already supported earlier attempts to secede from Ukraine.⁴⁴ Unsurprisingly, the support for the formal Russification of Crimea was particularly strong among the Russian Black Sea Fleet, which had always perceived its presence in Sevastopol as a *de facto* Russian territorial exclave.⁴⁵ But even outside of the ranks of the Russian military, a feeling of neglect by Ukrainian state authorities in combination with a relatively high concentration of Russian speakers merged into support for higher levels of regional autonomy or outright secession.

According to a poll from 2008, 73% of the population of Crimea voiced their support for secession from Ukraine and the territory's subsequent incorporation into the Russian Federation,⁴⁶ which was long before the territory was annexed by Russia in 2014.

Crimea's incorporation differs considerably from previous patterns of Russian expansionism in the post-Soviet era. In comparable cases, Russia systematically engaged in a policy of exclavization (institutional displacement) by encouraging the creation of breakaway statelets held together by Russian investments, Russian troops, and sometimes the offer of Russian citizenship—for instance in the cases of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Transnistria.⁴⁷ Two explanations can be offered for the distinct template of Russian expansionism in the case of Crimea. First, for the most part, the Port of Sevastopol (officially leased to Russia in the early 1990s) and the Russian Black Sea Fleet already operated as a *de facto* exclave on Ukrainian soil: consequently, the transformation of the Crimean Peninsula into an integral part of Russian territory (incorporation instead of exclavization) merely indicated an intensity shift in the ongoing projection of Russian state power. Second, the formal incorporation of Crimea against all odds (and despite the considerable presence of Ukrainian state institutions in the territory) points to the high Russian willingness to invest considerable resources into its control over the territory: after all, even high levels of stateness are no guarantee against a determined revisionist power. At the same time, the incorporation or *reincorporation* of Crimea may not last forever. As the cases of Northern Cyprus and East Timor show, the option of state contraction tends to stay on the table for decades—the same, of course, is true for Syria, Morocco, and Israel.

Conclusion

The comparative case study at the core of this book analyzes the historical origin and the institutional variety of three state expansions in the modern Middle East: Syrian rule over Lebanon (1976–2005), Moroccan rule over Western Sahara (since 1975), and Israeli rule over the occupied territories (since 1967). The comparison establishes widely shared commonalities in terms of irredentist thought and expansionist practice but also crucial differences. While Syria transformed Lebanon into a satellite state, Morocco attempted to incorporate both the territory and the population of Western Sahara. In contrast, Israeli rule over the occupied territories combined a pattern of military rule with the establishment of Jewish-Israeli settlements as ethnoterritorial exclaves: Unwilling and unable to carry out a full-fledged policy of territorial, political, and demographic incorporation of the occupied territories and their Palestinian-Arab inhabitants, Israel was limited to establishing miniatures of Jewish-Israeli towns and neighborhoods instead. By analyzing the differences between Syrianization, Moroccanization, and Judaization, the comparative case study emphasizes the impact of different opportunity structures. Expansionist states reacted strategically to preexisting state institutions and the availability of relevant power resources, and under the right circumstances (i.e., as a consequence of countermobilization), these reactions included different patterns of state contraction.

Irredentism after Empire

By linking the processes of state formation and state expansion, the comparison highlights the long-lasting impact of colonial rule in the Middle East. Postcolonial states engaged in expansionist policies as a coping strategy to

overcome a deeply disputed nation building (essentially contested statehood) and a highly fragmented state building (nonsovereign statehood). Both elements could be traced back to the late colonial “self-destruct state”¹ in Syria, Morocco, and Mandatory Palestine. Late colonial rule in the Middle East and North Africa consisted in a pattern of rule by bricolage, a policy of constant improvisation, widespread arbitrariness, and frequent shifts between co-opting ethnosectarian minorities or the Arab nationalist majority. As a consequence of fragile political institutions, ever-changing territorial divisions, and the decidedly temporary nature of late colonial rule, the most basic Westphalian attributes of the postcolonial state became contested—the geographic delimitation of the state territory, the organizational features of the state apparatus, the identity of the state nation, and the sum of its parts—in other words, overall state existence. Late colonial rule thereby raised an entire “generation of broad expectations,”² organized in a plethora of state projects eager to tear down the institutions of the colonial state in order to establish a completely new body politic.

