The MIZRAHI Era of Rebellion

Israel's Forgotten Civil Rights Struggle, 1948–1966

BRYAN K. ROBY

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Manufactured in the United States of America

To my mother, Patricia Roby;
my brother, Terrence Roby;
and my beautiful daughter, Rachel Eliana

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The MIZRAHI Era of Rebellion

Introduction

During the period from 1948 to 1956, 450,000 Jews from the Middle East and Asia immigrated to the newly established State of Israel, a far greater number than the 360,000 Jewish immigrants who came from Europe and North America.[1] By the end of the 1950s, Mizrahim or Oriental Jewry represented the ethnic majority of the Israeli Jewish population. Despite this status, they suffered from socioeconomic and educational inequality and a relative lack of political representation,[2] the result of a socioethnic hierarchy that had been firmly established during the British Mandate period. This hierarchy allowed for the privileged positioning of Ashkenazi settlers in Palestine, both new immigrants and second-generation settlers, who were seen as the veteran, indigenous, and dominant social class. Because of their non-European origins, and despite the proximity of their original homes to Israel/Palestine, Mizrahim were viewed as a foreign, albeit Jewish, population originating from culturally backward and geographically distant locations from which they must be rescued.[3]

As a consequence of this view, Mizrahim became a muted part of Israeli society and at the same time a historically silenced and externalized part of their countries of origin.[4] At the bottom of this hierarchal structuring were the Palestinian Israelis, who, although representing the indigenous population of Israel/Palestine, were seen as an intruding, foreign group and a potential "fifth-column" threat to the legitimacy and existence of the State of Israel.[5]

To achieve the aim of representing Israel as a bastion of modernity against a backward Orient, the state instituted a *mizug hagaluyot*, "melting-pot," policy, which sought to "modernize" and assimilate Middle Eastern

Jewry. In an effort to raise the Oriental Jews' cultural and educational level, this supposed integration process included placing them in transitory camps, *ma'abarot*, and peripheral "development towns" for training in pioneer work but at the same time deprived them of an education beyond vocational schooling.[6] The state elite justified these actions by pointing to the importance of the pioneering nature of the function of Mizrahi immigrants and their need to enter the modern era. In other words, to "modernize" and integrate Middle Eastern and North African Jewry, the state instituted paradoxical policies of educational retention and housing segregation. The implementation of labor divisions along ethnic origins as well as differential immigration, educational, and housing policies provided the tools for the proposed de-Levantization of Mizrahim.[7] However, even the first generation of Mizrahi immigrants fought against the most significant implication of these policies, institutionalized discrimination, waging a hard-fought struggle for equality, social justice, and civil rights in Israel. This book documents the variety of ways in which they resisted discriminatory practices and political suppression in Israel from 1948 to 1966.

But this book also looks at the state's reaction to various challenges to the establishment by focusing on the national police force in Israel. In most contemporary societies, the police act as the most visible manifestation of the government and the initial enforcer of its policies. In the case of Israel, the Israel National Police acted explicitly within a self-defined role as the integrator and civilizer of newly arrived Oriental Jews. In many cases, this meant that it brutally suppressed the protests mounted by Oriental Jewish immigrants who either fought against state-based discrimination or rejected notions that they needed to be civilized in order to integrate into Israeli society. This suppression defined and continues to shape a Mizrahi identity associated with marginalization and rebellion.[8] When examining police–ethnic group relations with a critical eye, Cyril Robinson and Richard Scaglion notably observe that the police are used as an instrument to maintain an unequal power structure within a given society: "The police institution is created by the emerging dominant class as an instrument for the preservation of its control over restricted access to basic resources, over the political apparatus governing this access, and over the labor force necessary to provide the surplus upon which the dominant class lives."[9]

For the Israeli case, this use of the police force meant that the Israel Police was permitted powers beyond the limits of traditional police duties. Asserting a monopoly over the legitimate use of physical coercion, it was provided with a unique power to penetrate and influence the social order.[10] As a consequence, it acted as an agent of the burgeoning dominant, Ashkenazi class through its active prevention of the allocation of basic resources to the marginalized Oriental community and its restriction of freedom of socioeconomic and geographical mobility—all ostensibly done in the name of advancing a pioneering spirit and integrating the very people who were being suppressed, Oriental immigrants.

In an effort to alleviate the emerging problems of integrating Oriental Jews into Israeli society, the task of absorbing new immigrants within *ma'abarot*, transit camps, was delegated to the Israel Police and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in 1950. Although this task was initially the responsibility of the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Sokhnut, it was handed over to the police and army to relieve the Jewish Agency's financial and logistical burdens.[11] This transfer of power was largely a response to the Ein Shemer riots of Yemenite Jews in 1950, after which the Jewish Agency immediately requested that police stations be set up in the *ma'abarot* to ensure security and sociocultural development.

In the *ma'abarot*, the police were responsible for creating strong bonds between citizens and the state by providing technical assistance in setting up residential tents, providing emergency care during flooding, carrying out teaching duties, and even conducting musical performances as a means of cultural development.[12] In addition, the government advised the police to keep track of immigrants who decided to relocate from the *ma'abarot* to more developed areas. Dissident residents—as those who relocated by their own choice were defined—were penalized by the withholding of their food-rationing cards and work permits, which essentially prevented them from acquiring any sort of livelihood or sustenance.[13]

Many scholars have addressed the consequential socioeconomic effects of the various forms of discrimination directed against Mizrahim.[14] Although Adriana Kemp has noted the state's oppressive policies and the implications of the discourse surrounding Mizrahi immigration, few scholars have conducted a serious historical examination of the Mizrahi

response to this discrimination during the 1950s and 1960s.[15] Focusing on the major events occurring in the Mizrahi struggle, scholars who examine its trajectory mark the Wadi Salib Rebellion of 1959 as its beginning. However, because of the Wadi Salib neighborhood's primarily Moroccan immigrant population, some scholars even go as far as to push the date of the beginning of a meaningful, unified Mizrahi struggle to as late as the 1980s.[16] This lacuna in scholarship has unfortunately marked the pre–Wadi Salib era as a forgotten period of Israeli history. Kemp, for example, takes note of the absence of the pre-1959 Mizrahi struggle in Israeli historiography but argues that it is justified because their acts of resistance constituted "thousands of individualistic, microscopic voices" that never amounted to a unified, collective protest.[17]

Recognizing this absence of discussions of the Mizrahi response to discrimination in the scholarship, this book aims to explore the nature of Mizrahi protests and acts of resistance during the first two decades of Israeli statehood with an eye toward examining how the police worked to suppress this nascent Mizrahi struggle. By delving into the nature of early Mizrahi protests, I have attempted to reconstruct a forgotten period of protests voiced by newly arrived Middle Eastern and Asian immigrants.

This study follows a critical reading of Israeli societal history regarding the nature of the relationship between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim. Although it acknowledges that there are other explanatory models for the emergence of the ethnic problem in Israel, most notably that of the functionalist-modernist school,[18] it does not provide an in-depth review of those models' specificities.[19] Rather, more central to the discussion here are the concrete realization of the state's effort to absorb and assimilate Oriental immigrants during the first eighteen years of its existence (1948–66) and Mizrahi resistance as a diverse and unified force against that effort. I limit the period of examination from 1948 to just before the Six-Day War of 1967 because the success of that war caused a significant conceptual shift in the way establishment Israeli society perceived the role of Mizrahim in the settlement project and defense of the state. Most important in this shift was the discursive change from the perception of Mizrahim as the Jewish "white man's burden" to a general appreciation of their active military and societal role as defenders of the State of Israel.[20]

Despite the Israel Police's intimate involvement in the processes of socialization and resource allocation, little research has been conducted regarding its influence on the inequality along ethnic and national lines. Although some Israeli criminologists in the 1960s addressed the issue of ethnicity, many focused exclusively on juvenile delinquency among Mizrahi youth and attributed the phenomenon to an Israeli society that "had lost its traditional values between 1950 and 1960 as a result of political, economic, and demographic changes."[21] In other words, the presence of crime (juvenile delinquency in particular) was attributed to the large influx of Middle Eastern Jews, who, it was claimed, brought with them to Israel a culture of degeneracy and poverty.[22]

The dearth of scholarship on Mizrahi–police relations stems from the facts that many scholars overlook the political activities of the police and that some even reject the notion of ascribing to the police any significant power, political or otherwise. Sam Lehman-Wilzig, for example, asserts that Mizrahi protests against the police and local officials were to no avail because Israel's political authority and power ultimately lay within the central government (i.e., the Knesset) rather than in local governance. He contends that Mizrahi protests during the period 1948–77 were largely naïve and unsophisticated owing to their "rudimentary conceptions of political authority" and mistaken beliefs that "local officials [were] the 'government,' just as they had done for centuries in the Arab countries in which they had lived."[23] He further asserts that their political sophistication grew only by merit of living in Israel. He contends that, as shown by the election of Menachem Begin in 1977 (known as "the Upheaval"), Mizrahim eventually "saw that real political power lay in the central government and directed their protests to it."[24]

Lehman-Wilzig may be correct in asserting that the government did not remedy the grievances raised in the *lehem ve'avodah*, "bread and work," demonstrations of the 1950s. However, his assumption that this neglect indicated the Mizrahim's failure to understand sophisticated governance wholly underestimates the power of the local officials and policemen in their function as the administrator and enforcer of the state's political authority. However, Lehman-Wilzig is not alone in his contention that Mizrahi protests were for the most part primitive and unsophisticated.

Sami Shalom Chetrit likewise argues that Mizrahi demonstrations before the 1980s were largely naïve in their demands and targets.[25]

Notwithstanding these assertions, the Israel Police itself was fully aware that it possessed the ability to maintain state power and assert its will on society. In summarizing the role of the police in the 1950s and 1960s, Police Commissioner Shaul Rozolio (1972–77) noted that "the police acted both as social change agent . . . and as shaper of political attitudes and facilitator of state power and centrality, thereby binding key constituencies to the state."[26] Moreover, when addressing police–community relations, the police explicitly pointed out that the "Israel Police is an organ of the State, and its people are the flesh and blood of the [Jewish] nation. . . . This is the guiding principle of the Israel Police."[27] In other words, even though formal political authority lay within a centralized government, the Israel Police was in fact "the most tangible manifestation [of the state], wearing a uniform, appearing in the streets, and coming into contact with the majority of citizens."[28]

Of course, the police force's relationship with new immigrants was not limited to the realm of protests. As noted previously, the police were used for education, instilling Israeli cultural values in the new immigrants and performing the role of guardian over the *ma'abarot* and their long-term, primarily Mizrahi residents. In other words, the police were explicitly used as a tool of socialization. Because European Jewish immigrants were the largest ethnic group in the police force until 1958,[29] the state considered the police's main task within each *ma'abara* to be the establishment of social control over the Mizrahi immigrant population to achieve the state's pioneering goals.[30] The police thus manifested the prevalent view of a supposedly helpless Oriental community as the "white man's burden." Moreover, it is through this ethnocentric custodial relationship that the police's pivotal role in the state's discourse surrounding Mizrahim and direct domination over this marginalized population becomes most apparent.

The implications of the state's relationship with Mizrahim is demonstrated in the terms used to describe the differences between the prestate waves of immigration (aliya) of mostly but not exclusively European Jews and the postindependence aliya period of immigration of primarily Oriental Jews. Whereas the *aliyot* of German and eastern European Jewish

veterans were seen as influxes of equal participants in the nation-building and colonial settlement project, the waves of Oriental immigration following the creation of the state were labeled the "Mass Aliya." The immigrants of the Mass Aliya were seen not as revered *halutzim* (pioneers) of the uninhabited periphery but as objectified tools of the true pioneers—namely, the idealized kibbutz members.[31] As tools of rather than participants in the settlement project, the majority of Oriental immigrants were sent to live in transit camps and development towns without their consent and were often held there against their will. This reality highlights a central factor in the convergence of a Mizrahi identity in that most Oriental immigrants in the first decade of statehood were reluctant pioneers and harbored resentment against the state.[32] One North African immigrant confirmed this assessment in an interview conducted in the early 1950s: "It is difficult for us people from an African town to get anything here. We can live only among ourselves, but even this they do not let us do. . . . [T]hey treat us as strangers, do not want to understand us, and try to make us into 'slaves.' First they destroyed our old life, and now they do not allow us to do anything new. Everything is closed to us. . . . Perhaps if one day all the new immigrants from an African town join together and rebel against all this, it may get better . . . but we are weak."[33]

This sort of resentment led to a "collective memory of forced settlement [that] has become central to peripheral Mizrahi identity formation."[34] Although the Oriental Jewish community arrived from countries as culturally and linguistically diverse as Morocco, Yemen, Egypt, Turkey, and Iran, it was during the early period of immigration (1948–56) that this community, alongside the indigenous Sephardic Palestinian community, began to see themselves as constituting one semihomogeneous Oriental or Mizrahi group. This growing awareness became particularly apparent with the dissolution of the Sephardim and Oriental Community, Old Timers and Immigrants Party in 1951, when the traditional Sephardic and Aleppo (Halabi) elite of the Ottoman period began to lose prominence among the non-European Jewish community.[35]

Whether done consciously or not, the convergence of dissimilar African and Asian identities as a distinct group, Mizrahim, opposed the state policy of *mizug hagaluyot* that attempted to create a "melting-pot" society

of one culturally homogenous, "modern" Jewish people and simultaneously to erase any traces of non-Western culture that did not fit into the state's concept of modernity. During the state's first decades, Mizrahim continued to assert their Middle Eastern identity through cultural production such as literature, plays, and religious festivals derived from their countries of origin. This rejection of Eurocentric notions of modernity was in itself an act of resistance. As Alain Dieckhoff points out, "The failure of the melting pot strategy is attributed to the authoritative methods employed by the State and to the *resistance developed by the immigrants* against a project of national integration that was accompanied by cultural dispossession and by a persistent socio-economic discrimination towards the Sephardim."[36]

This form of resistance through identity formation provides an interesting yet difficult to pinpoint explanation of the nature of Mizrahi resistance. A far more visible and empirically sound form of resistance, however, may be found in the protests raised explicitly against the establishment during the period in question. To properly analyze the latter type of resistance, it is necessary to understand how social and ethnic protests were and are perceived within Israeli society.

Mizrahi Protests in the 1940s and 1950s: *Infajarat* or Intifada?

To delve into the nature of Mizrahi protests it is necessary to contextualize the perception of Israeli protests in general. Henriette Dahan-Calev provides in her article "Protest" one of the most relevant frameworks for understanding Israeli perceptions of protests.[37] Through an analysis of some of the most influential protests in Israel, Dahan-Calev categorizes Israeli protests as consisting of two main types: those that are considered legitimate in the eyes of the Israeli elite and those that are perceived as antistate and thus illegitimate. Protests falling under the first category have clear demands that do not question the legitimacy of the government or the ideals of an existing, homogenous Jewish Israeli nation-state. More importantly, legitimate protests must be presented as being done for the sake of the whole of Israeli society and not for a specific social sector (e.g., a religious community, an ethnic group, a gender, etc.). Thus, a protest's legitimacy derives from the fact that the protestors work within the

framework of the perceived interests of the Israeli Jewish nation. According to this definition, then, the non-Jewish Palestinian population living in Israeli territory are decidedly excluded from the category of legitimate protestors. Protests are perceived as illegitimate when they are enacted by a marginalized community and are not concerned with the national elite's interests. As such, they are delegitimized as sectarian and as working outside the nation's or Israeli public's interests.

For the most part, Mizrahi protests during the period in question fell within the "illegitimate" category because they were organized under the banner of an Oriental rather than Westernized and homogenous Israeli Jewish identity and thus were perceived as an affront to the government policy of *mizug hagaluyot*. Therefore, the Israel National Police felt justified and even obligated to suppress any expression of the Oriental Jewish immigrants' "sectarian" demands.

Turning to the existence of a specifically Mizrahi social movement during the 1950s and 1960s, Sami Chetrit, a Mizrahi activist and scholar, provides one of the most appropriate points of departure. In his book *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel*, Chetrit makes use of Sidney Tarrow's criteria[38] for a social movement by arguing that a radical Mizrahi social movement requires "[an] honest aspiration for equality and social justice . . . [and] calls for a comprehensive change of socioeconomic structures for the benefit of society in general, not just of a limited sector." He concludes, without further examination, that "a Mizrahi organization that fits this definition fully is hard to find during the first decade."[39] However, his contention is a result of an overemphasis on the Wadi Salib Rebellion of 1959, which was conducted largely by Moroccan immigrants, and on its participants' seemingly limited demands.

Upon their arrival in Israel, many Mizrahi intellectuals presented a wide range of demands to and criticisms of the government, particularly with respect to the status of Palestinians living under military rule. Most notably, Iraqi immigrants Gideon Giladi and Latif Dori devoted themselves to open criticism of state policies and of the oppression of Mizrahi and Palestinian citizens alike. Others went so far as to link the issue of discrimination against Mizrahim to the oppression of Palestinians living under military rule.[40] The efforts made by these Mizrahi intellectuals,

published in Arabic-language journals such as *al-Mirsad* (Observation Post), *Sawt al-Ma'abir* (Voice of the Ma'abara, 1955–58), and *Ila al-Amam/Kadima* (Forward), altogether undermine the notion that prior to the Black Panthers' movement "there was little or no attempt to connect the struggle of the Mizrahim for social equality with that of the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel."[41]

Often ignored is the fact that the bulk of Jewish communities from the Middle East and Asia were indirectly influenced by and sometimes directly involved in the growing anticolonial struggles taking place in their home countries. It is hard to believe that upon their arrival in Israel Oriental Jews quickly forgot the intellectual momentum of the successful independence movements of Morocco and Tunisia and the struggles for democratic governance in Iraq, Iran, India, and Egypt. For example, the protest tactics used by Indian Jews during the 1950s and 1960s have been traced directly to the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolent resistance.[42] Scholarship has only very recently taken a serious look into the depth of pre- and post-1948 Middle Eastern Jewish intellectual production and its influence on Mizrahi thought in Israel.[43]

Mizrahim in Israel also benefited from the global attention on the black civil rights movement in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, which helped to contextualize the growing feelings of discontent and ethnic discrimination in Israel. This indirect transnational influence also assisted Mizrahi activists to understand how to fight against discrimination and segregationist policies. Indications of this influence are found particularly in the 1960s in Mizrahi intellectuals' references to "Uncle Toms," cautions to "remember what happened in Los Angeles and Alabama," and growing sentiment of being "blacks" struggling against a "white" establishment. Although this book details this influence in chapter 5, the parallels with and affinities to the black American struggle are far reaching and merit further scholarly research.

To assert that a Mizrahi social movement struggled only for the sake of a "limited sector" is to fall into the trap of pigeonholing Mizrahi demands as "sectarian" and thereby illegitimate, despite the fact that by the 1960s Mizrahim were quickly becoming the majority in Israeli society. Moreover, Chetrit's conclusion comes without a sufficient focus on the

decade-long demonstrations that formed a background and foundation to the Wadi Salib Rebellion. In fact, most studies make mention of the events of Wadi Salib and the Jerusalem-founded Black Panthers' movement (1971–72) as constituting the only formative Mizrahi protests during the Israeli state's first three decades.[44]

Like Lehman-Wilzig, Chetrit dismisses the numerous protests that occurred prior to the election of the Likud Party in 1977 as "short outbursts that never managed to rise to the level of independent nationwide political organization."[45] He thus contends that until the 1980s no such subversive Mizrahi collective existed, but this assertion is based on his assumption that most acts of resistance before the 1980s constituted "naïve protests" on the part of its Mizrahi participants.[46]

Contrary to Chetrit, Gideon Giladi, in his lesser-known but far more empirically rigorous book *Discord in Zion* (1990), states that these protests were a "kind of *Intifada* [that] often spread among the soldiers too, in the form of hunger strikes, indiscipline and verbal and physical violence against Ashkenazi officers." Taking note of a continuity in Mizrahi protests against the state during this period, Giladi places the Wadi Salib Rebellion in its proper historical context by describing it as "the *culmination* of popular Mizrahi uprisings."[47] Thus, rather than seeing the Mizrahi struggle of the 1950s as isolated *infajarat* (outbursts), it is best to view these acts of resistance against the state as a purposeful struggle united by a desire to achieve equality and exemplified by the Wadi Salib Rebellion, which sparked a national outcry in 1959. However, apart from a few sentences, Giladi does not provide an in-depth historical account of the varying forms of Mizrahi resistance prior to the Wadi Salib events.

If these popular uprisings or decades-long "Mizrahi intifada" were so persistent and widespread, where were the extraparliamentary Mizrahi organizations that complemented these acts of resistance? One issue often overlooked is that Oriental immigrants' main concern at the time was achieving the basic means for survival during a period of discriminatory food rationing, poor housing, and underdeveloped medical care. Considering the austere conditions of the time, few had either the financial or the organizational resources to attempt the lofty aspiration of effecting comprehensive changes to the socioeconomic structure.

Many Mizrahim instead affiliated themselves with the smaller opposition parties, such as the Communist parties, Maki and Mapam, and some with the right-wing Herut Party. Some even joined the Mapai Party—the ruling political party in Israel, in various forms and alliances, until the 1977 Knesset elections—which, according to Esther Meir-Glitzenstein, allowed Mizrahi voices to be heard, even if in an extremely limited way.[48] Although the List of Sephardic and Oriental Communities (Sephardi List) existed, most viewed this party as only nominally representative of the interests of the Oriental community as a whole. Moreover, under the auspices of the Jewish Agency, the World Sephardi Federation gradually weakened in influence in the early 1950s, as discussed in chapter 5. As a result, some immigrant communities established ethnic organizations external to the Knesset in which they argued for the advancement of a unified, Mizrahi force.[49] By the mid-1950s, it became more and more common to see protests in which participants in demonstrations, despite having diverse geographical backgrounds, argued for the rights of all "Oriental" immigrants and, among the Mizrahi intelligentsia, the rights of Palestinian citizens. This book seeks to demonstrate that the Mizrahi struggle for equality was a viable social justice struggle that emerged and was persistently fought from the 1950s on. Rather than looking solely at political organizations and political parties in framing this struggle, I borrow Mario Diani's conceptual framework for defining social movements: "A social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity."[50]

The lack of official political mobilization among Mizrahim was, according to some scholars, indicative of complicity with the state agenda and wholesale adherence to Zionist ideology. As a consequence of this view, Chetrit and Machover overlook the early manifestations of moves toward establishing an all-inclusive Mizrahi social struggle for civil rights and equality. Their reading of Israeli social history does not take into account the fact that most Mizrahim lacked the funds necessary to secure a parliamentary seat,[51] let alone establish counterhegemonic organizations as comprehensive and cosmopolitan as those seen in the 1980s.

The early Mizrahi activists' ability to spread their message was particularly difficult owing to the police's enforcement of draconian measures to stamp out antiestablishment dissidents. Dissident journalists in particular faced arrest, police raids on their homes, and temporary closure of independent newspapers. Countless others faced arrest simply for distributing posters that were suspected to be anti-Mapai or critical of Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion.[52] Thus, in examining the Mizrahi movement during the period, one must look not only to newspaper accounts but also to source materials diverse in language and form.[53] Recognizing this need, I place emphasis on the police as a unique primary source that entails detailed knowledge of both minor and major acts of resistance by Oriental Jewish immigrants. At the same time, I also implement newspapers and rarely examined publication materials such as the journals and ephemera of the *ma'abara*.

Methodology and Terminology

The principle aim of this book is to explore the nature of Mizrahi or Oriental Jewish protests during the first two decades of Israel's statehood and analyze how the police force worked to suppress the nascent Mizrahi struggle. The main questions I seek to answer are: How and to what extent did a Mizrahi collective fight against discrimination during these first decades? And how did the police work to suppress this civil rights struggle? In documenting the early Mizrahi civil rights struggle, I use the following criteria in defining a Mizrahi movement: the existence of a diverse yet unified struggle centered around a multicultural Eastern identity and demanding a variety of rights with respect to gender, education, housing, and ethnicity (i.e., for Palestinian citizens of Israel). In using this criteria, I challenge the assumption that Mizrahi protests of the time were isolated, individualistic, or too naïve to represent a formidable Mizrahi social movement.

My primary-source materials are written in Hebrew, Arabic, Judeo-Arabic, French, and English. Unless otherwise noted, I have translated all primary-source materials used in the book. Much of the materials provided in the appendix are the first full translations into English. They include the "Pardes Hanna Manifesto" (appendix D); Latif Dori's *al-Mirsad*

article "We, the Residents of the Ma'abara, Will Not Forget" (appendix D); and "The North African Letters" (appendix F). These documents provide invaluable insights into the Mizrahim's perspectives on the ruling elite of Israel during the 1950s.

I employ protest-claims analysis[54] as a means of understanding the nature of early Mizrahi identity and protest. This analytic method highlights the political claims and identity of actors within a protest event and extends the understanding of what constitutes a protest. In doing so, it demonstrates the significance of both physical protests and their discursive counterpart that seek to subvert the dominant actor within a society. Although most scholars who use this methodology employ newspapers as their sole primary-source material, I have included police reports in my examination of Mizrahi protests, mainly because of some of the problems inherent in newspaper accounts.

One major dilemma faced by scholars of collective action is that of media selection bias, in which newspaper editors tend to have a political bias in deciding whether a particular protest is worthy of news coverage or not.[55] Although media selection bias does not have a significant impact on the reporting of large-scale political movements, social protests involving marginalized ethnic groups tend to be underreported unless they are particularly violent. All the more problematic in the Israeli case is that during the first decade of statehood the Hebrew press maintained close links with the Israel National Police in their decisions to publish or censure acts of resistance.[56]

In contrast, declassified police reports provide more detailed, firsthand descriptions of protests in that they usually include eyewitness accounts and testimony from the demonstrators, clearly convey the reasons behind a protest, and illustrate the state's perception of the threat level posed by the protest. In this way, police reports allow a more nuanced and precise understanding of the event in question and its context. I thus rely heavily on police reports as a more reliable eyewitness account of events and link protest events to newspaper reports as a way of corroborating and supplementing police accounts.

I found police reports in thirty-five declassified police folders dating from 1948 to 1959. These folders hold anywhere from twenty to a hundred

files; however, many contain duplicate events or occurrences irrelevant to the study. Thus, I first compiled a database of events involving ten or more Mizrahi-identified demonstrators during the period 1948–66. I gave an identification number to each event to provide a reference to related events. For the purposes of this study, I identified Mizrahim based on several factors: the explicit mention of their ethnic origins (which was often the case); location of residence (e.g., *ma'abarot*, economically disadvantaged urban areas, development towns, etc.); and names of those arrested. I then categorized these disturbances according to year, location, political affiliation (if any), target, number of participants, reason for protest, and intensity. I based my assessment of the intensity of an event on the target of the demonstration and number of participants and used a system of abbreviations to describe each event (e.g., D = demonstration). Organizing singular police files by year and location allowed me to link lone attachments to the reports (e.g., posters, letters, photographs, etc.) to their corresponding event. I then ranked each unique event on a scale of relevance to the study, from "very significant" to "peripheral." I judged the relevance of each protest according to the following factors: (*a*) the target of the protests; (*b*) the ratio of policemen to protestors; and (*c*) the duration of the protest.[57] (See appendix A for a sample of the database.)

In order to understand the police subculture of the time, I perused the police journals *Shoter Israel* (Israel Policeman), *Rivo'un Mishteret Israel* (Israel Police Quarterly), and *9-9-9: Iton Shotrei Israel* (9-9-9: Journal of the Israel Police). Although written exclusively by police officers and staff, they were geared toward an audience of policemen, judges, and various government ministries. Through an examination of these police journals and annual police reports, I was able to explore the ideology of the police department vis-à-vis incoming Middle Eastern immigrants.

There are admittedly some limitations to using police reports as primary-source material. Apart from the police officers' explicit biases, one of the main difficulties in using Israeli police reports is an organizational one. In addition to duplicate or misplaced files, there were numerous attachments (posters, letters, internal correspondences, etc.) not clearly linked to an event. Also, each district dealt with its own disturbances, and few reports indicate extensive communication between different

districts. This lack of cross-district communication was particularly problematic for analysis of mobile protests that began in a remote *ma'abara* and then moved on to an urban setting such as Tel Aviv. In order to overcome these obstacles, I cross-checked most demonstrations through searches in the leading newspapers, *Ma'ariv* and *Davar*. I also made use of protest accounts available in *Al Hamishmar* (On the Observation Post), *Ha'aretz* (Land of Israel), and *Kol Ha'Am* (Voice of the People).

In addition to aiding my organization of protests, newspaper cross-checking revealed some patterns that seemed to go unnoticed by local precincts. However, despite the occasional reliability of news accounts, they often lacked the extensive detail of an eyewitness account in a police report. It should be no surprise that I found that most of the nonviolent protests were not reported within newspapers, regardless of location (e.g., urban versus rural areas) or intensity. In contrast, violent encounters with the police (whether within the context of a protest or not) were frequently given detailed reportage.

Another unforeseen obstacle was that the current political climate proved to be a significant hindrance to the study. Although the Israel State Archives approved casual requests for police folders, a thorough examination of a decade of police records raised suspicion among the staff. Thus, after several months of pouring through reports, I was denied requests for further police folders based on the claim that all files pertaining to the police were "reclassified."[58] It is for this reason that my descriptions and analysis of events dating from 1958 on are based largely on newspaper reports.

As a means of understanding the underlying ideology of early Mizrahi protests, I examined the contemporaneous writings of Oriental Jewish immigrants. Because the majority of Oriental immigrants during the 1950s arrived from Arabophone countries (in particular Iraq), I focused on publications written in their native Arabic language rather than those written in Hebrew. Specifically, I examined and translated numerous articles in Mapam journals and newspapers that were disseminated within various *ma'abarot*, such as *Ila al-Amam*, *Sawt al-Ma'abir*, *al-Mirsad*, and, to a lesser extent, the Herut Party publication *al-Hurriya* (Freedom). Although all of these publications can be found in the Jewish

National Library (Jerusalem), discovery of their existence was due largely to resources available at the Mapam Archives (Givat Haviva) and to its staff's helpfulness.

I have attempted to link the most significant ethnic protests to an overarching Mizrahi struggle, but there are, of course, some omissions. Using the police reports as primary-source material is a double-edged sword: with them, I have been able to uncover unexamined historical events, yet I have been limited by whatever knowledge the police had at the time. Nevertheless, compared to newspaper accounts, police reports provide an unfiltered, raw interpretation of protests and the development of social movements because policemen, when compiling a police report, did not anticipate a readership larger than their fellow police officers. Thus, their reports lack the "selection bias" or slant often found in newspaper reports. Therefore, despite the obstacles posed by examining police reports, I hope that this study illustrates some of their merits as a source material in the study of emerging social movements such as the Mizrahi struggle.[59]

I have largely avoided retelling events that other scholars have already described in detail, despite the fact that some major events, notably the Haifa sea workers' strike in 1951, were organized by and included mostly non-Ashkenazi Jewish participants.[60] Also, I do not address the demonstrations of the Yemenite Jewish community against the capture and adoption of their children by Ashkenazi parents because large-scale protests against the incidents did not appear in the source material until 1966.[61]

With one or two exceptions, I have refrained from the use of retrospective oral narratives. Although this exclusion has allowed me to focus on contemporaneous historical interpretations of the early Mizrahi struggle, it has admittedly hindered a fuller understanding of how the layman Mizrahi immigrant conceptualized his or her own struggle. In an effort to overcome this challenge, I examined the contemporaneous political writings of Mizrahi immigrants found in the *ma'abara* journals and Mapam-affiliated newspapers. I also used the transcripts of interviews of slum residents found in the mainstream Israeli newspapers of the time. These transcripts often, albeit not always, reflect the biases of the newspaper's own political affiliations. Through them, however, I attempt to portray

and retell the personal stories of the "average" Oriental Jewish *ma'abara* slum resident.

Because of the complicated nature of categorizing the Oriental Jewish collective in English, an explanation of the various special terms employed in this book is necessary.[62] I use the terms *Mizrahi(m)* and its English counterpart *Oriental Jew(s)* to refer to the immigrant community coming to Israel from the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia. This usage comes with the acknowledgment that during the first decade of statehood this ethnic group was still in the process of forming. However, I found the term *Mizrahi* or *Oriental Jew* particularly useful because it reflects a publicly articulated self-awareness that Oriental Jews asserted themselves as a marginalized non-Ashkenazi group during the period in question. Although Mizrahim of the time would likely have been seen as part of a "Sephardic" or "Edot Hamizrah" collectivity, this study largely refrains from using the latter terms as either inaccurate or outdated. Instead, I make retrospective use of the term *Mizrahi(m)* to highlight the continuity of this ethnic struggle and as a way to emphasize that the Mizrahi struggle of the modern era may look to its origins in the civil rights struggle of the earlier period in question.

Similarly, I refer to the non-Jewish Arab population of Israel as *Palestinian citizens of Israel*, following the view that other terms such as *Israeli Arabs* and *Arab Israelis* are outdated and inaccurately describe the majority of a population whose national aspirations are more in line with Palestinian nationalism than with Israeli or pan-Arab nationalism. I have found that *Palestinian citizens of Israel*, although a contemporary term, maintains its applicability even during the period in question (1948–66) because it allows a fuller comprehension of their position as both Palestinian-identified and third-class Israeli citizens living under military rule during this period.

This study maintains that the acts of resistance and subversive discourse were the backbone of a forgotten Mizrahi civil rights struggle composed of demonstrations, hunger strikes, revolts, rebellions, and uprisings. Although many of the events discussed may be referred to as "riots" in common parlance (e.g., the Wadi Salib riots), I largely avoid the term *riot* owing to its connotation as a violent protest without rhyme or

reason. I instead generally refer to these types of events as rebellions or uprisings against what was perceived as institutionalized discrimination.

Book Structure

This book is divided into five chapters with a strong focus on the largely ignored pre–Wadi Salib period of Mizrahi protests. Chapter 1 provides an analysis of the development of the nontraditional duties of the Israel National Police pertaining to Oriental Jewish immigrants. It emphasizes the Israel Police's assumed role as "Ben-Gurion's Police" and its declared method of advancing the process of *mizug hagaluyot*. Chapter 2 gives a history of pre–Wadi Salib Mizrahi resistance against the state's discriminatory practices. Through a focus on the Oriental Mapam members' political thought, this chapter examines the ideological foundation behind the pre–Wadi Salib protests. Moreover, I turn to the often ignored Mizrahi–Palestinian connection. This era suffers from a lacuna of research into the solidarity efforts of Mizrahi and Arab intellectuals despite the fact that such efforts were made by both groups. To fill this void, this chapter places an emphasis on those individuals in Israel who attempted to establish links of solidarity between the two interrelated struggles.

After an examination of the foundations of the Mizrahi struggle, I divide Mizrahi protests based on their geographical origins. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with nonviolent and violent acts of resistance occurring in two main locations: the rural setting of the *ma'abarot*, or transit camps, and the urban areas of major cities. They examine the relationship between Mizrahi citizens and the police as well as various uprisings against the police and government officials. Chapter 5 provides a brief history of the Wadi Salib Rebellion of 1959 but its larger focus is the rebellion's aftermath and its impact on subsequent Mizrahi revolts prior to the Six-Day War in 1967.

I conclude the study by attempting to come to some understanding of the function of the Israel Police in the development of a Mizrahi social justice struggle. By examining the history of Mizrahi collective action during the first two decades of statehood, I hope to spark a change in Israeli historiography by pointing to the 1950s and 1960s as the formative years of a Mizrahi civil rights struggle.

1

Building and Organizing the Israel Police, 1948–1958

The Uneasy Transition into National Police

The Israel National Police traces its origins back to the 1920s when the Palestine Police Force of the British colonial administration was formally established. Following the establishment of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, the British colonial police were formally disbanded, and the Israel National Police was established. Although many of the same Jewish and Arab police officers remained in the newly formed police force, this transition did not go without incident. After the first Knesset elections in 1949, the Israel Police went under a process of purging many of the officers who openly maintained close links to Mapai opponents, such as Herut and Lehi Party members. Although the police's main task was to ensure social order and protect the borders from "infiltrators" (e.g., Palestinian refugees returning to their homes), less than a year later most of their attention was, albeit reluctantly, directed to newly arrived immigrants coming from the Middle East and North Africa.

On December 21, 1947, less than a month after the United Nations resolution calling for a provisional Jewish state in Palestine, a proposal to establish a police force for a "Hebrew State" was sent to several leading figures in the Zionist movement, including David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir, and David Remez.[1] The proposal was a plan of action for the establishment of a police force by October 1, 1948, the expected time at which the Palestine (Mandate) Police would depart. This proposal outlined the

specific function of each administrative branch, auxiliary units, and the details of each commanding role in a future Israel Police.

A short time after the proposal was circulated to leading Zionists, the Palestine Police Force began to be dismantled, and Jewish policemen were recruited into both the police force and the Haganah.[2] By early 1948, at least 700 Jewish police officers were prepared to work in the budding Israel Police. However, David Ben-Gurion was reluctant to prepare an active police department out of fear that the British would perceive the Jewish community as interfering in British affairs.[3]

The transition from a colonial to a nationalized police force was far from easy, and in terms of equipment the Israel Police had to start from scratch.[4] The transition was particularly chaotic for the prison system. Prisoners were released en masse, including dangerous criminals—murderers, thieves, and rapists. Political prisoners took advantage of the chaos surrounding the transitional period. For example, a few weeks before the termination of the mandate, the Haganah launched an attack on the city of Akko. During the attack, a mortar hit the roof of the Akko prison, and 140 prisoners organized an escape.[5] The prison housed mainly Arab political prisoners from the Arab revolt and general strikes but also included ninety Irgun, Lehi, and Haganah members. A similar scene occurred in the previous year when the Irgun ignited dynamite in the prison and released forty of its members.

Commissioner Yehezkiel Sahar claimed that, in total, 2,500 prisoners escaped during 1948.[6] Sahar posited that many of the escaped Arab prisoners later formed gangs with Arab *notrim* (mandate-era communal guards) who had left their positions, most likely as a form of protest against the State of Israel.[7] Nevertheless, a not insignificant number of non-Jewish native Palestinians remained in service. In 1951, 278 police officers were registered as "minorities" born in Israel/Palestine,[8] which amounted to approximately 6 percent of the entire force and 29 percent of the number of native-born Israeli police officers.

Another problem with the postmandate transfer was the issue of where to hold prisoners. Because most of the jails were British property, the Israel Police were not able to take over the prisons, so prisoners were held within the police stations themselves. Tegart-style fortresses were

not initially handed over to the Israel Police but were acquired years later as prisons, housing for employees, and police stations. Housing provisions in buildings like the Tegart fortress were often an incentive for new immigrants to join the police. One such Tegart fortress was later used as the location for the infamous Camp 1391 prison. For Our Prisoners, a mandate-era organization for Jewish political prisoners, provided food to all prisoners in the first year.

Even with the problems faced during the transitional period, the realization of the Israel Police was not so different from the original proposals made. The main problems were the quality and size of their manpower and their financial resources. These two factors played a major role in the demographic developments in the Israel Police, which by the end of the decade would be composed mostly of Mizrahim.[9]

Structuring the Social Class and Ethnic Composition of the Israel Police

In highlighting the detrimental results of the cronyism present within the early police force, evaluating the structuring of the Israel Police helps to understand it as an entity that both accompanied and supported the construction of the social hierarchy in Israel.[10]

The commissioner, as head of the police force, was based in the Police National Headquarters, at that time located in Tel Aviv. The National Headquarters also included a secretariat and Communal Relations Department, with the commissioner setting the policies and directives of each police branch and the division of administrative districts. From 1948 to 1958, the National Headquarters came under the command of Commissioner Yehezkiel Sahar (née Sakharov) and his deputy, Yosef Nahmias. The National Police Headquarters were later relocated in a show of force to Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem, in July 1969. This relocation signifies the Israel Police's intimate involvement in the promulgation of state ideals, in particular the ideology of Zionist settlement.[11]

The commissioner's responsibilities included recruiting new police officers; managing police funds; deciding on suspensions, demotions, and dismissals; hiring supernumerary members; and establishing disciplinary courts for internal police matters. The commissioner was authorized

to discipline only those policemen below the level of superintendent. Apart from disciplining subordinates, he would compile an annual police report documenting statistics on criminal cases, the state of the police force, the state of police–community relations, and general police activities during the year.[12] This report was then sent to the minister of police for parliamentary review.

As with other aspects of the Israel Police, the rankings and symbols used in the force directly corresponded to those of its forerunner, the Palestine Police Force. During the transitional period, the entire structure of the Israel Police was based on the British Police, and the latter's ranking terminology was simply translated into Hebrew.[13] Other ranks were later added, and under Commissioner Shaul Rozolio, the rankings were changed to a system more in line with the IDF. The ranking system of the Israel Police divided police officers into two statuses: *katzin* (pl. *k'tzinim*) and *shoter* (pl. *shotrim*). *K'tzinim*, or commanding officers, were employees ranked from commissioner to subinspector. *Shotrim* were the lower-ranking officers ranging from corporal to constable.

The main reason for the use of British rankings was that few non-British officers in the Palestine Police had significant experience in police leadership roles. A serious problem for the transitional period was that Jewish and Arab police officers had worked only in the Investigations Department and in low-level police work. In fact, in the Palestine Police only one or two Jews held the position of district commander.[14]

In forming the police force, Sahar chose the commanding officers (*k'tzinim*) from among the ranks of Jewish members of the British Mandate army. District and branch commanders were appointed based on recommendations given by Haganah staff members. It is clear that Sahar used this hiring method because he was a former member of the British army and Haganah, but in doing so he implicitly rejected members of the Lehi and Etzel terrorist groups: "I did not thoroughly examine the party stances of the [appointed district commanders] because it was clear to me not to allow in members of the Etzel and Lehi because they did not recognize the authority of the Haganah."[15]

After being released from the British army, Sahar had worked in the Jewish Agency for a short time until Prime Minister Ben-Gurion appointed

him to the highest position in the Israel Police.[16] In return for this appointment, Commissioner Sahar hired Ben-Gurion's son, Amos, as the director of the Organization Branch (1949–58). Neither Commissioner Sahar nor Amos Ben-Gurion had any significant experience as police officers.

The cronyism present in the police force would eventually lead to the criminal investigation of both Commissioner Sahar and Amos Ben-Gurion in 1956 and their eventual resignations in 1958. In 1956, the Shurat Hamitnadvim (Volunteer Squad), a watchdog group of politicians and academics, uncovered a scandal involving Amos Ben-Gurion. In their publication *Danger Lurks—from Within!* they revealed that Amos, the longest-serving director of any police branch, had received numerous privileges during his police service owing to his familial connection.[17] The publication specifically brought to light Amos Ben-Gurion's lavish villa, allegedly acquired through a Mr. Ligum, who was accused of laundering money from German reparations meant for Holocaust survivors.[18] More substantially, the publication questioned Ben-Gurion's business partnership in a mining company with Assistant District Superintendent Ya'akov Kenner and Yishayahu Yarkoni. This was a serious accusation because Sahar had explicitly stated that "a police officer . . . will be considered as if he is always on duty. . . . [H]e is forbidden to work in any job or position apart from his duties as an officer."[19]

After a lengthy court case, Amos Ben-Gurion and Sahar resigned from their duties and were ordered to pay a large court fine.[20] The details revealed in the trial uncovered the cronyism and corruption existing in the higher ranks of the Israel Police. These revelations, particularly after the removal of its Organization Branch director, revealed to the public that the existing cronyism worked to the Israel Police's detriment.

After Sahar's resignation, the second in command, Deputy Commissioner Yosef Nahmias, replaced him and held the position from 1958 to 1964. With the promotion of Nahmias as head of the Israel Police, numerous structural changes to district distributions and branch divisions took place. However, the Israel Police's overriding philosophy did not change until after the departure of Bechor Shitreet as the minister of police in 1966. Thus, it is enough for my purposes here to address only the period of Sahar's appointment as Israel's police commissioner.

Although the commissioner and his deputy headed the Israel Police, the Commissioner's Office also assisted in running it. From 1948 to 1954, a General Secretariat existed to assist the Commissioner's Office. The secretariat was responsible for preserving the archive and filing documents and official letters. In addition to its normal duties, its tasks included the supervision of National Headquarters employees and managing the Israel Police's publishing house. Moreover, the secretariat was tasked with the difficult objective of establishing a good relationship with society by creating favorable press coverage and examining cases of complaints against police officers.[21] Although the General Secretariat (and later the Communications Branch) was responsible for establishing good relations with civilian society, a separate government ministry, the Ministry of Police, was tasked with representing the police force to the Parliament.

The Ministry of Police, external to the Israel Police, lasted until 1977, when it was transformed into the current Ministry of Internal Security. The commissioner coordinated police policies with the minister of police prior to their implementation. The Israel Police was originally to be under the supervision of the Interior Ministry, but the minister of interior in the provisional government refused to take responsibility for it.[22] As a result, David Ben-Gurion created a separate portfolio for the minister of police and appointed Bechor Shitreet of the Sephardi Party, then minister of minority affairs. From 1948 until a few months before his death in 1966, Bechor Shitreet held this position.

The existence of a Ministry of Police was problematic for some members of the Provisional State Council (predecessor to the first Knesset) for a variety of reasons. For instance, Nahum Nir felt that the parliamentary post would create a state within a state and that its organizational structure was so similar to the IDF's that the combination of the two would lead to a police state.[23] However, once the first Knesset was elected, Eliyahu Eliachar and Moshe Ben-Ami (Sephardi List) successfully vouched for a separate Ministry of Police.[24] The existence of a Ministry of Police portfolio, along with an institute for government training, was cited as the Sephardi List's main condition for joining Ben-Gurion's coalition government. Their existence, Eliachar argued, would ensure that each ethnic

community had the opportunity to be trained and work in the service of the state.[25]

The police minister's main duties were to ensure internal security and to act as a liaison between the Knesset and the commissioner.[26] Although the two positions functioned in different sectors (one civil, the other governmental), the minister of police, as a government overseer, superseded the commissioner. The Ministry of Police and the Israel Police derived their authority from the 1926/1929 Police Ordinance of the British Mandate, so many of the guidance laws for police officers were a direct continuance of British Mandate laws.

Apart from the Commissioner's Office and the Ministry of Police, the Israel Police was managed by three commanding branches directly subordinate to the commissioner: Management, Organization, and Investigations. The Management Branch handled manpower, training of new recruits, communications, logistics, and accounts. The Organization Branch dealt with special operations, organization of criminal files, planning, and training. The Investigations Branch dealt with criminal investigations, preemptive investigations, and financial (primarily white-collar) crimes.

In the developmental stage of the Israel Police, Yosef Ben Porat (1948–50) headed the Management Branch. After two years of service, Yekutiel Keren (née Sabitzky) replaced Ben Porat and continued in this position until 1970. Under Keren, the Management Branch was streamlined.

The Accounting Department dealt with salaries and managed the budget allocated each year to the Israel Police. A base salary was allocated in the Israel Police's first decade, with increases based on the number of years of service. The salary of regular "on-the-beat" officers placed them within the low-income bracket in Israel. However, having even a low salary was a significant improvement for many jobless immigrants living in the *ma'abarot*.

In the first year of service, *shotrim* earned twelve lirot per month, which increased to fifteen lirot per month (about $8 in the United States during the 1950s, where the monthly average income was $275) in the second year. From an officer's third year on, the salary was raised by one lira for each subsequent year of service, up to a maximum-capped salary of thirty lirot

($16) per month at fifteen years of service. Rankings from corporal and higher were given additional amounts on top of the base salary.[27]

Senior officers' salaries were set according to the salaries of other government workers. As such, they were given bonuses for family status, learning Hebrew (for Palestinian citizens) or European languages, and level of vocational education. Junior officers' salary was low compared to that of other public-sector vocations. This problem was ranked as one of the most frequent reasons given when an officer left the force.[28] Commissioner Sahar often lamented officers' relatively low wages and cited it as the principle cause for low retention rates: "Many leave the service because they only saw in the police a location for vocational training and integration. Once they get what they want from the police, they begin to look for easier and more comfortable professions. The main reason for nonrecruitment and quitting is the level of pay . . . [because] it still does not reach the required level and is not a [appropriate] reward for the spiritual and physical effort required of the police."[29]

Apart from data detailing reasons given for leaving the police department, some of the internal correspondence sheds light on the daily struggles of junior police officers as low-wage earners. One such letter involves an incident (discussed in further detail later) involving the injury of a policeman during a violent clash with protestors in late June 1952.[30] Officer Me'ir Idit, whose glasses were broken during the confrontation, sent numerous requests to the accused offender to pay to have his glasses repaired. The protestor who broke them, a hospital worker, refused to compensate Officer Idit until after the criminal trial against him.

Idit, who "[couldn't] go a day without glasses," began to send requests to his own police precinct for compensation. Relying on a new law put in place that demanded harsher punishment for those who attack a police officer or Knesset members,[31] Officer Idit noted that his district headquarters were required to reimburse him. The cost for replacing the glasses, twenty-two lirot, was one-quarter of his monthly salary, which made it nearly impossible for him to pay to replace them.[32]

One of the main reasons for junior officers' low salary was the budgeting concerns of police leadership. Despite complaints of insufficient budgeting for the police, the Israel Police acquired a hefty sum in comparison

to other essential governmental departments. In 1950 alone, the budget for the police was among the highest allocated budgets, apart from the security (military) and immigrant-housing sectors, each of which was provided with more than four times the budget of other government sectors.[33]

To illustrate the high budgetary allocation to the Israel Police, it is worth comparing its budget to the two sectors that were concerned mainly with new immigrants: health and education (figure 1). In the Israel Police's first year, its budget exceeded that of both the Education and Health Ministries. However, in subsequent years, the budget for education soared well above both the health and police sectors. Despite the rise, many of the *ma'abara* residents complained of a complete lack of schooling for their children.

Interestingly, during 1951–57, the police and health sectors remained largely on par with each other fiscally, with the police obtaining a slightly higher budget initially and showing a gradual decline in later years. Thus, in financial terms, the concern for the health of immigrants was as important as the policing of their communities. The sharpest increase for the police occurred in 1951 when their allocation nearly doubled.

In addition to financial problems, the Manpower Department of the Israel Police often complained about the quality of new recruits, who were primarily of Middle Eastern descent. In its first year of existence, the Israel Police was composed mostly of previous members of the Palestine Police Force and Jewish recruits from the British army and Haganah. Thus, at that time the ethnic composition of the police force was primarily Ashkenazi. However, in subsequent years the Israel Police witnessed a transformation with the mass recruitment of Oriental Jewish immigrants.

The period 1949–52 saw a sharp change in the percentages of Ashkenazi and Mizrahi policemen (figure 2). Even taking into account the mass influx of Middle Eastern Jews during this period, this change was largely disproportionate to the civilian demographic change. For example, in 1949 Ashkenazi policemen constituted 72 percent of the entire police force, but by 1952 they made up only 49 percent (a 23 percent drop). In contrast, during the same period Orientals went from a mere 9 percent of the police force to 32 percent (a 23 percent increase), an exact inversion of the sharp decline in the number of Ashkenazi officers. These numbers may appear to

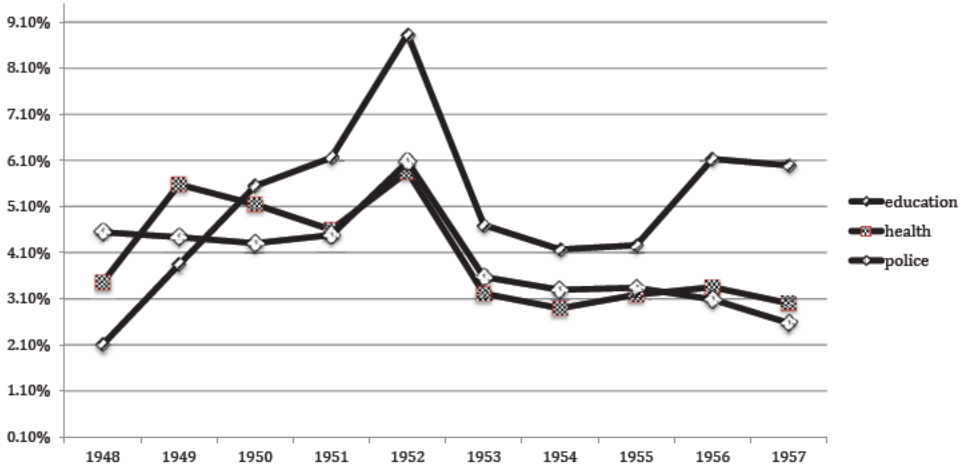

Figure 1. Allocation of national budget, Israel, 1948–1957. *Source*: Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1948–1958*.

mirror the sharp demographic change in the civilian population; however, the proportion of the Ashkenazi civilian population dropped by only 9 percent, and the proportion of Mizrahi civilians increased by 9 percent. This increase continued throughout the first decade, so that by 1959 Jews from Asia and Africa constituted the ethnic majority of the police department.[34]

One of the main reasons Mizrahim were disproportionately recruited into the police force was the perception of the police as an effective socializing tool for new immigrants. In general, the state and the Israel Police saw the large enlistment of Oriental immigrants into the police as an effective way to teach the state's Zionist and democratic values to newcomers. Member of Knesset (MK) Binyamin Silas Sasson (Sephardi List) expressed this point explicitly in one Knesset meeting: "I am proud that my dear friend . . . Mr. Shitreet, the head of the police, allows new immigrants to enter the police force [because] the police is a very important educational factor."[35] This was certainly true concerning the language capabilities of the largely immigrant police force. In 1953, more than 4,000 officers (67 percent) were unable to speak Hebrew at a fifth-grade level.[36]

Using the case of increased recruitment of black policemen in the United States, Ellis Cashmore and Eugene McLaughlin argue that this

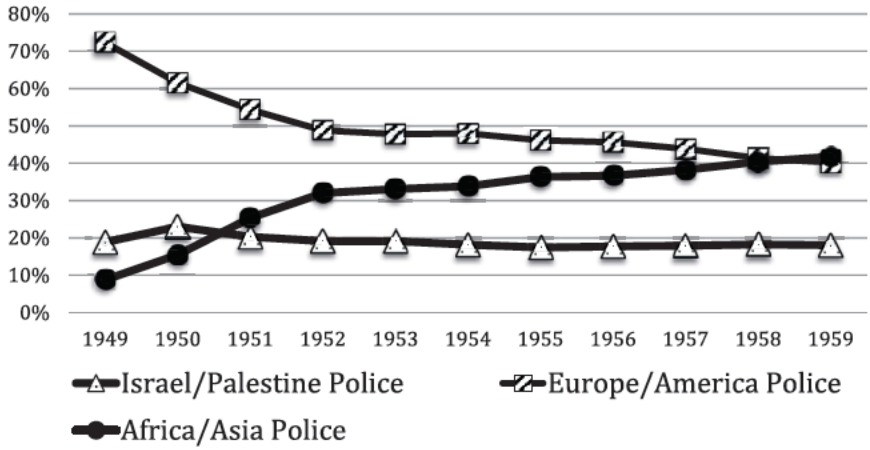

Figure 2. Ethnic composition of the Israel National Police, 1949–1959. For detailed yearly percentages and further clarification of the "Israel/Palestine" category, see appendix C. *Source*: Figures compiled from Israel National Police, *Annual Police Report* (in Hebrew) for the years 1949–59, Israel State Archives.

type of situation is an indication of a process of legitimizing a system of inequality that is already in place. Essential to this process is the inclusion of members of an oppressed ethnic group (e.g., blacks) into the police force, which aims to prove that inequality exists "because people *are* unequal, not because blacks have restricted opportunities." Cashmore and McLaughlin further note the effectiveness of this strategy: "Extending participation in the prime agency of law enforcement reminded the whole population that the USA sought commitment to equal opportunities. But it also had the advantage of co-opting significant sections of the black working class—and, later, middle class—into an institution of social control."[37]

The parallels between the recruitment of black Americans in the US police departments and the recruitment of Mizrahi officers into the Israeli Police are striking. "[Blacks] were being included to be community relations personnel. They were being used to make police officers more acceptable in the black community."[38] For both blacks and Mizrahim, the physical image of police officers and the state that they represented needed "to change from a representative of a de-personalized and

possible antagonistic agency to a protector, friend and neighbor."[39] In this way, the social control of the "problematic" ethnic community would be ensured.

For the case of the Israel Police, the issue of ethnic social control was important for both the Mizrahi citizen and the Mizrahi police officer. Whereas black officers in the United States were used to ensure communal respect of the police, Mizrahi officers were burdened with the task of educating immigrants on "civilized" ways to behave: "An [immigrant] policeman who . . . works with his friend who has a different way of life from his country of origin learns how to act properly based on his coaching. . . . Initially, in a small way and afterward in a significant way, he may learn to be a suitable [member of] the society into which he has been thrown. Constant contact between the [immigrant] officer and his friends at work and in society allows him to become aware of the civilized way of living and awakens in him a will to educate his children as an example of civility in his [community]."[40]

However, this model for "civility" was in the end ineffective: the point at which Mizrahim constituted a majority in the police force was also the point at which one of the most well-known cases of Mizrahi rebellion (the Wade Salib events in 1959) took place.

The use of Mizrahi recruits as communal civilizers as well as their high recruitment and retention rates did not correspond to their status in the police force hierarchy, however. Similar to the position of Jewish and Arab Palestinians in the Palestine Police Force, Orientals occupied mostly low-level patrol and investigatory positions that required language skills that would facilitate communication with Middle Eastern immigrants. As in the ruling Mapai Party, however, most of the commanding officers (*k'tzinim*) were Jews from the former Russian Empire (i.e., Poland and the Ukraine).

For instance, in 1956 only 25 (1.2 percent) of the 2,130 police officers of Middle Eastern origin were *k'tzinim*. In the following year, this figure dropped to 22 (1 percent) out of 2,180. In contrast, 17 percent of European-origin policemen in 1956 were *k'tzinim*, and, despite a significant drop in their numbers in 1957, the percentage of commanding officers in this group rose to 18 percent. Even in 1958, when Oriental Jewish policemen formed

nearly half of the entire police force, only 10 percent of officers were of Oriental Jewish origin.[41] This phenomenon was later depicted in the *bourekas* film *Shoter Azulai* (1970),[42] where the Moroccan-born Officer Azulai, despite length of service, bilingualism, and good rapport with various social sectors, never advanced beyond the rank of *rav shoter* (lance corporal).

David Ben-Haroush, leader of the Wadi Salib protest, was aware of the discriminatory division of labor within the Israel Police. In his testimony to the Etzioni Commission, which had been set up to investigate the rebellion, he noted that when he attempted to join the police force, nearly all of the *notrim* were recruits from the Middle East:

> JUDGE ETZIONI: Why in your opinion did they enter you as a *noter* and not receive you immediately as a *shoter*?
>
> BEN-HAROUSH: I know that I was qualified to be a *shoter* and especially since at the same time they received *shotrim* who were testing me and didn't know how to read or write. . . . [They] were people older than me and particularly from the Ashkenazi community.
>
> ETZIONI: All of the *notrim* were from North Africa?
>
> BEN-HAROUSH: There were also Ashkenazim, but mostly older people. There were none, perhaps just one, *noter* who was a young Ashkenazi.
>
> ETZIONI: Perhaps in other places there were [Ashkenazim]?
>
> BEN-HAROUSH: Perhaps, if there were no other places to work, they would be compelled to work.[43]

The recruitment of members of ethnic groups directly correlated with the political climate of the time. Between 1955 and 1957, the entire police force experienced a gradual decline. The sharpest decline for Ashkenazim occurred in 1956–57 with a decrease of 145 in their number because of their military reserve duty obligations during the Suez Crisis of 1956. After that, there was a steady decrease of about 100 Ashkenazi policemen each year. For Orientals, the sharpest decline was 49 policemen in 1955–56. However, their numbers continued to increase in subsequent years.

The number of Palestinian Israeli policemen remained relatively stable during the first decade of statehood.[44] The highest rate of their recruitment into the Israel Police occurred between 1952 and 1953, jumping from

303 to 417 members, an increase of 114 police officers. Although the year 1953 had the highest number of Arab policemen, MK Eliezer Peri (Mapam) noted that Palestinian citizens were highly underrepresented in the police force and were barely a third of the percentage they should have represented. He added that the low number of Palestinian citizens in the police force had a direct effect on the poor treatment of Arab prisoners in Israel.[45]

The Qibya massacre in 1953 appears to have had a negative effect on the retention and recruitment of Palestinian Israeli policemen. In 1953, the Israel Police had the highest number of Palestinian Israeli officers in that decade. However, the year following the massacre saw the largest decline of the decade, from 417 to 381 Palestinian Israeli officers.[46] After this significant decrease, the number of Palestinian Israeli officers continued to decrease until 1956, when their participation increased by 29 additional officers. This increase coincided with the Kufur Qasim massacre of 1956 that was perpetuated by the Israel Border Patrol and, as such, demonstrates that Palestinian citizens themselves began to see a real need for representation within the police force.[47]

Previously under the IDF's command, the Border Patrol came under the command of the Israel Police's Organization Branch in 1953. The unit itself was thus seen as an autonomous, borderless district under the commissioner's command. The idea of a Border Patrol originated from the proposal to establish a gendarmerie for the future Jewish state in 1947. Whereas the police would work to prevent crime and "known [societal] problems,"[48] a separate gendarmerie, then known as the Frontier Corps (later the Border Patrol), would protect peripheral regions and secure borders. The police would be made up of a permanent force, and being a police officer would be seen as a steady vocation. In contrast, the gendarmerie, with the exception of its sergeants and commanders, would be a transient force: its members would serve one year of obligatory national service and so were prohibited from receiving a salary.

This distinction would serve a few practical purposes. First, because the Border Patrol's manpower was double the number of the regular police force, its officers' nonpaid, transient status was implemented as the only possible way "to prevent the security budget from swallowing up the majority of the state's budget."[49] Moreover, both the Border Patrol

and the Israel Police were obligated to serve as auxiliary army units and come under the command of the IDF during times of war.[50] As a civilian policing force that served under the IDF from 1948 to 1953, the Border Patrol would always operate in an ambiguously militaristic function. It is interesting to note that the public perceived the Border Patrol, however erroneously, as a largely Mizrahi force. This perception was particularly prominent when the police were implicated in barbaric or violent acts against the Arab population, such as the Kufur Qasim massacre of 1956.[51]

Amos Ben-Gurion headed the Organization Branch of the Israel Police from 1949 until Shurat Hamitnadvim's allegations forced him to resign. This branch controlled district headquarters and their staff, trained new recruits, managed the organization of the National Headquarters, and conducted special assignments. It comprised several subsections: Special Assignments; Planning (1950–54); Training, Organization, Communications (1950–52); and Border Patrol.

A significant function of the Organization Branch was the training of new recruits and those promoted to commander status. An important part of this duty was to inform officers of their authority during demonstrations. The powers accorded to police officers during demonstrations were derived from a mix of colonial and postindependence law codes: the mandate-era Criminal Code Ordinance of 1936; Ottoman penal codes concerning gatherings; and newly established Israel criminal codes.[52]

In 1951, Deputy District Inspector Yitzhak Arieli, as head of the Training Department, codified the laws regarding the authority and proper behavior of each police rank.[53] Some of the more pertinent laws concerning police behavior involved the distinctions between illegal gatherings, public assemblies, and demonstrations. In general, an unlawful gathering was defined as a gathering of three or more people who intended to carry out a common goal or behave in a manner that aroused suspicion of public disorder or criminal intent or both. Anyone involved in such a gathering would be liable to one-year imprisonment. Not much different from an illegal gathering, a riot was defined in terms of the intention of those gathered. If illegal gatherers began to plot to "breach the peace or terrorize the public," they were to be treated as "gatherers for the sake of a riot" and thus liable to two years' imprisonment.[54]

Despite the differences in punishment for an illegal gathering and a riot, the authorities granted to police officers was the same in both cases. This congruity permitted room for an overuse of force because these two categorically different acts were treated the same in practical terms. If a riot, unlawful gathering, or disturbance of the peace occurred or was suspected to occur, any high-ranking police commander or justice of the peace was allowed to shut down all communal areas (e.g., cafés, clubs, and restaurants) for as long as they saw fit. In addition, any constable (*shoter*) was permitted to disperse any public gathering, with or without force, and arrest those who refused to disperse or even just dispersed too slowly.[55] These laws applied even to fellow police officers who held protests.

Although there were few reported cases of protesting policemen, humorous remarks made in police journals indicate that it was not rare for police officers to join protests.[56] In a well-publicized incident on April 6, 1949, a group of about eighty fired policemen staged a sit-down protest to make their complaints against the Israel Police known to the public at large and the government.[57] The fired officers, who were mostly veteran *k'tzinim*, organized in the corridors of the first two floors of the Tel Aviv Police Precinct. An hour after initiating the protest and after consulting with each other, the policemen gathered in an empty auditorium and formed a delegation, which eventually went to Assistant District Superintendent Shmuel Achiasaf and demanded to meet with the commissioner.

Commissioner Sahar agreed to meet with the strikers on the condition that they leave the police building. However, fearing that this condition was merely a trick, only some of the officers departed to meet with Sahar. By 11:00 a.m., each station in the Tel Aviv Precinct was informed of the strikers. Hearing about them, Minister of Police Shitreet was much less forgiving than Sahar and told the strikers that he would meet with their delegation, but if they did not evacuate the building by 6:30 that evening, every means necessary would be used to remove them. After having a successful meeting with Shitreet and Sahar, the protestors canceled the strike and left in an orderly single-file line at 8:00 p.m.

Several days later an additional strike was held in the Criminal Investigations Department of the same building. After several hours of negotiations, Commissioner Sahar prepared a letter to be read in front of

the strikers, demanding that they leave the building. When the strikers refused to leave, members of the military police and other officers from precinct headquarters were called in as reinforcements. Still unwilling to back down, the officers stood arm in arm in a show of defiant solidarity. Despite this nonviolent act, the situation took a turn for the worse, as one officer reported:

> Since the room was filled with people, it was not possible . . . to take them out by force. [I] received instructions to use a tear-gas bomb. Inspector Luntel, who came from the National Headquarters, activated the first bomb, but it was thrown back into the corridors by one of the strikers. Then the second bomb was activated, and everyone immediately left the room, dispersed, and went up to the roof of the building. . . . [While] on the roof, they incited the public . . . against the police, cursed and voiced their complaints, so much so that they insulted *k'tzinim* and policemen in a very personal manner.[58]

Most of the fired officers had served in both the Palestine and Israel Police Forces for ten to twenty-five years, including service during the war in 1948 and the Palestine riots in 1929. Although it is not entirely clear why they were fired, news reports indicate that it was part of a "cleansing" of unwanted political elements in the force.[59] However, this case illustrates both the brutal meaning of "using force" and its tendency to heighten tensions during nonviolent protests.

Police Journals—Understanding the Police and *Mizug Hagaluyot*

Apart from the official *Police Manual*, police journals provided a less-formal method of training new recruits and establishing a cohesive community of police officers. From 1950 to 1951, the Training Department published the journal *Shoter Israel* (Israel Policeman). From 1953 to 1956, the journal *9-9-9: Israel Police Journal* was distributed throughout police stations. Then *Rivo'un Mishteret Israel* (Israel Police Quarterly) appeared from 1956 to 1965. The latter was more of a police educational journal that published vocational material relating to police activity and new court rulings. It contained fewer anecdotal stories than its predecessor, *9-9-9*,

and thus was taken more seriously as an informational and representational guidebook for the police.

Unfortunately, there is no information on the readership numbers for *9-9-9*; however, some figures for it may be derived from the distribution of the *Israel Police Quarterly*. Despite publication delays owing to the Suez Crisis (Operation Kadesh), 3,000 copies of the *Israel Police Quarterly* were circulated in its first year, 1956.[60] Copies were sent to court libraries, lawyers and judges, prison wardens, and government ministers, in addition to police officers. There was a decrease in the number of police employees between 1955 and 1956, so it can be assumed that the journal *9-9-9* would have had a larger readership than its successor.

Although *9-9-9* was taken less seriously than the *Israel Police Quarterly*, its contents allow for an in-depth examination of the existing police subculture in the 1950s. Minister of Police Bechor Shitreet would often contribute editorials to it. Most of his articles concerned developing morale and reinforcing the ideal of maintaining strong links between new immigrants and the common patrol officer. Several times Shitreet explicitly outlined the duties of a police officer in relation to dealing with new immigrants. Although the annual police report compiled by the commissioner always contained a section concerning communal relations, *9-9-9* provided an informal venue for police officers to express often tongue-in-cheek comments on Israeli society.

In the March 1953 edition of *9-9-9*, Shitreet wrote an article entitled "The Police and *Mizug Hagaluyot*," explaining his aspirations for the police force in light of the large recruitment of new immigrants. In it, he revealed that he considered the Israel National Police to be a salvation for the new immigrants because it, unlike other government institutions, had been able to successfully instill "modern" behavior and Zionist values in its officers. In particular, Shitreet praised the veteran Israeli Jewish population for their ability to lift Oriental immigrant officers from the backward mentality they had brought with them from the Diaspora: "Forty-five percent of the Israel Police . . . immigrated to Israel after the establishment of the State. Many of them come from countries that are backward and underdeveloped. With their entrance into [the police], native and senior

Israelis have molded their character, and they have became integrated into [Israeli society]."

Shitreet asserted that the native Israelis' willingness to mold new immigrants was a great contribution to the Zionist pioneering project, which created a new type of personality separate from that of the Jewish Diaspora. As such, these veteran pioneers were able to do wonders for the process of *mizug hagaluyot*. For Shitreet, veteran officers were able to instill in the primarily Middle Eastern recruits "a cultural and social background appropriate to the level of the *yishuv* and to make possible their integration into the communal life of the state. Sometimes they began in this field from the beginning, [sometimes] from a national and social perspective, and even sometimes from the point of view of [teaching them] manners and cultured ways of living."

As a result of the molding of the Mizrahim's character from a supposed blank state, the integration of the "backward" immigrants into the police force had had long-lasting effects, according to Shitreet: "The nature of the [previously] mentally handicapped person, who has opened his eyes to see the light, will not return to his backwardness, but will search for a way to continue to progress. Against his will and without any effort, he will [portray] an image [of modernity]. It is enough to say that the teaching of Hebrew to all recruits and policemen constitutes a fundamental and unique character for the nation because if there is no united language in the homeland, there will be no special national character."

Similar arguments are found throughout the issues of *9-9-9*, particularly regarding the police force's effect on Mizrahi citizens. In February 1954, an entire publication was dedicated to police activity in the *ma'abarot*. In its headline article, "They Don't Pull Out Anymore Knives," a special correspondent was relieved to find that violent crime against police and citizens had decreased among *ma'abara* residents, specifically Moroccans.[61] This more peaceful situation, according to the article's author, Rivka Kashtan, could be attributed largely to police's efforts to create cultural activities in disadvantaged areas, such as police orchestras and nationalistic folk dancing. Thus, we see that even in the unofficial discourse of the police, constables saw themselves as a socialization tool for Mizrahim. Through the mere presence of the enlightened Ashkenazi and the

acculturated Oriental police officers in the *ma'abarot*, the "knife-wielding Moroccan" would be guided and learn the proper way to behave.

Although most articles regarding Oriental Jews carried these types of assumptions, there were a few exceptions. In a later article with a different tone, another correspondent came to the defense of new Oriental immigrants. Refuting common opinion among civilians and policemen alike, she pointed out that crime did not increase with the arrival of new immigrants and, at worse, only remained the same.[62] Despite her empirical findings, the stereotypes persisted, and Mizrahim were overwhelmingly the subject of preemptive criminal investigation.

The Investigations Branch of the Israel Police, along with regional districts, dealt with the traditional duties of a police force. Its main tasks were investigating ongoing criminal cases, doing forensics analysis, and undertaking special assignments. In 1948, the branch consisted of six subdivisions: Criminal Investigations, Forensics, Training and Education, Special Assignments, Economic Crimes, and Border Security. When the entire police force was reorganized in 1950, the branch experienced only minor changes apart from the appointment of Na'aman Satui (1950–52) as its director. Yeshurun Shif replaced Satui for a brief one-year stint, but Avraham Zlinger (1953–58) headed the branch for the bulk of the decade.

The Investigations Branch served two main functions that are relevant to this study. First, it enforced the austerity laws that were in place from 1949 to 1959. During this time, the government instituted a policy of austerity that involved the rationing of food and even furniture and certain items of clothing. This policy significantly restricted most citizens' quality of life, but *ma'abara* residents suffered from starvation considerably more than others. As a consequence, many *ma'abara* residents sold their kitchenware and clothing to residents of neighboring cities. In reaction to this economic work-around, the Investigations Department launched a largely ineffective "war on the black market" that persisted throughout the 1950s. The failure of this police war was apparent to Commissioner Sahar, who early in the decade commented that "the public did not cooperate even minimally . . . sometimes they even aided criminals to escape from the law. Any aggressive action taken against economic criminals has been described by certain sectors as persecution against innocent people."[63]

The second and most important role of the Investigations Branch was the investigation of incoming immigrants. In addition to the "war on the black market," which targeted mainly immigrants, the branch placed great importance on new immigrants' political leanings and the general atmosphere within *ma'abarot*. Entire police folders were dedicated to investigations into new immigrants who were antigovernment or Communist or who were considered to be dangers to society for other political reasons. As a part of its normal activities, the branch coordinated its findings with the Ministry of Rations and sought out dissident immigrants seeking to escape the conditions of the *ma'abarot*.

In 1950 and 1951, the Investigations Department launched several investigations into the status of new immigrants in general. Amos Ben-Gurion himself led several investigatory surveys of *ma'abarot* within the Hadera and Haifa jurisdictions. The reports took special interest in the Pardes Hanna *ma'abarot* with investigations launched in an effort to survey the employment situation in immigrant camps and make judgments on the possibility of future ethnic tensions and violent encounters with the police.[64] Although it is not entirely known what methods were employed to acquire much of the information, these classified investigations were likely coordinated with camp directors and used residents who collaborated with police officials. The results of this report are discussed at length in chapter 3.

In addition, the Investigations Branch made use of informants gathered from among the immigrants themselves in an effort to quell subversive protests against the ruling Mapai Party and state institutions. Not without controversy, the use of police agents in civilian clothes was the subject of an internal debate between commanding police officers. After the publication of an inflammatory news article, Chief Inspector Geffen of the Haifa branch of the Investigations Department wrote to the Hadera Precinct concerning this issue. Although quick to note that no one in his branch worked in civilian clothing, Geffen stated that it was completely permissible to do so during an assembly or demonstration. This, he wrote, was the right of "an unrestricted police department that was established even before the creation of the State [of Israel]."[65]

However, because of the fear that the news headlines would continue reporting animosity toward the police, Assistant District Superintendent A. Kramer replied to Geffen that officers should not be used in this fashion, and, if necessary, those in civilian clothes should act as civilians and wait until uniformed officers arrived.[66] But this order was adhered to only on the surface. As seen in the next chapter, the police frequently used nonuniformed officers to spy on legal political assemblies and gatherings of ethnic groups to identify dissident immigrants.

Policing the Mizrahi Immigrant Population in the *Ma'abarot*

Civil perceptions of the police were sullied with feelings of mistrust, indifference, and even disdain toward the Israel Police. Commissioner Sahar often made reference to these feelings and concluded that they were simply a product of Diaspora mentality.[67] Yet he also assumed that disdain was the natural order of things: "There is no police in the world that will be 'beloved' by the citizen: there are [only] police that the citizen respects."[68] In a racist diatribe against communal perceptions of the police, he lamented civil society's continued view of the police as oppressors:

> New immigrants overwhelmingly came from countries where *policeman* and *expulsion* are synonyms and the main victim of the oppression is the Jew. These immigrants have yet to distinguish between the Israeli policeman and the foreign oppressor. Added to this is their [the immigrants'] hot temper and [the] low cultural level of *certain sections* [of immigrants], antisocial behavior that they acquired in their countries of origin and during their travels, [and] the difficult living conditions and the restrictions placed on their economic activity that is not appropriate for the country or time period; also that they have been released from the bonds of fear and oppression was understood by them—incorrectly—as a loosening of all restraint and as a unburdening of all burdens.[69]

Considering the Zionist narrative regarding the supposed rescue of Mizrahim,[70] Sahar's comments on the antisocial behavior of "certain sections" of new immigrants leave no doubt that he was referring specifically to newcomers from the Middle East and Asia. Following this narrative, he

empathized with them because of the poor conditions in which they had to live but warned that Zionism's ability to free them from the "bonds of fear and oppression" had led to a "loosening of all restraint."[71]

More than anything, the "war on the black market" and the Israel Police's admitted role as Ben-Gurion's (rather than the people's) police[72] served to strain community–police relations. Moreover, the focus on the socialization of immigrants led to a de-emphasis on the traditional duties of a police force, such as serving and protecting the civilian population. Instead, much of the contact between the police and Mizrahi immigrants, especially during times of police assistance in the *ma'abarot*, was framed as pioneering work in the Zionist settlement project and custodial guardianship over an incapable, childlike Mizrahi population.

The Jewish Agency initially provided both the funding and the manpower for guards in the *ma'abarot*. However, many of the guards were incapable of adequately protecting the security of the transit camps and preventing crime among the residents. As a solution, the Jewish Agency relinquished to the Israel Police the responsibility of recruiting and hiring an auxiliary force of transit-camp guards, who had the status of supernumerary constables. These supernumerary constables[73] were paid for by the Jewish Agency but were trained and supervised by the Israel Police. Along with temporary employees and volunteers, transit-camp guards were not counted in the official police force count. As a consequence, there are no statistics on these guards' ethnic or socioeconomic background.

After the Ein Shemer riots of 1950,[74] the Jewish Agency began requesting that actual police stations be placed in the *ma'abarot*. However, Commissioner Sahar rejected the idea owing to a lack of manpower and financial resources in the Israel Police. In his reply, Sahar surmised that the IDF would eventually take care of the *ma'abarot*. This plan was indeed implemented through two military operations: Operation Ma'abara (November 1950–March 1951) and Operation Ma'abara II (March 1951–March 1952).[75]

Despite the police's reluctance to deal with the *ma'abarot*, they were still requested to provide guidance for a few of the camps.[76] Sahar saw the police presence in the *ma'abarot* as a great opportunity to improve community relations and to educate its residents properly: "Once the guardianship over the *ma'abarot* was handed over to us, the great educational and

communal value of this police activity became known. It has a great value to both the police officers who work there and to immigrants who come in contact with the police."[77]

Shortly after the army began Operation Ma'abara, the Israel Police placed a number of volunteer officers in the Har-Tuv *ma'abara* near Jerusalem and the Migdal Gad *ma'abara* (now Ashkelon).[78] However, this supervision was on a much smaller scale than the army's. Out of the seventeen volunteer officers who joined the *ma'abara* force in the first year, four decided to quit within the year. To help the volunteer *ma'abara* force effectively implement their task, the Israel Police created the Communal Relations Department as a method of communicating between the police and camp residents.

In the winter of 1951, mass flooding ravaged many parts of the country.[79] The most vulnerable settlements—*ma'abarot*, suburbs, and small villages—were provided assistance by the police and army. Alongside volunteer citizens, the army and police prevented property damage and protected lives during and after the floods. In addition, the police played a major role in searching for children lost in the flooding. Commissioner Sahar mused that as a result of this task the Israel Police gained a significant number of recruits.[80]

In the same year, seven male and ten female officers volunteered to assist the 1,840 residents of Migdal Ashkelon, including 500 children. Nearly all of the immigrants were from Middle Eastern countries. During the day, the officers took care of nursery school children, maintained cleanliness and hygiene within the camps, and handled food distribution. The police also organized parties for the residents, which on a few occasions included the police orchestra. At night, the police who worked there lived in the camp in tents and shacks similar to those in which the immigrants lived. Although little is written concerning the status and function of women in the Israel Police, it would be a valuable endeavor to further research their role in the *ma'abarot*.

Commissioner Sahar viewed the work of these *ma'abara* volunteers with the utmost esteem because, for him, it demonstrated "a high degree of self-sacrifice and a pioneering [spirit]."[81] One must not overlook the significance of this brief statement. Although only temporary residents and

free to leave at any time, these police officers, not the Mizrahi residents suffering and settling permanently in the undeveloped periphery, were viewed as the courageous pioneers of the periphery.

It is important to note that the Israel Police was first and foremost a national body in the service of the state under David Ben-Gurion's leadership. As a consequence, its relationship with civilian society was above all framed within a nationalistic context, and the traditional duties of a police force in the service of citizens was often a secondary duty.

Mizrahi immigrants were also aware that the Israel Police served Ben-Gurion's interests rather than the citizens'. One particularly tense confrontation between Kfar Ono residents and the police in 1952 highlights some of the feelings Mizrahi immigrants may have had for the police force. After the arrest of three *ma'abara* residents accused of property damage and assault, more than 300 residents took buses to the Petah Tikvah Precinct to protest their arrest. Positioning two sentries to guard the precinct, a group of *k'tzinim* and *shotrim* attempted to negotiate with a delegation of the protestors, "but instead of a response the protestors began to break the line of policemen and screaming 'Nazis,' 'Gestapo,' 'Ben-Gurion's Dogs = Shitreet,' etc."[82]

After these insults, the police dispersed the group, which fled into the side streets of the neighborhood. Later in the night, a group of fifty from the earlier protest reorganized and listened to the speech of one of their representatives. Hundreds more onlookers began to gather around and listen to the speech, which prompted the police to take decisive measures against them. When the police requested the gatherers to disperse, some of the demonstrators convinced them not to leave and "that they should not listen to the demands of the police, agents of Ben-Gurion, [and] Shitreet." Assistant District Superintendent Me'iri immediately ordered his officers to arrest the "inciters" with force and throw them into the police van.[83]

Cases of politically sensitive issues, such as criminal activities on the Jordanian–Israeli border, were often discussed among officers as political issues rather than as traditional policing duties. For example, in a letter to the Jerusalem District chief in 1949, an officer noted that "foreigners [i.e.,

Palestinians]" were making complaints about nearby residents who were stealing from their homes:

> [They] informed us that there is no military [presence] and that Jewish citizens treat them like the rest of the residents of Israel, especially after the removal of the Military Rule's Command Office in the streets of the South.
>
> The foreigners claim that soldiers and citizens enter populated homes and steal things from them, sometimes right in front of the homeowners' eyes, and that there are those who beat the Arabs who try to intervene.
>
> Complaints like these may be harmful to our international standing, especially at present. Therefore, I request that you use all means necessary to control the situation and to take to trial those who steal from the foreigners.[84]

Despite this serious accusation that soldiers and citizens were participating in widespread theft of Palestinian property, this officer's main concern was not the prevention of criminal activity for its own sake but for the damage it might be doing to Israel's standing on the international stage.

Similar to Ben-Gurion's perspective on the IDF, police leadership saw the Israel Police as an inseparable organ of the state that was to act as a nationalizing tool for both officers in service and the citizens they served. Because of the hegemonic nature of the Mapai Party and in particular Ben-Gurion's semiauthoritarian role in it, this reality was both apparent and problematic for opposition-party Knesset members. During a Knesset discussion of demonstrations in Nazareth in 1950, Bechor Shitreet and Communist Knesset members engaged in a heated argument concerning the character of the police force. In a lengthy speech, MK Tawfiq Toubi (Maki) condemned the police's behavior: "The police fired on peaceful protestors demanding bread and work. . . . [N]othing like this has ever happened, even during the British Mandate. It seems like the police of Ben-Gurion's regime feels as if it is allowed to open fire on workers in Nazareth, just as it is permitted to hit workers in Rehovot, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa."[85] Apparently incensed by Toubi's comments, Shitreet defended the Israel Police's reputation but at the same time provided further evidence

for Toubi's point: "MK Tawfiq Toubi dismissively and arrogantly speaks about 'Ben-Gurion's Police.' Thanks to Ben-Gurion's police and to his democratic government, you are found in the Parliament."[86]

The conversation then deteriorated into a shouting match between members of Communist parties and Shitreet regarding the Israel Police's uncultured ways. Infuriated, Shitreet proceeded to threaten to "teach" MK Toubi culture: "When I hear . . . talk about fascism in the Parliament, I say that the police will teach you the cultured way to behave, teach MK Toubi how to behave, so that he can't say things like this. . . . Thanks to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion's police, the demonstration in Nazareth was allowed to occur."[87] Shitreet's statements indicate that he perceived protests as a privilege rather than a right to expression. He used the guise of international law to excuse racist measures against Palestinians under military rule, but his perspective on Palestinian protests carried over to Oriental Jewish protests as well. A divide thus developed between legitimate protests serving the national interest and illegitimate protests serving special-interest groups.[88] As seen in chapter 2, the police were a central figure in the delegitimization of the formative period of Mizrahi immigrant protests.

2

The Foundations of the Mizrahi Civil Rights Struggle, 1948–1958

The Beginnings of Oriental Jewish Rebellion, 1948–1949

Apart from a few particularly violent demonstrations, there is little mention of Mizrahi protests during 1948–49. Unfortunately, most of the police reports during this year were poorly stored or are difficult to decipher because they were handwritten. However, with the restructuring of the police in 1950, nearly all handwritten reports were required to be typed as well. As a result, many cases of Mizrahi protests in 1948 and 1949 are documented by the occasional newspaper account and some typewritten police reports.

It is worth recalling that in the 1950s nearly all mainstream newspapers underwent government censorship. Also, protests against domestic issues tended to be trumped by international conflicts, such as the war in 1948 that was not fully resolved until January 1949. Even with taking these factors into account, however, we can say that the documented history of Oriental Jewish protests in Israel begins soon after the end of that war with a demonstration by North African immigrants in February 1949.

On February 23, the Mapai-affiliated newspaper *Davar* (Word) reported on an event that may be the first recorded demonstration by Middle Eastern Jews in Israel. During the previous day, dozens of North African immigrants residing in Jerusalem protested in front of their local

municipality's office.[1] Carrying national flags made from tattered clothing, they demanded that the municipality provide them with work, bread, and financial support.

Onlookers began to get into arguments, debating whether the immigrant protestors should be supported in their struggle or not, which led the police to intervene in an effort to keep order. Once the police arrived, Jerusalem mayor Daniel Auster met with a delegation of the protestors. After the meeting, the protestors were redirected to the General Employment Office administrators, who promised to deal urgently with their requests. Later in the day, the same delegation met with representatives of the Jewish Agency, including Eliyahu Dobkin. However, these cordial meetings did not resolve the growing problems of hunger and unemployment affecting many Mizrahim in the Jerusalem community.

One of the first violent encounters between the police and Mizrahi immigrants occurred in the late spring of 1949. Besides being one of the first Mizrahi revolts, this encounter is also an exemplary protest in terms of both the demonstrators' demands and the state's reaction to the protest. On May 8, 1949, several dozen hungry and jobless protestors who were leaving the Employment Office in Haifa joined together at the Office of Rehabilitation for Released Soldiers and from there went to the Jewish Agency offices on Melachim Street. When the police blocked the group, the protestors injured a police commander, broke into rooms, destroyed furniture, doors, and walls in one of the rooms, and yelled, "Give us housing and work!"[2] Fearing that the unrest would spread, the Jewish Agency's Absorption Department received a delegation from among the protestors.

Sometime after the meeting began, the police arrested eight people and instructed the rest of the protestors to disperse. Two of the arrested were accused of injuring a police commander, and the other six were charged with causing an unruly disturbance, bodily harm, and property damage as well as with assaulting a police officer.

In *Davar*'s account of the incident, a reporter questioned the local police chief on whether the police were right to intervene in this protest. Their intervention, many argued, appeared as if they were preventing freedom of assembly and protest. However, to Haifa's police chief, the demonstration was an illegitimate protest whose sole goal was to create

public disorder. In response to questions about impeding freedom of expression, he commented,

> The police did not disperse any demonstration or gathering. We were only there to protect people and property and, when they raised their hands and injured policemen and destroyed property—only then did the police start to use force—with clubs. We are aware of the light injury of one of the protestors. The police know that among the inciters there were also people who were promised work. We were there for public security and did not need to use force until after we tried other means. The protest that occurred on Friday . . . next to the Haifa Municipality ended quietly via the efforts of the police, who calmed down the protestors.[3]

Little was reported on ethnic demonstrations for almost three months, until in the early hours of July 18, 1949, sixteen cars approached the Knesset building in Tel Aviv. The cars had transported 400 Ramleh residents there from the Southern District. Ramleh, a previously Palestinian town depopulated after the war in 1948, had by this time been repopulated by the Jewish Agency with Middle Eastern and North African Jewish immigrants.[4] The Southern Police District ordered several cars to follow the protestors based on information it had received the previous evening. The police's preemptive measures allow for a fuller account of the unfolding of the protest.

On their way to Tel Aviv from Ramleh, the protestors took the main highways and drove through the cities of Yaffo and Tel Aviv and then along Allenby Street, chanting and carrying placards that demanded "bread and work!" (*lehem ve'avodah*).[5] Preempting their arrival, however, thirteen area policemen, led by Sergeant Bar Yehuda, came to the Knesset grounds nearly two hours before any of the Ramleh residents appeared. When the Ramleh protestors arrived at 10:50 a.m., they surrounded the Knesset compound and attempted to enter the Dizengoff, Montefiore, and Petah Tikvah Gates.

At this point, arguments between the protestors and police broke out at Dizengoff Gate. The arguments very quickly turned violent, with the protestors throwing sticks and stones and the police making use of their

batons. As a result, three officers, including Sergeant Bar Yehuda, were taken to the hospital for treatment. After successfully breaking through the Dizengoff Gate, the protestors split into two groups, half storming the Ministry of Labor and the other half storming the police camp to disarm the police. When a police squad blocked the second group from entering the police camp, the group instead turned to the Labor Ministry office and broke in.

It was then that government officials began to take the demonstrators seriously. After a meeting between the demonstrators and a member of the Labor Ministry was negotiated, it was agreed that a delegation of about ten men would be allowed to present the protestors' demands. By this time, at least two of the protestors had been treated for injuries, and additional police reinforcements had been called in.

Upon the realization that a mere dozen officers was an insufficient amount to quell the rebellion, a total of ninety-seven additional policemen were sent from National Headquarters and the regional police stations in Tel Aviv, Petah Tikvah, and the Southern District.[6] At this point, the crowd waited quietly while their delegation met with Labor Ministry officials, and the police began to surround them, preventing anyone from departing without permission. However, during the afternoon hours most of the women and children were allowed to leave.

After the meeting with the Labor Ministry was finished at 5:00 p.m., the demonstrators decided by a show of hands to sleep on the compound overnight until they met with Minister of Labor Golda Meir (1948–56) and Minister of Transportation David Remez (1948–50). When Meir and Remez arrived, they met with the protestors' elected committee and gave them promises of employment, as they requested. However, it was not until 12:15 a.m. that the remaining protestors left the compound.[7]

A week later, on July 26, 1949, another group of about 400 Oriental Jewish immigrants came to the Knesset compound to demand bread and work. After stating their demands, the demonstrators started a sit-down strike. When their delegation had not been received after an hour, some broke down the Knesset gates and nearly entered the Knesset chambers.[8] Policemen at the scene commented that three or four youth "who didn't seem all that hungry" were responsible for the break-in. In the Knesset

meeting following the event, MK Shmuel Mikonis (Maki) gave an astute observational reply to the police's comment: "If they weren't hungry for bread, they wouldn't have organized a demonstration."[9] Denouncing the protest in its entirety, Speaker of the House Sprintzak noted that "whether there is any room for protest or not, I can say without a doubt that this building is not an address for protests. This building that we have merited for the sake of the people . . . and their future needs to be immune."[10]

One member of Mapai belittled the significance of the protest because of the Oriental immigrants' "low character," concluding that "this was a 'spontaneous' protest from the type [of people] that is known to all of us."[11] In opposition to the state's handling of the protest, Mikonis had condemnatory words for the entire Knesset: "Only when they broke down the gates did you bring them the news that they would be received by the Parliament, that they are ready to receive a delegation of three people. I ask the Knesset leaders: Why did you need to wait until the gates were torn down? Why is it impossible to receive, fifteen minutes earlier, or even in the first fifteen minutes [of their arrival], a delegation of three people and speak with them?"[12]

These questions could be asked of most protests by Oriental Jews at the time. The police report indicates that it was not until violent means were employed that government officials turned their attention to immigrant concerns. In the end, eleven officers were in need of medical assistance; two of the protestors were injured seriously; and six men, two of whom were soldiers on active duty, were arrested for attacking policemen.[13] Although other ethnic protests had occurred with similar demands,[14] this particular demonstration sent shockwaves throughout government institutions owing to the protestors' willingness to break into the Knesset chambers.

This incident also encouraged more immigrants to protest, with at least one known demonstration of 500 Jerusalemites demanding bread and work the very next day.[15] Thus, a number of police officers were ordered to patrol the area surrounding the Knesset day and night for an indeterminate amount of time.

The fear of another uprising like the Knesset rebellion of 1949 was so great that the Israel Police Investigations Department, in an effort to

protect the government's and Parliament's security, began to spy on citizens who were rumored to be against the state or even simply anti-Mapai. A few months after the Knesset uprising in July, Tel Aviv's mayor, via Municipal Chief Alperin, sent a letter to District Chief Inspector Peleg pointing out that a certain "Café Tiferet" was being used as "a center for incitement . . . against the municipality and against the government." As a solution, the mayor asked Peleg "to wipe out this nest by the most speedy and aggressive means possible because they [government officials] are receiving complaints from all sides."[16] Although the fate of the Café Tiferet gatherers is unknown, "wiping out" meant in practical terms the arrest and harassment of those suspected of distributing ambiguously anti-Mapai fliers or Communist leaflets or both.[17]

In a related case, three Binyamina residents were arrested for possible incitement against the government and the camp guards based solely on evidence from untranslated flyers written in Moroccan Arabic. A member of the cultural center in the area notified Supernumerary Constable Kampiansky (a camp guard) that "he didn't understand the contents, since he didn't know the language, but had a suspicion that the posters were incendiary material against the government and the camp guards."[18] As a consequence, the police arrested the three camp residents and confiscated their box of posters for future translation.