Given this profound organic crisis of the postcolonial state (essentially contested statehood), in all three cases, irredentist nationalism was initially just one of many competing state projects that stood out for ideological and territorial maximalism. Greater Israel (as imagined by the founder of Revisionist Zionism, Ze’ev Jabotinsky) would have encompassed all of Mandatory Palestine and Transjordan; Greater Morocco (as imagined by Istiqlal founder Muhammad Allal al-Fassi) was supposed to encompass not only Western Sahara but also large parts of Algeria, Mali, and literally all of Mauritania; and Greater Syria (as imagined by Antun Sa’adeh, founder of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party) would have stretched all the way from southern Turkey to the Suez Canal, including Syria, Mandatory Palestine, large parts of Iraq and Transjordan, as well as Cyprus.³

While irredentist nationalism was analyzed as a response to disputed nation building, militarized state formation was identified as a reaction to fragmented state building. Both phenomena, the irredentist desire to capture the land beyond the border and the military capabilities to actually do so, only became interlinked as the unintended consequence of a regional state system plagued by both the security dilemma and the Macedonian syndrome:⁴ state-building elites did not necessarily aim at territorial enlargement per se, but they strategically grasped the chance to engage in expansionist policies when a regional conflict environment presented them with a convenient window of opportunity.

How did state these expansions become permanent or at least semi-permanent over time? In all three cases, two distinct waves of state expansion could be distinguished, a first-wave expansion at the occasion of state establishment and a second-wave expansion at the occasion of state *re*establishment. Both waves of expansionism were deployed by state-building elites to overcome entrenched crises of legitimacy and sovereignty but ultimately produced very different outcomes. The first wave of territorial expansionism typically sought to lock in relatively narrow ruling coalitions—the National Bloc in Syria (based on the capture of the Alawite and the Druze State in 1936), the Alaouite dynasty in Morocco (based on the capture of the Rif and the Tarfaya Strip in 1956–58), and Labor Zionism in Israel (based on the capture of territories beyond the UN partition plan in 1948–49). By contrast, the second wave of state expansion tended to establish much broader and much more permanent ruling coalitions, legitimated by eclectic ideological frameworks that merged previous state projects into a higher synthesis, held together by the irredentist appeal of retrieving a lost ethnic landscape⁵ (see maps 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6).

In the Syrian case, an eclectic Syrian nationalism (or Syro-centric Arabism) combined elements of pan-Arabism, pan-Syrianism, pan-Islamism, and socialism: this curious synthesis unified a military-mercantile complex led by the Assad clan, high-ranking Alawite military officers, and the country's urban commercial bourgeoisie. In the Moroccan case, the so-called Saharan Consensus reflected irredentism, anticolonialism, political Islam, and a notion of sacred kingship (Alawism); an ideological hodgepodge for a new domestic ruling coalition between an entrepreneurial monarchy and rising urban middle classes that excluded the military. In the Israeli case, following the 1977 electoral victory of the Likud, the Land of Israel ideology (as opposed to the *mamlachtiyut* consensus under Labor-Zionist hegemony)⁶ combined secular territorial maximalism, ethnic nationalism, and even decidedly millenarian messianism with a neoliberal focus on economic reforms, thereby uniting a broad alliance ranging from new middle classes via disenfranchised Mizrahi Jews to national-religious Zionists.

Paradoxically, instead of overcoming essentially contested statehood once and for all, the state expansions of Syria, Morocco, and Israel came to highlight the essential dilemmas of each postcolonial state project. In the Syrian case, the satellization of Lebanon exposed the brutality and corruption of Alawite minority rule in the Ba'ath state. Syria's military withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005 might have been an early symptom of the decline

of the Assad dynasty and the subsequent return of the proverbial “struggle for Syria.”⁷ In the Moroccan case, the denial of a Sahrawi nation exposes a more fundamental unease over other ethnic breaking points, particularly the Berber question.⁸ In the Israeli case, for mere demographic reasons, this dilemma might be simplified as the trade-off between a Jewish and a democratic state, or more precisely between a Jewish ethnocracy⁹ and a Jewish ethnic democracy.¹⁰