Despite strong condemnation from the Israeli press and Knesset members, immigrants did not hesitate to continue further demonstrations on the grounds around the Knesset. In October 1949, a group of Iraqi immigrants came to the Knesset to protest against the methods used in the ritual slaughter of animals.[19] A month later, a group of about thirty children led by one man from Giv'at Shmuel protested against the lack of education among immigrant youth. Upon arrival at the Montefiore Gate of the Knesset, the group of children made one simple yet defiant demand: "We want to learn." Dr. Burstein, a clerk from the Ministry of Education, was immediately called in to have a talk with the group, and following "a short discussion" the group left a mere fifteen minutes after their arrival.[20]

These Knesset confrontations mark the very first uprisings of Mizrahi immigrants in the nascent State of Israel. Although not joined as a completely united force or led by any particular political group, these protests

proved to be formidable. In many ways, they also laid the foundation for future Mizrahi protests in Israel. The perpetually unresolved demands for bread and work, improved education, and housing would continue well into the 1970s.

Another similarity between the uprisings in 1949 and later Mizrahi protests were the methods used by government officials to control and pacify demonstrators. The end result of most protests was the same. When a protest reached the critical point of frightening Zionist or state officials, a delegation from among the crowd would be accepted in an effort to calm down tensions, and their grievances would be heard. The demonstrators would be promised loans, work, or housing or all of these things, so the negotiations were considered "successful." However, these promises were rarely fulfilled. In other instances, when a delegation was refused, the police would be immediately called in to disperse the protestors, if necessary by means of physical force. This police duty led to the Israel Police's central role as either an alleviator of or a catalyst to violent resistance by Oriental Jewish immigrants.

The government's use of this ruse became commonplace. If we jump to September 1951, we see eighty men from the Kfar Ono *ma'abara* demanding, "Golda Me'irson, keep the promises you made on the eve of the election! Pave a road to the *ma'abara*!" Despite the men's show of force, the police report notes that in the end "a delegation [was] received by [the] director of the Absorption Department, . . . and at the end of the meeting the protestors dispersed quietly."[21]

This demand for a paved road into the *ma'abara* was made at a time when many *ma'abarot* lacked the proper roads to facilitate access to sanitation trucks, ambulances, or any transportation outside of the camps. These problems, among others, persisted for many *ma'abara* residents for years despite frequent promises of improvements. In an open letter to *al-Mirsad* readers, residents of the Herzliya *ma'abara* highlight this reality: "A period of four years has passed since the creation of the *ma'abara*; and, until now, they did not have telephones. So when a woman or sick person required an ambulance it was necessary to run to the center of Herzliya; which is several kilometers away . . . and this happened just a month and a half ago."[22]

The government did not limit its broken promises to the *ma'abara* residents. The Interior Ministry initially promised the local authorities that provided the *ma'abarot* with social services (such as sanitation and water supplies) that they would be reimbursed for maintenance costs.[23] However, the promised funds never arrived, so the local authorities threatened to disconnect the water supply to the *ma'abarot*. In at least one known case, the Petah Tikvah local authority did in fact cut off the water supply to *ma'abara* residents, which led to mass protests in the Sakia, Kfar 'Ana, and Petah Tikvah *ma'abarot*, where residents blockaded roads and initiated acts of mass rebellions in May and July 1952.[24]

The government strategy of selecting a delegation became so common by the mid-1950s that fewer militant protestors would make demands just so that their delegation would be met. However, as seen later in this chapter, not all protestors were fooled by the government's tactic. It should be noted that Golda Meir, in her position as prime minister (1969–74), attempted to use this very tactic decades later on the Black Panthers in the 1970s; however, by then the ruse had grown stale.[25] The decades of broken promises inevitably led to further demonstrations and an increased need to organize in some form to represent the *ma'abara* residents' interests.

Taxation without Representation: Policing Extraparliamentary Oriental Jewish Groups in the *Ma'abarot*

The events of the summer of 1949 indicated a growing discontent among Oriental Jewish immigrants. However, the poor living conditions for immigrants and growing unemployment had changed little after the Ramleh residents' meeting with Me'ir and Remez in July. On the contrary, the situation continued to worsen owing to the government's unwillingness to take the newly arrived Middle Eastern immigrants' concerns seriously. Whereas Ashkenazi Jewish citizens were well represented in the Knesset, only one ministerial position was held by an Oriental Jewish member, the Ministry of Police. The Ministry of Posts was also later unofficially designated as a slot for Oriental Jews. Because both of these ministerial posts involved the surveillance of immigrant activities of Oriental Jews,[26] they may be seen as little more than a mechanism of control over

Oriental Jewish immigrants. Roy Kozlovsky appropriately contends in his work on the architectural meaning of the *ma'abara* that the *ma'abara* itself served a dual purpose: it acted as a mode of governance and control and at the same time suspended the "political agency of its inhabitants and their status as autonomous citizens."[27]

Although there existed a Sephardi List within the Knesset, its influence was negligible, and it disbanded in 1955. In addition to this party, an extraparliamentary organization, the World Sephardi Federation (WSF), was founded prior to the State of Israel. It developed as the brainchild of Palestine's Sephardi leadership, who wanted to provide Sephardi representation following the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The Sephardi leadership's first significant meeting came in 1924, when it held the First World Sephardi Congress and thus created the World Sephardi Union, led by individuals from the Diaspora (Moises de Piciotto of Manchester, United Kingdom) and from Israel (Hakham Bashi Benzion Hai Uzziel).

Although the WSF ceased to function during the Second World War, Eliyahu Eliachar successfully pushed for a second congressional meeting, which was held in Paris in 1951. This Paris meeting resulted in a split between those who supported the WSF's subservience to the Israeli political system and those who were against it. Despite a temporary compromise between the two leaders of this camp (Bechor Shitreet in support and Eliyahu Eliachar in vehement opposition), by 1954 Shitreet's camp prevailed, and the financially limited WSF decided to accept financial assistance from the Jewish Agency. This decision would spell the WSF's temporary death. With a new leadership composed of Shitreet, Denzil Sebag-Montefiore (United Kingdom), and S. Nissim (United States), the WSF ceased many of its activities and did not hold a meeting for more than a decade. For Eliachar, this long quiescence illustrated the success of the Jewish Agency's desire for the WSF "not to die, but not to live either."[28] Thus, for most of the 1950s the only official representatives of the Oriental Jewish community were either politically or financially weakened institutions.

With the weakening of both parliamentary and extraparliamentary representative Sephardi institutions, *ma'abara* residents were left with no official method of bringing their problems to the forefront of the public

agenda. The government had effectively left new Middle Eastern immigrants with only two options: they could either suffer in silence or make their voices heard through public and private resistance against the state and its institutions. Many chose the latter.

In addition to a lack of parliamentary representation, new immigrants who lived in the *ma'abarot* were prevented from voting in local council elections. Despite their ability to express concerns in Arabic journals,[29] their voices often did not reach official government channels. Although many Mizrahim were affiliated with Mapam and Maki, their participation in these parties was limited to marginal departments designated specifically for Orientals. In the Knesset, they were mostly "spoken for" through opposition-party leaders' proxy and not "spoken to."

As a solution to representational problems, self-reliant *ma'abara* residents began to establish autonomous committees focused on their own interests and concerns. Many of these committees were established as the only means of political representation in the *ma'abarot*. However, the government did not recognize them as official political organizations. Because a *ma'abara* was a temporary residence by definition, the government maintained that it would be inappropriate to allot official council status to the *ma'abara* committees during local elections. According to government officials, there was no assurance that when permanent housing was built, the same people in the current *ma'abara* would populate it.[30] Therefore, the government was not obligated to take heed of any of the residents' demands.

Nevertheless, *Davar* (as Mapai's mouthpiece) presented local elections as democratic and local councils as working in the interests of *ma'abara* residents. But, as one resident, Ibn Sakia Bet, put it, "in reality everything *Davar* said [concerning fair elections] was false and imaginary." Continuing in his criticism of unrepresentative elections, this resident took note of the exploitative results of these false pretenses: "In spite of [immigrants'] lack of awareness of the so-called Committee Elections and despite their lack of involvement in them, taxes are still collected from them, and camp administrators still receive thousands of lirot."[31]

Connecting the Palestinian and Mizrahi struggles, David Cohen pointed out in 1954 that the *ma'abara* residents' lack of voting rights existed

"under the pretext of the inabilities of the newcomers and, for that matter, Arab citizens. They [government officials] think that because these people were raised in the Diaspora, they will not be able to engage in revolutionary work."[32] In an effort to overcome these challenges, some communities in the *ma'abara* began to establish unofficial, self-elected, and nonpolitically affiliated *ma'abara* committees.

The Rise of Unofficial *Ma'abara* Committees, 1950

One of the first known unofficial *ma'abara* committees was established in one of largest immigrant camps: Pardes Hanna. In January 1950, the General Committee of Immigrants of Pardes Hanna was established to address and struggle against the problems of immigrant housing. In a manifesto written in Hebrew, French, and Arabic to reach a wide spectrum of Mizrahi communities, the committee highlighted the main problems of immigrant life. They included the lack of access to medical care because of the unpaved roads; a complete lack of schooling for children; and disrespect for the dead, who were transported three days after their death by rat-infested garbage trucks.[33]

The Pardes Hanna Manifesto continued in its scathing criticism by denouncing the "rapport of master to slave between the employees of the [transit-camp administrative] office and the immigrants." Although the meaning of their statement was quite literal, their critique brings to mind Frantz Fanon's psychological critique of Hegel's master–slave narrative, published just a year later in *Black Skin, White Masks*. This Ashkenazi–Mizrahi/master–slave relationship was quite prevalent in the *ma'abarot* and, according to Gideon Giladi, was a deliberate strategy by the ruling Mapai Party to ensure authority in all areas of Israeli society. Giladi notes that within the camps a distinct hierarchy existed among camp employees, who were, with the exception of sanitation workers, Ashkenazi. From top to bottom, the camp elite ranged from "the camp director, head of the labor office, party secretary, sanitation workers, intelligence officer (the Shin Bet) and his spies."[34]

The Pardes Hanna Committee took particular note of the fact that, owing to the "inhumane conditions of immigrant life, thousands of immigrants are starting to consider the possibility of returning to their countries

of origin."[35] This was not an empty threat: by 1951, a total of 6,714 Jews from Asia and Africa had already left Israel for other countries, many among them repatriating to their native country despite the dangers involved.[36]

The committee emphasized that their struggle was against "those responsible for this inhumane situation and against the true enemies of the absorption of [im]migrants!"[37] Whereas many Oriental Jewish immigrants lingered in *ma'abarot* for months and years, Ashkenazi *ma'abara* residents often relocated to better residences. In one extraordinarily bizarre case, even a former Nazi was able to relocate away from the *ma'abarot*. In 1951, the police discovered a Christian man living in Pardes Hanna who "admitted to having served in Hitler's army."[38] After living with an immigrant family in Pardes Hanna, he then moved to Kibbutz Beit Oren as a nonmember resident. Ironically, this classified case came at a time of stormy demonstrations by Mizrahim demanding the elimination of the *ma'abarot*. Although this case was extraordinary, the point is that Mizrahi immigrants populated the *ma'abarot*, whereas Ashkenazi immigrants (with the exception of Romanians)—among them a former Nazi—were overwhelmingly housed in permanent dwellings.[39]

Like many similar committees, the Pardes Hanna Committee was not established through the official channels of the Jewish Agency or Interior Ministry or even through the semiofficial Histadrut (Labor Union). As a consequence, it was a frequent target of police harassment and attempts to delegitimize its authority. This harassment, the committee remarkably argued, was an infringement on its civil right to assembly and organization. Shortly after the committee's establishment, the police arrested several of its members during a demonstration. Its members understood these arrests to be a direct response to their January call to action.

According to a flyer distributed by the Pardes Hanna Committee, the arrested members had been identified to the police during a demonstration in Tel Aviv when a delegation met with the Jewish Agency. They were questioned for four days and subsequently arrested for organizing an illegal gathering and demonstration. The committee initiated a campaign for their release from prison on what were perceived to be trumped-up charges. In addition to making calls for the release of their "detained comrades," the committee demanded that the camp director be punished, that

the police cease their intervention in immigrant affairs, and that the police arrest the agent provocateurs who acted against the interests of immigrants: "The camp management, for the second time, repeats their criminal provocations against committee members, who were arrested in Jaffa. The managers want to stop the immigrant struggle for work, housing, better food, and medical care. It is for this reason that the camp management has removed freedom of action and made impossible the possibility for a struggle . . . for better living conditions."[40]

This committee can be seen as one of the first extraparliamentary "Mizrahi" organizations in Israel. Albeit based in Pardes Hanna, its influence reached Ein Shemer and even Tel Aviv.[41] It appears that the Pardes Hanna General Committee acted as a union of the four different Pardes Hanna immigrant camps (i.e., Pardes Hanna A to D); although the four camps were divided along ethnic lines, the General Committee acted as their unified body.

Because many of the *ma'abarot* were ethnically heterogeneous, this organizational structure was similar to that of later *ma'abara* committees; however, other extraparliamentary Mizrahi organization committees were not as unified as the one in Pardes Hanna. For instance, the Hadera *ma'abara* contained separate Iraqi and Syrian immigrant committees that often competed with each other for the residents' support.[42] The Iraqi community, the largest immigrant group in the early 1950s, established the Union of Babylonian Immigrants in Israel. Based in Tel Aviv, this union created branches throughout the country wherever Iraqi immigrants were concentrated.[43]

Many of the North African immigrants also established particularistic unions—for example, the Union of Tunisian-Origin Jews in 1952. This group formed out of a need to have those who were "militantly involved in the Zionist movement [in Tunisia] . . . feel supported and valued."[44]

One of the union's earlier concerns was the acquisition of German reparations for the Nazi occupation of Tunisia during World War II, when many Tunisian Jews were taken to work camps in Sfax between 1942 and 1943. Their demands came at a time of heated debates concerning the acceptance of reparations from Germany for the mostly European Jewish Holocaust survivors. In later years, the Union of Tunisian-Origin Jews

would hold meetings with Avraham Sigal, general director of immigrant housing for the Jewish Agency, to protest the eviction of families from housing that the Jewish Agency had neglected and left in ruins.[45]

Apart from particularistic unions, united *ma'abara* committees were formed throughout 1951 and would eventually transform into the officially recognized local councils of development towns. Unlike the wholly independent Pardes Hanna General Committee, the Histadrut established many of the later committees. However, the Interior Ministry still refused to grant them official status because it believed that the committees were manipulated to serve the Histadrut's own interests.[46]

Even when *ma'abara* residents united without the assistance of the Histadrut, they still faced police abuse if they protested against their living conditions. In December 1951, residents of the Petah Tikvah *ma'abara* wrote a letter to Minister of Police Bechor Shitreet, demanding the release of imprisoned protestors:

> Dear Jerusalem Minister of Police [Shitreet],
>
> We, the residents of the Petah Tikvah *ma'abara*, have joined together to bring forward our objection to the police attack on the residents of the Ramat HaSharon and Sakia Bet *ma'abarot*. We object to the fact that a number of people were arrested for protesting in order to improve their situation. We demand that you release them.
>
> —Petah Tikvah *ma'abara*[47]

Although it is not clear precisely which imprisoned *ma'abara* residents the letter refers to, two police reports marked as "classified" detail several related events that occurred weeks before this demand was made.

On December 2, 1951, sixty men from Sakia, accompanied by their children, protested at the Jewish Agency building with signs declaring, "We want clean water!" Presumably with water bottles in hand, they began shouting, "This is the water that we drink!" In this case, their selected delegation was refused, and the police commanded that they disperse. Most of the men began to disperse, but when nine of them persisted in their demand that their plight be alleviated, they were quickly arrested. Two hours later a larger group of 100 men and 40 children, all residents of the Ramat Hasharon *ma'abara*, arrived at the Jewish Agency building. They

asked that the Jewish Agency build insulated tin shacks rather than tents in the camps. They also demanded that the police release those arrested earlier in the day. This time they were allowed to speak briefly with Mr. Sigel, and the residents left the building shortly afterward.[48]

Organized protests and letters of appeal like the previous examples were a particularly difficult task. Because of *ma'abara* committees' nonalignment with state institutions (i.e., Mapai), regional police officers viewed committee meetings as "illegal gatherings" and often made derisive comments about them within police reports. For instance, in a report reviewing the minutes of a Pardes Hanna Committee meeting, an officer referred to this extraparliamentary group as "that bogus committee."[49] It was in this sense that MK Tawfiq Toubi was correct to refer to the Israel Police as "Ben-Gurion's Police" during parliamentary discussions.[50]

Despite animosity toward the Pardes Hanna General Committee, the Hadera police inspector appears to have acknowledged its formidable nature. By orders of Supervisor Meital, an Iraqi immigrant police officer (known only as "Ephraim") was asked to penetrate the committee's general meetings and identify its leading members for arrest.[51]

On the night of April 3, 1951, owing to the lack of proper space in the tent camps, a meeting took place in the camp's cafeteria. Around 600 people attended, including women, youth, and children. According to Officer Ephraim, the gathering took place illegally, without authorization from any of the "proper institutions."[52]

Officer Ephraim, wearing civilian clothing, gathered intelligence on the meeting attendees without identifying himself as an officer working for Supervisor Meital of Hadera Precinct. He noted that there were three speeches in Arabic and that although he could not remember the speakers' names, he was able to identify them because "they seem like members of the Iraqi intelligentsia due to their dress and external appearance."[53] The speakers made calls for the camp residents to become more aware of their situation and to start demanding better food, housing conditions, and schools for their children. They pushed them to go to the camp secretaries and demand Iraqi representation to achieve these aims.

The next morning at 8:30 a mass demonstration was organized in front of the camp's secretariat office. Supervisor Meital, already informed

about the demonstration, drove to the camp accompanied by Pardes Hanna guards and a few Hadera police officers. When they arrived, a *ma'abara* resident by the name of David identified himself as a lawyer; however, others present told him to be quiet. Supervisor Meital decided at this point to leave the demonstration because he felt (as if by premonition) that a brawl might break out.[54] However, he most likely made this decision because of a planned police instigation of such a brawl.

Half an hour later the secretariat called Supervisor Meital to request that he institute measures to stop a fight that was becoming serious. Officers had transported the aforementioned David to the camp's jail, and nearly 200 people had followed behind. After placing David in jail, Supervisor Meital identified him as one of the speakers from the previous night and then went on a search for the others. Once they were found and arrested, Meital revealed to them that he knew about the previous night's assembly and that it, along with the demonstration, had taken place without permission. Their political assembly was considered an illegal gathering and made them liable to imprisonment for one year. Surprised and embarrassed, they were released and told that their actions would be reported to the station's chief for a criminal investigation.

The police would often attempt to control communities through communications to the heads of families who they presumed to be the community leaders. For example, in a letter bluntly titled "Disturbing the Peace in Your Villages," Ramleh police chief Tabloub wrote to five family heads: "Here I turn to you, as the head of the families in the village, to calm the winds and keep the peace. It is known to the police that you have influence over your families and that it is up to you to calm them or excite them."[55]

This letter reveals the extent of the police's knowledge concerning who asserted power in the *ma'abarot*. It also illustrates, however, that the police and the state were incapable of controlling or asserting power over the residents. Police Chief Tabloub therefore had to resort to open threats to ensure control: "It has become known to the police that you have created incitement against the camp administrators among entire groups of people. Here I inform you that the smallest complaints from the [camp] administrators will be sent immediately to us and will be promptly dealt with."[56]

Because of police harassment and organizational difficulties, it was easier and safer for immigrant groups to affiliate themselves with opposition parties sympathetic to their causes, from the right-wing Herut Party to the Soviet-aligned Maki Party. Whereas extraparliamentary Mizrahi groups were much more grassroots based, Mizrahim affiliated with established political parties were perceived as having great legitimacy by both the police and the government. I focus here largely on Mizrahi members of the Communist parties because these parties, the socialist Mapam Party in particular, made significant efforts to allow the full self-expression of new Oriental Jewish immigrants.[57]

In the first decade of statehood, Oriental Jewish affiliation with the Communist Maki and Mapam Parties occurred largely among the Iraqi community, which until the mid-1950s represented the largest wave of immigration from the Middle East. The Iraqi immigrants joined these Communist parties because of their previous involvement in the Iraqi Communist Party. However, Mizrahi participation in Mapam and Maki was not limited to groups with a tradition of Communist involvement in their countries of origins—for example, members of the Yemenite community and North African immigrants in later years also joined these parties.

Of course, the relationship between the Soviet-aligned Maki Party and the Marxist–Zionist Mapam Party was not always warm. Disputes between the two and their contest for power led to occasional violent clashes between immigrant leaders. In one case, a full-out brawl between Iraqi families was caused by arguments on whether the communal leaders of the Sakia Bet *ma'abara* should be Maki or Mapam representatives.[58]

The relationship between the police and the Communist parties was one of mutual hatred from the beginning of the state. The earliest postindependence conflict between the police and Communists came a few months after the establishment of Israel when accusations of murder were launched at three police commanders. Although the actual murder occurred during the British Mandate in 1941, one must keep in mind that some of the commanding officers in the Israel Police had been veterans in the Palestine Police Force.

In September 1948, *Kol Ha'Am* (Voice of the People) published a story concerning the murder of a Jewish man, Siyuma Mironiansky, a Jewish

police sergeant. According to Michael Cohen, a former employee in the Tel Aviv Police District, Mironiansky, a man on trial for murdering his wife, had been beaten to death by three officers of the Jewish Secret Police (HaBoleshet) in 1941. *Kol Ha'Am* summed up Cohen's testimony: "'In the offices of the secret police in Yaffo, they murdered, in cold blood, Siyuma Mironiansky, because he was suspected of being a Communist.' When asked why this incident was not revealed to the supervisors of the officers, the accused responded that 'I didn't want to inform on Jews in front of the British.'"[59]

The publication of this incident angered the Israel Police, mainly because the three officers accused of murder (Steinberg, Gelbin, and Shamai) were all commanding officers in the nascent Israel Police. Just a few days after the article was published, the Tel Aviv regional supervisor for the Israel Police kept the headline-news article as an official police record and suggested that the Israel Police consult an attorney "because it seems like incitement to me."[60]

This episode in Israel Police history is significant owing to one accused officer's role in the investigations of immigrants' political affiliations.[61] In his police reports, Officer Steinberg often blamed Communist elements for inciting violent confrontations between police and Mizrahi immigrants with inflammatory rhetoric against the state and police officials. Steinberg was not the only officer to do so. Instances of organized Mizrahi expressions of anger, whether political or communal, were often assumed to be the work of unruly Communists. This assumption often served to delegitimize Mizrahi protests as anarchic in nature. Alongside this belief came the assumption that Oriental immigrants were too naïve and simple to organize independently. These views were shared by the police and political leaders alike and were used as a basis to exploit communal tensions for the benefit of Mapai.

In one particularly violent communal clash, members of the Mapai Party used the death of a child as a way to damage the reputation of the Mapam Party. In July 1951, Foreign Affairs Minister Moshe Sharett (Mapai) gave a speech in the Hatikvah neighborhood of Tel Aviv a few hours after a child died under mysterious circumstances. According to the assistant district police superintendent, a Mr. Ben-Tovim exclaimed

during Sharett's speech that Mapam Party members had run over the child with one of their cars. Unaware of these accusations, five caravans carrying 200 Mapam youth activists arrived in the Hatikvah neighborhood and attempted to interrupt Sharett's speech. When the police surrounding the area ordered the group to leave, the Hatikvah residents began to throw stones at the youth, believing that members of Mapam had killed the child. In turn, the Mapam youth broke nearby ladders and used the pieces as clubs against the crowd. Later in the night, the same crowd broke into Mapam's Hashomer Hatza'ir (Youth Guard) club and completely destroyed it. After this incident, the police increased their presence in the area and "emptied out all the streets in the neighborhood."[62]

What is noteworthy about this event, albeit not uncommon, are the comments of the police officer who wrote the police report about it. Taking away any agency from the Hatikvah residents, he excused their behavior because they were too naïve to realize the falsity of Mapai's charges against Mapam: "It's clear that a number of political factors were at issue, and they [Mapai officials] exploited the simplicity of the [Hatikvah] residents. The tragedy of the running over of the child was linked with the Hashomer Hatza'ir club, and the masses brought their anger onto the club, its furniture, and books."[63]

Apart from episodes like this, the Communist parties were at odds with the police, oftentimes violently. This was particularly true for the Soviet-aligned Maki Party. One extraordinarily violent clash between the police and Communist protestors led to protestors' detention of a couple of officers in a locked room.[64] And the police were accused of secretly spying on Communist party gatherings, damaging property in one Communist youth club, and arresting local Communist leaders for no reason.[65]

Communist party members' trust in the police was minimal, if at all existent. For example, in 1952 someone placed explosives inside a Mapam-affiliated club and completely destroyed it.[66] Although the destruction of Hashomer Hatza'ir clubs was not entirely uncommon, bombings were rare. The police denied responsibility, but residents blamed them for the destruction, and the police officers were unable to offer any other reasonable explanation that would placate the residents.

Leading figures in Mapam also accused the Israel Police of harassment. In a Knesset meeting in 1953, MK Ya'akov Peri raised concerns about the growing power of the Ministry of Police and the rapid transformation of Israel into a police state. Peri cautioned that "the existence of a special ministry for the police is, in itself, a symbol of a police [state]." Backing up his claims, he then showed a listening device that had been planted in Mapam member Me'ir Ya'ari's office and publicly denounced the Israel Police: "This device testifies to the despicable work done by the Investigations Department and to which the Minister of Police turns a blind eye."[67]

Because of this mutual distrust between the police and Communists, the police often placed blame on "Communist elements" when a violent confrontation between the police and immigrants occurred, and the Communist parties often perceived the Israel Police as a terrorizing force that fulfilled David Ben-Gurion and Bechor Shitreet's fascist commands.[68] The police's mistrust of the Communist parties may to some extent be explained by the simple fact that they were parties in opposition to Ben-Gurion's ruling Mapai Party. However, even this explanation does not fully clarify why Maki and Mapam were seen as more of a threat than the right-wing Zionist Herut Party, for example. A more thorough examination of the thought processes of Communist-affiliated Oriental Jews provides a more satisfactory answer. That is, the reason for the Israel Police's increased efforts to police the Communist parties was that doing so was a way of co-opting Oriental Jewish newcomers into Zionist ideology.

As discussed in the following section, the true threat to Ben-Gurion and Shitreet's police force was the increasing number of Oriental immigrants whose ideological leanings were outside European Zionist thought. A review of the ideological stances of Oriental members of Mapam shows that the growth of a specifically "Middle Eastern Zionism" appears during the 1950s and is later developed by Mizrahi leaders in successive decades.

The Voice of the *Ma'abara*: Progressive Mizrahi Political Thought

With the establishment of Israel in 1948, approximately 711,000 Palestinians were dispossessed of their homes.[69] Many of these refugees were a part of the Palestinian elite, and thus a vacuum in Arabic-language

publications was created. The only remaining Arabic-language newspaper from the pre-1948 era was the Maki-affiliate *al-Ittihad* (the Union, established in 1944). Taking advantage of this situation, the ruling Mapai Party created *al-Yawm* (Day) in 1948 as the political mouthpiece catering to the Arab population, similar in function to the Hebrew-language paper *Davar*.[70]

In 1953, a group of Arabic-speaking intellectuals formed the cultural-social magazine *al-Jadid* (New). This magazine, which ceased being published in 2001, was linked to Maki, the non-Zionist Communist party. Many of the articles were short stories and poems from around the world, with a focus on the Arab world and Communist-linked publications.

Using the politically neutral term *al-qadimun al-judud*, "newcomers," rather than *muhajirun*, "immigrants,"[71] *al-Jadid* devoted several sections to poetry, artwork, and short stories written by Oriental Jewish immigrants and Palestinian citizens as well. Some of its more prominent writers included Sami Michael, Sasson Somekh, Toufiq Ziyad, David Tzemah, and Emile Touma. In addition to Communist-affiliated work, *al-Jadid* translated Hebrew-language pieces relating to discriminatory practices against Oriental Jews. As the editors put it, they did this "out of the spirit of [establishing] Arab–Jewish solidarity."[72]

In 1951, Mapam created the weekly newspaper *al-Mirsad* (the Observation Post), which continued to be published until 1976. *Al-Mirsad* officially functioned as the Arabic sister of Mapam's Hebrew newspaper *Al Hamishmar* (On the Observation Post). Because of its large Iraqi immigrant population, Mapam found a large basis of support within the Hiriya and Sakia *ma'abarot*. For a short period, Mapam distributed an internal *ma'abara* publication, *Ila al-Amam* (Forward) within these two *ma'abarot*. Mapam's Oriental Jewish Department secretary, David Cohen, acted as *Ila al-Amam*'s chief editor during the three-year period of its existence from 1955 to 1958. Like other *ma'abara* Arabic publications, *Ila al-Amam* dealt with many hard-hitting immigrant issues, such as unemployment rates, marginalization, and housing conditions.

Whereas Hebrew-language Communist newspapers (such as *Kol Ha'Am*) suffered from censorship and forced closures,[73] *al-Mirsad* was

allowed greater freedom because Arabic was not widely known among the "veteran" Jewish community. The Arabic press in Israel was not completely immune from police suppression, however. On June 23, 1952, the police searched the house of Emile Touma, cofounder of *al-Ittihad* and regular writer for *al-Jadid*. The search was made because he allegedly possessed items in his home that would endanger the state's security. However, no such items were found.[74]

Because a large number of new immigrants spoke Arabic and some had been involved in their native countries' Communist parties, Mapam's organ *al-Mirsad* provided a means to win the votes of both the Palestinian and the Oriental immigrant populations. Although *al-Jadid* featured the writings of Oriental immigrants, its literary focus limited its contributors to those within intellectual circles. In contrast, *al-Mirsad* portrayed itself and was perceived as the "people's news" and thus gained wider readership and contributions from *ma'abara* residents and Mapam leaders alike.

The minds behind *al-Mirsad* were Yosef Vashitz and Eliezer Be'eri, two German Jewish Orientalists who spearheaded two ethnic-based departments in Mapam separate from the Ashkenazi-dominated party core: one department for Oriental Jews and another for Palestinians.[75] Leadership roles in Mapam's Oriental Jewish Department included several branches dealing with a range of issues: the WSF; the Yemenite community; culture and education; absorption and employment; the uniting of immigrants; Sephardi women; and communal relations.[76]

The writers of *al-Mirsad* argued for equality between Arabs and Jews in both society and employment. The conglomeration of Yemenite, North African, and Middle Eastern immigrant groups under the Mapam banner helped to forge an early sense of unity. Moreover, the Department of Oriental Jews' links with Mapam's Palestinian Department gave the various groups a sense that their unified struggle was not an exclusively Jewish endeavor.

Oriental Jewish and Palestinian writers took the opportunity to use the Arabic-language paper as a forum to publicize their politically progressive stance, which was at the fore of the newspaper's orientation, as indicated in its slogan: "For the sake of national and social liberation

and the fraternity of all peoples." This slogan ran in contrast to the focus of Mapam's Hebrew newspaper, *Al Hamishmar*, which aimed to portray Mapam as the vanguard party of the Zionist movement. Thus, *Al Hamishmar*'s Hebrew standard ran: "For Zionism, socialism, and the brotherhood of nations."[77]

However, some Mizrahi and Palestinian members of Mapam, including regular writers for *al-Mirsad*, saw the separate departments as discrimination in its most apparent form. In fact, the very existence of such departments was the catalyst for Iraqi-born author Naeim Giladi to turn away from party affiliation: "So I went to Room 8 and saw that it was the Department of Jews from Islamic Countries. I was disgusted and angry. Either I am a member of the party or I'm not. Do I have a different ideology or different politics because I am an Arab Jew? It's segregation, I thought, just like a Negroes' Department. I turned around and walked out. That was the start of my open protests. That same year I organized a demonstration in Ashkelon against Ben Gurion's racist policies and 10,000 people turned out."[78] The Department of Oriental Jews did in fact represent a different ideological strand from that of Mapam's Ashkenazi elite. This ideology reflected a much more sincere desire to bring about a progressive, democratic form of Zionism that was inclusive of Palestinian citizenry.

Despite being a party supposedly struggling against inequality, Mapam denied Palestinian citizens full membership until 1954. With their entry came Ahdut Ha'avodah Party's split from Mapam. However, many of Mapam's Oriental Jewish members welcomed the Palestinians. Latif Dori, an Iraqi immigrant and member of the Department of Oriental Jews, fully welcomed the entrance of Palestinian citizens into Mapam as brothers: "You have finally reaped the benefits of your patience, and the door of full membership, which was closed in front of you for six years, has finally opened. You have proved . . . your full dedication to its principles by standing with Mapam in all of its class struggles and your active cooperation in paving the path of understanding and brotherhood between the two brotherly peoples [i.e., Jews and Arabs]."[79] Although Dori had a positive outlook on the future of the Mapam Party with the inclusion of Palestinian citizens, he cautioned that the path to peace and

equality was long. In doing so, he placed emphasis on the fact that the struggle for equality for Palestinian citizens was one and the same with the Mizrahi struggle:

> Six years have passed, and you suffer from the pain of military rule and from [government] persecution, but our voice has not ceased to demand the rights that have been robbed from you during this period. . . . We were able to [gain success] in our joined fight to relieve the military rule in some regions, our fight for the equalization of agricultural price rates, our fight to open the doors of the professional organization of the Histadrut for the Arab worker, and a true admission of the Arab worker in the [Histadrut]. But the road before us is still long to [reach] our desired goal and our ultimate aim. Six years have passed, and you have stood with us hand in hand in front of the nationalist waves.[80]

Palestinian citizens' entrance into the Mapam ranks coincided with the establishment of several Arabic-language journals directed to *ma'abara* residents. Whether intentionally or not, these publications (alongside *al-Mirsad*) helped to further advance the efforts to establish solidarity between Mizrahi and Palestinian citizens of Israel.

From 1955 until the end of 1956, Mapam distributed the internal *ma'abara* journal *Sawt al-Ma'abir* (Voice of the *Ma'abara*). Headed by editor Sami Rafa'il, *Sawt al-Ma'abir* was concerned with rallying Arabic-speaking immigrants against the ruling Mapai and for votes for Mapam. True to its name, *Sawt al-Ma'abir* gave a voice to *ma'abara* residents by publishing poems and opinion pieces from both new immigrants and high-ranking Mapam members living in the *ma'abarot*. Although many of the higher-ranking Mapam members wrote under pseudonyms such as "Ibn al-Tira" (after a town in the Haifa region formerly populated by Palestinians) and "Muta'alim" (Tormented), most other writers used their real names.

This publication notably presents some of the first instances of the collective term *sharqiyyin* (literally, Easterners)[81] in reference to the self-identification of Mizrahim as an Oriental Jewish collective. This change was quite significant because *al-Mirsad* and other journals commonly used terms such as *newcomers from the East*. For instance, David Cohen often used the term *members of the eastern communities* or *the Oriental*

communities (in Hebrew, *Bnei Edot Hamizrah*, "Children of the Oriental Communities").

The tone of *Sawt al-Ma'abir* was generally in line with Labor Zionism. Albeit critical of governmental policies, this journal still believed in the necessity of the Jewish state and the centrality of the IDF in the state's future. For instance, residents of the David *ma'bara* expressed their faith in and loyalty to the IDF in a short poem:

> O Soldiers of Israel!
> For there is no country that could exist without a brave and courageous army, especially our dear state. . . . We are confident that our soldiers will continue to illuminate the torch of our young nation and provide a stronghold for its borders.[82]

Despite this strong faith in the IDF, some warned that *ma'abara* residents' confidence in the army and state was not without its limits. In describing the problems involved in the continued existence of the *ma'abarot*, Egyptian-born MK Haim Yehuda (Mapam) spoke in the Knesset of the need to refocus state concerns away from maintaining the defense forces. Yehuda suggested that the state instead needed to ensure that its citizens were granted all of the rights they deserved:

> In [the Knesset] many speak—and rightly so—about the problems of state security, but I believe that the main issue is that, in order to guarantee its security and safety, we need to find a way to make the people strong and healthy. . . . Unfortunately, this sort of guarantee cannot be found among the residents of the *ma'abarot*. In these existing grim conditions, our citizens are devoted to the state only in proportion to the way they feel they are [treated] as citizens with rights like all other people. Such a feeling is not often found among the *ma'abara* resident unless we also include him in the social advances in the country and allow him to obtain his fair share like any other citizen. The situation requires a quick response because we all know what the *ma'abara* residents face in the days of winter.[83]

Mapam's Oriental leadership placed the hopes for Arab–Jewish solidarity largely upon the youth involved in Mapam's youth wing, Hashomer

Hatza'ir. Iraqi-born activist Latif Dori argued that it was up to the next generation of Israeli citizens—namely, the *ma'abara* and Arab youth—to forge a unified struggle between the Arab world and Israel against colonialism.[84]

Dori was one of the central figures in attempts to establish solidarity and brotherhood between Palestinian citizens living under military rule and Oriental Jewish immigrants. Immigrating to Israel in 1951, he joined the Hashomer Hatza'ir a year later and in 1954 joined Mapam's Arab Youth Pioneers. In his work in the Hashomer Hatza'ir, he was particularly active in the Hiriya and Sakia *ma'abarot* (currently the town Or Yehuda).[85]

Most notably, Dori was the first to witness and unveil the tragedy of the Kufur Qasim massacre in November 1956. Despite a curfew placed on the village immediately after the massacre, Dori took testimonies from the Kufur Qasim residents and visited the injured victims at the hospital. He then became one of the first journalists to publish the event despite attempts by the government to censor news about it. Dori's activism was not limited to Palestinian citizens under military rule. He also supported various anticolonial struggles of the time, including the Front de Libération Nationale's struggle in Algeria.[86] This stance is particularly significant considering Israel's official backing of the French occupation.

In a speech published in *al-Mirsad* in 1954, Dori, at the young age of twenty, welcomed the development of an Arab youth movement within Mapam. From the start, Dori (then living in the Hiriya *ma'abara*) drew comparisons between immigrant life in the *ma'abarot* and the oppression of Palestinians living under military rule:

> From an Israel of *ma'abarot* composed of worn-out camps and dark huts[,] . . . constant unemployment, and disrespect. From Israel, a struggle against the bourgeoisie coalition government of Mapai for the sake of a humane, happy life of social equality . . . in the name of the *ma'abara* youth. . . . In these days, [there is] oppression of progressive democratic forces in the Arab world, contrived tension on the border . . . harassment by the military rule and unfair discriminatory laws against the Arabs citizens in Israel. Yes, these days have historical significance, and there is an urgent need to establish your movement, the Arab Youth Vanguard in Israel.[87]

For Dori, the establishment of this socialist youth movement was the only way to form a struggle for full equality for Palestinian citizens and to create a "bridge of understanding between [the Jewish] and Arab peoples." Reflecting on his life in Iraq, he urged the movement never to forget the Baghdadi Communist Youth demonstrators who in 1948 "united their cries against sending Arab armies to Israel for the sake of the brotherhood of the Arab and Jewish peoples and against British colonialism that lit the fire of strife between them."[88] Dori then expressed hope that the liberals within the Arab world would join the anticolonialist struggle for brotherhood and peace: "Even though hundreds of Arab liberals are shoved into the prisons of Glubb Pasha, Nuri al-Sa'id, and Gamel Abdel-Nasser,[89] they will form a truly progressive democratic force in the Arab world. And they will no doubt build a lasting peace on the ruins of the Anglo-American colonialism and the corruptible regimes of the Arab states and Israel."[90]

Israeli involvement in the Suez Crisis of 1956 likely did not come as a surprise to Latif Dori. He often warned of the dangers of Mapai's rule and how its alliances with colonial empires would bring Israel deeper into the depths of colonialist and fascist rule. Just two years prior to the Suez Crisis, he drew a pessimistic picture of the future of Arab and Jewish solidarity if his warnings were not heeded: "We know that peace will not occur in the Middle East region if it does not join the forces of democracy and stand in opposition to the reactionary rulers who are in the service of colonialism. For they are trying with all of their means to drag our country into the fires of a new war. Our common struggle is the only guarantee to achieve national liberation and socialism for the two brotherly peoples."[91]

Although there are recorded cases of violent clashes between Palestinian citizens and Oriental immigrants, they appear to have been infrequent and based largely on communal rather than political issues.[92] The police treated such cases lightly, but when expressions of a Mizrahi–Palestinian unified struggle were translated into grassroots protests, the police were quick to use heavy force to prevent them.

For example, in 1953 a group of 600 men staged a demonstration on Brenner Street in Tel Aviv. Organized by Mapam and Maki, the group comprised Arab and Jewish unemployed workers and new immigrants

from the Middle East. An hour before the planned demonstration began, the Tel Aviv branch of the Israel Police announced a state of alert throughout the country and positioned 177 policemen on the nearby streets. States of alert, albeit not entirely uncommon, were reserved primarily for protests that had already turned violent.[93] The "operation," as the police called it, included mostly policemen from Border Patrol and the Northern District, the two main branches that policed the Arab population. In addition, the Tel Aviv branch called in thirty-three officers from the Southern District and a police squad of eight men from the Criminal Investigations Department.[94]

The entire event occurred peacefully despite police provocation with this large show of force. For an hour, the group blocked traffic coming from the beach and carried signs and distributed flyers that stated "Bread—Work—Peace," "Against Job Dismissals," "We will fight to ensure work," and "For a united and persistent struggle."[95] Then Maki and Mapam leaders gave speeches from a megaphone on a truck, whose license plate numbers were recorded by police officers. Once the speeches were finished, the demonstration moved to Allenby Street, and the party leaders broadcast more speeches and then announced the end of the protest. The demonstrators dispersed immediately, and the precinct's state of alert was canceled.

In addition to police efforts to prevent a united Mizrahi–Palestinian struggle, some *ma'abara* residents working under the auspices of certain political parties would spread damaging rumors about the Arab population. Gideon Giladi documented one particularly widespread rumor that "the racist fascists . . . [had spread] to stir up hatred against Arab citizens within the *ma'abarot*":

> The fascist snake has raised its head in the last period, and perhaps its biggest champions are the coalition government's policies. . . . [A]fter the fascist circles failed in their propaganda against the ancient [Palestinian] residents, their poison has spread among the newcomers.
>
> Our correspondent in the *ma'abarot* near Tel Aviv has heard myths about the Arabs, like the story of a youth who was seduced by an Arab woman to go with her to a secluded house, and there he found himself

> in a room filled with Jewish corpses and in front of it were a number of Arabs armed with knives.[96]

Giladi went on to point out that "after the myth," no matter how ridiculous, "comes incitement to kill Arabs and to declare war on the Arab states." Positioning himself well outside of Zionist expansionist ideology, Giladi noted that following the telling of these myths came boasting about "the 'glorious' memories of the 'heroic' days of Deir Yassin[97] . . . and how the Irgun 'saved' the country and 'annexed' the Negev and Galil and the Jerusalem corridor."[98]

Following Giladi's exhortation that "it is the duty of every respectable person to resist such propaganda,"[99] the writer G. Ajluny condemned the attempts by the radio station Sawt Isra'il (Voice of Israel; the station was called "Sawt Isra'il" for Arabic programming but "Kol Israel" for Hebrew programming) to further the disenfranchisement of Palestinian citizens. Ajluny took note of Palestinian citizens' complaints about the lack of literary material in Arabic radio programs and in particular the lack of broadcasts dealing with the issues of women and students. Moreover, he criticized the dangerous lack of distinction between Arab civilians and their rulers:

> The Israeli radio station in Arabic often abuses the term *the Arab aggression* without distinguishing between the Arab people and its aggressive rulers.
>
> But this term in itself is undemocratic. The supposed task of [Sawt Isra'il] is to spread thoughts of peace and understanding, to express the hopes of the Arab public who are starved for national and societal liberation, and to clarify the real reasons behind the bloodshed and slow progress of political reconciliation.
>
> But if Sawt Isra'il were to expose the crimes of colonialism and [Israel's] resulting reactionism to the population of Israel, the articles encouraging wars and hatred would be diminished.[100]

For Ajluny, Israel's common "Arab enemy" was not the dispossessed Palestinians or even the citizens of the Arab world. The "Arab enemy," he argued, was specifically the colonial puppet leaders of the Arab world,

such as Farouk I and Nuri al-Sa'id, who perpetuated the colonial oppression of its Arab citizenry.[101]

Mizrahi activists made similar criticisms of the radio station Kol Israel. More than a decade after Ajluny voiced his arguments, in the monthly English-language bulletin *Israel's Oriental Problem* (*IOP*) one writer lambasted what he considered a misnomer; the station was more akin to "Kol Ashkenazi"[102] than to "Kol Israel." In its May 1965 edition, *IOP* criticized Kol Israel for its intentional alienation of Oriental Jewry. This alienation, it argued, drove many Oriental immigrants to turn to radio stations from neighboring Arab countries as the only outlet for them to derive knowledge and enjoyment.[103]

For *ma'abara* residents from the Arab world, papers such as *al-Mirsad* and *Ila al-Amam* provided a needed forum for conceptualizing their social position in relation to Zionism and a means to express and document their struggles as immigrants. One of the most interesting debates found in these news outlets was the question of who was to blame for the oppression of Oriental Jews living in *ma'abarot*. Although much of the political leadership argued that the Mapai government was to blame, some *ma'abara* residents went as far as to classify themselves as victims of Zionism itself.

One of the first Mizrahi articles to decry the state's oppression of Mizrahim came from an unlikely source: Menashe Za'arur, the chief editor of the right-wing Herut newspaper *al-Hurriya* (Freedom).[104] Za'arur, a Kfar 'Ana resident, wrote an article in 1954 addressing the bitterness Iraqis hold toward the Jewish state and how they perceived their social position in it.[105] Za'arur maintained that the situation of Jews in Iraq prior to the *farhoud* (violent dispossession) was comparable to their present situation in Israel. He took note that in Iraq Jews were caught between external British colonialism and the internal colonial rule of a government that did not represent their interest. The Iraqi Jewish community in Israel was similarly caught between a globalized, capitalist colonial rule over Israel and an internal colonialism demonstrated by a lack of representation for the Iraqi and Arab minority populations. In making this comparison, Za'arur asserted that both Arab and Jewish nationalisms were to blame for the suffering of Iraqi Jews:

> Jews remained in Iraq suffering this pain and bearing this injustice for a long time, until the establishment of the State of Israel, when they breathed a sigh of relief and rushed quickly to it. They all hoped that it would be salvation from all of those tragedies, and that there would not be foreign colonization or internal colonization or feudal[ism] or a hegemony or exploitation, and nor would they grieve. But as soon as they settled in their residences in this country and became acquainted with the system . . . they [realized] they faced new difficulties here.