Varieties of Expansionism

Despite clear parallels in the historical causation and subsequent lock-in of state expansion, the comparative case study points to very different patterns of institutionalizing state control over captured territories, namely the Syrianization of Lebanon,¹¹ the Moroccanization of Western Sahara¹² and the Judaization of the occupied territories.¹³ The typology that guides the comparative case study understands this outcome as a function of the power resources of the expanding state and the level of stateness in the captured territory. The early years of Syrian rule over Lebanon corresponded to the type of patronization (institutional layering). Both the establishment of a Syrian protectorate over Lebanon (in the aftermath of the Ta’if Agreement) and Israel’s instrumentalization of the Palestinian Authority as a client-state (after the Oslo Accords) came closer to the ideal type of satellization (institutional drift). By contrast, Israel’s settlement project in the occupied territories was analyzed as a form of exclavization (institutional displacement) while Morocco’s rule over Western Sahara followed the logic of full-scale incorporation (institutional conversion).

By differentiating between the grasp and the scope of external state control, this “varieties of expansionism” approach translates differences in the discretion and the directness of rule enforcement into different ideal types of expanding and contracting state control across space. As the comparative case study shows, *opportunity structure matters*. Expanding states react strategically to the availability of power resources and preexisting patterns of stateness in captured territories, thereby resulting in very different patterns of state expansion and state contraction. In the case of Syria’s rule over Lebanon (1976–2005), the strong legacy of Lebanese stateness precluded any form of incorporation—instead, particularly in the aftermath of the Ta’if Agreement, Syria carried out a systematic policy of satellization. In contrast, Morocco’s incorporation of Western Sahara (since 1975) became

possible as a result of the relatively *weak* legacy of Sahrawi stateness. The Sahrawi nationalists of POLISARIO could build a diasporic protostate in the Algerian desert (the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic), but they could not prevent the systematic Moroccanization of the landscape, the culture, and the demographic setup of Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara. In the Israeli-Palestinian case, the full-scale incorporation of the occupied territories (“Israelization”) was made impossible by a lack of Israeli power resources. For mere demographic reasons, Israel opted instead for the establishment of extraterritorial ethnic exclaves, the Jewish settlements (“Judaization”).

In addition, expanding states also reacted to subsequent changes in the opportunity structure, especially to shifting geopolitical circumstances after the end of the Cold War (see table C.1). In the Syrian case, the shift from patronization to satellization could be traced back to an improved relative power position of the Assad regime, both as a consequence of defeating alternative patrons in the Lebanese arena and as the result of US-Syrian realignment. In the Moroccan case, the institutional lock-in of incorporation (despite decades of guerilla warfare and a UN-supervised referendum

Table C.1. Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli State Expansion in Comparison

		Power resources of the expansionist state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	Patronization (institutional layering) —Syrian domination over Lebanon (1976–1989)	Satellization (institutional drift) —Syrian rule over Lebanon after Ta’if Agreement (1989–2005) —Israeli deployment of Palestinian Authority as client-state after Oslo Accords (since 1993)
	Low	Exclavization (institutional displacement) —Israeli settlement project in the occupied territories (since 1967)	Incorporation (institutional conversion) —Moroccanization of Western Sahara (since 1975)

process) could be explained as a consequence of weak Sahrawi stateness in contrast to stable great power support for Morocco by both France and the United States. In the Israeli case, the Oslo Accords were interpreted as a shift from pure exclavization (the Jewish settlements) to an integration of exclavization and satellization (the Palestinian Authority): while the PLO was defeated militarily in Lebanon, the mass mobilization of the First Intifada made the continuation of military rule over a civilian population so expensive (both financially and in terms of international legitimacy) that Israel grudgingly agreed to the establishment of a Palestinian protostate. However, this increased level of Palestinian stateness would quickly be redeployed for the purpose of entrenched Israeli control over the occupied territories. When the “transitional period” of the Oslo Accords became permanent, the Palestinian Authority saw itself become an Israeli satellite state, an additional layer of protection for Israel’s ethnoterritorial exclaves.

Countermobilization and State Contraction

Despite the focus on the projection of state power across borders, the comparative case study also highlights the fact that *resistance matters*. Different forms of countermobilization were analyzed as crucial factors for the initial type of state expansion as well as subsequent patterns of state contraction. In response to state attempts to reshape territorial borders and national identities, different varieties of resistance were deployed by Lebanese, Sahrawi, and Palestinian nationalists, ranging from counterviolence to the establishment of counterinstitutions, often complemented by counteridentities and counternarratives.¹⁴ Specific political practices of countermobilization often responded strategically to territorial claims and political practices of expansionist states. In reaction to Syrian and Moroccan unification nationalism, both Sahrawi and Maronite nationalism underwent a decidedly *ethnic* turn in order to express the notion of a fundamentally unincorporable Maronite or respectively Sahrawi people. By contrast, Palestinian nationalism after 1967 underwent a decidedly *telluric* turn: the emerging mystification of the Palestinian Arab soil and the celebration of Palestinian rootedness responded strategically to the exclusive claim to territorial ownership that guided Israel’s settlement project.

As a result of significant levels of countermobilization, none of the three cases of state expansion became fully normalized. Instead, both Syria and Israel carried out formal processes of state contraction (from Lebanon,

the Sinai Peninsula, and the Gaza Strip) while Morocco had to invest considerable resources into preventing a similar scenario in Western Sahara. In addition, the comparative case study illustrates the difference between specific types of state contraction, including depatronization (institutional unlayering), desatellization (institutional redrift), deexclavization (institutional replacement), and disincorporation (institutional reconversion). For instance, Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005 consisted in a process of desatellization, which allowed Lebanon slowly to reemerge from Syrian domination. By contrast, Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula (in 1982) and the Gaza Strip (in 2005) followed a pattern of deexclavization, the systematic removal of ethnoterritorial exclaves. In Western Sahara, the UN referendum process included the option of territorial disincorporation (or perhaps de-Moroccanization), a scenario ultimately subverted by Moroccan interference in the referendum process (see table C.2).

Nonetheless, even high levels of countermobilization struggled to overcome the phenomenon of territorial entrenchment. In the Syrian case, cross-sectarian coalition building resulted in the withdrawal of Syria's armed forces in 2005; however, Lebanon's domestic politics remained profoundly "Syrianized," and the ongoing dominance of Syrian proxies might represent a borderline case of patronization. In the Moroccan case, the establishment

Table C.2. Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli State Contraction in Comparison

		Power resources of the contracting state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	<p>Depatronization (institutional unlayering)</p> <p>—Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon (2000)</p>	<p>Desatellization (institutional redrift)</p> <p>—Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon (2005)</p>
	Low	<p>Deexclavization (institutional replacement)</p> <p>—Israeli withdrawal from settlements in Sinai (1982), Gaza Strip, and parts of the West Bank (2005)</p>	<p>Disincorporation (institutional reconversion)</p> <p>—One scenario of the UN-supervised referendum on Western Sahara</p>

of a Sahrawi protostate (the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic [SADR]) successfully undermined the de jure annexation of Western Sahara; however, Sahrawi nationalism was incapable of resisting the de facto incorporation of the “useful Sahara,” including Moroccan control over phosphate production and all major population centers. In the Israeli case, the Palestinian national movement successfully undermined the legitimacy of Israel’s irredentist claim to the occupied territories in the eyes of the international community and established the protostate of the Palestinian Authority—nonetheless, even decades of guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and state-building efforts could not put an end to the settlement project.

In-Case Variety and Mixed Cases

The distinction between different varieties of state expansion and state contraction can also help to categorize cases that are decidedly mixed. Expansionist states may rely on a variety of political measures, for instance, by combining patronage ties to local elites (patronization), the establishment of puppet administrations (satellization), the creation of ethnic exclaves (exclavization), and the annexation of at least parts of the territory and the population (incorporation). Based on the assumption that this policy mix reflects changing and strongly localized opportunity structures, the typology can be deployed to decipher the logic of differentiated patterns of expansionism across time and space. In the case of Israeli expansionism, for instance, the typology helps retrace considerable variation in the treatment of territories and populations that had come under the control of the Israeli state apparatus (see table C.3).