For Za'arur, these new difficulties were the continual exploitation of the Iraqi Jewish community and the hegemonic rule over the Jewish and non-Jewish Oriental community: "The penetration of foreign colonialism has an influence that is transparent. The exploitation may be lighter than in Iraq, but here it takes a different form. As for the hegemony, it shows its sharp teeth through the voices . . . getting louder every day from the Knesset [encouraging] the government's reprehensible treatment of the minorities!" The elegance, depth, and significance of Za'arur's article must not be overlooked. He dealt a serious blow to the government's divide-and-conquer efforts to plant the seeds of mutual hatred between Palestinian and Mizrahi citizens of Israel.

It is important to note that most Mizrahi writers dealing with the positioning of Oriental Jews vis-à-vis Zionism saw the issue of Palestinian citizens under military rule as inextricably tied in with their own struggle for equality. Thus, Oriental Jewish writers in *al-Mirsad* made similar criticisms of the treatment of the Palestinian population in Israel. For instance, Gideon Giladi wrote of the issue of medical care for both the Bedouin and *ma'abara* residents of the Negev in the article "Injustice and Starvation in the Negev."[106] Lamenting that he felt "as if the Bedouins are like the untouchable [caste of India]," he criticized the reprehensible treatment of Bedouin in the southern city of Be'er Sheva. Fully aware of the "ambivalent position" of Oriental Jewish immigrants caught between Arab and Jewish nationalist movements, Giladi felt a need to document the depth of the oppression of the southern Bedouin communities.

In his article, he noted a case in which a police officer told a Bedouin who had been speaking to one of Be'er Sheva's Mizrahi residents: "For

you it is permitted to visit the city, but it is not right for you to talk to the population." Giladi went on to expand his criticism of the systematic oppression of Bedouin by denouncing the restrictions of access to water resources. He also noted that "the health care of fifteen thousand Bedouin is imposed upon just one doctor!" He pointed out that, despite the kindness of some Israeli Jewish communities, the military prevented any kind of assistance to destitute Bedouin tribes:

> The members of the Kibbutz [Meshabei Sadeh] mediated when the military rule authorities restricted water to thirsty tribes, and they declared their willingness to participate in covering the cost. But the military rule authorities refused and replied that they were not prepared to participate in covering the expenses.
>
> And afterward, the authorities refused to register children who were born in the past two years and refused to give [ID cards] to youth between 18 and 19, with the full knowledge that lacking an ID means that [a young person] will be exposed to constant danger.

Pointing out that the Bedouin themselves were unable to publicly express their plight for fear of reprisal, Giladi urged "every honest man" to prevent "the policy of persecution [whose intent] is to convince them to leave the state and to take refuge in Arab countries." He offered a stern warning: "The policy of persecution not only tarnishes the reputation of the state but also hampers the efforts to [establish] peaceful normalization between Israel and the Arab states. The policy of discrimination and persecution awakens feelings of disgust within every honest man, no matter his belief."

In 1955, in an article written under the pseudonym "Farid,"[107] David Cohen outlined the position of the burgeoning Mizrahi struggle vis-à-vis the Zionist movement. This article, "Lingering of the Unemployed,"[108] appears to have been a direct response to the growing perception among Mizrahi immigrants that they were victims of Zionism itself. In it, Cohen provided a poignant analysis of the ethnically based socioeconomic divide between Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews. He depicted Israel as a society in which "the [Ashkenazi] ruling elite have invented two distinct [social] classes": the first class, "who work, eat, and live," and "the masses, who

are jobless, starving, and without shelter." Showing an awareness that the "Oriental community" fell within the category of the starving masses, he argued that ethnic segregation drove the government, not concern for its citizens' well-being. Cohen then cautioned that if this "image of segregation" continued for much longer, the "government cannot possibly sustain its authority over the [Oriental] masses."

Although this statement was quite radical for its time, Cohen limited his criticism to the confines of parliamentary, political debate. Likely in response to the article by Menashe Za'arur previously discussed, he noted that there "are a fraction of people who think that the ones responsible for this reality is the State that brought them here and that it is not the [current] government who is responsible for this division." He then went on to criticize "the ruling class, [who] has shown the Eastern communities that it does not want integration in the country." To illustrate his point, he referenced actions by the police, who, instead of listening, attacked "bread and work" demonstrators: "This is supposed to [assist] the immigrants and connect them to production and to the land? Of course not, it distances them from the love of work and even distances them from the love of the State and then they begin to hate it. Keeping them from mixing with other communities drives them to despair, to be a sectarian community that is rotting away." This article demonstrates the bitter criticism of the government, but it also shows some of the ambiguity in Oriental Jews' opinion of the Zionist movement's leadership and Mapam's vision for a truly Socialist Zionist movement.

Although it would be an oversimplification to place these writers within the camp of anti-Zionists, it would also not do justice to their writings to position them within traditional Zionist ideology. These Mizrahi writers' vision tended to stress the eradication of colonial influence and the subsequent development of fraternity between Arabs and Jews. In their eyes, the end of colonialism was not mutually exclusive with Zionism. On the contrary, it was the only way to fulfill a truly just form of Zionism within the Middle East.

Of course, the political stance taken by Department of Oriental Jews activists was similar to that taken by Mapam in that they demanded an end to the military rule over Palestinian citizens, full equality for all of

Israel's citizens, and the breaking of alliances with the American and British Empires. But what differentiated the Oriental Jews' stance from the central Mapam Party stance was a sincere desire for an Arab–Jewish brotherhood, which would be preceded by Israel's explicit identification with the Middle East. Mizrahi members of the Department of Oriental Jews thus envisioned a specifically Middle Eastern alternative to a Zionism that was rooted in European nationalist ideals.[109] In contrast, the central Mapam Party placed more importance on ensuring its status within the elite Zionist circles.[110]

The proposal for a progressive, Middle Eastern Zionism is demonstrated in David Cohen's plan for a united Oriental struggle. First, he (writing in the name of all *ma'abara* residents) saw the elimination of the *ma'abarot* and construction of permanent and humane housing as a prerequisite for establishing a self-reliant Mizrahi population. Second, he demanded the cancellation of *avodat-dehak* (workfare jobs for the unemployed that involved public-works projects), an end to lengthy delays in payments to workers, and an equal distribution of taxes between all citizens. Last and most important, he proposed a new progressive system of governance that would "remove the traditions of racism" by encouraging the social integration of Palestinian and Mizrahi communities into Israeli society. This system, he argued, would cultivate a "brotherhood of peoples and class solidarity" that would "bring about peace in the Middle East and the entire world."[111]

Although Cohen's propagation of a specifically Middle Eastern Zionism was novel, his relatively marginal position as the secretary of Mapam's Oriental Department did not provide an appropriate place from which to develop this concept further. However, Eliyahu Eliachar, a pre- and post-state Sephardi intellectual, promoted similar ideas and for a variety of reasons was able to fully develop this ideological stance in his later writings. These publications, published mostly in the latter half of the 1960s, are discussed in further detail in chapter 5.

Ila al-Amam promoted a position politically similar to that of *Sawt al-Ma'abir* vis-à-vis Zionism and the indigenous Palestinian population. Unflinchingly against the oppression of Palestinians on either side of the Armistice Line of 1949, most of *Ila al-Amam*'s writers were deeply concerned

about the direction in which Ben-Gurion's Mapai government had taken the Zionist settlement project. However, unlike the Soviet-aligned Maki Party, their opposition to the Mapai hegemony did not translate into any form of anti-Zionism. On the contrary, writers within the internally distributed *ma'abara* publications were politically oriented firmly within the leftist Zionist camp. Dori, for instance, often made sure to position himself within Mapam's ideologically Zionist party line: "We will not forget the continuous struggle of . . . Mapam against [the government], the *ma'abara* policy, or the unemployment. We will not give out votes to Maki, the enemy of Zionism, or to Ahdut Avodah . . . or give service to Mapai . . . or to the fascist party of Herut."[112]

Dori's assertion that Maki was an enemy of Zionism points to his position not only as a member of Mapam[113] but also as an ideological Zionist. In a fiery and lengthy article published in 1955, he expressed much of the antigovernment resentment many of the *ma'abara* residents felt:

> We will not forget the days of constant unemployment, which gnawed at our bodies. Nor [will we forget] those long days of standing in front of the Employment Bureau just to obtain one day of work. . . .
>
> We will not forget the despicable crimes of Mapai, which introduced a heretical emergency policy of starvation in which we received our daily morsel of bread while the huge revenues entered the pockets of the realtors.[114]

In addition to issues faced by adult Mizrahi immigrants, Dori placed great emphasis on the future of the young Oriental Jewish collective. He had an optimistic view of the future of Mizrahi youth in acting as a vanguard for the development of positive Arab–Jewish relations. However, he and several other Mizrahi activists were perturbed by the lack of proper education for *ma'abara* youth. Most notably, Avraham Abbas wrote an article entitled "Youth and Education" for the feature "Affairs of the Newcomers from the East" in *al-Mirsad*.[115] A Damascus-born Knesset member from 1955 until his death in 1958, Abbas summed up the tragic development of the Ashkenazi–Mizrahi division in his opening statements: "Among the popular sayings that we have is that 'the youth will bring about' [*mizug hagaluyot*]. But let's examine the truth in that statement. We were in despair

even before the state concerning the destiny of the neglected youth concentrated in the neighborhoods of poverty. So when we see our boys who roam around selling [shoe parts] and evening newspapers, this disturbs us from the depths of our souls. Therefore, we have worked to save our youth and established hundreds of comprehensive projects for the street children."

Focusing on the state of education for Mizrahi youth in the center and periphery in this article, Abbas cited a study conducted by Dr. Moshe Smilansky. According to Smilansky's study, Abbas noted, out of 90,000 youth between the ages of fourteen and eighteen in Israel, 44 percent did not attend any kind of school. In a more detailed breakdown of the state of education in Israel, Smilansky showed that one-third of youth were registered in decommissioned schools, with a second third working in irregular work and the last third "receiv[ing] their livelihood from dubious sources."

Among the Mizrahi youth,[116] Dr. Smilansky asserted, according to Abbas's article, that out of the 1,300 secondary-school students registered in Tel Aviv, only 13 were of Eastern origin. In addition, he noted that a school inspector in Be'er Sheva found that half of the primary-school students living in various immigrant residences were unable to read or write, that one-third of the children from ages six to thirteen never even attend school, and that "90 percent leave school after fourth grade, and that's a [conservative] estimate. And there is no significant understanding of culture found among the kids, and they just waste away. The schools are in a state of rags in terms of equipment and furnishings and are blackened by neglect and indifference."

Although Smilansky's report cited well-researched figures, it erroneously attributed the problem of poor education for Oriental Jews to the "adultery and gambling" present in the *ma'abarot*. In "Youth and Education," Abbas refuted the implications of Smilansky's conclusions, but he fell short of pointing out the prejudices inherent in those conclusions. Abbas stated that "the reason for these phenomena is neglect and not the nature of the children, who are generally excellent. What is said about this region is said about the majority of regions with Eastern newcomers. And if we add the *ma'abara* residents and the poor neighborhoods and camps,

a deep, bottomless abyss stands out in front of us, and then we must ask, 'With what and how do we confront this disastrous phenomenon?'"

As seen in chapter 5, these questions would continue to arise in the 1960s, when these undereducated children grew into stigmatized teenagers and adults. Abbas proceeded to propose a governmental plan to provide free education for all elementary school students, including those living in peripheral cities and towns. Also, in an effort to encourage Middle Eastern Jews to attend institutions of higher education, he requested that the government and Jewish Agency increase their subsidies for Oriental students in need of financial assistance.

Whereas Abbas was unwilling to openly point out the institutionalized discrimination against Oriental Jews, four years later David Cohen published the ground-breaking article "Discrimination and Mizug Hagaluyot,"[117] which explicitly stated the reason for the educational neglect of Oriental youth: racism. Citing figures from interethnic marriage rates, labor division, and housing locations, Cohen highlighted the entrenchment of the various layers of segregation between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim.

One of his main points of contention was that the majority of the employed Mizrahim worked in unskilled labor sectors such as agriculture and industry. Many of his contemporaries, including Mapam leaders, argued that this reality was owing to a lack of education among the Mizrahi immigrant population. However, Cohen refuted this line of reasoning with the argument that the Mizrahi population's low socioeconomic status was owing to intentional discriminatory policies.

Moreover, Cohen pointed out that some Israelis falsely believed that the socioeconomic gaps between Ashkenazim and Sephardim was the result of the Oriental immigrant's innate inability to adapt to European concepts of modernity. To this view, he responded that "[Mapai], which is in control of the state, and Histadrut are largely responsible for the existing discrimination." This state-based discrimination, he added, is an intentional policy put in place to ensure Mapai and Histadrut's grip on the reigns of power.

A recently declassified letter sent to the Etzioni Commission, which was charged with investigating the Wadi Salib events, reveals that immigrants'

educational status was unrelated to their residential or employment status. Although the majority of academics entering the country from 1956 to 1959 were from Poland and Romania, about 100 new immigrants from Egypt, Asia, and Africa possessed academic qualifications. The letter writer, Kalman Levin, admitted that there might be large errors in his calculations, but he still had come to the conclusion that even these well-educated Oriental immigrants were not transferred out of the *ma'abarot* and were invariably delegated hard labor if any employment at all.[118]

Turning to the issue of the next generation of Mizrahi youth, Cohen noted in "Discrimination and Mizug Hagaluyot" that some circles claimed that only the adult Oriental immigrants felt discrimination. He responded that ethnic discrimination had a perpetuating impact that "poisons the souls of the [Oriental] children and youth." This statement would be later confirmed when in the 1960s the state itself discovered the persistence of the "communal gap," or socioeconomic disparities based on ethnicity, among the largely Israeli-born Mizrahi youth.

In part responsible for the continuance of the communal gap was the turning of a blind eye to the realities of the prejudices in Israel. For instance, David Ben-Gurion told a *Sunday Express* reporter that "there is no legal discrimination between the Brown and White Jews. So the existing discrimination is illegal."[119] Highlighting the increasingly apparent institutionalization of racism against Oriental Jews, Cohen refuted Ben-Gurion's claim by asserting that discrimination against them would not stop "as long as the newspapers continue to highlight the country of origin of a criminal when the crimes are committed by Edot Hamizrah. And as far as the crimes that are committed by immigrants from Europe and America are concerned, they are [described] in a neglected corner in the newspaper."

The best case of this disproportionate reporting concerned Rachel Levin, a murdered child found near the Hiriya *ma'abara*. Cohen pointed out that the press immediately accused the Iraqi *ma'abara* residents and even claimed that they were frequent hashish smokers and gamblers. However, when the actual murderer was found, he was neither an Iraqi immigrant nor a *ma'abara* resident.

Cohen admonished those who, true to the Mapam Party's stance, believed that "there is no need to be distressed by ethnic discrimination" because it would disappear with the realization of socialism in Israel. He pointed out that this view had not taken into consideration the particularistic nature of the state's strand of Zionism: "Vanguard Zionism was not a philosophy written by the fathers of socialism, but it emerged as a result of the circumstances of the Jewish people exclusively." He thus dismissed the possibility of eradicating ethnic discrimination, social inequality, and racism by way of propagating Zionist ideals. Although Cohen often focused exclusively on the struggle of Oriental Jews, it should be noted that he viewed this nascent Mizrahi struggle as a class struggle united with that of the Palestinian population of Israel: "[This] is a joint struggle with the general population of the country, including the Arab citizens who suffer from national discrimination. If we take the struggle against unemployment, for example, which is one of the most painful problems within the circles of the Oriental communities, it is clear to us that this joint struggle is for every single member of the working class. But those of us belonging to the Eastern community are uniquely marginalized."

Despite the weakness created by shocking levels of neglect, undereducation, and poverty, *ma'abara* residents of Middle Eastern origin fought very early on against the institutionalized racism they suffered. More importantly, both *ma'abara* residents and central political party members worked to develop an ideological foundation for this nascent Mizrahi struggle.

3

Resistance Tactics in the *Ma'abarot*, 1950–1953

Building *Ma'abarot* as a Permanently Temporary Solution

From 1948 to 1951, the Jewish Agency (Sokhnut) was directly responsible for providing temporary housing to thousands of new immigrants. Upon arrival, most immigrants were kept within the Sha'ar Ha'aliya (Immigration Gate) camp. This camp was meant to house immigrants for a few weeks until a more permanent residence was established for them. Many of the new immigrants during these years were placed in the former homes of displaced Palestinians, particularly in the cities and towns of Ramleh/Lod, Acre, Jaffa, Manshiya, and Haifa.

A much smaller number were accommodated in *batei olim*, immigrant housing. The *batei olim* were wooden houses similar to military barracks as opposed to the tent camps that were more common during the era. Once the Sha'ar Ha'aliya campsite was deemed insufficient housing for the tens of thousands of immigrants arriving on a yearly basis, plans were drawn up to find a more permanent solution.

In July 1950, Giora Yoseftal, director of the Jewish Agency's Absorption Department, transferred 70,000 immigrants from immigrant camps to transitory *ma'abarot* with very little possibility that they would be able to earn a livelihood.[1] Those who were transferred from the immigrant camps to *ma'abarot* were subject to a selection process based on their perceived ability to adapt to independent *ma'abara* living. Although some of the younger immigrants escaped to developed cities, the rest were transferred

to *ma'abarot* with little chance of receiving stable housing for years. These "transitory" camps, albeit devised as a temporary solution to the fast growth in the Jewish population, continued to exist well into the 1960s.

By 1951, the *batei olim* were being closed down because they were full, and so 50,000 newly arrived immigrants joined other neglected citizens in the *ma'abarot*, which replaced the *batei olim*. Most of the housing within the existing seventy-one *ma'abarot* comprised tent housing structures (16,711), and only 1,314 houses were built with sustainable wood material. By the end of this year, 227,000 people were crammed into 123 *ma'abarot*.[2]

Even in 1955, five years after the implementation of this "temporary" solution, 55 *ma'abarot* remained, with a total population of 69,720. By then, most residents were living in tents made of cloth. This was during the height of the Ezra and Nehemiah Operation (1950–52), an immigration campaign that brought a large proportion of Iraqi Jews to Israel. During the first four months of the Iraqi Jews' arrival, the number of unemployed Iraqi Jews in Israel went from 5,650 to 20,000 in 1950.[3] During this period, 45,000 people immigrated to Israel,[4] which would indicate that 44 percent of the arriving population were left without jobs.

When the first permanent *ma'abarot* were established, several violent confrontations occurred between *ma'abara* residents and the police. Although these incidents were not direct protests against the *ma'abarot* themselves, they are noteworthy because they reflect the tensions that developed as a result of the transit-camp policy for new immigrants. These confrontations were thus an indirect protest against the living conditions in the *ma'abarot*.

Violent Clashes between Yemenite *Ma'abara* Residents and the Police, 1950

In the first half of 1950, a series of violent confrontations between the police and the Yemenite residents of Ein Shemer would culminate in the killing of a Jewish citizen by a member of the Israel Police. Nearly all of these confrontations concerned religious observance in the camps because the mostly Yemenite camp residents opposed a process of forced secularization. Many of the *ma'abarot* were under the guidance and assistance of religious political parties such as Agudat Israel and Mizrahi.

Those who were not provided with religious services often fought for the right to a religious education for their youth. However, they risked being labeled antigovernment because of their antagonism to the state's secular character.

For instance, in 1950 the Society of Tripolitarian and Benghazi Jews compiled a flyer in Judeo-Arabic to residents of the Beit-Lid *ma'abara*. Addressing those "dear to the Torah and Law of Moshe," the flyer instructed new immigrants to ask the government to "educate our children only in [religious studies] as our ancestors have done."[5] Despite the flyer's nonthreatening tone, the man who was found putting up the flyers was arrested, and it was only after an Arabic-speaking policeman was found that the poster was translated.[6] It should be noted that the issue of religious education and David Ben-Gurion's conflict with the religious sector was a major factor in the eventual fall of the first Knesset in 1950.

On February 14, 1950, two religious youth from a prestigious Ashkenazi yeshiva (religious school for men) entered Ein Shemer to recruit some of the Yemenite immigrants and ensure that *kashrut* (Jewish dietary laws) were maintained in the camps. Because the two youth were not camp residents, Camp Director Tzvi Ginter informed the Karkour Police Station that two unknown and suspicious youth were walking around the immigrant camp.[7] When the police arrived, they identified the young men as yeshiva students and asked why they had entered Ein Shemer. However, because of earlier attempts to forcibly secularize the Yemenite community, the situation quickly degenerated into a bloody attack on the police.

Assuming the police were there to harm the boys, a group of more than a thousand Yemenite residents, some clutching iron pipes found in nearby heaps, surrounded the camp director's office and demanded that the police release the two boys.[8] The women began to break into the camp office to free the boys, and Chief Inspector Meital called in reinforcements from Hadera and Karkour. Before police backup arrived, the entire community broke in, and the women freed the two youth while some of the men attacked the police with pipes. At the same time, a few of the officers tried to make arrests. After the boys escaped, police reinforcements arrived with Hadera's deputy superintendent Avneri. Once the camp quieted down, seven of the men were arrested, and Ein Shemer

was effectively placed under curfew, with a police surveillance of four mobile officers patrolling the camp housing to ensure peace.[9] *Al Hamishmar* reported that rioting had also occurred in the Beit-Lid *ma'abara* (now Pardesiya). In the following weeks, a government committee was established to listen to testimonies relating to the incident and to allow the voicing of communal concerns. This committee consisted of Avraham El-Maliah, Gad Frumkin, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, Israel Yishayahu, and Rabbis Sha'ag and Kahana.[10]

Less than a month later, on the festive holiday of Purim, another police confrontation occurred. After the Yemenite community finished praying, two of the communal rabbis gave sermons railing against the Jewish Agency and camp administrators. According to Deputy Superintendent Avneri, rumors began to spread that the Jewish Agency and camp counselors wanted to "slaughter all of the [Yemenite] workers."[11] Because of these rumors, when the community saw that the camp counselors had dressed some of the resident youth in strange festive costumes, they mistakenly assumed the youth had been instructed to murder members of the community.[12] About a thousand members of the community began to chase and threaten the youth until police reinforcements arrived from the Zikhron Ya'akov and Hadera District Stations.

A week later the Ein Shemer camp was again placed under curfew when a group of twenty rabbis came to Ein Shemer to express solidarity with the residents' struggle against secularization. Upon seeing the rabbis and their intentions, the camp guards forbade all entry and exit, while the camp manager called the Karkour Police.[13] Once the police arrived, the rabbis moved to a field facing the camp's fence and began to pray with a group of 100 Yemenite Jews who were returning home. A crowd of 800–1,000 camp residents gathered and through the fence dividing them watched the group pray. After nearly two hours, the police moved the camp residents away from the fence, and, disappointed in their inability to enter, the rabbis returned to Pardes Hanna.

This month-long battle with state officials against secularization culminated on April 8, 1950. A day after the weeklong Passover festival, an argument broke out between two Yemenite women in the camp's cafeteria, which led to a ten-year-old being injured. The *ma'abara* guards were

called in to detain one of the women, Hamda, and she was placed in a room alone with a male officer. Among religious communities, isolation with the opposite gender is strictly forbidden. After the woman had been sitting alone with the arresting officer for a while, her brother, twenty-five-year-old Salem ibn Salem Ya'akov Jarafi, and two other men with iron pipes entered the camp's detention room and demanded that the officer release his sister. Although the police account fails to mention this detail, news reports indicate that the injured child was detained and happened to be Jarafi's daughter.[14]

Jarafi was quite vocal in his opposition to the secularization process in the Ein Shemer Yemenite community. Many felt that the confrontation between Rabbi Jarafi's sister (Hamda) and the other woman was staged by the *ma'abara* police guards. According to the police report written by First Supervisor Geffen, the incident proceeded as follows:

> Jarafi ran in with two other people who were armed with iron pipes to release the woman, and they attacked the police officer [Druksh], who had been with [Hamda] privately for an hour in the room. The policeman escaped immediately and ran into the weapon room and locked the door from inside. However, the attackers broke down the door, and the policeman fired two warning shots into the ceiling and ran out through the window. The attackers chased after him, and then he fired twice and asked the attackers to leave him alone, but . . . [they] advanced upon him and threatened him with pipes. Then [Druksh] fired two shots toward the attackers and, as a result, Salem [Jarafi] was killed on the spot.[15]

It should be noted that none of the news reports on the incident mention any chase.[16] Also, *Ma'ariv* reported that Jarafi died from three gunshot wounds—in the arm, in a knee, and in his stomach—rather than the firing of two warning shots.[17] Immediately after hearing the shots, the camp residents gathered around Officer Druksh and began to stone him, but he was able to retreat to the camp's medical center. When the nearby Karkour Police arrived, a riot began, and the residents refused to hand over the rabbi's body for an autopsy, which is a taboo procedure among religious Jews. As a consequence, officers from Zikhron Ya'akov, Haifa, and Hadera came to assist the Karkour Police. After coaxing by Staff Sergeant Shamai,

the rabbi's body was handed over to the police for an autopsy, and Officer Druksh was transported to the hospital for treatment.

A week later, a government investigations committee was conducted to examine the circumstances surrounding Jarafi's death and the situation of new immigrants in transit camps. This investigation committee comprised Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, Jewish Agency administrators, and Eliezer Kaplan, the Treasury minister. The committee's discussion centered on a plan to transfer immigrants to what would later be called "development towns"; however, it also concluded that Jarafi's death was a case of manslaughter rather than murder.[18]

Less than a month after the Jarafi shooting, a Yemenite Ein Shemer resident by the name Avraham Yahya Hannani was accidentally shot and injured by a police guard. The shooting occurred outside of Pardes Hanna (a transit camp located two miles away from Ein Shemer), where he had traveled to request work. It is unclear why he was shot, but news accounts described him as wandering around the outskirts of the camp, so he may have been mistaken for a Palestinian armed militant.[19]

Unlike the Ein Shemer incident, this shooting did not cause a stir among Pardes Hanna residents. However, four months after the shootings of Jarafi and Hannani, a large-scale uprising against camp administrators occurred in Pardes Hanna.[20] This incident was sparked by another accusation of the intentional killing of a *ma'abara* resident by the police. It is more than likely, though, that the conflict intensified because of anger already stirred by the Jewish Agency's policies.

Pardes Hanna: The First Uprising against *Ma'abara* Policies, 1950

On August 21, 1950, a forty-nine-year-old Egyptian immigrant named Avraham Harosh entered the Office for Immigrant Care in Camp Aleph of the Pardes Hanna *ma'abara* to ask for suitable housing. His demand came just a month after the first transfer of immigrants to the *ma'abarot*. Harosh, visibly upset, began to demand housing in Ramat Hadar; however, the office clerk denied his request and informed him that he must continue waiting to be settled elsewhere.

According to the police report, Harosh became enraged, began overturning desks and throwing office supplies, and then broke a chair.

Fearing that Harosh would attack him next, the clerk ran to the window just when a policeman patrolling the area saw the altercation. According to the police report, two officers thereafter tried to escort Harosh to the police station. However, the report fails to mention the interaction between Harosh and the officers prior to exiting the overturned office. This missing information is of crucial importance because shortly after they left the office, Harosh collapsed, and he fell dead on the spot.[21]

Seeing Harosh collapse, the *ma'abara* residents came to the conclusion that the officers had beat him to death. Realizing that the crowd was increasingly enraged, the officers retreated into the office building. About thirty minutes later, a group of 500 men and women "from the Oriental community" besieged the building, threw rocks and sand at its windows and doors, and even attempted to set it alight.[22] This siege went on for more than two hours; by noon, policemen from five different police stations had arrived at Pardes Hanna. Once the crowd was dispersed, the police arrested four men (mostly in their midtwenties) who were suspected of instigating the attack on the offices. After Harosh's body was examined in a Haifa hospital, his death was declared to be from natural causes, and much of the rebellion dwindled down.[23]

Although some *ma'abarot* existed by the beginning of 1950, they were not officially referred to as such until the spring of 1950.[24] Even by the summer of that year, news reports were still announcing plans to move 50,000 immigrant families to transitory tent camps in areas adjacent to kibbutzim and moshavim (cooperative farm settlements).[25] The resettlement locations were meant to ensure that immigrants had ample employment opportunities in nearby cities and settlements.[26] A blockade instigated by the politically aware Pardes Hanna Committee, which was established in January 1950 and publicly argued for equality and improved conditions for immigrants (discussed at length in chapter 2), would amount to one of the first Mizrahi revolts against the Jewish Agency's decision to settle immigrants into *ma'abarot*. Despite such revolts, when Prime Minister Ben-Gurion paid a visit to the Pardes Hanna and Ein Shemer *ma'abarot*, camp residents greeted him with cheers: "Long Live Ben-Gurion, the Gatherer of the Exile!"[27]

In the Eyes of the Police: Hadera's Investigations into *Ma'abara* Life, 1950

Six months after Harosh's death, the Hadera Precinct launched investigations into the status of *ma'abarot*, particularly regarding the likelihood of violent conflicts among residents.[28] In an attempt to predict future rioting in the camps, the police conducted a detailed survey of all aspects of life in the camps and the potential catalysts to violence, including ethnic tensions, employment status, and viability of absorption in the camps. The survey notably failed to evaluate the camp administrators' efficacy in managing the *ma'abarot*.

The survey placed great emphasis on the atmosphere in the Pardes Hanna immigrant camp because it was one of the most crowded and ethnically diverse camps. Pardes Hanna had originally served as a British military camp and was then transformed into a transitory camp for new immigrants following the plan to build *ma'abarot*. For the police survey, Sergeant Fisher and Supervisor Steinberg[29] provided two separate reports. The camp, divided into four sections, encompassed a total of 1,200 *dunam*s (0.46 square mile) yet had a total population of 22,000—only 1,000 less than the camp's maximum capacity.

Pardes Hanna was the archetypal *ma'abara* in that its cramped housing conditions were all too common throughout the decade. Most of the *ma'abara*'s tents were situated in Pardes Hanna Aleph, which, according to Supervisor Steinberg, permitted relatively easier absorption of the immigrants. However, with a population of 6,600, this section of the camp had already reached its capacity, and more residents were still entering it than leaving.[30] Pardes Hanna Bet was considered the worse section of the camp, with a capacity of 3,650 yet containing 5,000 residents. In 1951, 916 residents entered the camp, but only 409 left it. Pardes Hanna comprised mostly women and had a fairly young population, with 40–50 percent of its residents younger than eighteen.

By 1952, there were 111 canvas-tent *ma'abarot* in Israel, housing 172,500 people, and an additional 38,544 lived in temporary wooden shacks. In 1953, forty-two *ma'abarot*, housing 70,000 people, were transformed

from the cheap canvas-material tents to wooden shacks. Although this "upgrade" was cause for celebration for some immigrants, 108,850 people had to stay in the remaining 69 canvas-tent *ma'abarot*.[31]

The ethnic composition of the residents of these temporary dwellings was overwhelmingly Middle Eastern, with only 22 percent of the residents originating from Europe.[32] The work situation in many of the camps was particularly dire. The entire Pardes Hanna camp had an unemployment rate of 90 percent. Two of the worst camps, Ein Shemer and Karkour, had unemployment rates reaching 96 percent. In other camps, such as Binyamina and Brandes, less than half the population had stable jobs.[33]

Camps with the best employment situation and least density were composed mainly of Ashkenazim or had an Ashkenazi majority, with a large Yemenite population. This was the case for the Kfar Vitkin and Even Yehuda *ma'abarot*. The residents of these *ma'abarot*, according to Steinberg, were content with their lot and quiet. The *ma'abarot*'s ethnic composition, rather than the employment situation, appears to have been more influential in how Supervisor Steinberg rated a camp's immigrant resentment. For example, in Ein Shemer, with an Ashkenazi majority and a mere 4 percent employed, Steinberg noted that the "[atmosphere] is fine, there are no compl[ai]nts of lacking [necessities]." However, Steinberg did warn that 400 new families had been transferred to the camp recently, but "there is no absorption."[34]

Assessment of a camp's atmosphere was based on two correlated factors. The first factor concerned the employment situation in the camp, which was deemed satisfactory if the majority of the residents had daily work or private business. The second factor dealt with the residents' ethnic composition. In general, as noted, when a *ma'abara* was composed entirely or mostly of Ashkenazi immigrants, the camp atmosphere was classified as quiet, and residents were thought to take their poor living situation in stride. For camps with predominantly Oriental Jewish populations, the exact opposite was true. The nuances in these classifications characterized certain groups as more resentful and violent than others. Iraqis and Persians, two of the largest incoming immigrant communities at the time, were perceived as the most troublesome ethnic groups. This stereotype was so ingrained in Supervisor Steinberg's perceptions that if a camp

with a significant Mizrahi population had few violent incidents, he would point out that there were no Iraqi or Persian families in that camp.[35]

One of Steinberg's concerns involved each *ma'abara*'s propensity for violence and resentment against the state. In his writings, he suggested that this propensity was influenced primarily by the employment status and proximity of jobs to developed cities. In Umm Khaled (now Netanya), he noted that "[the] work situation is good . . . there is no bitterness, and this is because most have jobs and live in the city where they work. So they can pass the time in cafés and toy stores. The thing everyone looks forward to is permanent housing, since most live in tents."[36]

In a revealing commentary, Steinberg connected residents' satisfaction with a camp's ethnic composition. Most of the Umm Khaled residents were from Turkey and had smaller communities from eastern Europe, North Africa, and Yemen. Brushing aside the fact that other communities were not represented in the *ma'abara*, Steinberg explicitly noted that "there are no Persian or Iraqi immigrants in this camp."[37] Here he indicated an awareness on the part of the police that these two communities were the most resentful about their decision to immigrate to Israel. In a somewhat shortsighted evaluation, Steinberg explained that this resentment arose because the government was not bringing in enough Iraqi immigrants: "The [current] goal of the government is to bring the Iraqi Diaspora to Israel, and this is perceived as a reason to relax. Funds earmarked for providing stable housing to the residents have now been allocated to the transportation of Iraqi Jews to Israel. So if there was a question of [violent] outbreaks against the [Agrovnak] camp management in the past, this has ceased. However, there are still a few isolated incidents involving one or two women."[38]

In addition to believing that Iraqis were the most bitter about their immigration to Israel, he also considered the Iraqi and Persian communities to be the least controllable and most violent population. Their propensity for violence, according to many of his police reports, was owing to their alignment with the Communist parties in Israel. Although the connection between violence and political affiliation may appear tenuous, in Steinberg's eyes one or two Maki members were enough to incite an entire community to riot.[39] Steinberg was one of the *k'tzinim* previously

accused of murdering a man for being a member of a Communist party,[40] so his evaluation comes as little surprise. However, more sensible evaluations attributed growing violence in the camps to the quickly developing interethnic tensions between Jews from the Middle East and Jews from Europe.

For example, in August 1952 a child living in the Netanya *beit olim* accused one of the Polish residents of trying to strangle him in his sleep. Interestingly, the text of the report indicates a distinct ethnic division within the camp: "At around 1:00 a.m. . . . the child . . . age 13 . . . woke up from his sleep in his tent as if he saw *an Ashkenazi* inside the tent, and he tried to scream murder."[41] It is necessary to take note that, according to the report, the boy did not scream at the sight of a strange man or even of a German or Polish man but at the sight what he thought was an *Ashkenazi* intruding and attempting to murder him in his sleep.

This description likely stems from events that had occurred in the previous week. The boy's accusation came just days after an Ashkenazi immigrant was placed in police custody for fifteen days after entering the tent of an Iraqi immigrant woman without her permission. Although the text of the report does not indicate the Ashkenazi immigrant's intentions, there is some indication that he may have attempted to sexually assault the woman. Despite this serious charge, which would enrage any tight-knit community, the author of the police report merely commented that, "under this background, it is apparent that some agitation was created among the Iraqi immigrants *via Maki supporters* in the area because the Ashkenazim insulted their wives and children."[42]

After the young boy's accusation, 200–300 Iraqi men, women, and children gathered together and broke into the shed of thirty new Polish immigrants and began to attack two of them. When the police arrived, they arrested several youth, all of whom were labeled Maki supporters. After the two Polish immigrants were transferred to a nearby hospital, there were murmurings within the Ashkenazi section of the *ma'abara* that a self-defense force should be established to protect themselves from the Iraqi community. This sort of self-defense force had commonly been organized in Poland as a reaction to pogroms against the Jews, so the implications of forming a self-police force to protect one Jewish community

from another was quite startling. The next day the Netanya police made every effort to ease the rising tensions between the eastern European and Iraqi communities. The Iraqi boy involved in the incident was sent to a *kupat cholim* (clinic) for a medical examination by a Dr. Frank "to rule on whether there were signs of strangulation on his throat. Dr. Frank did not find any signs of strangulation; however, he ruled that the child was sick from Angina [a throat infection]. He had a 40-degree [104 degrees Fahrenheit] fever, and his . . . throat was swollen, and because of the nonstop fever he had, he hallucinated that they were choking him."[43]

Immediately after the doctor's examination, all but six of the men arrested during the incident were released. However, their political affiliation seems to have been the reason for their arrest more than any criminal activity. The six men convicted men were, according to the police, "Iraqi agitators suspected of belonging to Maki" and were sentenced to fifteen days imprisonment.[44]

To calm the Iraqi community, the police met with some of its leaders. After Dr. Frank's ruling was explained, two of the leaders still appeared to express some doubt in the explanation. However, one of the respected members of the Iraqi community who was present at the exam "had been convinced [by his] examination, confirming [to the leaders] that this was only a hallucination on the part of the child."[45] The police also feared that the incident had ruined local Ashkenazi confidence in the police and that an anti-Mizrahi self-defense force would be established. The police later met with the leaders of the "Ashkenazi Edah" and explained to them that there was no need to form a self-defense force: "instead, the police will be placed there, and only they will be responsible for the security and the communal order in the camp."[46]

Interethnic tensions between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim were understood early on as indicative of the development of a "Mizrahi" collective. This formation of a Mizrahi collective was in direct conflict with the Ashkenazi population, which was a serious issue for the police because it impeded their ability to prevent violence and obstructed the successful development of *mizug hagaluyot*. An Israel Police internal correspondence between the Investigations Branch and Hadera's superintendent Meital reveals the Israel Police's early realization of the strong divisions forming

between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim. In the letter, Meital noted that in many of the *ma'abarot* (particularly in Pardes Hanna, Caesarea, Agrovnak, and Emek Hefer) the tensions between eastern Europeans and Mizrahi Jews were explosive: "Every little dispute between the immigrants or between their children or quarrels about the Employment Office creates an immediately tense atmosphere. . . . The *ma'abara* is *divided into two rival camps*, [and] any insignificant event immediately creates a tense atmosphere, and they start quarrelling and even brawling, which sometimes ends in a serious injury." Meital warned that these communal tensions were a growing problem that could not be contained: "The same thing happens even in the queue at the Egged [bus] station near the camps and sometimes outside the camp until the arrival of the police . . . and in the meantime . . . they brawl in a serious manner."[47]

It must be noted that communal tensions existed even between communities with similar regional origins. Solidarity between different Middle Eastern Jewish communities was not entirely solid during the 1950s. Even within the Iraqi community, tensions developed between Iraqi Kurdish and Iraqi Arab groups. In one notable case, entire Kurdish and Arab-origin families fought after one man called another a "son of a donkey."[48] After sticks and stones were thrown, at least nine men, ages seventeen to forty-four, were arrested, and three required bed rest. The argument had arisen over concerns about who would manage a newly built Employment Office and thus control the allocation of jobs and number of workdays. The police's description of the incident indicates that cultural frictions already existed between the two groups, and this particular issue further ignited the feud.

Although intra-Mizrahi conflict did exist during the period, it is rarely described in the source materials. What can be said is that each case of intra-Mizrahi fighting stemmed from a power struggle within the *ma'abara*. In a similar case involving Iraqis, several families openly brawled over the *ma'abara*'s political affiliation.[49] Despite these intercommunal tensions, instances of Mizrahi solidarity were far more common in protests occurring in urban settings where the Sokhnut was located.

The police survey conducted in 1950 placed a great deal of emphasis on determining indicators of future violence in the camps. For example,

the report indicated that in Binyamina half of the residents were unemployed. Those who had jobs were provided with agricultural, forestry, and governmental work by an office in the Zikhron Ya'akov moshav. However, the majority of these jobs were for only three days a week. Most of the camp's residents were from the Middle East—1,489 from the "Edot Hamizrah" (as the report put it), 110 Sephardim, 223 Yemenites—and only 292 were Ashkenazim.[50]

The author of the report, Detective Fisher, noted that there was some bitterness concerning the lack of jobs in the camp and salary reductions. Attributing this problem to the mass influx of residents from other villages, he warned that this serious problem must be dealt with, as did the fact that many of the families continued to live in canvas tents.[51] Less than a month later a group of more than fifty Egyptian, Iraqi, and Yemenite men and women from the Binyamina work camp demonstrated outside the Employment Office in Zikhron Ya'akov.[52]

What was particularly noteworthy about this event was the range of issues and demands raised by the protestors. While walking, they chanted, "Work, Work, Bread, Bread!" But their demands were not limited to employment concerns. Their placards showed a diverse set of agendas, including criticisms of state policy, calls for class solidarity, and demands for greater gender equality in job distribution:

> There is insufficient work for us and the government continues to bring us immigrants.
>
> The camp clerks are not good managers of *ma'abara* Binyamina.
>
> The workers of Binyamina want housing in the *ma'abara*.
>
> Long live the cooperation of the working class in pursuit of peace!
>
> Give work to the girls in the *ma'abara*.
>
> Long live indecision[53] concerning us!
>
> The Iraqis in Tiberias want their proper rights![54]

This rally by Iraqis, Egyptians, and Yemenites is unique in that prior to their arrival in Israel there had been little, if any, contact between these

different Jewish communities. We can thus see in this rally the seeds of a politically subversive Mizrahiut demanding civil rights, employment for women, the unity of the working class, and the ever-elusive peace. Another interesting point to note is the location of the protest. Although the demonstration itself took place in Zikhron Ya'akov, the protestors came from the Binyamina work camp, but, curiously, they argued for the rights of Iraqi immigrants in the Tiberias *ma'abara*, which was nearly forty-three miles away.

The Israel Police often connected the issue of violence to the lack of employment in *ma'abarot*. In particular, it looked to nonunion workers from surrounding *ma'abarot* and Arab villages as the main source of conflict between immigrants and government institutions. For instance, Steinberg blamed the presence of Arab residents from the Northern Triangle region (Umm al-Fahm, Ar'ara, Baqa-Jatt, etc.) as the main reason immigrants were bitter. He argued that owing to perceptions that Arabs were higher-quality farmers, they came in droves to Jewish areas and were more readily employed. He even went as far as to suggest that this was a pressing security concern that "must be eliminated." The failure of local institutions to find work for new immigrants was also noted as a cause for violence. For instance, in a private police correspondence, Assistant District Superintendent Kramer emphasized three factors to investigate further in the anticipation of violence in the Agrovnak and Caesarea *ma'abarot*:

> (b) If it was apparent if the riot was organized or began spontaneously;
>
> (c) What are the chances of improving the [unemployment] situation in the future and what were the negligent factors on the part of the local institutions concerning this;
>
> (d) The [amount] of unorganized laborers working in the surrounding orchards and from which immigrant housing the unorganized laborers originate from.[55]

Despite their efforts to anticipate violence acts of resistance against some state institutions, the police were often surprised by violence directed specifically toward them. Just a year after the survey was done, the Emek Hefer *ma'abara* would disprove some of Steinberg's preconceptions that

Yemenite immigrants, unlike other ethnic groups, were averse to turning to violent means.

The Emek Hefer Revolt against the Camp Guards and Police, 1952

On October 25, 1952, violent clashes between police and Yemenite immigrants occurred in the Emek Hefer *ma'abara*. Emek Hefer was composed mostly of Yemenite immigrants, and some of its residents had been transferred directly from the Ein Shemer camp, the site of violent clashes with police a year earlier. There were also a few Iraqi and Persian families among the Yemenite population.[56] As at most other transit camps, at Emek Hefer there was rampant hunger, unemployment, and inadequate housing. A former Yemenite resident later recalled that life in Emek Hefer "was a fenced-in pen of hundreds of hungry people, while all around were orchards with oranges and tangerines and fields of vegetables."[57] So some of the hungry residents would steal fruit from nearby kibbutzim, which infuriated kibbutz residents and caused some of them to hire security guards to protect their produce.

The start of the clashes in question here began when a woman gathered weeds for her goat and was then accused by a kibbutz guard of stealing produce. The guard, Moshe Kom, then sicced his dog on the woman. If, as the Pardes Hanna Committee argued, the Israeli elite's relationship with *ma'abara* dwellers constituted a master–slave dynamic, the camp guards were like slave overseers. This was particularly the case concerning the relationship between Emek Hefer residents and this particular kibbutz guard: "In press reports, inhabitants of the camp described how Kom pummeled them or set his dog on them, even sometimes on children and the elderly."[58]

The woman's son, along with several of his friends, later retaliated against the guard. When Inspector Fisher (Hadera's police chief) heard of this, he traveled in a police Jeep on a Sabbath afternoon to arrest Kom's attackers. Incensed by the offensive desecration of their religious convictions, residents captured some of the accompanying police officers and threw stones and sand at the Jeep and other policemen. Seeing that some of his officers required medical treatment, Fisher decided to retreat to the police precinct and planned a raid on the camp in retaliation.

At 4:30 the next morning, a contingent of police, armed with firearms and batons, raided the camp, and 200 constables and Border Police surrounded the camp. Announcing a curfew in Hebrew and Arabic, the police searched each tent and gathered approximately 1,000 adult and young males and lined them up in the nearby field. Once this was done, a total of 105 men were arrested and transferred to the Hadera Precinct. However, only 39 of the 105 arrested were actually prosecuted. Among those prosecuted were eight youth who were serving in the army.

In the wake of the Emek Hefer revolt, four additional *ma'abarot* organized demonstrations and strikes over the lack of water and housing. Contemporary narratives on the Emek Hefer uprisings look for a linkage between the succeeding protests and Emek Hefer, but there is little to no indication of any causal relationship.[59] Although such incidents gained much more news coverage because of their violent, ethnic background, they were rare expressions of anger ignited by singular incidents. The Emek Hefer revolt did not spark further clashes throughout the country, but it did damage the prestige of the Israel Police. Commissioner Sahar explained to Ben-Gurion: "Policemen were struck. Doing away with the matter will make a bad impression on the police and will educate the other transit camps to mock the police and the law."[60] Although the Harosh, Ein Shemer, and Emek Hefer incidents were extraordinary cases, they were a sign of the times and irrevocably harmed perceptions of the police early on, especially among Oriental Jewish immigrants. Scholars and the Israel Police attributed these poor perceptions to Jews' historical dislike of the police owing to their experiences outside of Israel. But the reputation of the Israel Police was more commonly sullied by their day-to-day policing of immigrants. Routine police activities often involved the suppression of the "democratic" values that were lauded on paper yet compromised on the street.

Violence that occurred during Mizrahi protests depended largely on the reaction from the police and government officials. This was particularly the case in urban settings. But violent confrontations in the *ma'abarot* were caused mostly by a spark that ignited a well-kindled fire of resentment within its residents. The Ein Shemer and Emek Hefer cases illustrate this point. Although violent incidents in these two *ma'abarot* were

caused by systematic mistreatment of Middle Eastern immigrants, they were caused in the main by the most egregious government acts. As seen in chapter 5, this type of situation differed significantly from the violent clashes located within urban environments. Unlike cases of widespread violence against the police in the *ma'abarot*, violent urban protests were not necessarily violent from the start but, on the contrary, began as nonviolent protests until the police agitated things.

Nonviolent Resistance against Living Conditions

As noted in the case of the Emek Hefer riots, organized nonviolent protests against government policies and discriminatory practices in the *ma'abarot* went largely unreported in mainstream Hebrew press. Violent protests involving Oriental Jews were provided more frequent and lengthy coverage in lieu of organized protestors' persistent, near-daily struggles. The organized protests of the time were given such brief coverage that news articles often obfuscated the reasoning and extent of the demonstrations. For example, in two small last-page articles, *Davar* reported on two seemingly unrelated events in June 1952: one incident at the Jewish Agency building in Tel Aviv and the other in the Be'er Ya'akov *ma'abara*. In the article concerning the Tel Aviv protest, *Davar* noted that after living in tents for three years, "tens of new immigrants from Be'er Ya'akov demonstrated in front of the Sokhnut building."[61] In a separate (and significantly shorter) article, *Davar* reported that at dawn 500 immigrants blocked the passage of hospital employees to request shacks to live in rather than tents. Without providing further specifications, the article concluded by stating, "Only through the intervention of the police, the blockades were removed at around 10:00 a.m. Four were arrested."[62] Although these two occurrences were reported on the same page, no apparent connection was made between them or any significance assigned to them, despite the fact that these two demonstrations were actually the same protest. In contrast, the police account is much more eye opening.

On a Sunday morning in June 1952, a police supervisor happened upon several roadblocks erected by the Iraqi residents of Be'er Ya'akov. He then discovered that the roadblocks were built to stop traffic and bring attention to the residents' housing demands. The police officer

immediately requested backup from the nearby towns Ness Tziona, Rishon Letzion, and Ramleh to surround the entire camp and called for reinforcements from the Jerusalem and Tel Aviv police headquarters. At around 10:00 a.m., the police surrounded the area and burst through the blockade, where they found more than 500 immigrants, including women and children, standing next to canvas tents and holding signs stating, "We are requesting proper housing and housewares," and "We live in tents like these."[63]

Once the police arrived, three buses transported 100 of the male demonstrators to the Jewish Agency building in Tel Aviv and the rest remained in the *ma'abara*. After the incident, the police conducted a further investigation and found that 2,500 Iraqis from the camp had been traveling back and forth to Tel Aviv during the previous two weeks to make the same demands to the Jewish Agency. However, despite promises to the contrary, their demands for housing had not been met.[64]

As these weekly demonstrations persisted, the regional police headquarters of the Northern District opened an investigation and realized a pattern. Every Sunday starting in May of that year, new immigrants from Nahalah Yehuda, Rishon Letzion, Akko, Be'er Ya'akov, and numerous other immigrant camps in the North would first protest in their local residences and then, upon the arrival of the police, move the demonstration to the Jewish Agency in Tel Aviv. Although it is not clear how these road blockages were organized, they certainly illustrate a concerted effort on the part of several *ma'abarot*. It should be noted that these weekly roadblocks occurred during the Be'er Sheva Rebellion of Indian immigrants, which is discussed in chapter 4.

The Be'er Ya'akov roadblock protest was not without precedent. One of the earliest examples of the roadblock protests occurred in October 1951, when residents of the Kfar 'Ana *ma'abarot* staged a nonviolent protest against the lack of clean drinking water.[65] The immigrants used stones to construct a barricade to block the main road between Lod and Tel Aviv. A police squad was immediately sent to Kfar 'Ana, and upon their arrival, the residents removed the barricade without any prompting by police force. This tactic won the residents the ability to meet with a Jewish Agency official.

The police report later explained that water piped into the Kfar 'Ana *ma'abara* was contaminated, and the Jewish Agency had agreed to give water provisions up until October 9. After this, the provisions would cease, so it was at this point that the residents held their protest. Days later, after the protest, when the *ma'abara* delegation met with Jewish Agency officials, they told the officials that the residents offered to bear the costs of a supply of clean water. However, the Jewish Agency refused to take any further responsibility in this matter. Through police intervention and negotiations, the local water company granted the residents free access to drinking water "until after Yom Kippur," a day of fasting just two days away.[66]

Apart from dispersing protestors, the police acted as mediators between government officials and immigrant protestors. This role as mediator became more prominent when protests were located near and inside of central government offices such as local municipalities and Employment Offices. Rather than demonstrating outside of government buildings in the hopes of having a delegation selected, some Mizrahi protests were conducted directly within large Employment Offices.

According to police records, in 1952 and 1953 a series of well-organized protests were staged inside the offices of government officials in the Haifa Police District. The first of this type of demonstration took place on June 30, 1952, when about fifty Persian immigrants marched inside of the Employment Office in Binyamina and demanded work for all 150 male residents of the *ma'abara*. To transfer blame away from the government, the Employment Office administrators informed the demonstrators that, owing to an expected harsh season and the "employment of children and Arabs in . . . the moshav," only forty to fifty jobs could be provided.[67] Steadfast in their demands, the group insisted that the Employment Office provide everyone with work, or they would stage a general strike. They also demanded that the Binyamina Employment Office sign a publicized letter confirming that, contrary to widespread myths, it did not help *ma'abara* residents find work. Unlike other protests of the time, the protestors did not assign a delegation to fight their cause. Instead, the entire group of protestors presented themselves as representatives of all 150 Persian male residents from the Binyamina *ma'abara*.

More than six months later, a string of similar protests occurred throughout the Haifa District.[68] In January 1953, more than 200 new immigrants marched from the Netanya Employment Office to the Histadrut (Labor Union) building.[69] This demonstration was likely a regionally organized effort. Around the same time as the Netanya protest, the Haifa District commander received information on a smaller demonstration of sixty people attempting to enter the Hadera Municipality building and then moving on to the local Histadrut building.[70]

In Netanya for half an hour, both unemployed and employed immigrants demanded bread and work. Then they marched to the Netanya municipality. There, some stood on the staircases, and others disturbed the workers by shouting in the corridors of government offices. While this went on, a police inspector contacted Mayor Ben-Ami (née Dankner) and pleaded with him to travel to the municipality building and speak with a delegation of four men from the protest. When Ben-Ami arrived, he promised to provide a week of work for the unemployed among them and "to produce, in advance, a sum of money to the [Employment] [O]ffice for the most needy workers."[71] But then a government representative arrived at the Employment Office and declared that because 400–500 people were registered as unemployed, the Employment Office would be unable to help them. He warned the office workers that the municipality would close the office completely if sufficient job sources were not found within a week. Despite the warning, the Netanya Employment Office continued to function, and yet people were still unemployed months afterward.

Four months later, 150 unemployed workers returned to the Netanya Municipality building and once again screamed for bread and work in the corridors.[72] Police officers were immediately called in to silence the crowd. After some time, the mayor, along with representatives from Histadrut and the Ministry of Labor, spoke with the protestors' delegation and explained the municipality's financial constraints. The mayor then agreed to assemble an investigatory panel on the following day; it would be composed of five members of the protesting group; an agent from the Netanya Worker's Council; the mayor; and a representative from the

Netanya Employment Office. After this plan was agreed upon, the demonstrators returned home.

On October 16, 1953, a group of seventy-five unemployed Hadera residents broke into the Hadera municipality building.[73] Rather than electing a delegation, the residents broke into the mayor's office and demanded to start negotiations with the mayor concerning their employment status. They immediately broke the telephones to prevent the police from being informed of their takeover. But members of the regional council managed to call the police, who arrived in a group of six sergeants and officers.

Interestingly, the police did not see any of the protestors' actions as unlawful, nor did they perceive the group as a threat. Although reinforcements were prepared, the commanding officer in the area stated, "There hadn't been any real attacks, and I didn't find it appropriate to take steps toward arresting them." However, Subinspector Meir explained to the group that the police "understands their situation" and were "prepared to provide assistance to all citizens, on the condition that they [do not] follow the temptation [to] cause disruptions." In addition, Meir promised to investigate whether there were "minority [i.e., Arab] laborers in the area working without permission."[74]

This incident elucidates the Israel Police's intimate involvement in the new state's affairs both as mediator between the government and its citizens and as the enforcer of labor divisions between two ethnic communities. Although Palestinian citizens of Israel were used as a scapegoat for startlingly high unemployment rates, not all Mizrahi protestors accepted this answer as a sufficient excuse for not providing jobs. Although the protestors disturbed the work of government offices and may have been considered rowdy, they invariably had clear goals and a very sophisticated understanding of how to achieve their goals for social equality.

A good example of this sophisticated understanding comes from a Mizrahi demonstration against ethnic discrimination in Migdal Ashkelon. In March 1953, a former member of the city council and director of employment in the municipality, Mr. Yakar, informed the Migdal Ashkelon Precinct that a demonstration was to occur four days later, on March 12. According to the police, "entire sectors of the Edot Hamizrah were

about to demonstrate against ethnic discrimination."[75] This description of the demonstration must not be underrated. In the first half of the 1950s, Mizrahi protests were often described in terms of mistreatment of immigrants or a specific ethnic group. The police rarely referred to "entire sectors" of an Oriental Jewish collective.

The main reason for the protest was to demand the reinstatement of a Mr. Yakar as a member of the "workers'" council representing the Sephardim and Edot Hamizrah because there was no representative for these groups on the council. Although Yakar had been demoted from his former position as director of employment, he "emphasized that the protest had no political party affiliation."[76] After Yakar filed his request with the local precinct, the supervisor of the Migdal Ashkelon Precinct contacted the municipality to see if there was any legitimacy to his claims of ethnic discrimination:

> [The municipality] reported that Mr. Yakar spent his time in the municipality as the director of employment and was removed from his post because of intoxication without any connection to his [ethnicity]. . . . Action was taken by the council of municipality workers, who made the accusations against him, and they decided as follows:
>
> 1. To demote him
>
> 2. To transfer him from the post of Employment Manager to the head of cleaning duties only
>
> 3. [To levee a] financial fine.[77]

Whether the municipality's accusations were correct or not, it would seem inappropriate (and surely demeaning) to demote a former director to the position of cleaning manager. After reporting plans for a demonstration to the police, Rehovot's district supervisor rejected Mr. Yakar's request and announced a state of alert in the district. On the day originally planned for the demonstration, more than 100 men gathered in front of the workers' council building. However, the police dispersed them after explaining that their gathering was illegal.

A week later more than 150 protestors, mostly Iraqi and Turkish immigrants, joined in the protest to demand the reinstatement of Mr. Yakar and

an end to ethnic discrimination against Oriental Jews. According to the police report,

> The protestors carried signs: "Change the Histadrut Secretary!" "Bread and Work to the Edot Hamizrah!" they marched quietly to the municipality building, where a delegation was received, and after negotiations with the mayor, that went on for three hours, the demonstrators dispersed. . . . It was explained that the topic of discussion was that of personal manners only, only of interest to the organizers themselves.
>
> It seems to me that the protest was organized for the personal needs of the organizers.[78]

Even though the police also denied permission for this protest, they allowed the demonstration to continue. In this way, they likely prevented any escalation of conflict between the group and government representatives (including the police themselves).

4

Mizrahi Protests in Urban Space, 1950–1958

Everyday Nonviolent Resistance

Whereas some communities staged internal revolts—that is, within the *ma'abara* itself—other groups felt that bringing their protests to the urban arena would elicit a more effective response from government officials. Unlike documented *ma'abara* protests, nonviolent urban protests often represented more of a quotidian form of resistance. The term *quotidian resistance* refers to everyday forms of resistance that exist among less-powerful social actors such as peasants or marginalized ethnic groups. James Scott first used the term to highlight the significance of various forms of working-class resistance rather than the more direct physical protest with placards and slogans.[1] These everyday acts of resistance against the government ranged from residing in regions not designated for Mizrahi immigrants to warning family members against immigration to Israel.[2]

One of the most historically significant and widespread types of quotidian resistance against housing discrimination involved escaping from remote *ma'abarot* and illegally squatting in central, urbanized areas. Although there were many isolated cases of youth fleeing *ma'abarot*, this section focuses on the organized efforts by entire immigrant families and communities to escape the ghettoization of Oriental Jewry. It is too difficult and impractical to research singular cases of runaway youth and determine (by way of police reports) whether their escape was an intentional

form of resistance against the state. But families and whole communities who left *ma'abara* expressed their discontent with the government through letters and public protests against state institutions.

The Israel Police viewed the squatters as everything from a common nuisance to a blemish on Israel's international standing. One of the more serious and common problems for the police involved *ma'abarot* youth sleeping in the corridors of abandoned and occupied buildings when they tried to find employment in the more established cities and villages.[3] Those without dependents, such as single youth, would often escape to kibbutzim, cities, and towns in search of job opportunities. Although some would return to the *ma'abara* to provide for their family, others would start life anew elsewhere. Those with families would sometimes leave the *ma'abara* completely in the hopes of a more prosperous life either in an established town or in the Diaspora.

Despite the difficulties in determining the intentions of youth escapees, there are a few unambiguous cases of youth escaping conditions in Israel. In 1954, a soldier deserted from the Israeli army and fled to Egypt. There, he informed Egyptian authorities that the Israeli army had built a military camp disguised as the Ktzi'ot agricultural settlement in what was then the demilitarized area of El-Auja. The soldier, a nineteen-year-old born in Tripoli, Libya, had immigrated to Israel in 1949, but he wanted to seek asylum in Egypt because the discrimination against Mizrahim was unbearable for him. He went further, asserting that in Israel Ashkenazim "despised Oriental Jews and discriminated against them *everywhere*."[4]

Another exceptional and unambiguous case of quotidian resistance involved an Ashkelon teenager in 1965. Fed up with the poverty and despair he experienced in the southern town and former *ma'abara*, this fifteen-year-old boy fled Israel for the Egyptian-controlled Gaza Strip in October 1965.[5] He had been pushed to flee to Gaza when he was fired from his job as a mold caster after requesting a raise in salary. As the sole provider for a family of nine, the youth was so distressed about being fired that he decided to escape that very day.

Interestingly, the child did not run to a more prosperous city in Israel. He instead considered life in Gaza, in a state at war with Israel, as more promising than the life awaiting him in a development town. When a

group of Israeli soldiers found him crying near a bush, the child immediately ran farther into Gaza and hid in a nearby orchard. A group of United Nations soldiers eventually gained the boy's trust and later handed him over to the Ashkelon Police Precinct.

The organized efforts of families were different from that of youth squatters in that many times youth would only temporarily leave for big cities to find work and then return to the *ma'abara* days or weeks later. In contrast, immigrant leaders in *ma'abarot* would gather entire families, ethnic communities, or even all the residents of an entire *ma'abara* and permanently move them en masse to another residence.

The police and Jewish Agency officials often handled these direct and physical acts of resistance harshly. A letter from the Israel Police Organization Branch director Amos Ben-Gurion outlines the position of the police vis-à-vis squatters and *ma'abara* escapees. In his letter, Ben-Gurion noted that the government promised to transfer all canvas-tent residents to housing more suitable for the rainy season. However, he expressed some unease because of the political implication of immigrants independently leaving the *ma'abarot* on their own for better conditions: "Because of the conspiracy theories promoted by certain circles and entire political parties interested in thwarting the government in this particular mission, residents of distant *ma'abarot* . . . left their shacks and for 'key money' entered tents (in the outskirts of cities) whose residents intended to leave for better renovated housing."[6] The "key money" residents would pay an entrance fee under the table as an informal yet illegal housing contract.[7] They were then considered the new tenants, but "as far the law is concerned, they [are to be] evicted like squatters."[8] As such, they could be immediately evicted whether they had lived in the tent for only twenty-four hours or for months.

During periods of flooding, many *ma'abara* residents experienced a quandary: on one hand, they were not allowed to move to more developed camps, and, on the other, the government would refuse to repair their destroyed homes. After one particularly damaging flood, members of the Agrovnak *ma'abara* wrote an appeal to the government pointing out the problematic policies directed against new immigrants. They noted that rather than providing materials for the residents to rebuild,

the government disconnected the water supply to the *ma'abara*, "forcing people to fetch water from long distances, and this administration wants to force them out of their homes. . . . But where to?!"[9]

The two most frequent protest targets for immigrants were the Jewish Agency and the police. From the Jewish Agency's point of view, squatters were preventing the ensured settlement of Jewish immigrants throughout the Land of Israel.[10] To the police, the issue was more one of unlawful residence and burglary. In many cases, those who did not want to separate from their family or ethnic community would refuse to leave the *ma'abara* when instructed to do so. Realizing that immigrants were entirely dependent on the Jewish Agency, the Interior Ministry took decisive action to put an end to these acts of resistance. Ra'anan Weiss, leader in the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency, explained to Interior Minister Haim-Moshe Shapira, "The Settlement Department is partaking in several measures to stop the migration of new settlers from place to place without our prior authorization. One of the measures recommended is preventing the relocation of food-rationing cards without our approval."[11] This measure was quite significant because the only means of sustenance during Israel's austerity period (1949–59), apart from the black market, was government-provided food rations. Although Weiss's suggestion was made in October 1951, the withholding of food-rationing cards and all social services had already been in place since the summer of that year. In addition, *ma'abara* squatters and those refusing to relocate as instructed were dealt with harshly when they attempted to negotiate their residential status.

Adriana Kemp points out that state officials initially argued that residents' leaving the *ma'abara* without official permission endangered its residents' security. But throughout the 1950s those fleeing from the camps turned into a political and a national problem as the *ma'abarot* became more and more a tool of social control developed by the state. As such, unauthorized departures from the camps created an environment of moral panic in the eyes of the state authorities, which in their view called for punitive actions against both those leaving the *ma'abarot* and those leaving the country.[12]

In most cases, the Jewish Agency would refuse to speak with any immigrant who did not live where he or she was instructed. Thus, when

a group of Yemenite immigrants refused to leave the Eliashiv *ma'abara* (Emek Hefer) and protested in the Jewish Agency office, police violently removed them from the office.

"Waging War" on the Sokhnut, 1951

On June 11, 1951, sixty Yemenite immigrants entered the Jewish Agency building to discuss their grievances with the manager of the Absorption Department. They were upset that they were being forced to separate and resettle in different locations throughout the country. One of the group's likely fears was the potential dissolution of family and communal ties after relocation. For instance, one Iraqi immigrant, Na'im Abdush, reflected decades later on the devastating effects that this sort of relocation had on his family:

> My father lived in Petah Tikvah Camp for ten years until he died in his hut. Samra, my paternal grandmother, was placed in Pardes Hanna Camp on her own, and she remained there until she died a few years later. . . . My sister Lulu was settled in Saqiya Camp until her husband took to drink and gambling, and the family fell apart. The rest of the family was ripped apart. . . . My uncle, Salim, was sent to [Hiriya] Camp. He had been a senior civil servant in Baghdad but stayed unemployed for the rest of his life. . . . Had the whole family been settled in the same camp, we could have made up a commando squadron to defend our interests![13]

This sort of forced resettlement was a frequently implemented discriminatory practice against Middle Eastern Jewry. Some Middle Eastern immigrants would reside in relatively higher-quality shacks for lengthy periods of time, but when Ashkenazi immigrants arrived, these Mizrahi families would be asked to move to lower-quality canvas tents. The reality and extent of housing discrimination against Mizrahim were not lost on Oriental Jewish immigrants: "We had been living here for a whole year . . . then they removed some of us from our houses and put others there, saying that these houses are suitable only for the Europeans and are not fit for the Yemenites. Are we worthless? Now they are paving a road in the center, but not for us."[14]

When the group of sixty Yemenites approached the Jewish Agency in June 1951, a delegation of three was chosen to speak with Haim Zadok, the Yemenite representative of the agency's Absorption Department. During the meeting, Zadok explained to the protestors that as long as they ignored the agency's request to transfer to other locations, no social services would be provided for them. Fearing the seriousness of Zadok's threat, two of the delegation members agreed to leave the Eliashiv *ma'abara*; however, the third remained steadfast in his refusal to move.

Strengthened by one man's defiance, the protestors then declared they would "wage war on the Sokhnut." When the police arrived at Zadok's request, one man among the group of resisters threw himself on the ground and refused to leave the building. Seeing this, others joined in and blocked the entrance to the building. Annoyed by this act of nonviolent resistance, Sergeant Lissak ordered his officers to remove them by force.[15] The fate of this group is uncertain, but what is certain is that they were not the only Mizrahi group willing to wage war on the Jewish Agency.

The issues of sewage clearing, education, water quality, the police presence in the *ma'abara*, and poor housing had compounded to such a degree that toward the end of 1951 the Jewish Agency building in Tel Aviv became the site of daily multiagenda protests originating from *ma'abarot* throughout the country and from different, albeit mostly Middle Eastern, ethnic communities. But if the maintenance of the *ma'abarot* was officially the responsibility of the local councils, why did so many of these protests take place at the Jewish Agency offices and not at regional government buildings?

Because the *ma'abara* guards and local police were incapable and ill equipped to handle near-daily protests, they often turned a blind eye to such protests and even encouraged *ma'abara* residents to take their grievances up with the Jewish Agency in Tel Aviv. However, in doing so they were running against the Jewish Agency's intentions. As far as the agency was concerned, the transfer of immigrants from an immigrant camp such as Sha'ar Ha'aliya to a transit camp marked the official end of the agency's responsibilities to newcomers. In theory, the newcomer's new life as a fully independent citizen of Israel had begun: "What is the difference between an immigrant and a citizen? An immigrant says: Give me, give

me, while the citizen is asked to give of himself. . . . [I]f an immigrant is under the care of the [Jewish Agency's Absorption] Department, it means he has not yet been absorbed. . . . [I]f he is dealt with by the local authorities, he slowly begins to feel like everyone else."[16]

As such, the local municipality and relevant government ministries were meant to deal with the problems faced in the *ma'abarot* concerning employment, health care, education, and so on. However, within a year of the establishment of the *ma'abarot*, the futility of passing the burden of the increasingly inhumane conditions of *ma'abara* life to the local councils had become apparent. The Ministry of Interior lamented this reality by noting, nearly a year after the establishment of the *ma'abarot*, that their residents were acting "not as citizens of their local municipality but as citizens of the Jewish Agency."[17]

One of the more apparent reasons for staging protests at the Jewish Agency was that agency's ideological impact. A Tel Aviv–based institution, the Jewish Agency had encouraged immigrants to come to Israel and was supposed to manage their absorption. Thus, it was rightfully perceived as the source of immigrant troubles. In a similar situation, Palestinian citizens of Israel would protest not in Tel Aviv but at their local Military Rule Headquarters. Although the Land Day protests in 1976 are seen as the first major instance of Palestinian protest in Israel, demonstrations for bread and work and for proper education for children were already occurring in 1950.[18]

The Be'er Sheva Rebellion of the Indian Community, 1951–1955

The ideological undertones of targeting the Sokhnut as a site for protest may best be represented by a sit-down strike involving a group of more than 100 southern residents. This group of Indian Jewish immigrants, many from the B'nei Israel community, would initiate what they termed the "Be'er Sheva Rebellion" against housing and work discrimination.

On November 20, 1951, just weeks after Ra'anan Weiss proposed to cut off social services to "dissident" immigrants, at least 150 Indian Jews left their homes in Be'er Sheva, sat on the grounds of the Jewish Agency building, and began a hunger strike to the death. In a letter signed by 90 of them and addressed to Jewish Agency officials, the protestors came with

only one demand: "You brought us here—we want you to send us back."[19] It should be noted that this passive form of resistance was becoming increasingly common in the civil rights struggles against ethnic discrimination throughout the world, thus sparking the interest of the international press.[20]

Charging Israeli society with racism, the group expressed concerns that applied to many other Oriental Jewish communities. However, other communities' pleas for an end to discrimination often fell on deaf ears. In a *New York Times* article covering the strike, a representative spoke of blatant and everyday racism experienced by the Indian community: "In Bombay, we were told that there is no color bar in Israel . . . but, in a shop in Beersheba we were told that we should eat only black bread as we were black and the white bread was only for white Jews."[21]

The group's representative went on to criticize the fact that their children were not provided with education, which forced the community to send them to Catholic mission schools. Adults were excluded from jobs, forcing them into heavy manual labor in remote locations. Many attempted to relocate to homes closer to their jobs, but the Jewish Agency refused their relocation requests even though, according to one protestor, a "'white man' with 'protection' was immediately transferred to Bat-Yam." As a result, the protestors firmly declared that "no more promises of temporary help will convince us of your good intentions."[22]

The group explained to the Reuters news agency that "immigrants who came to Israel with a pioneering spirit find the hard and bitter conditions in this country intolerable. The only life for us is in India."[23] This remarkable statement came within a year of their immigration to Israel and must have been a great blow to the Jewish Agency, who was responsible for instilling in Jewish immigrants the nationalistic ideology of settling in the Jewish national homeland, not in the Diaspora.

In response to this shocking protest, a Jewish Agency spokesman claimed that the agency would attempt to resolve the community's problems within two months and said that whoever still wanted to repatriate afterward would be allowed to do so.[24] However, four months later little had changed for the group of protestors. As a consequence, 125 of the original protestors renewed their sit-down strike at the Jewish Agency,

and only 25 of them decided to remain in Be'er Sheva rather than return to India. The Jewish Agency's response was to delegitimize the significance of the protests by questioning the protestors' Jewishness and ability to adapt to Western "modernity": "In the case of these Indian Jews, Israeli authorities had been unable to overcome 'cultural absorption difficulties,' [and] said the Indians belonged to B'nei Israel, a group that has been in India perhaps as long as 2,000 years and is 'more detached from Judaism than practically any other Jewish community.'"[25]

Because of these "absorption difficulties," the Jewish Agency agreed to return most but not all of the protestors to India. Those who did not go were said to have decided to remain in Israel. However, in a *Jerusalem Post* article it was revealed that they were kept in Israel against their will. The Southern District's *ma'abara* inspector, Aryeh Gvili, claimed that "new immigrants from India tend to change their minds daily and are extremely fickle." However, the head of the Sokhnut Immigrant Department admitted that they remained only because of the Sokhnut's refusal to return them to India: "'[The agency] already fulfilled its promise' . . . for those still here[,] he said, 'whoever heard of a public body fulfilling its promise 100 percent; 85 percent is quite sufficient and those who did not leave with the original group will have to take care of themselves.'"[26]

On the day following this announcement, a new group of ten Be'er Sheva residents joined the original strikers. Also demanding to be returned to India, this group claimed to represent at least a hundred more immigrants and pointed out that half of them were still in the army, and most were young and unmarried.[27] Thus, contrary to the agency's statements, those demanding to be returned were young and serving in the IDF, the major absorption mechanism in Israel.

On April 4, 1952, 115 of the original protestors were flown to Bombay dressed in their national dress. Embarrassed by the entire incident, the Jewish Agency took pains to note that the same plane that returned the Indians would pick up the same number of Persian Jews from Tehran, and an additional thirty-five Persians would immigrate to Israel on the same day. During the following days, a total of forty-eight new protestors joined the strike; however, the Jewish Agency's response was far from kind. After the third day of their strike, an official informed the demonstrators

that "the agency would deal no more with the return of immigrants to India. . . . [T]heir situation [is] now 'a matter for the police.'"[28] After this threat, all but one family (who were later forcibly removed by the police) returned to Be'er Sheva.

A month later an Indian Jew named A. I. Macmull wrote an open letter to the *Jerusalem Post* describing in no uncertain terms his criticism of the state's ethnocentrism and the escalating tensions developing between Ashkenazim and the Oriental Jews: "The idea that the Jewish state constitutes a 'melting pot' for all the multifarious cultural forces is indeed a magnificent idea; but we cannot see that the Western cultures in Isreal [*sic*] are in process of 'melting.' The belief that western culture and civilization are, after all, superior to the 'lethargic' and 'drowsy' civilizations of the East, and especially of India, is still accepted by many thinking Israelis. . . . Apparently, European culture itself constitutes the 'melting pot' and all other cultural forces are expected to dissolve in it."[29]

One of the police tactics used to end this protest was the threat to take away the protestors' children. In January 1955, Tel Aviv's chief operations officer went to the Jewish Agency building to initiate "negotiations" with the heads of each family. In fact, his intention was to give the group an ultimatum: either end the sit-down strike or lose your children. During their discussion, he informed them that keeping their children on the street was criminally negligent and threatened their life and health, so if they continued their protest, the police would take their children and place them in a childcare home.[30]

The group initially agreed to leave the premises but returned later. When the chief operations officer reiterated his threat, the group refused, and the police promptly arrested all of the men. The women then held on to the police cars transporting their husbands, and some prostrated themselves in front of the cars to prevent their arrest. After this, the men were brought before a judge, and the women were allowed to remain with their children in the precinct. Tel Aviv's assistant police superintendent, the author of the police report, appears to have empathized with the protestors: "After a judgment was made on [January 1, 1955], and they were released on bail, they were loaded into a Jewish Agency car with their belongings and were sent to their previous, worn-down residences by

orders of the Jewish Agency clerk Mr. Bar-Ratzon and four policemen."[31]

Despite police interventions like this, the Indian Jews' protests continued well into the mid-1960s. However, after a decade of sit-down strikes and ambiguous responses by the Jewish Agency, Foreign Affairs Minister Moshe Sharett definitively declared in 1963 that the "Sokhnut will not return the [Indian Jewish] protestors to India."[32] After Sharett's refusal, the protestors began to demand that the Jewish Agency "end all forms of discrimination; nothing less."[33] At the same time, others in the B'nei Israel community of Indian Jews staged an additional struggle against the Chief Rabbinate and against what they called the "apartheid" society of Israel because of its treatment of Asian and African Jews. As Joseph Hodes documents in detail, this struggle was mainly against the decision to ban all marriages with the B'nei Israel community owing to suspicion that members of the community were not fully Jewish.[34]

The Indian Jewish community's actions were innovative, and their acts of resistance and non-Zionist stance were rare among immigrant communities. More commonly, groups of immigrant families would organize a Jewish Agency protest to demand to be relocated to more developed areas within the country. For instance, in June 1952 forty Afghan immigrants residing in the Negev entered the Jewish Agency building and demanded to speak with representatives from the Absorption Department. Although they were likely aware of the Indian Jewish protests that had occurred in the preceding months, the Afghani community requested relocation from the Negev to more developed areas of the country rather than emigration from Israel.[35]

Clerks from the Absorption Department offered to relocate the Afghan immigrants to the remote villages of Katrah and Zechariah in the Jerusalem region. Yet an earlier police report indicates that just three months earlier about sixty Mizrahi residents of Zechariah had demanded to be transferred to another location because of its inhabitability.[36] Thus, the alternatives presented to the protestors were unsuitable, so they completely refused. Rather than negotiate, the clerks summoned police officers, who were able to convince the Negev residents to accept the offer and move to other villages.

A few months later, on August 28, 1952, residents of the Rehovot *ma'abara* protested for proper housing, locating their protest right next to the Jewish Agency building, which by that time had become a fairly routine practice. However, instead of yelling their demands, the protestors used the same tactics as the Indian Jews: sit-ins and hunger strikes. Upon arrival at the Sokhnut building, the *ma'abara* residents staged a sit-in protest, prayed, and then announced a hunger strike in front of the building, which, a *Davar* reporter noted, "they would continue . . . until they either die or their demands are met."[37]

Reflecting the government's unsympathetic attitude, *Davar* crassly commented on the residents' plight: "Have we forgotten the noise and tragedy that the residents of the same *ma'abara* made during the flooding . . . ?"[38] Unlike the press, many other immigrants felt a sense of unity with the Rehovot protestors. On the following day, residents of the Hadera *ma'abara* left their camp and staged a solidarity march in Tel Aviv in support of the Rehovot hunger strikers.[39]

Violent Protests in the Cities: The Police as a Catalyst for Increased Violence

The role of the Israel Police as a government mediator would often figure into the outcome of demonstrations. In this sense, the Israel Police defined whether a protest or act of resistance would end in violence. For example, on June 26, 1951, a group of 250 Iraqi immigrants from the Sakia *ma'abara* arrived at the Jewish Agency at ten in the morning. Apparently fed up with the handling of elections in the *ma'abara* and a lack of representation, the Iraqis demanded an end to the agency's and the state's discriminatory practices: "The protestors complained of the lack of politeness on the part of the manager of the Employment Office in the *ma'abara*, about horrible discrimination directed against Iraqi immigrants, and demanded to see the director of the Absorption Department of the Jewish Agency. Policemen . . . prevented the protestors from entering inside and, according to the suggestions of the commanding officers, chose a delegation of about seven people that would be received by the manager of the Absorption Department, Mr. Yoseftal."[40]

Unlike at other protests, at this protest police officers, not the demonstrators, chose the delegation. As a consequence, as soon as a meeting with Giora Yoseftal, the director of the Absorption Department, was approved, a fight between the chosen delegation and the protestors broke out concerning who would represent the *ma'abara*. During the argument, a curious tourist from Africa began to photograph the protest, but the protestors took her camera away. Inspector Kaplan eventually confiscated the camera.

While this went on, a police informant from the *ma'abara* turned to Inspector Kaplan and told him that the demonstration was organized by one of the Communists in the area. The informant and Kaplan then began to walk around the crowd in search of the Communist man; however, by then he had apparently already left the protest. Once the protestors agreed on a delegation, they met with Giora Yoseftal, who promised to set up an investigatory committee into the handling of the upcoming *ma'abara* elections.

Exactly a month later the Tel Aviv police received information on a planned protest by the Persian community. Although the police expected the demonstration to finish at the Tel Aviv municipality building, there was much confusion about the origin of the protest. So, first, a squad of nine policemen and sergeants were sent to the Tel Aviv municipality building, but no protestors were there. Then they were informed that the protestors were heading for the prime minister's house. However, when the police arrived there, the police dispatcher informed Inspector Slominsky that the protestors had walked toward the Sokhnut building. By this point, Inspectors Slominsky and Wein had brought seventeen sergeants and policemen to handle a relatively small demonstration of ninety participants. Highlighting their role as government middlemen, the police (rather than Sokhnut administrators) asked the Persian immigrants what they wanted from the government: "Their reply was that they had brought furniture from Persia (mostly carpets), and [customs agents] took them and refused to release the furniture until they paid customs and luxury tax; their demands was for the Sokhnut management to fix this."[41] After hearing this, Inspector Slominsky went to Yoseftal's office and tried to negotiate for the immigrants. It must be noted that the demonstrators'

intention was to have a peaceful discussion with Yoseftal. From the start of the protest, they tried to maintain public order and even moved everyone to the sidewalk so as not to disturb traffic. But Yoseftal answered in the negative, commenting that "it doesn't interest him to take care of issues of taxes." Instead, a Mr. Ben-Efraim, "the head of the Persian immigrants,"[42] told the group to return home and try to petition the manager of taxes in Haifa.

The only newspaper account of the incident claimed that the General Zionist Party had initiated the demonstration,[43] so, because of the demonstration's perceived political nature, Yoseftal refused to meet with the group. However, this report from *Davar* appears to be unreliable for two reasons. First, it claimed that less than twenty people participated in the event, but the officer present during the protest counted no less than ninety protestors. Second, if a political party had organized the demonstration, Assistant District Superintendent Kenner, as supervisor of the North Tel Aviv Police District, would have cited this fact as a point of contention in his report.

The start of the violence seems to have been a result of the actions of one uniformed soldier. The man, an air force soldier, attempted to break the chain of officers guarding the Sokhnut building and attacked a police sergeant. The police then detained the soldier, but this detention led to others calling out for violence against the police. It was then that the demonstrators moved the protest to the middle of the street and fought with police. At the same time, some protestors began to make impromptu speeches from within the crowd and "incited the crowd in Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, and English to attack the police and break into the Sokhnut building violently."[44] The fact that the speeches were in four languages suggests that, contrary to the police report, the protest was not confined just to the Persians but most likely included other ethnic communities, demonstrating in solidarity.

Completely overwhelmed by the confrontation, the police called in reinforcements. At the same time, Kenner tried to convince the protestors to send a delegation to Haifa. Then, according to the police, officers attempted to disperse the crowd and "push them without batons and without force."[45] The protestors moved to Sderot Rothschild and threw bottles,

garbage cans, and stones at the police. Upon the arrival of reinforcements, the police then started to violently disperse the protestors, which led to a full-out brawl between the two groups. The fighting incensed the speakers to the point that they became more militant in their criticisms of the government: "The speakers attacked with words like 'Shame on the government,' 'Shame on Ben-Gurion,' [and] 'Nazi police.' Instead of a Mapai government, they brought an Abdullah government."[46]

The placards they carried said, "Persian immigrants, free the property of our forefathers' last hope," "The Persian government frees our property—the Government of Israel destroys it," and "Mapai remove the chains from the new immigrant—give us our property, do not use us for propaganda purposes."[47]

Without much clarification, Kenner noted that by 1:30 p.m. (four hours after the protest began) the entire area was silent. But at least twenty-four demonstrators had been arrested, and numerous others had been injured.

One of the factors that contributed to violence during Jewish Agency protests was the relatively difficult access to the agency. Despite their frequency, protests at the Jewish Agency in Tel Aviv were rarely an easy task for *ma'abara* residents to organize. Many of them lived in *ma'abarot* whose only access to the outside world consisted of unpaved mud roads. As such, the act of initiating a Sokhnut protest was in itself an act of resistance that demonstrated a sense of unity, determination, and organization. The frustration involved in organizing a protest and traveling long distances only to be refused an audience with an agency official may have contributed significantly to the level of violence at Jewish Agency protests.

Even immigrants residing in *ma'abarot* adjacent to Tel Aviv experienced these difficulties. For instance, in August 1951, 400 residents of the Pardes Katz *ma'abara* feared that the clothing and tents provided by the Jewish Agency were not sufficient for the approaching winter. So, even without public transportation to Tel Aviv, they organized themselves early in the morning and decided to walk by foot to the Jewish Agency, more than four miles away.

By 8:15 a.m. on August 27, the protestors had already arrived at the main road of Tel Aviv–Petah Tikvah accompanied by a single car, carrying signs that said, "Fulfill the promises of winter hats for the children."[48] With

a police car following close by, the protestors finally arrived at the Jewish Agency building two hours later. Mr. Roth, the assistant manager of the Absorption Department, appeared and immediately agreed to receive a delegation of fifteen members. This agreement was based on advice from police officials, who suggested that a riot would break out otherwise.

During the meeting, the assistant manager explained that the most influential members of the Jewish Agency were at that time attending a Zionist Congress meeting in Jerusalem. So Roth suggested that he and the Pardes Katz delegation go to Jerusalem to raise their demands with the Zionist Congress. Although the atmosphere in the meeting was cordial, the feelings among the protestors awaiting a decision were more like a silent storm approaching: "The whole time the protestors stood quietly and idly on Nahalat Binyamin Street around the Jewish Agency building. At 12:15, the members of the delegation told the protestors about the agreements with Mr. Roth and asked the protestors to disperse. . . . Inside the group of protestors there was heard an angry call, saying, 'We want a reply now!' and with contemptuous yelling and cursing. Immediately hundreds of protestors started to run in the direction of the gates of the Jewish Agency building with a clear intention of breaking inside."[49]

However, the police were already guarding the entrance. The protestors started to attack the officers and attempted to disarm them. Others threw stones and bricks from far away. The commanding officer in the area ordered his squad to disperse the crowd by force, and within ten minutes the protestors were pushed back onto the main road. During the skirmish, one woman bit the sergeant in charge in an attempt to protect her husband from arrest. But in the end she and ten others were arrested by the police, and four other demonstrators required hospitalization because of the police officers' use of force.

Another reason protests took place at the Jewish Agency is that many of the new immigrants, in particular Iraqis, felt as if they were victims of Zionism and its conflict with Arab nationalism. This feeling of victimhood was particularly prevalent following the bombing of a synagogue in Iraq. The bombing had spurred the emigration of the majority of Iraqi Jews to Israel with the Operation Ezra and Nehemiah airlift.[50] Iraqi authorities later arrested two Jewish youth in connection with the bombing. Whether

the charges against the youth were real or imagined, scholars such as Abbas Shiblak assert that many Iraqi Jews felt that the bombing was the work of Zionist emissaries to promote further immigration to Israel.[51] Added to this feeling was the mistreatment of Iraqi immigrants by Israeli government officials, which caused many Iraqi Jews to feel as if they were Jewish victims of the State of Israel.[52] This sentiment became particularly apparent after a demonstration in 1952 led to a parliamentary investigation into the behavior of the Israel Police toward immigrant protestors and the reasons behind the protests themselves.[53]

On June 22, 1952, forty families from the Akko *ma'abara* and other *ma'abarot* in the North organized a sit-in at the middle of Lilienblum Street in Tel Aviv. According to the police report, the families had left their tents in northern Israel and had begun illegally squatting in Nahalah Yehuda, a *ma'abara* just south of Tel Aviv.[54] As soon as the sit-in began, a relatively large force of twenty-eight police officers arrived on the scene, indicating that the police had anticipated the demonstrators' arrival well in advance.

While sitting in the road, the protestors began yelling at the Jewish Agency building: "Receive our delegation!" But Avraham Sigal, then a clerk in the Jewish Agency (he would later become the director of the Absorption Department), refused to speak with them or permit them entrance to the building. Once the police separated the actual protestors from curious onlookers, the demonstrators continued to block traffic and yell about their situation. The women among the crowd started to surround the policemen and guards protecting the building.

Although women usually played a limited role in *ma'abara* protests, their role in demonstrations at the Jewish Agency extended far beyond holding placards. They, along with children and the elderly, acted as a buffer for the men, who were forcefully dispersed by police officers. In some cases, Mizrahi women took up leadership roles at demonstrations. During the protest in June 1952, the women, accompanied by their children, formed the delegation that was meant to meet with Jewish Agency officials. But a delegation composed of women was unacceptable to Mr. Sigal. Minister of Police Bechor Shitreet later supported Sigal's refusal to meet with them because it was felt that women, like children, were incapable of articulating their demands. Speaking at the Knesset, Shitreet commented,

> They sat, MK Sassoon, for hours, and the police did not touch or say anything to them. And, tired of sitting for hours, a group of women stood up and tried to enter the Sokhnut building. . . . [T]hey asked to be received, and the clerk refused to receive them. MK Argov may be right in saying: "These [women] were not a delegation, and neither were the children." If a group of adult [men] came, intelligent and able to negotiate, of course that same clerk would have received them, but he doesn't need to receive a delegation of women and children who have nothing to say.[55]

When MK Esther Raziel-Naor (Herut) requested that Shitreet retract his sexist remarks about the female demonstrators, Shitreet explained that he was referring to Iraqi immigrants in particular:

> SHITREET: That's how it is—I don't mean the sort of women like you. . . . [T]here are men who don't know how to negotiate, and there are also women like this. What's so offensive about this?
>
> RAZIEL-NAOR: It's possible that they don't know how to speak [Hebrew], but they knew exactly what they wanted to say. People who don't have housing and are resentful and bitter need to be given the possibility to be heard, and [we] need to release ourselves from this automatic discourse concerning demonstrations, that we see them all as inciters and instigators.[56]

Government officials were at times more receptive to children's protests than to women's.[57] A similar woman-led protest involving sixty women and their children occurred in September 1951 in the Magen David Square in Tel Aviv. Capable of articulating their demands to the appropriate officials, the women carried placards in their hands demanding that the supervisor of food rationing "give food to our children."[58] The group requested that a delegation from among them be received, but the supervisor refused.

Unsupervised youth protests (located mostly in *ma'abarot*) were taken more seriously than protests by women. For instance, in the Pardes Hanna Bet *ma'abara*, a group of 100 Iraqi youth ages fourteen to sixteen organized a demonstration in July 1950 and held up signs in Arabic demanding, "Give us work" and "Open the schools for children."[59] Inexplicably

threatened by this protest, both First Inspector Steinberg of the Investigations Department and Inspector Meital of the Hadera Precinct came to the camp with a police squad to stop the protest. The presence of high-ranking police officers normally indicated a protest of high intensity that was considered worth future investigation.

As the police approached the youth, the youth threw their placards to the ground and then hid in nearby tents. Inspector Steinberg, author of the police report, noted that the protest was organized solely by the youth; "most of the [adult] immigrants roamed around on the roads inside the camp, and they were completely indifferent to the protest and did not interfere . . . or get involved in their demands."[60]

Although not taken seriously, women were not immune to police violence. In cases when a police attack seemed certain, the women would often fight back. This is precisely what occurred in June 1952, according to the commanding officer. When fights broke out between women and officers, the police attempted to push the crowd back into the streets. However, the women resisted by attacking several policemen and, among other things, breaking the eyeglasses of one of the junior officers, Me'ir Idit.[61] Seventeen people were arrested, and most of the crowd moved the protest to the streets. However, some of the women successfully entered the building, and they, along with their children and elderly, moved the sit-in to the corridors of the Jewish Agency building. But with no positive response in negotiating a meeting with Mr. Sigal, they returned to Nahalah Yehuda.[62]

One Iraqi-born MK, Benyamin Sasson (Sephardi Party), would later describe the events surrounding this archetypal Mizrahi protest as a source of great criticism against the government and police. During a Knesset debate in the weeks following the event, Sasson railed against the Sokhnut and the behavior of Bechor Shitreet's police force. The debate began with Sasson criticizing the actions of the Jewish Agency's clerk, Avraham Sigal. Sasson pointed out that when the protestors requested housing, Sigal called the police, who forcefully threw out the protestors rather than using common courtesy: "When [the clerk] was informed that the delegation was from Nahalah Yehuda, he forgot the sayings of

Proverbs, 'A soft answer turns away wrath [but a grievous word stirs up anger],' and sent them a response, that whenever they are not settled in the Galilee—he wouldn't speak with them. And, as such, they remained on the stairs, women, children, the elderly, and toddlers. . . . [T]hey waited there for three hours."[63]

Going even further in his condemnation, Sasson denounced the Jewish Agency's discriminatory apathy toward Iraqi immigrants. In doing so, he drew parallels between the Israeli and Iraqi governments in their treatment of Iraqi Jews: "The question that concerns me now is the behavior of the police during this incident. These people think that they are themselves victims of the establishment of the State [of Israel]—people who lost their property; people who came to the country after every place that they lived in threw them out; they have no housing, and no one understands their language."[64]

As noted in chapter 2, the feelings of being dual victims of both the Israeli state and their country of origin can be found in the work of some Iraqi-born writers of the time.[65] Sasson's assertion, coming nearly forty years prior to Ella Shohat's groundbreaking article on Zionism and its victims,[66] came as an absolute shock to Knesset members, particularly to the minister of police, Bechor Shitreet. Despite his denials, the Oriental immigrants' feelings of being victims of the State of Israel persisted throughout the decade.