As the table shows, Israel’s rule over various territories and populations can be separated conceptually into very different patterns of expansionism, even though in principle, Israel’s rule should have been regulated by the international law of occupation in *all* cases.¹⁵ A closer look shows that this pattern of institutional in-case variety corresponded to different opportunity structures and different political motivations. In South Lebanon, Israel’s establishment of a security zone followed a relatively unstructured pattern of institutional layering (patronization):¹⁶ since the level of Lebanese stateness remained strong, Israel deployed only limited amounts of power resources—a limitation that became apparent in the failed Israeli attempt to turn all of Lebanon into a satellite state closely linked to Israel’s regional interests.¹⁷ In the case of the occupied territories, successful Palestinian countermobili-

Table C.3. In-Case Variety of State Expansion—The Israeli Case

		Power resources deployed by the expansionist state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	Patronization (institutional layering) —Israeli military presence in security zone in South Lebanon (1985–2000)	Satellization (institutional drift) —Israeli attempt to rule over Lebanon (1982–1983) —Israeli rule over Palestinian Authority (since 1993)
	Low	Exclavization (institutional displacement) —Judaization of the occupied territories via the Israeli settlement project (since 1967)	Incorporation (institutional conversion) —Partial Israelization of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights (since 1967)

zation throughout the First Intifada (theorized as a higher level of stateness) resulted not in Israel's territorial withdrawal but in the establishment of a Palestinian satellite state closely integrated into Israel's control over the occupied territories.¹⁸ The settlement project, an idiosyncratic pattern of miniature exclavization, corresponded to the paradoxical weakness of an expansionist state that was strong enough to capture the territory of the West Bank and Gaza but found itself unable to deploy the necessary power resources to incorporate its population both due to widespread resistance in the international community and the obvious demographic pressures. Only two territories were incorporated more systematically when East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights were annexed *de facto* but not *de jure* in 1967 and 1981.¹⁹ In both cases, Israel was able to mobilize significant power resources to incorporate territories with high symbolic or strategic value, even if relatively high levels of preexisting stateness continue to challenge Israel's control, either in the form of symbolic displays of pro-Syrian loyalties (by the Druze population in the Golan Heights) or by ongoing Jordanian involvement in the control of Jerusalem, especially on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.

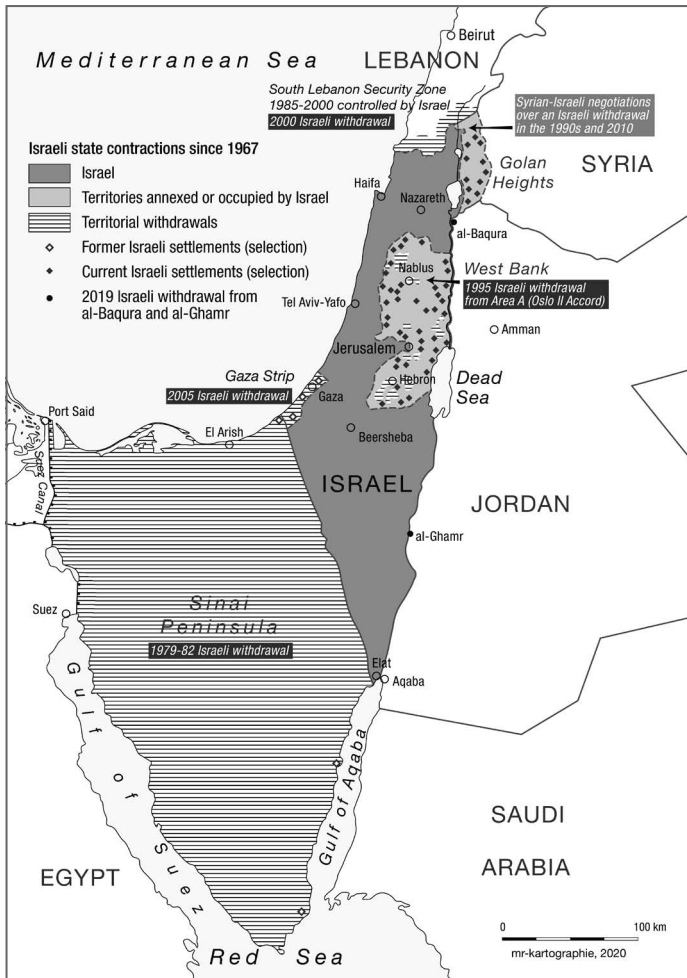
As the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and several rounds of territorial withdrawal indicate, Israel's rule over the occupied territories, the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, and parts of Lebanon has undergone various forms of institutional changes since 1967. Consequently, in addition to the in-case variety of state expansion, the Israeli case can also be deployed to study the in-case variety of state contraction (see table C.4).