From Kiryat Shmona to Be'er Sheva: A Mizrahi Ethnic Struggle Grows, 1956–1958

The year 1956 marked a turning point in Mizrahi social protest history when two major revolts broke out. In some ways, these revolts may be seen as the direct lead-up to the Wadi Salib Rebellion. But, unlike Wadi Salib, they were not organized by any organization or coalition of protestors. However, an examination of their demands, targets, and catalysts for violence indicates that they planted the seeds for the Mizrahi revolt in 1959.

The first of these revolts began in the Mansi *ma'abara* in the early morning of February 14, 1956. Forty North African families from Mansi traveled twenty-five miles to the Sokhnut building in Haifa and requested

a meeting with K. Levin, the manager of the Absorption Department in the North. The majority of the demonstrators were disaffected agricultural workers employed by the Jewish National Fund (JNF).

They likely turned to the Jewish Agency building in Haifa because by the mid-1950s police officers were making a more concerted effort to prevent small protests at the agency building in Tel Aviv. For example, in 1955 when a group of Moroccan immigrants residing in the Harovit *ma'abara* decided to protest at the Jewish Agency in Tel Aviv, they were stopped before they even reached the city.[67] Their truck was confiscated, and they were told to return to the Harovit *ma'abara*. The immigrants, who had been in the country for only five weeks at that point, wanted to stage a protest against the JNF, which contracted their agricultural work.

When the Mansi delegation met with Levin in 1956, they demanded that the JNF lower the daily well-digging requirement from 120 to 80 wells,[68] which they had to do within eight hours.[69] However, the minimum requirement was lowered only to 100. In response, the families requested the immediate resignation of the employment manager in the region. However, Levin explained that this request was beyond the Sokhnut's authority and advised them to speak with representatives from the JNF and Ministry of Labor. After nearly two hours, Levin ended the meeting with the usual promises of better working conditions and the shifting of responsibilities onto other government offices.

When the delegation returned to the protestors waiting outside, they explained the agreement with Levin, who had even promised to provide transportation back to Mansi. It was then that the protest became violent and the families attempted to break into the Sokhnut offices. Unfortunately, the only source material on this incident is a news report in *Davar*,[70] so the specific reasons for the outbreak of violence during an otherwise peaceful protest are not mentioned. Based on similar previous incidents, it is likely that the families were unhappy about having to organize more meetings with other government officials.

By the spring of 1956, more intense demonstrations were staged against the working conditions that Middle Eastern immigrants had to suffer. In May, violent attacks against the state broke out simultaneously

in the peripheral cities of Kiryat Shmona and Be'er Sheva. In Be'er Sheva, during a time of rapidly increasing unemployment,[71] about 100 unemployed workers burst into the Employment Office, broke windows, and threatened office workers until the police dispersed them.[72]

Even new immigrants became more forceful in their opposition to being settled in undeveloped areas. In July 1956, a group of young immigrants were taken directly from the ship that had brought them to Israel and were told they would be transported to Be'er Sheva. Unbeknownst to the youth, however, they were "deemed suitable for hard labor" and thus were selected to be taken to the Omer moshav instead.[73]

Expecting to settle in Be'er Sheva, the youth were shocked upon their arrival at the undeveloped moshav north of Be'er Sheva. When the truck driver stopped and asked them to get out, the group refused and demanded to be taken to the city proper. When they realized that they would not be taken to Be'er Sheva, they left the truck and headed directly for the moshav secretary's office, which they broke into and began destroying furniture until the police came and arrested them.

In Kiryat Shmona, protests began quietly when a group of workers blockaded the town's main roads as a protest against reductions in payments to immigrants. However, once the police arrived, the 600 demonstrators began attacking officers.[74] According to one account, they also set fire to the local labor offices.[75] *Ma'ariv* immediately delegitimized the Kiryat Shmona protests as "angry, violent clashes but without a serious reason, need, benefit, or meaning behind them."[76] However, even Yitzhak Steiner (secretary of the Kiryat Shmona Workers' Council) supported the protest and gave a serious warning to the government: "If the central offices do not immediately cancel the [planned reductions] and do not order a return of the 7,000 lirot that were to be allocated, then Kiryat Shmona will see destruction and a revolution in the coming days."[77]

It was the issue of work that sparked the Kiryat Shmona Rebellion, despite the fact that the government failed Kiryat Shmona *ma'abara* residents in multiple ways, including employment. One resident commented in the summer of 1957 that "450 families, nearly 2,000 residents, still live in shacks. Most of the shack dwellers have lived here for years. The majority

lack financial resources to rent or purchase property. And up until now . . . nothing has changed. Poverty, death, the hygienic situation have yet to change; [we] lack showers, toilets, and water lines. We are lacking in general."[78]

The following year was marked by two similarly intense demonstrations in Beit She'an and Bnei Brak. In February 1957, 300 unemployed people demonstrated in Beit She'an and broke into various government offices.[79] The first set of demonstrations broke out in the local labor office on February 4. The protests were sparked by general dissatisfaction with the number of days of employment allotted to immigrant workers each month. In an interview with *Davar*, the director of accounting in the Labor Office noted that the state of unemployment became particularly severe in January. In response to the worsening situation, he had set a minimum work schedule of twelve days a month for every worker. However, there were workers who still received only five days of work each month, and others who refused to take up the work allocated to them.[80]

Following the protests, the local municipality held an emergency meeting concerning employment in the region. After years of empty promises from government officials, the Beit She'an residents took a different approach. Treating the government's actions as a case of criminal negligence, the protestors turned directly to the police and demanded a meeting with Superintendent Gershoni. The protestors charged the Employment Office with nonreceipt of payment, serious unemployment, the holding back of wages, discrimination in the distribution of labor, and the importation of foreign workers.[81] The branch supervisor explained that he would bring their complaints to the appropriate government institutions and would do all that was possible to fix the situation if they would cease their protest. Frustrated, the demonstrators demanded work immediately and threatened to interrupt work in the Employment Office and to block traffic.

The protestors then took the demonstration to the center of the city and broke into numerous buildings linked to the government. They engaged in a full assault against the state and "broke all the furniture, tore up documents, smashed doors and windows in the Worker's Council, Local Council, the Amidar [Housing Association], and the Solel-Boneh

[construction company]. They then threw stones at the post office."[82] It is important to note that the targets of attack were not symbols of any particular political party but of the state itself. In response, the police sent sixty police officers from the Jezre'el District and subsequently engaged in a violent confrontation with the protestors. In the following days, dozens of officers were placed on the streets to prevent any renewed protests or public gatherings.

Davar later interviewed an Employment Office clerk, who insinuated that the demonstrators were simply being greedy. He informed the newspaper that "everyone receives at least 12 days of work a month, but many refuse to work in *avodat-dehak* and demand profitable work."[83] Despite claims that unprofitable work was a reasonable solution to rampant unemployment, these Beit She'an residents were receiving *avodat-dehak* wages (many for six months) at a rate of just three lirot a day.[84] David Cohen later noted that immigrants receiving *avodat-dehak* would generally "yield a profit of no more than 50–60 lirot per month." This small amount would be paid unreasonably late each month and "leave a lot of families on the brink of starvation."[85]

Davar made allegations that the Beit She'an protest was organized by a "group of inciters" who had gathered the identity cards of all the unemployed to force them to join the protestors in breaking into government buildings. A public trial was arranged against twenty arrested leaders and took place in front of hundreds of Beit She'an residents. The police claimed that among the suspected leaders of the demonstration were members of the Communist-affiliated Maki and right-wing nationalist Herut Parties. By making these claims, the police were able to delegitimize the protest by stating that it had a "political [and thus sectarian] flavor to it." In addition to the police's delegitimization efforts, the prosecutor in the legal proceedings made claims that "the employment situation is not at all bad."[86]

Many of the defendants were arrested simply because they were known members of the opposition parties Maki and Herut. During the judicial proceedings, the arrested protest "leaders" stated that "we were just passing by, and the police fell upon us and suddenly arrested us."[87] This claim was later substantiated by the dismissal of charges against one of the accused, Moshe Kadosh, who proved he had not taken part in any

violence and had in fact organized a nonviolent hunger strike. During the trial, one of the Beit She'an residents began to scream, "Police brutality!"[88] At this point, the judge called for a recess while the police forcibly removed the man.

Two months later, in April 1957, the residents of the Mansi *ma'abara* renewed their previous protest and initiated a mass revolt of 300 people against the police and the JNF.[89] Several weeks before the demonstration, at least 250 people had refused to work until the daily well-digging requirement was lowered to eighty. Once the strike began, the government refused to sign the protestors' work cards. Despite this refusal, they were provided with some form of income until the Passover holiday. Representatives from the Agricultural Department and JNF managers then staged a publicity event in the *ma'abara* and gave speeches claiming that the issue would be reinvestigated.

On the morning of the protest, the residents (mostly of Moroccan origin) went on strike and shut down the entire *ma'abara*. To prevent the police from being called, they first disconnected the phone lines in the camp offices. Then they stopped the elementary school and all other communal institutions from opening. Following the tactics used by the Be'er Ya'akov residents, a group of protestors erected a stone blockade in the middle of the main roads and blocked traffic from both sides. After this, the police were called from the Afula Precinct, and upon their arrival a *katzin* asked that the demonstrators send a delegation, dismantle the roadblock, and disperse. A Moroccan policeman, Elbaz, then translated the senior officers' request into Moroccan Arabic, but as he stated during the trial, "they [the protestors] did not obey."[90] After a year of tolerating this ruse, the protestors sent their new response: a hail of stones.[91]

The clashes between the police and Mansi residents became so serious that reinforcements were called in along with ambulances for the injuries received on both sides. The stoning of police officers continued even with the arrival of reinforcements and an ambulance truck. However, once the police assembled a substantial squad of riot police, about 150 of the protestors fled to nearby cities and hills. Because a few of the residents had threatened to burn down every government building in the area, the

police were not able to chase after the escapees. Instead, 170 *shotrim* were placed on guard in the *ma'abara* to prevent further clashes and potential arson attacks.[92]

Once the majority of the escaped residents returned to the *ma'abara* that evening, the police arrested forty-four suspects, including one woman. However, a judge immediately acquitted one person. Of the forty-three residents taken to court, thirty-eight were charged with rioting; two with attacking the police; eleven with blockading the road; and five with committing all of these acts.[93] At the conclusion of the trial, Judge Bar-Ze'ev ruled that four of the accused were innocent and that the rest were to be given prison time ranging from two weeks to three months. He criticized the protestors by stating that they were wrong to protest because they had jobs. However, he did admit that the government demonstrated a great failure by not providing the *ma'abara* with sufficient educational or communal services.[94]

A month after the Mansi trial, the residents of the Bnei Brak *ma'abara* staged a similar uprising. The majority of them had lived in various *ma'abarot* since 1950,[95] but prior to the uprising they discovered that the permanent housing being constructed nearby was being allocated to new immigrants from Europe. This sort of ethnic discrimination, although widespread throughout the country, had for years been fiercely attacked in the Ramat Gan area.[96]

The Bnei Brak municipality had previously promised the *ma'abara* residents that at least the ground floor of the municipality building would be allocated to some of the camp dwellers. However, the construction company Mishkenot began to build the housing complex and allocated the entire housing complex to European immigrants who had not yet arrived in the country. The Bnei Brak municipality then requested that Mishkenot hold off construction for ten days until an alternative housing solution could be found for the Mizrahi *ma'abara* residents.

When Mishkenot refused to comply, Bnei Brak residents formed a *ma'abara* housing committee and then announced a sit-down strike at the construction site. Two police officers arrived on the scene and were upset to find a uniformed soldier encouraging the protestors from a megaphone.

They then took him and another unidentified man to the local precinct. Bnei Brak deputy mayor Moshe Begno wrote a letter to the committee promising to find the protestors housing if they ended the strike. As a result of the negotiations with Begno, the protestors decided to disperse and end the sit-down strike. The protest would have ended at this point, but four additional police cars arrived and instigated further conflict. Without explanation, the police arrested a total of thirteen people, including one woman and five preadolescent children, even as the protestors were returning home.

On the following day, the entire Bnei Brak *ma'abara* rallied near the Ramat Gan Police Precinct and demanded that the police release their imprisoned neighbors and relatives. Although the protest was entirely peaceful, the police response was brutal suppression. Both junior and high-ranking policemen pushed and dragged the protestors away from the site and attacked them with their batons. Among those injured by the police were men, women, and children, who screamed and cried during the assault.[97] Because this demonstration took place in an urban area, the city of Ramat Gan, others were witness to the police's response, which "awakened feelings of disgust" among the public.[98] Although Minister of Police Shitreet later apologized for the officers' violent behavior, he refused to acknowledge that the protestors' peaceful demonstration against discrimination was a legitimate way to protest.[99]

Two weeks after the Bnei Brak clashes, the government decided to end its decade-long *ma'abara* policy and transfer most of the residents to permanent housing. Although the government began to make efforts to move *ma'abara* residents to permanent housing in 1957, this new policy was not fully implemented until well after the Wadi Salib events in 1959.[100] As Miriam Katchensky notes, by 1963 approximately 15,300 people still remained in various *ma'abarot*,[101] and this figure is likely an underestimate because the complete dissolution of the *ma'abarot* was only nominal. Even when the *ma'abarot* were officially delegated town status, their shack-and-tent infrastructure remained, and many of their residents remained in these temporary dwellings throughout the 1960s. For example, a total of 800 *ma'abara* shacks continued to house many of the residents of the "town" of Kiryat Shmona in 1966.[102]

5

Wadi Salib and After

Mizrahi Rebellions, 1959–1966

The events surrounding the Wadi Salib Rebellion of 1959 are well researched,[1] so it is enough to provide a brief summary of its developments. Rather than focus on the details of each incident of this Mizrahi revolt, this chapter focuses on the reaction to the protests both by the state and by the protestors themselves. Thus, it relies heavily on recently released police files concerning the Wadi Salib Rebellion and the Etzioni Commission established to investigate discrimination. Moreover, this section places Wadi Salib within the context of the previous decade's history of protest, viewing it as what Gideon Giladi terms a *culmination* of events leading to "a kind of [Mizrahi] *intifada*."[2] This intifada did not lead to an uprooting of the discriminatory practices against Mizrahim, but it, like the Palestinian intifada of the 1980s, led to a renegotiation of the terms according to which Mizrahim would tolerate their marginalization. In the words of one Mizrahi publication, "The days are over when the [O]rientals would gratefully thank their European masters for any little morsel thrown to them in the form of a longer day at school or another Uncle Tom in the Knesset. There is growing, instead, the feeling that 'we don't want any favors' but, rather, demand what is ours by right. . . . To repeat the quotation in last month's bulletin: 'Whitism breeds Blackism.'"[3]

This declaration strongly resembles Frantz Fanon's perspective on black–white relations following the abolition of slavery: "It is not an announcement that one hears twice in a lifetime. The black man contented himself with thanking the white man. . . . 'Say thank you to the

nice man,' the mother tells her little boy . . . but we know that often the little boy is dying to scream some other, more resounding expression. . . . The white man, in the capacity of master, said to the Negro, 'From now on you are free.'"[4]

Later Mizrahi uprisings (in particular the Hatikvah Youth Uprising of 1965) also proved the Mizrahi desire to scream a different, "more resounding expression," declaring their awareness that they did not feel truly free.

The Wadi Salib Rebellion and the Etzioni Commission Investigation, 1959

On the night of July 8, 1959, the police were called in to a Moroccan café to arrest Ya'akov Akiva El-Karif, who was drunk and disturbing the peace. When two officers arrived, El-Karif threw bottles at them. The two officers then fired "warning shots," but one of the bullets hit and injured El-Karif, making him wheelchair bound for life. Onlookers began to hurl stones at the officers, who retreated to their patrol car. One of the members of the commission that investigated the incident later that month, Yosef Nahmias, admitted that the shots fired by the officers were completely unwarranted.[5]

Although outrage at the shooting of El-Karif sparked the Wadi Salib Rebellion, El-Karif's later battles with the state are worth noting yet have received little attention. In 1962, El-Karif filed a lawsuit for 100,000 Israeli lirot against the State of Israel, Asher Goldberg, and Karol Segel, the two officers involved in the shooting. The police attempted to settle the issue out of court, but El-Karif refused to settle. In July 1965, he finally agreed to settle out of court while imprisoned in the Kishon Detention Center for an unspecified criminal action.[6] In 1967, El-Karif was charged with arson after his apartment building was set alight. His lawyer pointed out that he was incapable of arson because he had control of only half of his body. The presiding judge empathized and noted that society had largely abandoned him and "thrown [him] from institution to institution," to which the prosecutor callously responded, "So prison is precisely the place where he will find what he is missing: attention and personal care."[7] In 1969, El-Karif was again arrested after he threw himself in front of a bus in an unsuccessful suicide attempt after he made numerous complaints

of inadequate medical care.[8] A year later a truck struck him while he was riding in his wheelchair in the streets.[9] The police attributed the accident to the fact that his wheelchair was not secure and lacked backlights. Following this incident, little was heard about El-Karif.

In 1959, numerous towns and slums witnessed uproars from its Mizrahi residents in the months immediately following the shooting of El-Karif. These incidents included the burning of a Histadrut building in Migdal Ha'emek; ethnic protests in cities such as Acre, Tel Hannan, Kiryat Shmonah, and Be'er Sheva; and attacks on Employment Offices throughout the country. As a consequence, the Investigative Committee into the Wadi Salib Events—better known as the Etzioni Commission, named after its leading member, Judge Moshe Etzioni—was established by the Knesset in the last weeks of July to examine the root causes of the rebellion. This committee was tasked with determining whether there was discrimination against the Mizrahi population. Despite listening to eyewitness accounts to the contrary from community leaders, police officers, journalists, and various Oriental Jewish immigrants from throughout the country, the committee concluded there was no such discrimination.

Included as a witness to the Etzioni Commission hearings was newly appointed police commissioner Yosef Nahmias (1958–64). Although Nahmias himself did not witness any of the events, he concluded that the rebellion "did not constitute a national calamity [in Hebrew, *makat medinah*]."[10] Despite freely admitting that the shooting of El-Karif was unwarranted, he was less than forthcoming regarding the reason why David Ben-Haroush, the rioters' supposed leader, was arrested for incitement. Describing it as a classified matter, he recalled that three men were arrested for putting up inflammatory posters that incited violence: "the leader of the organization, Ben-Haroush, and the second who *actually* announced incitement," implying that Ben-Haroush did not actually incite anyone.[11] As indicated by previous police records, even posters that condemned violence were confiscated by the Israel Police and considered incitement. This police interpretation of the posters is likely because the posters advocated the empowerment of the Mizrahi community.[12] Nahmias even refused to provide details on an incorrect poster claiming that an Officer Boym, on vacation during the commission hearings, was handling the matter.[13]

Ben-Haroush's arrest appears to have been unjustified because, by Nahmias's own admission, the violent rebellion began before Ben-Haroush ended his nonviolent protest at the Haifa Precinct.

On the night El-Karif was shot, around 200 nearby residents, unsure whether he was alive or dead, staged an impromptu protest. Throughout the night, the protestors shouted slogans: "The police injured an innocent man because of discrimination," and "The police [committed] murder."[14] By eleven that night, however, the entire group of protestors had returned home.

David Ben-Haroush, leader of the Union of North African Immigrants, was undecided about whether to hold further protests against the unlawful shooting. That indecision lasted until one man came to Ben-Haroush and demanded that someone stage a protest: "We have had enough of all the discrimination against us, and then our blood is spilled for free? We need to protest." This comment was enough to motivate Ben-Haroush to gather various members of the community and hold a protest. However, he did so only on the condition that the demonstrators do precisely what he asked of them and no more. He then took 200 men, women, and children to a local synagogue to swear an oath: "I said: 'Swear by the name of this synagogue that you will not raise your hand to anyone and will go quietly. As a humble people and not as a powerful group we will appear at the police, and they will receive a delegation and tell us if, this guy who shot a man from our community in cold blood, will you do justice to him?' Everyone said, 'What you say we will do.' We went out to protest, passing through the whole neighborhood."[15]

Although the witnesses for the Etzioni Commission emphasized that they were protesting against injustice and not staging a revolt against the state, some of the demonstrators disagreed. At the beginning of Ben-Haroush's protest, two national flags and several black flags were raised "to demonstrate the injustice and deprivation." When Israeli national flags were raised, one man demanded that they lower the flags. However, according to Ben-Haroush, "everyone . . . said, 'This is our flag. We are not having a war against the state. We will always fight for the sake of this flag. We fight only against injustice.'"[16]

On their way to the police station, one of the demonstrators splattered blood from an unknown source on one of the black flags to "give the impression that blood was spilled." On another black flag, a man wrote, "Where is the justice within the police department?"[17] When the protestors arrived at the precinct, a police officer photographed the participants. He took particular note of the young children present and a man holding a black flag that read, "Where is the justice? The police killed an innocent man" (see these police photos in appendix E).

During the following weeks, violent confrontations between police officers and Mizrahim occurred in many of the impoverished slums throughout the country. Unlike the original Wadi Salib confrontation, many of these conflicts with the police were between Mizrahi officers and Mizrahi slum residents. The use of Mizrahi officers was a deliberate attempt by police leadership to eliminate the perception that the revolt was justified because it had an ethnic and socioeconomic character. Moreover, the introduction of Mizrahi officers as riot police was strategically implemented to lessen Mizrahi perceptions of being ruled by an Ashkenazi police force.[18] A Moroccan witness at the Etzioni Commission hearings pointed out that in fact the explicit order given to officers of the Afula Precinct indicated this strategy: "The [reinforcements from Afula] told me that they received their orders from Katzin Zinger. [When] I asked him why all of the *shotrim* were Moroccan, Sephardi, and Druze, the *katzin* responded, 'If you attack any of the *shotrim*, you will be attacking one of your own.'"[19]

In the mainstream newspapers, the immediate reactions to the Wadi Salib events included arguments that violence was being used as a solution to the communal problem. However, many of the reports of subsequent violence were speculative.

In many of the cases of conflict, youths threatened violence against municipalities or Employment Offices; however, older communal residents often prevented the youth from following through with their threats. In Kiryat Gat, there were reports of increased tensions when a group of youth wandered the streets one night: "the tensions reached a peak when they passed the municipality, and there were murmurings of

riots breaking out there."[20] When a police squad arrived, they found the rumors to be false and that the youth had gone home.

The fear of widespread violence in impoverished Mizrahi areas was not completely without merit. In Hatzor, about twenty youth stood in line for *avodat-dehak*. But the employment clerks told them that only five positions were available. Upset by this news, a fourteen-year-old boy was reported to have shouted: "Come, let's do a Wadi Salib on them and finish them off!"[21] The group began to scream similar things, but without committing any violence. Police were immediately called in and arrested the fourteen-year-old. The Mizrahi community seems to have been divided on whether violence would solve their problems. At the same time as this incident, an older Kiryat Shmona resident named Moshe Aziza attempted to gain equal rights for Mizrahim by way of nonviolence. When he staged a small protest, one group of youth opposed to his methods attacked him until another group came to his aid.[22]

The disagreement over whether to use violence or nonviolence appears to have been a generational dispute. In other words, Mizrahi youth who were either born or raised in Israel were much more prepared to employ violence than were their immigrant parents. Days after the Wadi Salib Rebellion, the southern town of Be'er Sheva witnessed widespread violence as groups of youth destroyed store windows and doors. The Iraqi and Persian leadership immediately condemned what *Davar* called the "mostly North African protest."[23] When the police investigated the incident, they accused a man referred to as "Professor Ben Gui-Gui" and Moshe Nahmias of leading the rioting. However, the two denied any involvement in the youth violence. At the end of their criminal trial, Ben Gui-Gui sat in tears and proclaimed: "I am not a leader! It is true that we made a mistake. I was ready to go protest, but with men! Not with these children."[24]

Davar completely delegitimized the Be'er Sheva incident by emphasizing the recent socioeconomic progress in the city: "They cannot carry signs saying 'bread and work!' because there is no unemployment in the Negev capital. . . . [T]hey cannot denounce discrimination against them because there is no discrimination in [Be'er Sheva]."[25] But as one Mizrahi-oriented journal later pointed out, the bitterness found among

marginalized ethnic groups increased when some socioeconomic and educational advances were made. In the article "Melting through Education," *IOP* quoted a teacher in an immigrant town, who claimed that "it is not unlikely that their sense of failure will grow rather than diminish after they have acquired an education." Expanding on this assertion, the article contended that it was not the downtrodden Oriental Jews who were the most resentful of their low status; "the most bitter Oriental Jews are precisely the well-off and *well-educated* ones."[26] An increased quality of education, the article argued, heightens the self-awareness and powers of articulation for a member of a marginalized group.[27]

Understanding the Oriental Other:
The Police's Reconnaissance Mission

Weeks after the shooting of Ya'akov El-Karif, the Israel Police, at the behest of the Etzioni Commission, sent three plainclothes policemen to survey the Wadi Salib neighborhood. As if planning a war on the impoverished neighborhood, the police called these surveys "reconnaissance missions." Three officers working in civilian clothing interviewed Mizrahi locals, toured work offices, and gave their general impressions of the neighborhood. In effect, these missions were state-sponsored, ethnological research into Haifa's Mizrahi population. Out of all of the Etzioni Commission's activities, they appear to be one of the more sincere attempts to understand the nature of conflict between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim.

The first of these reconnaissance trips took place immediately after the completion of court testimony on July 29, 1959, and was conducted by an unnamed police officer from 6:00 to 8:45 that evening. The officer's first impression provides a glimpse of life in Wadi Salib directly following the neighborhood's historical uprising. He took note of an unusually large police presence, with patrol cars on nearly every street and beat officers monitoring street activity. This officer recalled that when he arrived, he had a startling realization of the overcrowding in the streets. The streets were filled with residents, mostly men, who sat idly on the pavement and crowded around various parts of the street. In a later report, the officer predicted that the children he saw were already doomed to failure in life: "Most of the children wandered around the main streets

and alleyways. . . . [T]he children gave the impression of being neglected, dirty, and poor, and there is no doubt in my heart that this environment relegates them to failure in elementary school a priori."[28]

A different officer from the wealthy Hadar Hacarmel area gave the impression that he was entering a warzone, with "stones, garbage, and broken glass everywhere." When he accidently walked in the middle of a confrontation between police and residents, a "rain of stones" intended for the police fell upon him. Once shots were fired into the air, the officer inquired about the orders given to police when dealing with Wadi Salib residents: "The orders to the police were, according to the commanding officer, to reply with force and not to [hesitate]."[29]

During the first reconnaissance mission, one officer happened upon a group of twelve Algerian men from twenty to thirty years old standing on a street corner. Not a North African himself, the officer was easily identifiable as an outsider. When he asked what the group did for social activities, they simply replied: "You are looking at it." He readily identified himself as working under the auspices of the Etzioni Commission. Most of the residents he encountered had a positive response to the commission, which they assumed would uncover the oppressive practices against Mizrahim. Thus, he was able to interview youth with surprising ease: "To my pleasant surprise, I found a willingness to have a discussion with me." He noted that although they were opposed to violence, they were satisfied that the violent aspects of the rebellion had led to wider news coverage of the Wadi Salib area.[30]

The Algerian youth were likewise pleased to find that the Etzioni Commission was set up to investigate "the fact that there is oppression, and, thus, the commission came as a result of the use of violence."[31] However, the interviews did not lead to any revelations about the existence of discrimination in Israel. If anything, the reconnaissance missions served only to reaffirm many of the elite's assumptions about North Africans and the difficulties of integrating ethnic Jewish groups.

When asked what the police considered to be the source of anger in Wadi Salib, the officer noted that "they agreed . . . that many lack education, and one of the [interviewees] doesn't even know how to read and write." From this short meeting, he was somehow able to conclude that

the problem of integration was largely a Moroccan problem that stemmed from their lack of education: "The group was from Algeria, the majority of which had already served in the army. It is possible that there are differences in the education and traditions of the Algerian Jews [because] there is no issue like there is with the rest of North Africans. They spoke quietly and answered all of my questions. In order not to raise suspicions and not to stop their flow of speech, I didn't ask for their names and didn't write their answers on paper." The assumption present in his statement is that events such as the Wadi Salib Rebellion would not occur again if, in his words, the "rest of [the] North Africans" were properly educated and abandoned their traditions.[32] As Yaron Tsur notes, assumptions concerning the characteristics of certain North African communities were already cemented in Israeli society in 1949 through a perceived social hierarchy of North African Jews, with Libyans and Tunisians considered the best and Moroccans the worst. According to this common contention, the problems of integration would disappear with the second generation of Oriental Jewish immigrants. The officer observed that the members of this second generation "mostly dress like most Israeli youth, speak Hebrew more or less fluently[,] . . . have a somewhat 'patronizing' attitude towards their family (they speak of *them* and not *we*)," and so on.[33]

In Haifa alone, the state of education was dire for immigrant and Israeli-born Oriental youth. A letter to the Etzioni Commission from the director of Haifa's Cultural Department, S. Rozenhak, attached to the reconnaissance missions' report, reported that high school enrollment was almost exclusively an Ashkenazi achievement (see table 1).

It must be noted that, following the independence of Morocco and Tunisia in 1956, a large number of North African Jewish families fled to Israel. Under the French colonial regime, the majority of Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian Jewish youth were enrolled in Zionist and French educational institutions such as the Alliance Israélite universelle.[34] Despite this history of education, the new immigrants likely lost faith in the Israeli education system's ability to provide adequate education for their children. Thus, in the year immediately following the largest influx of North African immigrants, there was a decrease in the already low number of Oriental children attending high school. In contrast, for unexplained

TABLE 1

Number of Children Enrolled in High School, Haifa, 1955–1959

Year	Ashkenazim	Sephardim	Arabs
1955–56	225 (74.25% of total enrollment)	74 (24.52%)	4 (1.33%)
1957–58	252 (75%)	64 (19%)	20 (6%)
1958–59	272 (74.93%)	75 (20.65%)	16 (4.43%)

Source: "Letter from S. Rozenhak to Judge Etzioni," in the file "Statistics: Tables Concerning the Number of North African Immigrants, Ma'abarot Population, etc.," Aug. 16, 1959, 17252/9-GL, ISA.

reasons, the Palestinian Israeli population in Haifa experienced a significant rise in high school attendance, from four to twenty students, during the same period.

A different officer observed that even if the second generation of Oriental immigrants appeared to be more integrated, they would face the same fate as their older siblings: "The situation of children in the future will not change from the situation of their older brothers and sisters today even if they are transferred to the long-sought-after *shikkun* [housing project]. These children do not even receive the encouragement that a child needs in the first years of his life in order to succeed in elementary school."[35]

One young man explained to the officer that the main lesson he learned from living in Wadi Salib was the usefulness of violence. Recalling that the only decent work he obtained was in railroad laying, he resigned himself to the fact that the only way for him to survive was through violence: "I worked in *avodat-dehak* [and was] fired. I worked a few days a week, etc. Only when I screamed, turned over desks, and made a ruckus . . . then I received decent work. Only with force is it possible to get work in this country."[36] Other participants in the rebellion made similar statements. For example, one Be'er Sheva resident pointed to the realities of deprivation and segregation within the *ma'abarot* as the source of violence: "Every single Ashkenazi has a home and a job that pays 600–700 lirot a month. And [the government] put the North Africans into the *ma'abarot* and made them into criminals."[37]

On the second day of the reconnaissance missions after the Wadi Salib Rebellion, an officer went undercover at the local Employment Office at 8:30 a.m. After half an hour of waiting outside, the officer entered the building, where he was placed in a waiting room. The employment manager's office was in a room behind a locked heavy iron door. The stark contrast between the Ashkenazi managers and Mizrahi job seekers did not go unnoticed. He overheard many of the job seekers claiming, "This employment office is like the Germans," and noticed a swastika drawn on one of the bare walls of the waiting room. The majority of the job seekers were older, with only a few youths looking for employment there. The only Ashkenazim the officer noticed in the waiting room were five tough men standing in the back of the line and acting as bouncers.[38]

On the following day, another officer went to the same Employment Office and identified himself to the clerk. Upon entering the clerk's office, he made a disturbing discovery: "We entered the clerk's office, and [it] seemed like a jailhouse. You can see the faces of the people waiting through bars on one side, and the windows on the other side were blocked by concrete (in order to prevent stone-throwing, according to the clerk). While we were there, everyone received work." When asked about the availability of work, the clerk went through pains to show that not only was there work but that there were more jobs than suitable workers. He insisted that the problem was the job seekers' terrible behavior and inability to express themselves.[39]

The North African Letters, 1958–1959

Another important element of the Etzioni Commission's ethnological study was the examination of hundreds of private letters sent between North African immigrants and their families abroad. These letters were acquired from the Israeli Censorship Bureau, which was tasked with surveying immigrants' attitudes toward the state. The confiscation and surveillance of correspondence were ongoing government practices and were not by any means limited to the Wadi Salib events.[40] The scope and intended goals of this type of surveillance merit serious scholarly attention yet so far have received little treatment among historians. The very existence of the Israeli Censorship Bureau and its need to monitor the feelings

of Middle Eastern Jews toward the state leave no doubts about the reasoning behind the (unofficial) allocation of positions in the Ministry of Posts and Ministry of Police to Oriental Jews. According to the Etzioni Commission, the Censorship Bureau examined more than 14,000 private letters between Morocco and Israel during a ten-month period (see appendix F for a breakdown of data on these letters).

The Israeli Censorship Bureau noted that many of the letters from Morocco were self-censored. Families in Morocco were well aware that their government read their letters, but their relatives in Israel were apparently not aware of similar government activities at their end. The Censorship Bureau cited one letter in which a family member commented, "I can't send you much details about Morocco; sometimes they open letters here."

The Etzioni Commission claimed that the letters were examined to get a sense of the Moroccan immigrants' feelings toward the state and Zionism and how they were portraying Israel to their relatives. Thus, the greatest number of letters were examined in the month of the Wadi Salib Rebellion. After reviewing about 1,000 of them, the Etzioni Commission came to the conclusion that Moroccan attitudes toward the state were mostly positive and that they felt as if their life in Israel was much better than in Morocco. Many of the letters considered to be positive showed that many of the North African immigrants had relatively low expectations of a desirable quality of life. However, the Etzioni Commission did acknowledge the existence of some bitterness toward the Jewish state.

In the sample of letters submitted to the Etzioni Commission, many expressed a desire to return to Morocco because of the difficult employment situation in Israel: "Dear parents, there is only work in construction here, [and] I have no work. . . . Please send me a ticket so that I can return. [Israel] is a waste of time." One Moroccan immigrant lamented his decision to live in Israel: "You guys are lucky to be living there. The first chance I get [I will] leave the country, especially since I have been here in Israel for ten years." Another similarly indicated a longing for a return to the immigrant's *Moroccan* homeland: "I don't care. The point is to make a livelihood until that clear day when [King] Mohamed V decides to return us to Morocco."

Letters from Haifa reveal a buildup of tensions in the Moroccan community in the months preceding the Wadi Salib Rebellion largely because of the growing labor competition between North Africans and incoming Romanian immigrants:

> From Afula—"The Africans, whether or not they are Moroccans, Spaniards, Algerians, or Tunisians, they are not allowed to work except with a rake and hoe or in construction. But the Romanians and Poles, they get all the rights and financial assistance . . ."
>
> "There exists here discrimination between the Europeans and the North Africans (and particularly the Moroccans). But we have hope that [with the passing] of time the situation will be better."

The Etzioni Commission determined that "in four of the letters going out to Morocco, France, and Tunisia there was a negative reaction to the mass immigration from Romania." This is a particularly interesting letter because the author identifies as an African rather than as an Arab, Jewish, or Berber person. In another letter, a North African resident compared discriminatory practices against Mizrahim to anti-Semitism in Europe. The tone of this letter indicates that some North Africans felt that they were facing the same type of alienation as Oriental Jews in Israel that they had felt as Jews in their native lands: "This treatment exists wherever you go; it does not change; you remain Jewish. Even in France, which calls itself a friend of Israel, there are anti-Semites. You don't need to look at the government or listen to speeches. You need to look at the French [people]. For them, a Jew is always a Jew."

The discrimination North Africans faced in Israel appears to have been well known throughout Morocco and France. For example, one Casablanca resident wrote to his relative in Israel that the harshness of Ashkenazim toward North African Jewry was common knowledge: "Everything that you told me in your letter is very right. Even here in Morocco rumors are being spread, and everyone is talking about them. Ashkenazim have a different mentality and are known as wicked and harsh people. Even in France it is impossible to fix them."

Two youths who left Israel returned to a Morocco seemingly different from that of their memories. The commission cited them as a sign of hope for the future because despite their initial hatred of Israeli society they expressed a desire to return to Israel:

> A youth, who returned after living in Israel for four years, wrote from Casablanca: " . . . [F]or me the freedom that I had in Israel is over. Here, I feel that I am always on guard. . . ."
>
> The second, from Casablanca, [wrote]:
>
> " . . . [O]ur hope is to immigrate to Israel. I can no longer look at the crooked faces of our enemies. I pray to God that we will be saved from their hands."

The emphasis the Etzioni Commission members placed on the concerns of the remaining Jews in Morocco shows that they were much more interested in acquiring more Jewish immigrants to Israel than in the quality of life of those immigrants already present there. Thus, they highlighted three points that would increase further immigration from Morocco:

> 1. Encouragement from their relatives in Israel and [confirmation] that their situation has improved greatly. . . .
>
> 2. The poor economic conditions in Morocco.
>
> 3. A loss of faith in the Moroccan government. Of the most encouraging letters . . . [is] one from Haifa: "Life in Israel is good, even better than that in Africa. Do everything necessary to come to Israel. We live here like kings. Make yourself a passport, sell everything and then come to Israel."

One can only be reminded of the cries of Binyamina work camp residents in 1951: "There is insufficient work for us, and the government continues to bring us immigrants."[41] Much of the Etzioni Commission's investigation failed to adequately address the problem of discrimination against Mizrahim. Despite the novelty of the commission's establishment, its actual aim was no different from the state's previous responses to ethnic conflict: the government willfully claimed ignorance of the oppression of Mizrahim and sought to increase further immigration from the Middle

East. Moreover, many of the Mizrahi witnesses for the Etzioni Commission stressed their allegiance to the state's Zionist ideals. In particular, witnesses such as Ben-Haroush frequently pointed out that despite their struggle against discriminatory practices, they were not fighting against the state's integrationist ideals through *mizug hagaluyot*. This allegiance assisted in perpetuating the idea that the intra-Jewish conflict was not serious and was bound to disappear in years to come.

It is worth pointing out that some newspapers in the Arab world were aware of Wadi Salib's implications for the Jewish community in Israel. In the Jordanian newspaper *al-Difa'a*, one correspondent likened the Mizrahi struggle to that of the anticolonial struggles going on in Asia and Africa: "It follows that what occurred between Eastern and Western Jews in Israel, such as what happened in Haifa, Tiberias, and . . . others in Be'er Sheva, it is not a strange phenomenon that is unknown in the world. But what is strange is that it occurred in Israel, where the state claims that the Jewish people are one nation [that] 'has no differences based on color'. . . . [But] with regard to the Colored Jews in Israel during the past decade, Israel has replicated the crimes of the White man in Asia and Africa."[42]

Whether the Arabic newspaper focus on the Mizrahi struggle was used as a nationalist tool (i.e., to discourage further Middle Eastern immigration to Israel) or not, it is important to note that some Arabic newspapers did have an awareness of the complicated nature of Ashkenazi–Mizrahi tensions.[43] This awareness starkly contrasts with the Israeli elite's "willful ignorance" of the persistent entrenchment of the communal problem in Israeli society. Although these sorts of comparisons were absent from the Etzioni testimonies, they were later made by Mizrahi activists in public and in print in the years immediately following the Wadi Salib events.

Raising Awareness of Israel's "Oriental Problem," 1962–1966

If one looks at the Wadi Salib Rebellion as an isolated incident, its results were fairly typical of the previous decade's protests. Not only did the government continue to deny the deep entrenchment of the prejudices against Mizrahim, but also the Sokhnut continued to make false promises of an end to the *ma'abarot*.[44] Moreover, the police were used in the months following the rebellion as a buffer and mediator between the neglected

Mizrahi communities and the government. The truly significant outcome of Wadi Salib was Oriental Jews' increasingly public awareness of themselves as an oppressed majority of the Israeli Jewish society.

To highlight this heightened awareness of "Mizrahiut," or Mizrahi identity, in the post–Wadi Salib era, it is worth turning to the work of MK Avraham Abbas published just prior to the rebellion in 1959. In *From Ingathering to Integration*, Abbas shed light on the sufferings of Oriental Jews. This book was originally published in Hebrew in 1958, but the WSF also coincidentally produced a posthumous English translation during the outbreak of the Wadi Salib Rebellion. It is an illustration of Abbas's growing frustration concerning the state's willful ignorance of the problem of ethnic Jewish discrimination in Israel. As a Syrian-born Jew, he noted with regret that Oriental Jews "have not yet been *socially* integrated" into Israeli society. In what was to be one of his last works, he lamented that "in the social and cultural spheres there is an almost unbridgeable chasm between the so-called 'First Israel [Ashkenazim]' and the so-called 'Second Israel [Sephardim].'"[45]

From Ingathering to Integration touches heavily on many of the same issues Abbas raised in his article "Youth and Education," published in 1954.[46] However, unlike in the *al-Mirsad* article, in the book he directly confronted the underlying reasons for the "ethnic gap" between Ashkenazim and Sephardim: he explicitly stated that an institutionalized policy of discrimination against Oriental Jews existed in Israel.

Abbas's previous reluctance to designate the Mizrahi situation in Israel as discrimination was likely owing to his position within the elite circles of Israeli society. However, he confessed that he realized that his high position did not make him immune to the effects of institutional discrimination: "I am a Member of Knesset, and also serve as member of my party's central secretariat. Not only new immigrants and dwellers in the slums and Transit Camps suffer from the present oppressive atmosphere of discrimination and maltreatment, but also a number of old-established [non-European] residents of the country."[47]

Abbas not only blamed the European elite for its role in the oppression of Mizrahi but also accused some Mizrahi representative organizations of exploiting impoverished Mizrahi communities for the organizations' own

benefit. For example, he indirectly referenced the Union of North African Immigrants as a group that "embarked upon such separatist moves . . . in a vain attempt to exploit the frustration of [O]riental Jews for [its] own personal designs and ambitions."[48]

It is interesting to note that Abbas emphasized that his call for integration was that of a "strictly 'national,' not [a] 'sectional' (or communal)[,] approach."[49] This concern closely follows Henriette Dahan-Calev's division of Israeli protests and the delegitimization of movements that are considered too sectarian because they deal with a marginalized group's issues.[50] Yet, despite Abbas's contention that all citizens of the country should be integrated, the issue of Palestinian citizens of Israel is conspicuously absent from his book.

From Ingathering to Integration deals with a full range of issues concerning the Ashkenazi–Mizrahi division, including agricultural settlement, representation in the Knesset, education,[51] absorption, and intercommunal marriage. To illustrate his main point that "Sephardim and Oriental Jews definitely belong to the underprivileged and submerged class," Abbas cited figures from the two lowest-paid occupations: agriculture and construction. In the year 1955–56, 80 percent of agricultural workers and 90 percent of construction workers were of Middle Eastern origin. Moreover, 95 percent of applicants to workfare (*avodat dehak*) and unemployment benefits were Oriental Jews.[52]

One of the more notable sections of this book covers Abbas's plan of action for the full integration of Mizrahi Jews into Israeli society. In an effort to fight the tide of transforming Oriental Jews into "hewers of wood and drawers of water,"[53] Abbas proposed a plan equivalent to an affirmative-action program for Oriental Jews. He suggested the establishment of a public authority separate from the Ministries of Education, Agriculture, and Labor, whose highest priority would be the "exploration of ways and means for free education in all secondary, vocational, and agricultural schools, preferential treatment being given to students of [O]riental communities."[54] In an effort to increase the retention rate of primary-school pupils, he suggested that the state establish schools within peripheral areas in which a free and compulsory ninth year of study would be added. In addition, any family with more than two children would be exempt

from all school fees. All of these changes, he argued, would bring about "justice and equality" in the allocation of school fees.[55]

Abbas hoped that the government would heed his warnings and take his suggestions into consideration so that "at the end of the second decade of the State we might be able jubilantly to proclaim that the vision of the integration of all exiles has become a reality."[56] Unfortunately, this reality did not materialize in the second decade, and many Mizrahi thinkers began to doubt their social position would change any time soon.

To understand the increased assertiveness of post–Wadi Salib Mizrahi discourse, it is worth looking at a booklet written and published in 1965 by the WSF, which had published Abbas's work in English. Juxtaposing the two works makes it clear that Abbas's tone, albeit somewhat militant for its time, was fairly tame in comparison with that of the WSF booklet *Danger, Jewish Racialism!*[57]

The booklet, put together by the Council of the Sephardi Community of Jerusalem (CSCJ), was handed out to members of the twenty-sixth World Zionist Congress held in 1965. A special four-page letter was inserted into each pamphlet explaining what the CSCJ was and what brought it to produce this pamphlet. The CSCJ enjoined its readers to "put a stop to discrimination in representation [and] put a stop to the arbitrary nomination of 'caids' and 'chiefs.'"[58] The publication of *Danger* was sparked by the CSCJ's contention that the communal problem would not "disappear automatically in a generation or two but will continue to be a prominent feature of Israeli society for decades to come."[59] The council felt it necessary to call attention to the consequences of the state's pervasive policy of discrimination against the Oriental Jewish community.

Pointing out the fact that 55 percent of the Jewish population of Israel were of Middle Eastern descent, the CSCJ admonished the Ashkenazi state elite for turning Mizrahim into "victims of racialist attitudes; Ashkenazi nondemocracy; cultural genocide; discrimination in education; [and] appalling living conditions. *This is the pattern for Israel's future!*" The council went further by noting the "pattern for Israel's future" that the Ashkenazi elite had forged for the country: "the nation permanently divided; the Sephardim as Israel's underdogs, culturally destroyed[,] economically depressed, [and] socially rejected[.] Is this your legacy to the future?"[60]

The warnings present in *Danger* and in particular its charge of a "cultural genocide" of Mizrahim prompted a backlash by many of the government-backed newspapers.[61]

The CSCJ also noted that even though the *ma'abara* system had nominally been discontinued by this point, 1965, Mizrahim continued to live in similar dreadful living conditions: "Nearly a quarter of the Sephardi population lives four or more people per room; the Sephardim have far fewer status-giving material luxuries (refrigerator, washing machine, etc.) than the Ashkenazim." Recognizing that calling attention to prejudice was only a first step, the CSCJ proposed a series of measures necessary to end racism against Mizrahim:

> Needed: Public and official recognition of the problem and unequivocal condemnation of ethnic prejudice.
>
> . . . Recognition of Israel's cultural and ethnic pluralism as an enduring fact.
>
> . . . Adequate democratic Sephardi representation, political, administrative and cultural. Cessation of Ashkenazi party political tutelage.
>
> . . . Overhaul of the educational system, taking into account the economic situation of a large part of the Sephardi community and its desire to preserve and revitalize its cultural heritage.
>
> . . . Lower wage differentials, greater social benefits for large families, to counter the disastrous effect of the concentration of Sephardim as unskilled laborers.
>
> . . . Creation of a ministry whose function it will be to secure the fulfillment of the above objectives.[62]

This was not the first time Mizrahi activists suggested legislative measures to battle the communal problem. In 1962, Mapam representatives had presented a bill that would make discrimination against Mizrahim illegal.[63] Those against the bill claimed that systematic discrimination against Mizrahim did not exist. Mordechai Bibi, an Iraqi immigrant and MK of the Ahdut Ha'avodah Party, countered by stating that there was no reason to hide the fact that Mizrahim were an oppressed community.

During the parliamentary discussion of the bill, the debate focused on the discriminatory practices enacted during the transfer of immigrants to permanent housing. Several Knesset members, including members of Mapam and Herut, argued that even Yosef Berginsky, director of the Jewish Agency's Absorption Department, would agree that there existed systematic and widespread prejudice in the allocation of housing. However, Mapai representative Judge Dov Yosef, the bill's main opponent, considered the notion preposterous. Yosef contended that even if discrimination existed at all, it was merely the result of actions taken by a few low-level clerks, so the bill was unnecessary. In the end, the bill was rejected. The failure to pass this legislation did not deter Mizrahi activists, however. In 1964, the Public Committee for the Enactment of a Law against Communal Prejudice joined with Mapam secretary David Cohen to press for a bill that would ensure the end of communal prejudice.[64]

Just prior to the publication of the *Danger* booklet, the CSCJ was already showing signs of becoming an ideologically strong and increasingly vocal Mizrahi organization. It had been established in 1860, and its main activities a century later during the 1960s lay in funding and managing two schools. In addition to promoting educational institutions, the council provided social services to the poor, published a Hebrew-language magazine called *Bama'arakha* (the Battle), and supported a historical society concerned with the prestate Sephardi Jerusalemite community.

Although *Bama'arakha* was a success in its own right, Eliyahu Eliachar, a tireless supporter of easing ethnic tensions between Jewish communities, felt that the plight of Oriental Jews in Israel was not given sufficient attention. He, along with editor Michael Selzer, then initiated the English-language monthly bulletin *Israel's Oriental Problem* in 1964 to familiarize Anglophone leaders in Israel and abroad with the problems faced by Oriental Jews. *IOP* directed its message to the Ashkenazi elite in Israel and Zionist leadership worldwide. The editors considered the main problem to be the Ashkenazi elite's "reluctance to recognize that deeply ironical discrimination and prejudice which lies at the root of Israel's communal problem."[65]

As the only English-language publication directly and persistently addressing the "Oriental problem" in Israel, *IOP* gained international

recognition, and its articles were often mentioned in various Anglophone magazines and radio programs. It was disseminated not only in Europe and America but also in the Arab world.[66] Even members of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) most likely read it, as evidenced in the minutes of PLO meetings dating back to 1964 in *al-Yawmiyyat al-Filastiniyya* (Palestinian Chronicles), where the matter of discrimination against Oriental Jewry in Israel and the Arab world was addressed several times. And the Beirut-based PLO Research Center, founded in 1965, later spearheaded two research projects on Oriental Jewry that resulted in the publication of two works in June and July 1971. The PLO's evaluation of Mizrahi history in Israel featured research based on publications by Michael Selzer and Eliyahu Eliachar, Arabic- and Hebrew-language news articles, and works by sociologist Shmuel Eisenstadt.[67] The author of one of the two books, Hilda Sha'aban Sayigh, does not explicitly mention Mizrahi involvement in the creation of her book, but her quadrilingual (English, French, Hebrew, and Arabic) source material would have required the involvement of someone intimately involved in Mizrahi issues in Israel.

The first work, a 311-page book entitled *Jews in Arab Lands*, documented the millennia-long presence of Jews in the Arab world.[68] The work provided a chapter on Jewish life in every Arab country throughout history, from Morocco and the Sudan in the West to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Bahrain in the East. In the second publication, *Discrimination against Oriental Jews in Israel*, the PLO dealt with the issue of ethnic relations between Jews in Israel. This book contained lengthy chapters on racism, discrimination, and social and housing segregation directed against Mizrahim within Israel and the Zionist movement. In reference to various "revolutions" such as the one at Wadi Salib, the author, Hilda Sayigh, maintained that "Oriental Jews have not ceased to show dissatisfaction with the type of treatment they face. They have protested against [their mistreatment] in various ways and methods."[69]

Demonstrating an intimate knowledge of the situation of Mizrahim in Israel, Sayigh noted that the communal problem stemmed from the fact that Israel wanted to convert Oriental Jews to Westerners "by obliterating their historical identity." Underlying this desire was a fear that

the growing immigration of Mizrahim would turn Israel into a Middle Eastern country, "and thus the goals and ambitions of Zionism will disappear. . . . [T]his fear may be summed up by the panicked murmurings of some: 'Is our society to turn brown in the next fifty years?'"[70]

The CSCJ challenged the belief, common at the time, that the communal tensions between Oriental and Occidental Jews was only a transient situation resulting from Oriental Jews' inferior educational and socioeconomic status.[71] Apart from calling attention to the racism present in Israel, the *IOP* editors wanted to push the WSF into action and depose its leadership—namely, British WSF representative Denzil Sebag-Montefiore and Minister of Police Bechor Shitreet—because they felt that the WSF's assumed task of representing the Sephardi community was significantly diminished by the Jewish Agency and leadership figures such as Shitreet and Sebag-Montefiore. In an open attack against Sebag-Montefiore, they derided the fact that he was a "non-Zionist assimilationist" and an "Uncle Tom" yet was considered the spokesman for more than a million Sephardim in Israel. Eliachar took particular offense to Sebag-Montefiore's comments on his visit to Israel in 1965, when he "denounced the attempts of the Sephardim of Israel to organize themselves politically as 'almost criminal.'"[72]

The *IOP* and CSCJ were not alone in their criticism of Sephardi "representatives" of the Oriental Jewish population in Israel. Other Mizrahi voices were critical of the "Ashkenazi power structure" and the Sephardi leaders who were "the Israeli equivalent of an 'Uncle Tom.'"[73] In an interview with a Hatzofeh newspaper reporter, a group of Mizrahim acknowledged the ubiquitous nature of discrimination in Israel: "They spoke about the refusal of some estate agents to rent or sell flats to Orientals; about the Oriental family whose child was not admitted to a certain school; about the preference for Ashkenazim in different businesses and offices. . . . The complaints made to him . . . led him to believe that the situation here was similar to that of the Negroes in America, or to Africa under colonial rule."[74] Not by coincidence, these sorts of comparisons followed the Watts Rebellion in Los Angeles in 1965, and many warned of the possibility of a comparable event in Israel's slums and development towns. In a letter to *Ma'ariv*, one American youth explained how he found inspiration from

racism in Israel to join the American civil rights movement: "I arrived to Alabama by way of Be'er Sheva: when I went to visit Israel a few years ago, I was in Be'er Sheva. There, when I saw the pains of Oriental Jews who are discriminated against and that their deprivation is caused only by the fact that they come from a certain ethnicity . . . the will to struggle against all discrimination and prejudice of people awoke inside of me. . . . So when I returned to my country it was only natural that I struggle against the existing discrimination there against the Negroes."[75]

Prior to the Watts Rebellion, the *IOP* made one of the earliest comparisons between the Mizrahi civil rights struggle and the black civil rights movement in America: "The elite of American Jewish youth, which has so far shown itself largely indifferent to Israel and is nobly involved in the Civil Rights struggle in the United States, can be attracted to Israel. Not by the thought of reclaiming the desert or wielding a sub-machine gun—but by helping us in Israel *to fight the very same struggle* which they are now fighting in the United States. *We too shall overcome*, in the end."[76]

Of course, as should be very evident by now, Mizrahi activism was not limited to the institutional level. In the post–Wadi Salib era, it became clear that Mizrahim would continue their struggle with or without the backing of political parties. For example, in 1964 one Jerusalem man who was disappointed with the quality of education for his children staged his own public protest. Moshe Cohen, a resident of the Ein Kerem neighborhood, announced a strike against the education system itself. During the strike, he refused to send his children to school until his demands for improved quality in their school were met.[77]

Cohen lamented that although his children were intelligent, "they will not be able to enter a high school after they finish here. The level of the eighth grader here is about the same as that in the fifth grade of a normal school. . . . Why are all the 'white' children of Ain Karem, the Ashkenazim, allowed to study in good schools . . . while my own children are not admitted?"[78]

In February 1964, a Dimona resident named Albert Zrihan decided to highlight the discrimination directed against Mizrahim in the labor sector. As a North African immigrant living in a peripheral region, Zrihan wanted to move to a more prosperous urban city. However, Sokhnut

officials met with him and, after much discussion, convinced him to remain in Dimona. When he later applied for a job, he discovered that his employment prospects were low because of his Middle Eastern origins, so he sent two job applications to a local company. Each application listed the same qualifications but under two different names: Maurice Bitton from Morocco and Ya'akov Kish from Poland. It was no surprise to Zrihan that he received two different responses. The letter to Bitton read, "In response to your letter, we regretfully inform you that there are no open positions at the moment," but in the letter to Kish the company invited him to an interview.[79] The incident gained the attention of the Israeli media as a stark example of institutionalized discrimination; however, some saw Zrihan's experiment as a provocation. The Zrihan affair was later memorialized in the song "I Went to the Employment Office" by Ze'ev Revah and later by Eyal Golan.

Similarly, one Ashkenazi woman took note of the developing segregation in Israel. In an argument similar to David Cohen's in his article "Lingering Unemployment," published nearly a decade earlier, she pointed out that the "dangerous poison" of prejudice had caused the emergence of two types of citizens: the privileged citizens who are overwhelmingly Ashkenazi and possess "all sorts of tacit privileges and the 'inferior' class who are 'deprived of their basic rights.'"[80]

Surprisingly, one of the most public acts of resistance against the Ashkenazi Israeli hegemony came from a member of the ruling Mapai Party. On September 1, 1965, Meir Ibn-Haim, an immigrant from Casablanca, read from an eight-minute prepared speech that he and two other Mizrahi Mapai members had prepared for a Mapai central-party meeting. During the speech, he stated unequivocally that Mizrahim constitute an oppressed people suffering from Ashkenazi racism. With contempt in his voice, he warned Mapai that "you will have a severe problem in Ashdod because the color of Ashdod is brown and your color is white. You discriminate against us because you were born to hate Orientals. Remember what happened in Los Angeles and Alabama."[81]

Ibn-Haim went on to criticize the central leadership of Mapai, who he felt regarded "the Oriental Jews as hewers of wood and drawers of water." This biblical analogy between Gibeonite servants and Mizrahim was

precisely the same grievance Avraham Abbas had mentioned seven years earlier.[82] Moreover, Ibn-Haim accused Mapai of bringing in an "Uncle Tom" figure to pit Moroccans against Moroccans. "It does not matter if Moroccan blood is spilled so long as a seat for an Ashkenazi is ensured at the center of the party. The main point is to make sure that the *'schwarzer'* [Yiddish for "Negro" but with a negative connotation similar to the epithet *nigger*] Ben-Simhon does not sit in the seat." Ibn-Haim, who had arrived in Israel in 1962, went on to claim that during his life in Morocco the non-Jewish Arab population had never given him the feelings of "prejudice and discrimination" that he had suffered from the Ashkenazi population in Israel.[83]

It must be emphasized that Ibn-Haim's contentions were neither new nor shocking to the Mizrahi public. Claims of institutional discrimination had been expressed verbally within the impoverished neighborhoods and development towns for years. In the public forum, the struggle against racism was demonstrated in the form of the violent uprisings of Beit She'an, Bnei Brak, Be'er Sheva, and, of course, Wadi Salib. But public, formal declarations of discrimination and oppression like Ibn-Haim's were considered taboo. Even simple calls for better Mizrahi representation in the government were deemed inflammatory and controversial. For example, *Davar* denounced the Council for the Advancement of Orientals as "inflammatory" when it placed posters around the city of Tzfat demanding that Mizrahim "wake up! Your hour has come! . . . We warn Mapai that they must appoint immediately a Sephardi mayor in town!"[84]

Ibn-Haim's assertions were novel in that he was a relatively high-placed member of the ruling Mapai Party. His speech also marked a significant shift in Oriental Jews' attitude toward the Ashkenazi Israeli elite. Following his remarks, posters were plastered in several Israeli cities, declaring, "The Sephardim demand an end to discrimination. They will no longer tolerate the Ashkenazi hegemony."[85] Although it is impossible to know how much Ibn-Haim's comments directly influenced these posters, they did demonstrate a more public awareness of Mizrahiut.

Ibn-Haim's statements outraged Mapai, many of its members claiming that he was threatening violence against the state. Mapai secretary Reuven Barakat notably claimed that Ibn-Haim was providing the match

that would "light the entirety of Israel on fire."[86] Although the press requested that Ibn-Haim publish his speech, he declined to do so because of the accusations of criminal incitement. In a later interview, he asserted that his intention was not to threaten the state but to provide a warning not only that a Watts-style rebellion was possible in Israel but that it was likely to happen.[87] Indeed, this was precisely what occurred just a month after Ibn-Haim made his prediction.

The Watts Rebellion of August 1965 reignited memories of the Wadi Salib events of 1959 in the minds of many Mizrahim and led many to caution that similar rebellions were soon to follow in Israel. Thus, in an article written in *Ha'olam Hazeh* (the Independent) on the eve of the Jewish New Year 5726 (1965–66), a writer warned that an uprising similar to the one in Watts was imminent: "The continuing growth of the (economic) gap on the one hand and the absence of any real progress towards (social and cultural) equality on the other, are creating here tensions similar to those which brought about the bloody outbursts of [1965] in Los Angeles. The Spanish word 'Los Angeles' has the same meaning as the Hebrew 'Kiryat Malachi,' (one of Israel's most forlorn development towns). The explosion which did not take place in [1965] might well take place in [1966]."[88]

In the following weeks, Ibn-Haim's and *Ha'olam Hazeh*'s predictions would come true with the emergence of the Shkunat Hatikvah Youth Uprising of 1965. For nearly three months, impoverished Mizrahi youth from the Hatikvah slum and surrounding areas staged violent clashes with the police all because of a poorly planned decision to reroute the Dan Bus Company's route linking Tel Aviv and Hatikvah.

The Hatikvah Youth Uprising, 1965

The Hatikvah neighborhood was established by a group of Oriental Jews on an Arab-owned orchard in 1936. However, it was not until 1948 that the neighborhood was accepted as part of the Tel Aviv District. Despite this official recognition, few municipal services were actually provided to the neighborhood residents. By the 1960s, Hatikvah became the largest distinctly Mizrahi slum in Israel. Although the municipality assisted the residents in making Hatikvah habitable, development beyond the most basic services—sewage and a connection to the water supply—never took

place. As a consequence, residents began to build illegal housing, cafés, and kiosks for themselves.

Lacking youth clubs or playgrounds, many of the children were left to the streets as their only mode of entertainment. The only comfort seems to have been Hatikvah's proximity to the city of Tel Aviv, which provided residents with a place for work and recreation. In May 1965, however, even access to the city was taken away from them when without notification the Dan Bus Company ended its route connecting the Hatikvah slum to Tel Aviv.[89] Most of the Hatikvah residents rose up and vocally opposed this decision by staging a protest against Dan and the Tel Aviv Municipality. Throwing stones at passing Dan vehicles, cries could be heard from the crowd, asking, "Why are they especially screwing us over?"[90]

Although not on the same scale as the Watts Rebellion, the Hatikvah Uprising continued for a longer period of time. It was largely a youth rebellion made up of young people from children as young as twelve to young adults in their twenties. Because of their age, most offenders were not imprisoned for their participation in this rebellion. For many observers of this event, the demonstrators' age was the most disturbing aspect of the Hatikvah Uprising. The *IOP*, albeit not at all surprised by the occurrence of the uprising itself, noted being surprised by its mostly young participants: "The wonder of course is not that these riots have taken place but rather that they did not happen earlier. . . . [It] would have been less alarming had the rioters been adult immigrants to Israel. . . . [T]he overwhelming majority of them were in fact youngsters who were either born in Israel or were brought here when they were very young. Their bitterness and despair and hostility are not the product of difficulties faced by immigrants. . . . *They are, rather, the product of an experience confined to life in Israel itself.*"[91]

Following the May clashes, one Hatikvah resident shed light on the reasons behind the youth uprising. He pointed out that in his neighborhood the "streets are the educators."[92] Thus, even little children who barely understood what the protests were about participated in the attacks on the buses.

The May 1965 demonstration seems to have touched a nerve with the Israeli press. After the violent protests, more and more mainstream news

articles began calling attention to the neighborhood's problems. Following the return of the bus route and subsequent end to protests, *Ma'ariv* dedicated a full-page article to the lives of Hatikvah residents. What the *Ma'ariv* correspondent discovered was that the Dan Bus protests, much like the Wadi Salib Rebellion, proved for many youth that "strength is an effective commodity."[93] Thus, the stage was set for increasingly violent confrontations between Hatikvah residents and government authorities.

Few residents, new or old, expressed any hope for the future of the Hatikvah neighborhood. During an interview with Tzadok Shalom, an elementary school teacher of fifteen years, the *Ma'ariv* correspondent asked him how the government should go about fixing the problems in the neighborhood. In response, Shalom boldly stated: "This is not a neighborhood, this is a *ma'abara*. A few veterans remain here. The majority flees. . . . [We] must destroy this! This is a life of degeneration; it destroys the soul of a child. . . . The atmosphere here is packed full of explosive material. Any little match could light a great fire. The youth are abandoned to the street."[94]

Shalom Yefet Shara'abi, a Hatikvah resident of twenty-nine years, pointed out the parallels between life in the *ma'abara* and life in the Hatikvah slum. Shara'abi noted that the government's promises to develop the Mizrahi slums, just like its promises to improve the *ma'aborot*, were never fulfilled. Instead of the promised paved sidewalks and streets, there just remained resentment and feelings of institutionalized racism against Mizrahim created by state leaders: "I know, this is dangerous thinking and not nice to say it. But how else can you explain the neglect here . . . ? When everyone in the North is happy, here we are sad in darkness! And our heart cries over our fate because of one reason: in the eyes of many we are the most powerful symbol of neglect."[95]

Highlighting the underlying racism behind the treatment of Hatikvah residents, Shara'abi recalled the government's lack of recognition of the contributions Hatikvah residents made to the establishment of the state. Specifically, he noted that "Hatikvah boys" were the first to fight in the Arab–Israeli War "for the soul of the neighborhood" in 1948. But there were no memorials dedicated to the fallen soldiers from the

neighborhood. Drawing the conclusion that this lack of memorial was the result of racism, he started to reflect on the state's annual commemoration of the Holocaust. Recalling that many of the shops in Hatikvah refused to close on Holocaust Day, as was customary in Israel, he openly questioned the relevance of the national commemoration of the Holocaust: "If you don't need to commemorate the heroes of the neighborhood, who died here, at our windows," then there was no reason to memorialize the Holocaust either.[96]

After the protests against the Dan Bus Company ended, a group of teenagers found a temporary solution to the state's neglect of Hatikvah. Calling themselves the "Levanda Gang,"[97] they began weekly Friday night drag races throughout the streets of Hatikvah. Many of the neighborhood youth roamed the streets on Friday night, so the races gained a great deal of attention, which spread beyond the neighborhood residents to residents from surrounding areas and even Jerusalem. The drivers in the races wore aluminum masks, and young residents would often throw stones at passing cars "not from the neighborhood." A local rabbi pointed out the widespread popularity of the "Hatikvah Grand Prix": "If you come here on the Sabbath night, you'll see streets crowded with entire families, sometimes with chairs, food baskets, and blankets. Sitting around in pajamas and waiting for the performance to start. Some go to sleep early on Friday in order to wake up refreshed at midnight and see the great races without being tired. I think more than 3,000 people come here every Friday night, and at least 70 percent of them are from the neighborhood."[98]

Most of the drivers and car thieves were youth who were raised in Israel, and some intentionally made themselves ineligible for the obligatory army service. This action at the time was considered extremely taboo; however, it seems to have been a point of pride for some of the residents: "Some of the 'car demons' are con-artists because they were released from army service: 'they not only know how to drive cars, but they know how to benefit from all the tricks in the recruitment center in order to receive a low mental profile [and thus be exempt from service].'"[99]

By mid-October, at least 800 youth had been arrested for car theft in the Tel Aviv District. But the arrests appeared to have done little to prevent

further car thefts and drag races because many of those arrested were too young to be prosecuted. The drag-racing exhibits subsequently spread north to Ramat Israel and Pardes Katz. During the religious festival of Sukkot, the police decided to escalate efforts, but the youth responded with force. On October 12, when eight patrol cars arrived to disperse the crowd of young people, a few hundred youth erected a barricade against them. In the end, forty-five participants were arrested, which appeared to only strengthen the remaining youth in the area. Days later, during the "Hatikvah Grand Prix," more than a thousand youth anticipated the arrival of the police and erected a barricade.

One Hatikvah youth composed "prison song" poetry during the uprising. Describing various crimes committed and the loneliness of prison life, and naming a Sergeant Ayyash as an officer who beat suspected criminals, the author pointed out in "Shkunat Hatikvah Anthem" that he still refused to snitch, unlike another neighborhood resident.[100] This poem revealed the sense of alienation felt by these Israeli-born Mizrahi youth. Moreover, it indicated a communal distrust of Israeli authority figures and an awareness that Mizrahim, threatened by police brutality, worked under an *omertà* code (originally a Mafia code of silence).

On a superficial level, the Hatikvah races were simply a string of criminal activities. However, for the residents themselves, they were an expression of the frustration and anger stemming from their marginalization. Although the Hatikvah Youth Uprising was ideologically weak, its existence as the "most powerful symbol of neglect" helped to publicize the level of alienation felt by Israeli-born Mizrahi youth.

Police and sociologists portrayed Mizrahi youth as the most problematic victims of social malaise, but this discourse would change in later years.[101] Despite the fact that Mizrahi activists had for years argued for an appreciation of the participation of all sectors of society in the state, both ethnic and religious, it was not until the military victories of the war in 1967 that Mizrahim were viewed as full participants in the development of Israeli society, meshing with the CSCJ's promotion in the pre-1967 era of an alternative Zionist philosophy that would push for the integration of all sectors of society, both Jewish and Palestinian.

Equality and Israel's Oriental Character: Promoting a Middle Eastern Zionist Alternative

Although the *IOP* was one of the first magazines to raise international awareness of the oppression of Mizrahim, this was not its only function. In addition to providing an invaluable record of the Mizrahi struggle, it promoted an alternative to the state's Zionist ideology. Unlike European-born Zionism, this alternative organically developed from and sought a nonexploitative relationship with the cultural and geographical roots of Israel—namely, the Middle East. Within the *IOP*, the ideology of this Middle Eastern Zionism (also discussed in chapter 2) came largely from Eliyahu Eliachar; however, its progressive and inclusive spirit represented the sentiments of many other Mizrahi activists, including David Cohen, Avraham Abbas, and David Sitton.

Eliachar's decision to promote this alternative Zionism was sparked by concern over the neglect of the Palestinian issue and the state's desire to isolate itself from its neighbors. His views on this matter were detailed in an interview of him conducted in 1975: "The real original sin of the Zionist Movement," he said, "was the fact that, in returning to our Homeland, which is part and parcel of the Orient, we did everything we could to estrange ourselves from the Middle East in which we wanted to live."[102]

This alternative Middle Eastern Zionism was far removed from the colonial expansionist ideology of what these critics of Israeli society termed "Ashkenazi Zionism." Eliachar and the CSCJ's desire for an alternative ideology stemmed from their criticism of Zionism because it lauded a nineteenth-century European model of nationalism.[103]

The editors of *IOP* noted that one of the tragedies of Israel was that its eastern European leaders had left Europe just prior to the development of two major trends in Europe. The first trend was the rising belief that "European civilization is in decay and that most of its values and ideals were misfounded."[104] The second was the emergence of cultural anthropology (e.g., Ruth Benedict and Claude Lévi-Strauss), whose expounders buried the idea "that Europe has an exclusive title deed to the word 'civilization.'"[105] These concepts appeared well after the formulation of

European Zionist philosophy, so that the pre-twentieth-century colonialist assumptions about Asia and Africa were the most influential thought that shaped the central concepts of *mizug hagaluyot*.

The *IOP*'s contention was that for the Ashkenazi state leadership the true intentions of *mizug hagaluyot* were to "de-Orient" Oriental Jewry. Thus, as *IOP* so aptly put it, "when the Israeli talks of 'integrating' the Oriental immigrant he really means 'Westernizing' him."[106] Because European Zionists had yet to progress beyond these decidedly "unmodern" ideals, the Israeli elite continued to interact with Oriental Jews as if they were the "white man's burden." In other words, the proposed efforts to integrate Mizrahim involved a dual process of removing all cultural traces of the Orient from them and resocializing them to fit a preconceived notion of a new and enlightened European Jewish Israeli:

> The East-European Zionists . . . made an axiom out of the belief that "Europe" and "civilization" are different terms for one and the same thing; and which saw in the diversity of cultures between Europe and the Orient a Divinely-given responsibility ("The White Man's Burden") to make *them* like *us*.
>
> As it is, the European Zionist at many points reflects the cultural trends of the imperial, extrovert Europe, the Europe which firmly believed in "the idea of progress" and which was buried for ever in 1918. . . . [W]hat passes for "modern" in Israel is in fact what was modern in 19th century Europe.[107]

As an alternative to the *mizug hagaluyot* policy, which Eliachar felt was intended to Westernize Oriental Jews, he demanded a new era that would encourage "'*shituf hagaluyot*' [or] the participation of *all communities* in the building up of the State."[108] Following this contention, he argued:

> Israeli attitudes towards the Oriental Jew are conditioned by a determination to acknowledge the close bonds which link the Arab and the Jewish people; and by the fear—sometimes voiced explicitly—that the Oriental Jews are "too much like the Arabs." It also illustrates . . . the contention that ultimately the *Oriental problem is closely bound up with the Arab problem*: for it is only when Israel is able to acknowledge to itself

> that it is, among other things, an Oriental country, that Israelis will be able to prepare themselves for a constructive encounter with the Arabs. We believe that the Oriental Jews are Israel's surest bridge towards an understanding with the Arab world—*but they can be this only as truly Oriental Jews*.[109]

This proposal is strikingly similar to the one forwarded by Latif Dori in the 1950s, who saw the full recognition of Palestinian and Mizrahi citizens into Israeli society as a prerequisite for the achievement of peace and understanding between Israel and the Arab World.[110] David Sitton, editor of CSCJ's publication *Bama'arakha*, argued that the "cultural treasures of the Orient" must be nourished in the State of Israel. This nourishment, he argued, would strengthen the Jewish people in such a way that it would allow the breaking down of the "Great Wall" separating Israel from the Arab world. Moreover, Sitton argued, the benefits of Israel's turning toward the "Orient" rather than toward the West would be mutual: "We must do this in order to give generously from our culture and spirit to the neighboring countries and establish cooperation and contact with them in all spheres of life—spirit and action, cultural and material. This way, we can put an end to the mutual suspicion that wears down ourselves and our neighbors equally."[111]

Unlike Sitton, who accused Arab nationalist leaders of erecting a "Great Wall" around Israel, Eliachar saw the misunderstandings between Arabs and Jews as a problem perpetuated by the Ashkenazi elite. To a certain extent, Eliachar was willing to concede that a *pre*state "Ashkenazi hegemony" was justified because eastern European Jews had played a significant role in the creation of the state. However, this hegemony had to be altered in the postindependence era. For Eliachar, all sectors of Israeli society, both ethnic and religious, had to play a part in the development of the state, and thus "there can be no possible justification for European-Jewish hegemony."[112]

Eliachar proposed a rebalancing of power between the Ashkenazi elite and Israel's Oriental majority. This equalization of power was not exclusive to the Jewish population, but the *IOP* rarely addressed the status of Israel's Palestinian population. Despite this silence, there was an

implicit acknowledgment that *IOP* felt that both Mizrahim and Palestinian citizens suffered from "prejudice [that] is given official, public and institutional expression in Israel."[113] However, it was more imperative to document the prejudices directed against Mizrahim because the oppression of the Palestinian population was "far more *visible* than the communal problem."[114] In later publications, Eliachar would further delve into the status of Palestinians and his future vision for a just Israeli society.[115]

Conclusion

This book set out to provide an historical account of the varied acts of resistance against oppression and discrimination conducted by Mizrahi immigrants during the period 1948–66. By looking critically at the Israel Police's early history and records, it provides new insights into the process of co-opting Mizrahim into the Israeli nationalist hegemony and how the police were involved in the suppression of the Mizrahi struggle in its formative period in Israel. More importantly, it helps to open up further discussion on the historiographical understanding of early Mizrahi resistance against the Israeli establishment.

What emerges from the critical writings of Mizrahi immigrants and a decade's worth of police reports is a story of how the Israel Police used the state policy of *mizug hagaluyot* as a mechanism to suppress Mizrahi political expression and collective action. Although scholars such as Adriana Kemp have addressed this suppression, an examination of the police records reveals the extent to which and the method by which the policy of "integration through segregation" was implemented in Israel. In addition, the socialization project within the police force itself, suggested by Minister of Police Bechor Shitreet among others, presented itself as an effort to assist the integration of Mizrahim by encouraging their mass recruitment into the police force and the removal of any traces of the "Orient" from their mindset. By 1958, Mizrahim constituted the majority Jewish ethnic group in the Israel Police.

Mizrahim and the Police

In ideological terms, the police's integrationist policies meant the attempted Westernizing of Mizrahi police recruits and by proxy the Oriental Jewish public sector. Moreover, under the guise of advancing "integration," the Israel Police's understanding of *mizug hagaluyot* meant the maintenance of the Israeli social hierarchy by serving as the most visible state actor in the geographical and social marginalization of the Oriental Jewish collective. The consequences of this physically and culturally dis-Orient-ing socialization process meant that the Israel Police was intimately involved in the forcible settlement of Mizrahi immigrants in the peripheries, the brutal suppression of otherwise peaceful demonstrations, and the silencing of the freedom of expression. The fact that many of the low-level patrol officers carrying out these acts were Mizrahi themselves complicated the situation even more.

As indicated in police records and magazines, some Mizrahi officers did empathize with protestors. However, this empathy did not seem to have a significant effect on their ability to carry out with enthusiasm some of the state's draconian measures against immigrants, most likely because of the recruits' sincere desire not only to be accepted in Israeli society by not questioning the state's implementation of housing segregation and the cracking down on dissent but also, more importantly, to keep their jobs. It is without a doubt, however, that the recruitment of Mizrahim was a calculated move by the police to ensure the pacification of the Mizrahi population. The use of Mizrahi officers in their own neighborhoods and towns was an attempt by the state to make it clear that if demonstrators rose up against the police, they would be "attacking one of [their] own," as one commander put it during the Wadi Salib Rebellion.

This contention has helped to elucidate some of the complexities of the Israeli case—a case in which Mizrahi police found themselves acting against the interests of the marginalized community to which they belonged. Of particular note is the Fanonian "black skin, white mask" persona of Bechor Shitreet, who was the driving force behind the ideology of socialization through the mechanism of recruiting Mizrahim into the police force. Shitreet's desire to raise Mizrahim up from their

"backwardness" despite his own Mizrahi origins earned him the title "Uncle Tom" among Mizrahi intellectuals. This drawing of parallels between American blacks and Mizrahim provides an informative starting point for a much-needed comparative analysis of the African American and Mizrahi struggles for equality.

Looking beyond Wadi Salib: Reevaluating the Early Mizrahi Struggle as a Battle for Civil Rights

Through an examination of Oriental Jewish immigrants' ideologies, protest demands, and actions during this period, this study has revisited a nearly forgotten period of the Mizrahi struggle in the new State of Israel. By looking beyond the Wadi Salib Rebellion of 1959, it has challenged the prevailing scholarly portrayal of the Mizrahi struggle as a movement that prior to the 1980s sputtered briefly in the Wadi Salib and Black Panther uprisings of 1959 and 1971, respectively. This challenge and the descriptions of multiple acts of resistance that back it up overturn the mistaken notion that the Mizrahi response to the discriminatory practices of *mizug hagaluyot* was passive despondency or even patient compliance.[1] More importantly, by detailing early Mizrahi awareness of discrimination, the study helps to refute denials of intentional discrimination on the part of the state. It also helps to dispel the belief that the Wadi Salib Rebellion constituted merely an opportunistic riot on the part of its mostly Moroccan participants rather than a radical ethnic uprising.[2] This study has instead addressed clear cases of discrimination against the Oriental Jewish community and the varied responses to their oppression based on the community's awareness that racism played a central role in their peripheral status. This awareness is typified in the rebellions in Migdal Ashkelon and Kiryat Shmona, whose residents were (already in 1953 and 1957, respectively) demanding in no uncertain terms an end to discrimination against Mizrahim in resource and housing allocation.[3]

As noted earlier, many scholars consider the 1980s to be the pivotal point for Oriental Jews' independent expression and organization as a political force. Thus, statements to this effect are asserted without much controversy: "In discussing radical responses to oppression we must recall

that . . . almost all Mizrahi political action and organization up to the 1980s resulted from initiatives of the regime and its institutions."[4] Even veteran Oriental Jewish immigrants have made similar statements to this effect, retrospectively glossing over the existence of the early Mizrahi responses to the state's oppressive practices: "The Kurdish [immigrants] had a lot of sense, a lot of suffering . . . [but] we received everything in a loving manner, we did not even protest and, with difficulty, we set ourselves up. But this came from a mindset that does not exist today. . . . Look at the Ethiopians or the Russians—if they don't have shoes, they protest. Our *aliyah* was truly Zionist. Immediately upon arrival, [my husband] joined the army in order to make a contribution."[5]

However, by looking at traditional and nontraditional forms of protest, this study has revealed that Mizrahi activists and intellectuals initiated a persistently fought struggle against state oppression. Beginning with the Knesset Rebellions in 1949, this struggle operated independently of (and often in direct opposition to) David Ben-Gurion's Mapai regime. Articulating a diverse set of demands to the state, Mizrahi intellectuals and activists such as David Cohen, Gideon Giladi, Latif Dori, and Eliyahu Eliachar showed that the early Mizrahi struggle was not only for the sake of Oriental Jewish immigrants. On the contrary, it was a movement based on the desire to advance the civil rights of all suppressed sectors of Israeli society, including Bedouins and Palestinians living under military rule, and to link the Mizrahi and Palestinian struggles as one and the same. Thus, based on my findings, I define this early struggle as the developmental phase of a Mizrahi civil rights struggle.

Framing these early efforts in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s as a civil rights struggle is important because that is how participants saw their rebellion and their demand to be treated equally within society. Mizrahim wanted to be defined not as immigrants or as adult "Children of the Oriental Communities" (which the name "Bnei Edot Hamizrah" suggested) but as citizens and equal contributors to the building of Israeli society. Had this more inclusive view been applied, Israeli society might have looked and acted differently and possibly been more integrated with its cultural Arab or Levantine roots and its neighboring countries.

At the forefront of this Mizrahi civil rights struggle, Oriental Jewish immigrants conducted a decade-long campaign of protests for civil equality, which are often referred to as "bread and work" demonstrations. Aside from the important (yet limited) demand to receive bread and work, Oriental Jewish immigrants also demanded a variety of changes from the state, including improvement in workers' rights, women's equality, proper education for Mizrahi children, and the elimination of both the *ma'abarot* and Israel's military rule over Palestinian citizens. The fact that they made these demands as *sharqiyyin*, or Orientals, sheds some light on the terminological debate on the existence of "Arab Jews" and their relationship with the other silenced Oriental community in Israel: the Palestinian citizens.[6] These early Mizrahi protests and the ideology of Middle Eastern Zionism developed by Mizrahi intellectuals prove that the Mizrahi civil rights struggle was a dynamic and diverse social movement comparable to African Americans' civil rights movement in the United States.

Among the extraparliamentary Mizrahi protests of the period, the Be'er Sheva Rebellion showed the inextricable fusion of what has been called "Middle Eastern Zionism" and the on-the-ground Mizrahi protests of the period. Intellectuals who espoused this Middle Eastern Zionism (e.g., Iraqi-origin Latif Dori, Palestine-born Eliyahu Eliachar, and Indian-origin A. I. Macmull) demonstrated a radical attempt to challenge and reshape the type of relationship the Israeli state maintained with the sectors lying on the margins of Israeli society. As both Eliachar and Macmull noted, the ideological foundations of this early Mizrahi struggle had many similarities to other anticolonial struggles occurring in America, Asia, and Africa. A future comparative study of the Mizrahi struggle and these other movements would help to provide new perspectives and insights on the status of Mizrahim, who hold, to paraphrase Ella Shohat,[7] an ambivalent position of power wherein they are simultaneously marginalized as Orientals but empowered as Jews in a Jewish state. Particularly enlightening research would involve a comparative study of other "internally colonized" peoples, such as the black population of the United States, the black population of South Africa, and the Berber (Amazigh) population of North Africa.[8]

The extent to which the ideological side of the Mizrahi civil rights struggle influenced the wider population of Oriental Jewish immigrants is demonstrated by the robustness of the public protests enacted by Mizrahi *ma'abara* and slum residents. Far from an exercise in intellectual calisthenics, the ideals of the Mizrahi intelligentsia were fought for not only in the Be'er Sheva Rebellion but also in the near daily battles against the Jewish Agency as well as in the *ma'abara* uprisings of Pardes Hanna, Bnei Brak, and Kiryat Shmona, to name just a few. In the latter half of the period under examination, radical responses to Mizrahi oppression were found in the Wadi Salib Rebellion of 1959, the Hatikvah Youth Uprising of 1965, and MK Avraham Abbas's (Mapai) and Meir Ibn-Haim's (Mapai) appeals for improved Mizrahi political representation. Moreover, expressions of Mizrahi resistance to oppression can be seen in the Zrihan affair of 1964, the statements of Hatikvah residents in 1965, and the Jerusalem-based CSCJ's criticism of the Jewish Agency's efforts to weaken Mizrahi representation.

The previous scholarly focus on the violence surrounding the Wadi Salib Rebellion to the exclusion of the previous decade's protests has helped to create an impression that this early Mizrahi uprising constituted nothing more than a brief expression of Mizrahi awakening in July 1959. But this book's detailed exploration of various forms of Mizrahi resistance from 1948 to 1966 shows that the Mizrahi struggle neither began nor ended in 1959. It also shows that the use of newspapers as the sole primary-source material for reviewing collective action is problematic when dealing with marginalized ethnic groups. Owing to journalists' overemphasis on the violent aspects of ethnic protests, an examination limited to newspaper accounts creates a noticeable gap in the historical narrative. This problem is particularly pronounced when reviewing the pre–Wadi Salib era. Future research should develop a better understanding of the linkages between the pre- and post-1967 Mizrahi struggle.

The overemphasis on Wadi Salib to the exclusion of previous Mizrahi rebellions devalues and even erases the existence of an ideologically sound Mizrahi civil rights struggle comprising resistance tactics ranging from nonviolent, sit-down strikes against the Jewish Agency to violent uprisings against the Knesset. Specifically, overemphasis on Wadi Salib's

violent circumstances led to a focus by the police and government officials on eliminating ethnic violence and not necessarily on dealing with the problems behind it. Subsequently and perhaps unconsciously, scholars have drawn from this flawed perspective and have examined the Wadi Salib Rebellion as the only meaningful expression of Oriental Jewish immigrants' opposition to their oppression. As I have shown here, however, that rebellion is more appropriately viewed as the explosive culmination of a decade-long struggle to achieve equality. A radical Mizrahi struggle in the 1950s and 1960s was neither nonexistent nor focused solely on bread and work.

Appendixes

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APPENDIX A

Database Sample of Mizrahi Protests

Event Topic	Location	Date	Political Affiliation	Number of Participants	Labels	Relevance	Police Folder in Israel State Archives
Argument between Jews and Arabs in a mixed neighborhood in Yaffo	Yaffo	June 10, 1949	Nonaffiliated	Not known	ICB	Very relevant	Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949
Demonstration of factory and port workers (duplicated in police files)	Tel Aviv	October 27, 1949	Communist	3,000	DWV	Important	Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949
Demonstration next to Knesset	Tel Aviv	October 27, 1949	Nonaffiliated	Not known	DK	Very relevant	Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949
Letter: People rumored to be talking against the government and the local council late at night in a café	Tel Aviv	October 31, 1949	Nonaffiliated	Not known	ORG	Very relevant	Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949
Children's demonstration: "We want to learn!"	Tel Aviv	November 17, 1949	Nonaffiliated	26 kids	DY	Very relevant	Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949
Telegraph to Bechor Shitreet from Petah Tikvah *ma'abara*	N/A	December 19, 1951	N/A	Entire *ma'abara*		Important	Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951
Confiscation of posters written in Moroccan Judeo-Arabic	Not known	November 4, 1950	Nonaffiliated	3 Moroccans arrested	ORG	Very relevant	Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951

Event Topic	Location	Date	Political Affiliation	Number of Participants	Labels	Relevance	Police Folder in Israel State Archives
Letter from Internal Committee of *ma'abara* residents to Bechor Shitreet concerning complaint	Not known	January 30, 1952	Nonaffiliated	Entire *ma'abara*		Important	Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54
Complaint against police by Kfar 'Ana *ma'abara* residents	Kfar 'Ana	October 2, 1952	Nonaffiliated	Entire *ma'abara*		Important	Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952
Poster for protest rally against starvation policy, also in Yiddish	Not known	March 22, 1952	Mapam/Maki	Not known	D	Peripheral	Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952
Complaint against the police by residents of Ramat Hasharon *ma'abara*	Tel Aviv	October 9, 1952	Not known	Not known	ORG	Important	Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952
Police assistance in the supervision of the Agricultural Department	Not known	August 17, 1955	N/A	N/A		Peripheral	Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952
Activity report on the assistance to the Jewish Agency in Moshav Bakoa	Moshav Bakoa	March 20, 1956	N/A	Not known		Peripheral	Dangers to the Community, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Peace, 1955

Event Topic	Location	Date	Political Affiliation	Number of Participants	Labels	Relevance	Police Folder in Israel State Archives
Letter on eliminating tent camps to Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Tiberias District superintendents; Israel National Police (INP) inspector general; and head of the INP Criminal Investigations Branch, Amos Ben-Gurion	N/A	August 21, 1952	Not known	Not known		Very relevant	Rehovot/Gedera: Demonstrations and Disturbances, 1957–58
Report on Mapam public gathering, police spy work	Be'er Ya'akov	January 7, 1955	Mapam	Not known	ORG	Important	Dangers to the Community, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Peace, 1955
Public meeting on behalf of Maki	Ramleh	December 22, 1955	Maki	Not known	ORG	Important	Dangers to the Community, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Peace, 1955
Report on Our Work in the Employment Office in Kriyat Malachi	Gadera	April 17, 1956	Not known	Not known		Peripheral	Hadera Branch—Investigations into New Immigrants
Attempt to demonstrate by the Harovit *ma'abara* residents	Tel Aviv Highway	September 3, 1955	Nonaffiliated	Not known	ORG	Very relevant	Ramleh/Gedera: Strikes and Disturbances

Event Topic	Location	Date	Political Affiliation	Number of Participants	Labels	Relevance	Police Folder in Israel State Archives
Demonstration against unemployment and price of bread	Tel Aviv	July 25, 1954	Nonaffiliated	150 protestors; 10 police	D	Important	Tel Aviv Northern Branch: Strikes, Demonstrations, Gatherings, and Marches, 1954
Gathering of housing complex residents in Ramat Gan	Ramat Gan	September 28, 1953	Nonaffiliated	30 residents	ORG	Very relevant	Strikes, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Order, 1955
Brawl between Iraqis and Arabs	Ramleh	February 7, 1952	Not known	Not known	ICB	Very relevant	Hashfelah/Ramleh: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1952

Label abbreviations: D = Demonstrations (K = Knesset; W = Workers; Y = Youth; V = Violent); ICB = Intercommunal Fighting; ORG = Community/Political Organizing.