Israel's unstructured and somewhat chaotic withdrawal from South Lebanon followed the pattern of institutional unlayering (depatronization). By contrast, Israel's withdrawal from Beirut after a failed attempt at satellization might be described as desatellization, resulting in a shift of the Lebanese "satellite" from the Israeli orbit into the Syrian zone of influence.²⁰ While both forms of military withdrawal from Lebanese territory did not leave behind any significant civilian infrastructure, in the case of Israel's state contraction from the Sinai Peninsula (1982) and the Gaza Strip (2005), Jewish-Israeli

Table C.4. In-case Variety of State Contraction—the Israeli Case

		Power resources deployed by the contracting state	
		Low	High
Level of stateness in the captured territory	High	<p>Depatronization (institutional unlayering)</p> <p>—Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon (2000)</p>	<p>Desatellization (institutional redrift)</p> <p>—Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon (1985)</p>
	Low	<p>Deexclavization (institutional replacement)</p> <p>—Israeli withdrawal from settlements in Sinai (1982), Gaza Strip, and parts of the West Bank (2005)</p>	<p>Disincorporation (institutional reconversion)</p> <p>—Israeli withdrawal from Jordanian territory in Naharayim/al-Baqura and Tzofar/al-Ghamr in 2019 (previously leased to Israel according to the 1994 Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty)</p> <p>—Failed Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights (negotiated during the 1990s)</p>

settlements had to be dismantled in a process of deexclavization.²¹ In contrast to the successful Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, the disincorporation of the Golan Heights (and their subsequent return to Syria) was discussed in extensive Syrian-Israeli peace talks but ultimately failed to materialize.²² More recently, after Jordan ended the twenty-five-year lease of Jordanian territory to Israel in Naharayim/al-Baqura and Tzofar/al-Ghamr as stipulated in the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty of 1994, Israel withdrew from both territories in a process of disincorporation (see map C.1).²³



Map C.1. Israeli state contractions since 1967

Studying Israel as a Middle Eastern Society

Comparisons between state formation, state expansion, and state contraction in modern Syrian, Moroccan, and Israeli history point to intriguing commonalities. At the same time, the close parallelization also highlights why and how exactly the three cases followed different institutional pathways over time. Nonetheless, as a critical reader might ask at this point, does the Israeli case truly fit into the category of third-wave irredentism in the Middle East? Should we not instead emphasize the fundamental difference between the Zionist project and postcolonial state formation in the Arab World? And wouldn't the term "postcolonial" seem rather inappropriate to describe the State of Israel, which emerged from Jewish colonization in the Land of Israel/Palestine and continues to engage in demographic engineering (as a careful euphemism for colonization) in the occupied territories up to this very day?

The approach of studying Israeli society in the context of postcolonial state formation in the Middle East indeed challenges the widely shared assumption of a political, cultural, and historical disconnect between Israel and its neighbors.²⁴ By moving beyond Occidentalist portrayals of Zionist state formation and Israeli state expansion, this book seeks to contribute to the research agenda of recontextualizing Israel into its regional and historical setting:²⁵ "Israel, in fact, is closely tied—for better or for worse—to the region in which it exists, much more so than to the liberal-democratic West, and much more so than some Jews or Arabs are willing to admit."²⁶ Of course, such a regionalist approach may come with its own challenges. Throughout the process of researching and writing this book, both Jewish Israelis and Arabs protested vehemently against the idea of being compared to one another, which the author secretly interpreted as a subtle sign that he might be on the right track. In the end, the reader of this book will have the privilege of deciding who was right.

Notes

Introduction

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Chapter 1

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Chapter 4

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Chapter 6

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Based on three case studies from the Middle East, *The Land beyond the Border* advances an innovative theoretical framework for the study of state expansions and state contractions. Johannes Becke argues that state expansion can be theorized according to four basic ideal types—a form of patronage (patronization), the imposition of a satellite regime (satellization), the establishment of territorial exclaves (exclavization), or a full-fledged takeover (incorporation). Becke discusses how both irredentist ideologies and political realities have shaped the dynamics of state expansion and state contraction in the recent history of each state. By studying Israel comparatively with other Middle Eastern regimes, this book forms part of an emerging research agenda seeking to bring the research fields of Israel Studies and Middle East Studies closer together. Instead of treating Israel's rule over the occupied territories as an isolated case, Becke offers students the chance to understand Israel's settlement project within the broader framework of postcolonial state formation.

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