APPENDIX B

Illustrations from *9-9-9: Journal of the Israel Police*

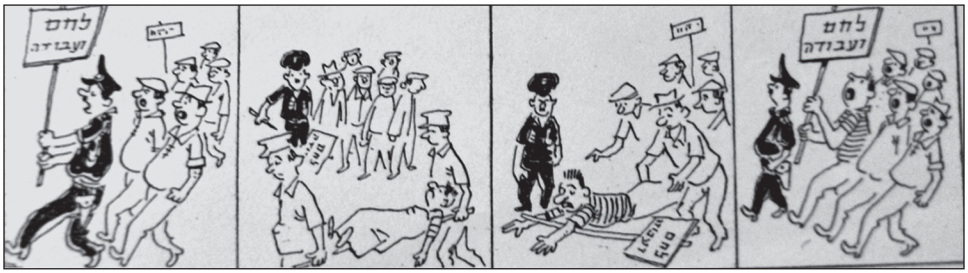

Figure 3. Bread-and-work protest. From *9-9-9: Journal of the Israel Police,* Feb. 1954. Protestors (*right to left*) hold signs reading "bread and work." When one demonstrator is injured, a policeman takes his place. Reproduced with permission from Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

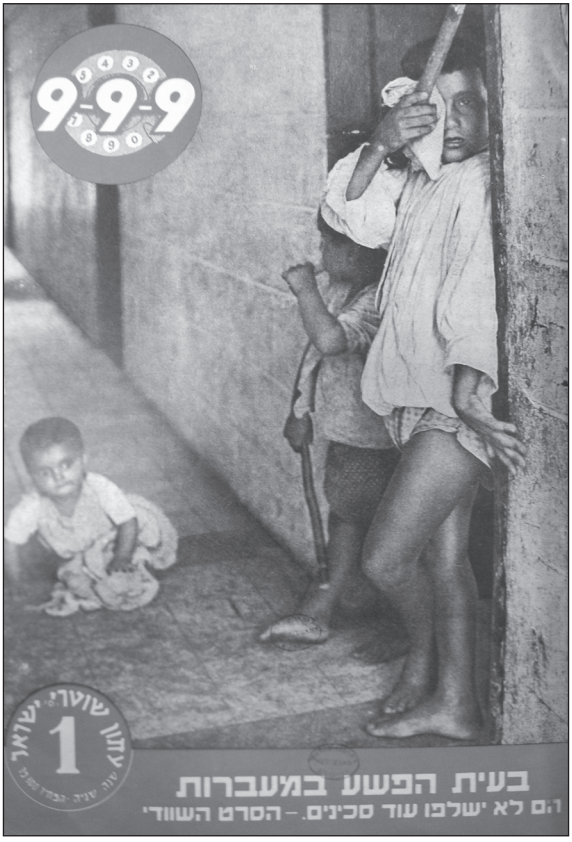

Figure 4. *Crime Problems in the Ma'abarot: Mizrahi Children*. Cover photograph from the February 1954 issue of *9-9-9: Journal of the Israel Police*, titled "Crime Problems in the *Ma'abarot*: They Don't Carry Knives Anymore." Reproduced with permission from Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

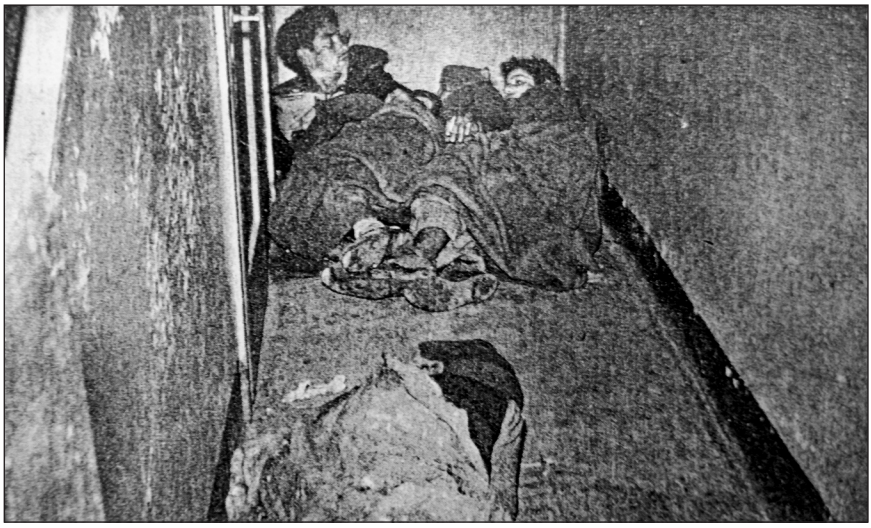

Figure 5. *Candid Photograph of Ma'abara Youth Sleeping in Stairwell*. From *9-9-9: Journal of the Israel Police*, Mar. 1953. "The youth were found like this by officers on a routine patrol: sleeping in the stairwell of one of the houses next to the vegetable *bursa* [market]. According to the officer who investigated them, the youth said that they live in a remote *ma'abara* and that they work as porters in the market. They usually sleep in the stairwell in order to save money from the cost of hotel accommodation. When the police left, the [youth] returned [to the stairwell] and tucked themselves halfway back into their blankets—for the time being." Reproduced with permission from Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

APPENDIX C

Data on the Israel National Police

Ethnic Composition of the Israel Police by Percentages, 1949–1964

Year	Israeli/ Palestinian (% of total)	European (% of total)	African (% of total)	Asian (% of total)	American (% of total)	Native "Minority" (% of total)	Native Jewish (% of total)
1949	18.9	72.3	3.6	5.2	0.0	—	—
1950	23.0	61.2	7.4	8.1	0.3	—	—
1951	—	54.1	11.7	13.7	0.2	5.8	14.5
1952	—	48.5	14.5	17.5	0.3	5.6	13.5
1953	—	47.5	15.8	17.3	0.3	7.0	12.1
1954	—	47.8	16.3	17.5	0.2	6.5	11.7
1955	—	46.0	17.9	18.4	0.2	6.2	11.2
1956	—	45.3	18.0	18.7	0.3	6 9	10.8
1957	—	43.6	19.8	18.5	0.2	7.1	10.8
1958	—	41.1	21.7	18.7	0.2	7.0	11.3
1959	—	40.0	22.8	18.9	0.2	6 9	11.1
1960	—	38.4	23.6	19.0	0.2	7.3	11.4
1961	—	37.9	23.1	19.0	0.2	8.1	11.6
1962	—	37.2	24.8	18.7	0.2	7.8	11.3
1963	19.9	35.8	25.2	18.9	0.3	—	—
1964	19.3	34.5	27.0	18.8	0.5	—	—

Source: Compiled from raw data in Israel National Police, *Annual Police Report* for the years 1949–64, ISA.

Proportion of Jewish Civilian Population to Police Population, 1949–1964

Year	Ashkenazi Police (% of total Israel Police)	"Mizrahi" Police (% of total Israel Police)	Ashkenazi Civilians (% of total population)	"Mizrahi" Civilians (% of total population)
1949	72.31	8.80	53.77	18.48
1950	61.56	15.47	51.54	22.21
1951	54.37	25.36	46.93	27.60
1952	48.82	32.04	45.00	27.43
1953	47.81	33.07	43.43	26.87
1954	47.96	33.85	41.71	26.90
1955	46.19	36.37	39.66	27.77
1956	45.59	36.69	37.51	29.11
1957	43.84	38.25	37.15	28.98
1958	41.33	40.39	36.33	28.62
1959	40.20	41.78	35.62	28.10
1960	38.66	42.66	34.98	27.56
1961	38.11	42.18	34.78	27.42
1962	37.37	43.54	33.16	28.40
1963	36.07	44.04	32.19	29.02
1964	35.03	45.71	31.91	28.72

Source: Compiled from raw data in Israel National Police, *Annual Police Report* for the years 1949–64, and Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1948–1965*.

APPENDIX D

Mizrahi Calls for Action, 1950–1955

Pardes Hanna Manifesto, 1950: "Pour une unit[é] solide, pour une lutte constant"

Ceci est un cri de detresse du fond des camps des Olims adressé au peuple d'Israel.

Savez vous ce qu'il y a au Beit Olim, ce que c'est le Beit Olim? Le Beit Olim c'est:

- La femme qui accouche sur le camion d'ordure, l'ambulance ne venant pas.
- Les mort qui doivent faire la queue et attendre parfois plus de trois jours pour etre transportés pa le camion d'ordure àla montagne et ceci aprés avoir servi comme appas aux rats.
- Les enfants qui courent les rues, sans école et sans instruction. Le rapport de maître à esclave entre les employés des bureaux et les olims.
- Le pain dur qu'on sert aux olims.
- L'intervention de la police dans les affaires des olims.

Valeureux Peuple d'Israel,
Comme resultat des conditions de vie inhumaine des olims, des milliers d'olims ont commencé à penser sur la possibilite de retourner de retourner à leur pays d'origine.

Peuple d'Israel,
La lutte que ménent les olims pour ameliorer leur condition de vie et trouver des logements et du travail est en même temps une lutte pour créer les possibilités pour l'absorbtion d'une large immigration. C'est une lutte contre la pensé défaitiste qui est le resultat de la situation terrible des olims.

Les olims ont manifesté plusiers fois, ils ont presenté des pétitions et des demandes et ont refusé la nourriture jusqu'à ce qu'est venue une délégation de

la Sokhnut ayant en tête Mr. Sigal, directeur générale des Batei olims d'Israel. Ce dernier refusa de negocier avec la délégation des olims en exigeant le retrait de la presse de la reunion; pretextant que ces négociatio[n]s étaient plutôt amicales qu'officieles! Mr. Sigal avait l'intention de faire pour encore une fois de fausses promesses et craignait de s'engager devant l'opinion publique. A part le fait qu'un membre de la délégation fût menacé par le bureau d'un des mahanés d'avoir "la gueule cassée" s'il y mettait son pierd une seconde fois.

Apres l'echec des négociations les olims ont organisé une demonstration pacifique pour leurs demandes les plus élémentaires et envoyérent une délégation à Tel-Aviv pour rencontrer les autorités. La police de Pardes Hanna, après avoir permis à cette grande délégation de partir pour Tel-Aviv en camion, decida avec la police de Hédéra d'arrèter la délégation l'acussant de prendre le camion par la force et d'organiser des desordres dans le camp.

Les responsables ont eu recours à la provocation après avoir refusé de repondre aux démandes cette manifestation pacifique!

Citoyens,
L'etat de siège à Pardes Hanna les provocations contre la délégation et la persécution de cette manifestation pacifique, sont des questions ne concernant pas seulement les olims! Demain cette action s'étendra contre les ouvriers à Tel-Aviv, Haifa et Jerusalem. Aujourd'hui ell[e] est dirigée contre les olims demain elle le sera contre tout le peuple!

Voila comment les autorités ond [*sic*] repondu aux demandes des olims Peuple d'Israel!

Le comité des olims vous demande d'aider les olims dans leur lutte pour la réalisation de leurs démandes les plus élémentaires, de lutter contre les responsables de cette situation inhumaine, contre les vrais ennemis de l'absorption des émigrants!

- Pour une lutte pour annuler le procés honteux contre la delegation des olims de Pardes Hanna.
- Pour une lutte pour du tra[v]ail et des logements pour les olims.
- Pour une lutte pour des soins medicaux adequats dans le Batis olims.
- Pour une lutte pour des ecoles pour les enfants des olims.
- Pour une lutte pour la liberte de parole et de manifestation.

Le Comit[é] Général des Olims de Pardes Hanna
Pardess [*sic*] Hanna le 26/01/1950[1]

Pardes Hanna Manifesto, 1950: "For a Solid Unity, for a Constant Struggle"

This is a heartfelt cry of distress from the [immigrant] camps addressed to the people of Israel.

Do you know that there are Beit Olim, [or even] what are Beit Olim? The Beit Olim is:

- Women who give birth in garbage trucks, the ambulance never arrives.
- Dead who must be made to line up in a queue and wait, sometimes more than three days, in order to be transported by garbage trucks to the mountain, and this occurs after having been served up as delicacies for the rats.
- Children who run in the streets, without schools or instruction. The rapport of master to slave between the *ma'abara* clerks and the olim.
- Hard bread that is served to the *olim*.
- The intervention of the police in the affairs of the *olim*.

Valorous people of Israel,
As a result of the inhumane living conditions of immigrants, some thousands of immigrants are considering the possibility of returning to their countries of origin.

People of Israel,
The struggle that the immigrants have led to improve their living condition and to find homes and work is at the same time a struggle to create the possibilities of absorption for a large immigration. This is a struggle against the defeatist thought that this is the result of the terrible [preexisting] situation of the immigrants.

The immigrants have protested several times, they have presented petitions and demands and have put off food just to bring a delegation to the Jewish Agency for Mr. Sigal, general director of [Immigrant Housing] of Israel. He refused to negotiate with the delegation of immigrants and withdrew the press from the meeting, under the pretext that these negotiations were more on an amicable basis rather than an official meeting! Mr. Sigal has the intention to make false promises again and is afraid to engage with public opinion. Apart from the fact that a member of the delegation was threatened by the bureau of the *mahanot* [camps] to have "his face broken" if he stepped foot [in his office] a second time.

After the negotiations failed, the immigrants organized a peaceful demonstration for their demands for the most elementary needs and sent a delegation to Tel Aviv in order to meet with the authorities. The Pardes Hanna Police, after having permitted this large delegation to leave for Tel Aviv in a truck, decided

with the Hadera Police to arrest the delegation, accusing them of taking the truck by force and of creating disorder in the camp. The officials have resorted to provocation after having refused to respond to the demands of this peaceful protest!

Citizens,
The state of siege of Pardes Hanna, the provocations against the delegation, and the persecution of this peaceful protest raise questions that concern not only the immigrants! Tomorrow this action will extend to be against the workers of Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem. Today it is directed against the immigrants; tomorrow it will be against all of the people.

Here is how the authorities have responded to the demands of the immigrants People of Israel!

The committee of immigrants ask you to assist the immigrants in their struggle for the realization of their most elementary demands, to struggle against those responsible for this inhumane situation, against the true enemies of absorption for immigrants!

- For a struggle to annul the humiliating process against the delegation of immigrants of Pardes Hanna.
- For a struggle for work and homes for immigrants.
- For a struggle for adequate medical care in the [immigrant housing].
- For a struggle for schools for the children of immigrants.
- For a struggle for freedom of speech and assembly.

General Committee of Immigrants of Pardes Hanna

Latif Dori: "We, the Residents of the Ma'abara, Will Not Forget"

We will not forget the years that passed of inhumane living conditions, and yet we still are living in shabby camps and unjust canvas tents.

We will not forget the charming promises that divided us, coming from the mouth of Ben Gurion, on the days of the previous elections and that vaporized into the air a day after the elections.

We will not forget the days of thirst in the burning hot summer season. When they rationed off disgusting water to us and when our women and children had to walk long distances to retrieve it.

We will not forget the days of constant unemployment that gnawed at our bodies and the long days that we stood in front of the Employment Office to obtain one day of work.

We will not forget the despicable crimes of Mapai, which instituted a heretical emergency policy of starvation under which we received our daily morsel of bread while the huge revenues entered into the pockets of the realtors.

We will not forget the garbage that surrounded us under the governance of Sharett, Rokah, the Tel Aviv Municipality, and the Herut Party. No, [we will not forget] what they did in Khayria [Hiriya]—threatening our health and the health of our children.

We will not forget how our children walked, with torn clothes and barefoot, prone to diseases and sins.

We will not forget the suspension of social assistance to the elderly and infirm, who are dumped between the tusks of poverty and hunger by the government.

We will not forget the accusations brought forth by the government newspapers and sensationalist journalists against the Oriental community, claiming that [we] form a class of degenerates, thieves, and criminals.

We will not forget the days of massive flooding when we were at the mercy of the harshness of nature and no one responded to our cries.

We will not forget how three years ago both Maki and Mapai stood against the projects of self-reliant *ma'abara* residents, [especially] when they had it in their power to provide housing for us.

We will not be misled by the concerts and money that Mapai deployed left and right so that we would forget the calamities and horrors that descended upon us.

We will not forget the continuous struggle, from atop the Knesset podium and the local council and the municipality, to eliminate the *ma'abara* and provide jobs.

We will not forget the continuous struggle in which Mapam waged war against starvation, discrimination, the *ma'abara* policy, and unemployment.

We will not give out votes to Maki, the enemy of Zionism, or to Ahdut Ha'avodah (as if it were part of the family of vanguard parties) or . . . to Mapai and . . . not to the fascist party Herut.[2]

Eliyahu Eliachar: "White Man's Burden"

The East European Jews, who were in fact also largely instrumental in creating the state of Israel, are largely responsible for the communal problem. It is not only an expression of nineteenth-century nationalism that organized Zionism reflects the European environment in which it was founded. . . . This would not have been at all alarming if the European culture we find in Israel had been of

the mid–twentieth century, and not of the pre–First World War variety. As it is, the European Zionist at many points reflect the cultural trends of the imperial, extrovert Europe, the Europe which firmly believed in "the idea of progress" and which was buried forever in 1918. . . . [W]hat passes for "modern" in Israel is in fact what was modern in 19th century Europe. . . . [I]n this context it is worth pointing out that [the] most ardent devotee of western culture, David Ben Gurion, was educated at the Ottoman University of Constantinople!!!

. . . [T]he East-European Zionists . . . made an axiom out of the belief that "Europe" and "civilization" are different terms for one and the same thing and which saw in the diversity of cultures between Europe and the orient a Divinely-given responsibility (The White Man's Burden) to make *them* like *us*.

It is one of the tragedies of Israel that the East Europeans, . . . [who] still rule the State, left Europe just as two major new trends were achieving significance. One of these was the rise of the belief that European civilization is in decay and that most of its values and ideals were misfounded (this idea finds expression in writers like Spengler and Sorokin, Kafka and Carpeter, etc.). The other major trend was the emergence of the school of cultural anthropology (Ruth Benedict, [Claude] Lévi-Strauss, etc.), which pointed to the impossibility qualitatively of comparing different cultural patterns. Both of these ideas, which have had a considerable impact in many Asian and African countries (cf. Gandhi in India, Iqbal in Pakistan, the "Negritude" of black Africa), appeared too late to condition the policies which were formulated by European Zionists. . . .

In certain vital respects then, the Ashkenazi Jew in Israel is culturally at the same point of intellectual development that his non-Jewish fellow Europeans were a hundred years ago. As a result, he is unable to see that what he mistakes for the *solution* to Israel's communal problem *is in fact non[e] other than the very cause*. . . . It is the very urge to Westernize the Oriental (based on an outdated, nowadays quite un-European assumption that Europe has an exclusive title deed to the word "civilization") which lies at the root of communal tensions in Israel.[3]

APPENDIX E

Police Photos from the Wadi Salib Demonstration in the Haifa Precinct

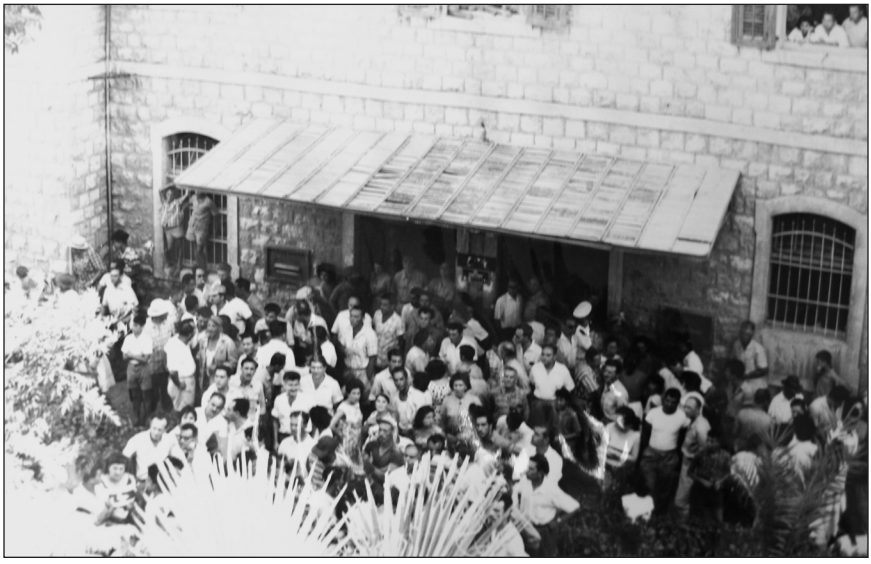

Figure 6. Photo of protest taken outside the Haifa Police Station. From the folder "Investigational Committee into the Wadi Salib Events," 1959, 17252/14-GL, Israel State Archives. Reproduced with permission from Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

Figure 7. “Where Is the Justice? The Police Killed an Innocent Man.” Text of the banner at the center of the photo. From the folder “Investigational Committee into the Wadi Salib Events,” 1959, 17252/14-GL, Israel State Archives. Reproduced with permission from Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

APPENDIX F

Excerpts from the "Etzioni Commission Report," "The North African Letters"

Survey of Letters, October 1958–July 1959

	1958		1959						
	October–November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
Number of letters sent	6,377	6,519	6,402	7,298	7,368	8,041	8,087	11,057	13,254
Number of outgoing letters examined	783	968	1,128	660	1,005	1,149	1,645	971	5,897
Number of outgoing letters returned to writers with warning	5	5	13	101	3	5	2	—	10
Number of letters received	12,937	13,189	13,936	14,042	8,437	6,358	11,509	12,544	8,869
Number of incoming letters examined	6,884	5,785	4,991	4,038	4,922	3,573	—	3,891	2,543
Number of incoming letters released with warning	65	74	69	—	190	49	57	62	163

Source: Data compiled from Office of the Official Censor, Censorship Bureau of the Postal Service and Telegrams, "Documents Submitted to the Etzioni Commission," 1958–59, 17253/6-GL, ISA.

Undated Letters, 1958–1959

From a resident of Jerusalem—"I don't recommend immigrating to the country. Life here is hard and unemployment is [widespread]. Moroccan immigrants complain a lot about the conditions here."[1]

From a resident of Jerusalem—"Dear mother, I await plane tickets from you in order to return to Morocco. I don't have work, and a lot of people, particularly Moroccans, are found in the same situation as me. We suffer quite a lot here. I am tired of the wars and hardships. I [will] travel to France and from there to Morocco. It is impossible to travel directly here to Morocco."

Letters from February 1959

[Judge Etzioni's comments on letters]: Moroccan immigrants—in a general sense there is no talk of changes in the situation of immigrants in Israel. In four of the letters going out to Morocco, France, and Tunisia, there was a negative reaction to the mass immigration from Romania.

"Life is made even more difficult. . . . On the one hand, the provision of labor was reduced to 17 days a month, and on the other hand prices nearly doubled."

[Etzioni]: And there are more assertions that 100 workers—all from the Oriental Community—who worked in the sugar factory in Afula during an extended period of time, were fired from their work because they wanted to make room for immigrants from Romania. They complain that the Employment Center is not concerned with their existence, because of . . . discrimination against those from Oriental countries.

For example, they recall that the Romanian immigrants were directly transferred to *shikkunim* . . . [w]hile at the same time [Orientals] were thrown into the shacks of the *ma'abara*, which are cold in the winter and hot in the summer.

Letters from May 1959

[Etzioni]: Situation of Moroccan immigrants: all signs indicate that the economic situation of Moroccan immigrants is improving. . . .

From a resident of Akko—"We are not in want of anything in Israel. We are all fine and go everyday to the cinema. Only you guys are lacking us."

From a *kibbutz*—"I have been in a kibbutz in Israel [for six months], and, truthfully, I have nothing to complain about. The life in the kibbutz is wonderful, and I have no serious concerns."

From Tiberias—"Thank G-d we lack nothing. I am very satisfied. I even have [a gas stove] in the house, and next month I hope to have a refrigerator. My house is like a little palace."

From Kiryat Eliezer—"I work pretty hard from four in the morning until seven at night. This is difficult, but believe me that I am in good health and life here is better than in Morocco."

Letter from June 1959

From Kibbutz Beit Oren: "[L]ife in Israel has changed quite a lot since the last time. Thankfully, we lack nothing. We have everything we need. Even children from age 16 are healthy as adults."

Notes

Material in Hebrew and Arabic

Unless otherwise noted, articles from *al-Ahram* (Cairo), *al-Difa'a* (Jordan), *al-Hayat* (Beirut), *al-Hurriya* (Herut Party), *Ila al-Amam* (*Kadima*, Mapam Party), *al-Mirsad* (Mapam Party), *Sawt al-Ma'abir* (Mapam Party), and *Yawmiyyat al-Filastiniyya* (Palestinian Diaries, PLO) are in Arabic.

Articles from *9-9-9: Journal of the Israel Police*, *Ba'Ma'aracha*, *Davar* (Histadrut and Mapai Party), *Ha'aretz*, *Al Hamishmar* (Mapam Party), *Ha'olam Hazeh* (Independent Party), *Hed HaMizrah*, *Herut*, *Kol Ha'Am* (Maki Party), *Ma'ariv*, *Rivo'un Mishteret Israel*, and *Shoter Israel* are in Hebrew.

Articles from *Israel's Oriental Problem*, *Jerusalem Post*, *Manchester Guardian*, and *New York Times* are in English.

Also, unless otherwise noted, all material from the Israel National Police folders and annual reports, *Knesset Minutes*, government publications, and the Giv'at Haviva archives is translated into English from Hebrew.

I have translated Arabic and Hebrew titles into English in all cases.

Abbreviations

CZA	Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
ISA	Israel State Archives, Jerusalem
INP	Israel National Police
IOP	*Israel's Oriental Problem*
HHA/GH	Hashomer Hatza'ir Archives (Mapam), Giv'at Haviva, Jerusalem
MK	member of the Knesset

Introduction

1. Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1978*, 137, quoted in Swirski, "The Oriental Jews in Israel," 79.

2. See Shafir, *Land, Labor, and the Origins of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict*; Cohen and Haberfeld, *Rising Wage Inequality*; Bernstein and Swirski, "The Rapid Economic Development

of Israel"; Lewin-Epstein, Semyonov, and Elmelech, "Ethnic Inequality in Home Ownership and the Value of Housing."

3. Shohat, "Sephardim in Israel."

4. Massad, "Zionism's Internal Others"; Chetrit, *The Mizrahi Struggle in Israel* (in Hebrew); Behar, "Palestine, Arabized Jews, and the Elusive Consequences of Jewish and Arab National Formations."

5. Ghanem, *The Palestinian-Arab Minority in Israel*; Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity.*

6. Yiftachel and Tzfadia, "Between Periphery and 'Third Space'"; Lissak, *Mass Immigration in the Fifties* (in Hebrew); Ya'ar, "Continuity and Change in Israeli Society."

7. Scholars who address this aspect of the Mizrahi experience tend to highlight the state's explicit de-Levantization project. See, for example, Smooha, *Israel Pluralism and Conflict*; Shafir, *Land, Labor, and the Origins of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict*; Yonah and Saporta, "The Wavering Luck of Girls"; Y. Cohen and Haberfeld, *Rising Wage Inequality and the Wage-Gap between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim*.

8. Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*, 218.

9. Robinson and Scaglion, "The Origin and Evolution of the Police Function in Society," 113–14.

10. Shadmi, "Police and Police Reform in Israel," 208.

11. Caspi, "Policing the Holy Land 1918–1957," 323. See also HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 214–21.

12. Caspi, "Policing the Holy Land," 323–24.

13. HaCohen, *The Grain and the Millstone* (in Hebrew), 194.

14. See Tzfadia and Yiftachel, "Between Urban and National"; Shohat, "The Invention of the Mizrahim" and "The Narrative of the Nation and the Discourse of Modernization"; Massad, "Zionism's Internal Others"; Chetrit, "Mizrahi Politics in Israel"; U. Cohen and Leon, "The New Mizrahi Middle Class."

15. See Giladi, *Discord in Zion*. To a lesser extent, Sami Chetrit, Oren Yiftachel, and Dvora HaCohen have also provided historical accounts of Mizrahi protests external to the Wadi Salib events. See Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict*; Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*; and HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*.

16. Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict*.

17. Kemp, "'Wandering Peoples' or 'The Great Burning,'" 65.

18. For the specifics of the functionalist-modernist school, see Eisenstadt, *The Absorption of Immigrants*.

19. For a full evaluation of the trajectory of Israeli sociology, refer to Ram, *The Changing Identity of Israeli Sociology*, and Smooha, "Three Approaches to the Sociology of Ethnic Relations in Israel."

20. For further information on the subject of defending the state, turn to Levy, Lomsky-Feder, and Harel, "From 'Obligatory Militarism' to 'Contractual Militarism'"; Y. Levy, "Militarizing Inequality"; Smooha, "Ethnicity and the Military in Israel" (in Hebrew);

Eli[yahu] Eliachar, "Tailpiece: What Orientals Can Contribute," *Israel's Oriental Problem* (*IOP*), Jan. (1968): 10–12.

21. Ben-David, "The Sociological Examination of the Problem," quoted in Ajzenstadt, "The Study of Crime and Social Control in Israel," 12.

22. Refer to N. Cohen, "Territorial Stigma Formation in the Israeli City of Bat Yam."

23. Lehman-Wilzig, "Public Protests against Central and Local Government in Israel," 114 n. 27.

24. Ibid., 114.

25. Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel*.

26. Shaul Rozolio, "The Police Officer as a Social Change Agent," address at the Social Work Colloquium, Hebrew Univ., May 18, 1972, quoted in Shadmi, "Police and Police Reform in Israel," 218.

27. "Communal Relations," in Israel National Police (INP), *Annual Police Report*, 1960, 48.

28. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1954, 44.

29. For data on the various ethnic groups in the Israel Police in the period examined, see the *Annual Police Report* for 1948–66 and appendix C in this book. European immigrants represented 72 percent of the police's ethnic makeup in the State of Israel's first years and showed a steady decline to 41 percent in 1958, when they were roughly equal in number to the Asian and African Jewish police officers. However, Polish immigrants held the overwhelming majority of high-ranking positions well into the 1960s.

30. See Kemp, "'Wandering Peoples' or 'The Great Burning.'"

31. Ibid., 45, 65; Ram, *The Changing Identity of Israeli Sociology*, 30–33.

32. See Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*, figure 9.2, "Locational Choices: What Is the Most Important Reason for Your Living in the Town?" 218.

33. Quoted in Eisenstadt, *The Absorption of Immigrants*, 156.

34. Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*, 218.

35. Zenner, "Sephardic Communal Organizations in Israel."

36. Dieckhoff, "Israel," 45, emphasis added.

37. Dahan-Calev, "Protest" (in Hebrew).

38. Tarrow, *Power in Movement*.

39. Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel*, 74–75.

40. Kabaha, "Oriental Jews in the Arab Press in Israel" (in Hebrew), 454–55.

41. Ein-Gil and Machover, "Zionism and Oriental Jews," 66. This assertion may be a result of Ein-Gil and Machover's lack of Arabic source materials.

42. Hodes, *From India to Israel*, 171.

43. For examples of such scholarship on Middle Eastern Jewish intellectual production, see Motzafi-Haller, "Mizrahi Intellectuals 1946–1951" (in Hebrew); Behar and Ben-Dor Benite, *Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought*; and Behar and Ben-Dor Benite, "The Possibility of Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought."

44. For detailed accounts of these events and their societal implications, see Elkaïm, *Panthères Noires d'Israël*; Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel*; Bernstein, "The Black Panthers of Israel 1971–1972"; Dahan-Calev, "Self-Organizing Systems" (in Hebrew).

45. Chetrit, "Mizrahi Politics in Israel," 51.

46. Ibid., 52–53. See also Smooha, "The Mass Immigrations to Israel," 9.

47. Giladi, *Discord in Zion*, 252, 253, emphasis added.

48. Meir-Glitzenstein, "Conflicting Obligations."

49. A good example of this sentiment can be found in several confiscated manifesto letters written in French, Arabic, and Hebrew. See in particular "Pardes Hanna Manifesto (1950): For a Solid Unity, for a Constant Struggle—the General Committee of Immigrants of Pardes Hanna," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–1954," Jan. 26, 1950, 3/21-L, Israel State Archives (ISA), given in French and English in appendix D in this book.

50. Diani, "The Concept of Social Movement," 13.

51. Eli[yahu] Eliachar, " . . . By the People, for the People," *IOP*, Aug. (1965): 1.

52. Evidence of this suppression is seen in a case in which three Moroccan immigrants were arrested for incitement against the government, despite the fact that no one in the INP was able to translate the posters written in Moroccan Arabic. See "Confiscation of Posters in Moroccan Judeo-Arabic," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–1954," Apr. 11, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

53. The limitations of newspapers as a singular primary source are discussed in Boguslaw et al., "From Protest to Agenda Building"; Barranco and Wisler, "Validity and Systematicity of Newspaper Data in Event Analysis."

54. Olzak, "Analysis of Events in the Study of Collective Action"; Koopmans and Statham, "Political Claims Analysis"; Martin et al., "The Use of Newspaper Data in the Study of Collective Action."

55. Barranco and Wisler, "Validity and Systematicity of Newspaper Data."

56. See Fishman, *Between the Police and the Press*; INP, "Special Links to Society," in *Annual Police Report*, 1948–59.

57. See an example of the database I used in appendix A.

58. This denial of my request runs contrary to the ISA's own official policy that police folders from 1948 to 1973 are declassified and available for review.

59. Thus far no scholar has made use of the Israel Police as a source specifically for documenting the history of Mizrahi rebellions. To my knowledge, only Hillel Cohen has made extensive use of the archives of the Israel Police, but his study *Good Arabs* deals with the issue of collaboration in the Palestinian–Israeli community.

60. Beinin, "The Seamen's Strike and Israel's International Orientation" and "Confirmation of Mapai Hegemony," in *Was the Red Flag Flying There?*

61. Even newspapers seemed to give attention to the issue only after 1966. Consult Weiss, "The Children of Yemen."

62. See a review of this debate in Behar, "What's in a Name?"

1. Building and Organizing the Israel Police, 1948–1958

1. "Proposal of the Situational Committee to Establish a Police Force in the Jewish State," Dec. 31, 1947, Central Zionist Archives (CZA), Jerusalem, reproduced in Hod and Shadmi, *History of the Israel Police, Part One* (in Hebrew), 210–15.

2. The Haganah, the IDF's direct predecessor, was one of the Zionist paramilitary organizations during the British Mandate. Other groups (e.g., Lehi and Etzel) were not looked upon fondly in the postindependence period because they were considered terrorist organizations.

3. Sahar, *Story of My Life* (in Hebrew), 93.

4. For further historical insight into the transitional period, refer to Caspi, "Policing the Holy Land."

5. "Mortar Attack on Akko—140 Prisoners Escape," *Ma'ariv*, Apr. 26, 1948; "The Haganah Severely Attacks Akko," *Davar*, Apr. 27, 1948.

6. Sahar, *Story of my Life*, 93.

7. INP, *Annual Police Report: The Police in a Decade 1948–1957*, 7.

8. There is some difficulty in citing figures for non-Jewish, Palestinian-origin policemen because the phrasing in the *Annual Police Report* does not mutually exclude Jewish officers born in Israel/Palestine. However, between 1951 and 1962 the commissioner included in the annual report commentary on the number of Arab policemen.

9. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1948–59; Abbas, *From Ingathering to Integration*, 17.

10. For an in-depth discussion of this concept in a general sense, refer to Herbert, "The Geopolitics of the Police," and Pasquino, "Theatrum Politicum."

11. Refer to "Israelis to Use East Jerusalem for Police Base," *New York Times*, July 2, 1969, and *Yawmiyyat al-Filastiniyya* (Palestinian Diaries), Dec. 13, 1966 (articles identified only by date). For a brief overview of the controversy surrounding Sheikh Jarrah, see Shragai, "The U.S.–Israeli Dispute over Building in Jerusalem."

12. Arieli, *Police Manual* (in Hebrew), 5.

13. Editors' text in Hod and Shadmi, *History of the Israel Police, Part One*, 164–65.

14. INP, *Annual Police Report: The Police in a Decade 1948–1957*, 2.

15. Sahar, *Story of My Life*, 92.

16. Sahar, "In the Service of a State on Its Way," in ibid., 83–90.

17. Ha'etzani et al., *Danger Lurks—from Within!* (in Hebrew), 20–24.

18. Ibid., 23.

19. Commissioner Yehezkiel Sahar, "Ordinance 20—Meaning of Forbidding Private Work," in INP, *Collection of Ordinances from the National Headquarters 1948–1952* (in Hebrew), 1953, 12.

20. Shurat Hamitnadvim, *Excerpts from the Trial of Amos Ben-Gurion* (in Hebrew).

21. Editors' text in Hod and Harel, *Israel Police 1948–2004* (in Hebrew), 52.

22. Caspi, "Policing the Holy Land," 217–397.

23. State of Israel, Provisional State Council, hearings, 4th sess., June 17, 1948, 22–26, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem; Caspi, "Policing the Holy Land," 400.

24. Eliyahu (Eli) Eliachar, *Knesset Minutes*, Mar. 9, 1949, 104, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem.

25. Ibid.

26. The police minister's functions directly copied those given in the *British Criminal Ordinance of 1926*, as given in INP, *Police Ordinance and Regulations*, 19–20. Caspi also provides a concise summary of each of the minister's duties in "Policing the Holy Land," 397–99.

27. Editors' text in Hod and Shadmi, *History of the Israel Police, Part One*, 350.

28. INP, *Annual Police Report: The Police in a Decade 1948–1957*, 23.

29. Ibid., 22–23.

30. The demonstration in question is detailed in "Demonstration Next to the Sokhnut," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Tel Aviv, June 22, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

31. This law was widely publicized. See "The Knesset 'Immunes' Itself," *Ma'ariv*, Jan. 23, 1952.

32. "Letter to Northern District Commander: Damage to Private Property While Fulfilling an Order on June 22, 1952," in the INP folder "Northern Branch: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1951–52," July 30, 1952, 11/19-L, ISA.

33. Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, *The Israeli Economy in 1950*, 31–32.

34. See the table "Proportion of Jewish Civilian Population to Police Population, 1949–1964" in appendix C.

35. Binyamin Salim Sasson, "Demonstration of Iraqi Immigrants Next to the Jewish Agency Offices in Tel Aviv," *Knesset Minutes*, July 9, 1952, p. 2594.

36. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1954.

37. Cashmore and McLaughlin, *Out of Order?* 93.

38. Cooper, *The Police and the Ghetto*, 120, quoted in Cashmore and McLaughlin, *Out of Order?* 97.

39. Cashmore and McLaughlin, *Out of Order?* 97.

40. Bechor Shitreet, "The Police and *Mizug Hagaluyot*," *9-9-9: Journal of the Israel Police*, Mar. 1953.

41. Abbas, *From Ingathering to Integration*, 17.

42. *Bourekas* films are comedic melodramas popular in the 1960s and 1970s. Named after *bourekas*, a filo-dough Turkish pastry, these films were considered lowbrow and were very popular with Mizrahi audiences.

43. David Ben-Haroush, testimony, in the folder "Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib" (commissioned by the Knesset and known as the "Etzioni Commission Report"), July 26, 1959, 17:00, file 6, 17253/3-GL, ISA.

44. It is not clear from the annual police reports which sector(s) (e.g., Druze, Christian, or Muslim) of the population of Palestinian citizens of Israel served in the Israel Police.

45. Peri's estimates were based on statistics from 1952, when Palestinian citizens of Israel were only 5.6 percent of the police force. However, during the year he made his statements, this figure jumped to 7 percent. His statements are recorded in "We Do Not Agree with the Suppression of Freedoms or with a Police State," *al-Mirsad*, Mar. 12, 1953.

46. The Qibya massacre occurred on October 14, 1953, when IDF forces, led by Ariel Sharon, conducted a reprisal raid against the border village of Qibya and killed about sixty-nine Palestinian civilians. The raid was claimed to be a response to the killing of three Israelis two days earlier in the town of Yehud. For a brief history of the Qibya massacre, consult Morris, "The Israeli Press and the Qibya Operation, 1953."

47. The perpetrators of the massacre of forty-eight innocent civilians were Border Patrol policemen acting under the orders of IDF colonel Yiskhar Shadmi. The mass slaughter occurred on the eve of the Suez Crisis on October 29, 1956.

48. Refer to Situational Committee, "Proposal of the Situational Committee to Establish a Police Force in the Jewish State" (in Hebrew), Dec. 31, 1947, CZA.

49. Ibid.

50. Caspi, "Policing the Holy Land," 398.

51. Although nearly all of the accused officers were Ashkenazi, mainstream discourse presented the Kufur Qasim massacre as a brutal incident perpetrated by uneducated, Arab-hating Moroccans. Shira Robinson makes reference to this discourse in "Local Struggle, National Struggle," n. 15.

52. INP, *Documents on the Police Ordinance* (in Hebrew), 1952, 47.

53. Arieli, *Police Manual*, 53.

54. INP, *Documents on the Police Ordinance*, 47.

55. Arieli, *Police Manual*.

56. Refer to appendix B in this book, "Illustrations from *9-9-9*."

57. "Strike of Laid-off Police Officers," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Tel Aviv, Apr. 6, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

58. Ibid.

59. "Fired Policemen Organize a Sit-down Strike," *Ma'ariv*, Apr. 6, 1949.

60. INP, *Annual Police Report: The Police in a Decade 1948–1957*, 41.

61. Rivka Kashtan, "They Don't Pull Out Anymore Knives . . . ," *9-9-9*, Feb. 1954. The article title itself uses a prevalent racist stereotype of knife-wielding Moroccan immigrants (in Hebrew, "Marokai-Sakin"). Refer to the cover of the February 1954 edition of *9-9-9*, "Crime Problems in the *Ma'abarot*."

62. "Crime in the Country—There Is No Basis for the Opinion That 'Most of the Crime Is a Result of New Immigration'!" *9-9-9*, Mar. 1952.

63. "Communal Relations," in INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1951, 32.

64. "Classified—Immigrant Housing Statistics Letter to Haifa Police Branch," in the INP folder, "Hadera Branch—Investigations into New Immigrants," Apr. 11, 1951, 2/7-L, ISA.

65. "Supervision over Gathering," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Hadera, Mar. 4, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

66. "Supervision over Gathering," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Hadera, Apr. 16, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

67. "Relationship with the Community," in INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1950, 27–28.

68. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1958, 39.

69. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1950, 27, emphasis added.

70. Wurmser, "Post-Zionism and the Sephardi Question."

71. "Relationship with the Community," in INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1950.

72. Refer to Minister of Police Bechor Shitreet's parliamentary discussion: "Riots in the Immigrant Camps of Ein Shemer and Beit-Lid; Demonstration in Netzeret," *Knesset Minutes*, Feb. 27, 1950, pp. 858–59.

73. Although the constables' official rank stood at "supernumerary constable," they were invariably referred to as *notrim*, "guards." This title was also used for communal guards during the British Mandate.

74. Refer to "Riots in the Immigrant Camps of Ein Shemer and Beit-Lid; Demonstration in Netzeret," 859.

75. For a detailed review of the IDF's role in the *ma'abarot* during this period, refer to HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 214–21.

76. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1951, 32.

77. Ibid.

78. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1950–52.

79. Refer to the section titled "Taking Care of the *Ma'abara*," in INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1950–51.

80. INP, *Annual Police Report*, 1951, 32.

81. "Taking Care of the *Ma'abarot* and Those Injured by the Flooding," in *Annual Police Report*, 1951, 32–33.

82. "Unlawful Demonstration," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Petah Tikvah, Feb. 25, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

83. Ibid.

84. "Letter to Jerusalem District Chief," in the INP folder "Ramleh/Jerusalem: Demonstrations and Disturbances, 1949," Jerusalem, Mar. 13, 1949, 37/8-L, ISA.

85. "Riots in the Immigrant Camps of Ein Shemer and Beit-Lid; Demonstration in Netzeret," 858–59.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. This dichotomy has been discussed at length in Dahan-Calev, "Protest" (in Hebrew).

2. The Foundations of the Mizrahi Civil Rights Struggle, 1948–1958

1. "Protestors," *Davar*, Feb. 23, 1949.

2. "Protestors Break into Sokhnut Building in Haifa," *Davar*, May 9, 1949.

3. Quoted in ibid.

4. S. Hasson, *Immigrant Housing in Israel's Veteran Cities* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Hebrew Univ., 1977), quoted in Golan, "Lydda and Ramle," no page.

5. "Demonstration of Ramleh Residents," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Tel Aviv, July 26, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

6. By noon, the total number of police officers present at this demonstration constituted approximately 4 to 6 percent of the entire working police force.

7. "Demonstration of Ramleh Residents."

8. *Knesset Minutes*, July 26, 1949, pp. 1137–38.

9. Quoted in "The State—and the Immigrants Inside It—Do Not Reconcile with Rioting," *Davar*, July 27, 1949.

10. *Knesset Minutes*, July 26, 1949, p. 1137.

11. *Knesset Minutes*, July 26, 1949, p. 1138. The Mapai member's name is concealed in the Knesset transcripts.

12. Ibid.

13. "Demonstration Next to the Gates of the Knesset," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Tel Aviv, July 26, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

14. For example, a protest of mostly Romanians demanding bread and work occurred on May 6, 1949. See "Protest and Calls on Herzl Street," *Davar*, May 8, 1949.

15. "Protest of the Unemployed in Jerusalem as Well," *Ma'ariv*, July 28, 1949.

16. "Letter from Municipal Chief Alperin Addressed to Regional Chief Y. Peleg and Tel Aviv Mayor," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Tel Aviv, Oct. 31, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

17. Consult the mass collection of posters in the following INP folders: "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," 3/21-L, ISA; "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," 14/4-L, ISA; and "Strikes, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Order, 1955," 42/16-L, ISA.

18. "Confiscation of Posters Written in Moroccan Judeo-Arabic," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Binyamina, Apr. 11, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

19. "Report on Demonstration Next to Knesset," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Tel Aviv, Oct. 27, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

20. "Children's Demonstration," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Tel Aviv, Nov. 17, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

21. "*Ma'abara* Kiryat Ono Residents in Front of the Jewish Agency Buildings," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951," Tel Aviv, Sept. 12, 1951, 13/30-L, ISA.

22. "Letter from Herzliya Ma'abara," *al-Mirsad*, Sept. 30, 1953.

23. HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 196.

24. "Demonstrations in the Petah Tikvah Area, 1952—Demonstration against Cutting Off Water Supply, Demonstrators Block the Roads in Sakia Aleph," Petah Tikvah, May 5, 1952, and "Gathering and Riot against Cutting Off Water Supply," Kfar 'Ana, July 27, 1952, both in the INP folder "Strikes, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Order, 1955," 42/16-L, ISA (that a document from 1952 is in a folder for 1955 demonstrates the disorganization of the INP folders).

25. Refer to the transcript interview "Compte rendu sténographique de la recontre entres le premier ministre et les Panthères noires à Jerusalem le 13 Avril 1971," in Elkaïm, *Panthères Noires d'Israël*, 55–92.

26. The Ministry of Posts, which existed until 1970, systemically seized and examined letters between immigrants and their relatives abroad. This practice is discussed further in chapter 5. Appendix F provides statistics on the examination of the letters as well as excerpts from some letters.

27. Kozlovsky, "Temporal States of Architecture," 139.

28. Eliyahu Eliachar, "Representing the People," *IOP*, Apr. 1965.

29. A list of most of these journals can be found in Habiba, *The Israeli Press*.

30. Rosen, *Ma'abarot and Immigrant Residences*, 312, cited in HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 209. Rosen was the director of the Division for Immigrant Residences in the Ministry of Interior.

31. Ibn Sakia Bet, "In the Camps of the Newcomers: Here Is Your Democracy," *al-Mirsad*, Feb. 13, 1953. This statement was specifically in reference to the *Davar* article titled "A New Immigrant Settlement Is Being Built—Bika'at Ono," Jan. 9, 1953, which lauded the municipality's efforts to allow voting and assistance with education and cleanliness in the camps.

32. Daoud Yusuf [David Cohen], "A Region without Representation," *al-Mirsad*, June 24, 1954.

33. General Committee of Immigrants of Pardes Hanna, "For a Solid Unity, for a Permanent Revolution" (in Hebrew, French, and Arabic), in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Pardes Hanna, Jan. 26, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA. For the manifesto in French and an English translation of it, see appendix D.

34. Giladi, *Discord in Zion* (English translation), 118.

35. General Committee of Immigrants of Pardes Hanna, "For a Solid Unity, for a Permanent Revolution."

36. The desire of large segments of the North African immigrant population to return to their countries of origin is mentioned already in 1953. Refer to "Why Are There Returnees Back to North Africa?" *Ma'ariv*, July 6, 1953, and Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel 1955–56*.

37. General Committee of Immigrants of Pardes Hanna, "For a Solid Unity, for a Permanent Revolution."

38. "Suspect," in the INP folder "Investigations into New Immigrants, 1950–51," May 7, 1951, 2/7-L, ISA.

39. For example, Hannah Yavlonka notes that in 1953 only one-fifth of the residents of the *ma'abarot* and other temporary residences were of European descent. Refer to the table in her article "European Immigrants and Awareness of the Holocaust" (in Hebrew), 48.

40. "Release the Arrested Immigrants" (in French), in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Mar. 3, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

41. Ibid.

42. As indicated in the ISA folder 1901/c, the Kfar Saba Archives, the Hadera Archives, the Petah Tikvah Archives, cited in HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 209.

43. "Manifesto—Union of Babylonian Immigrants in Israel," in the folder "Department of Oriental Jews, 1956–60," (2) 133.90, Hashomer Hatza'ir Archives, Giv'at Haviva (HHA/GH), Jerusalem.

44. "Letter to David Cohen," *Bulletin de L'union des originaires de Tunisie en Israel*, Union of Tunisian-Origin Jews Central Committee, Apr. 1960, p. 1, in the folder "Department of Oriental Jews, 1956–60," (2) 133.90, HHA/GH.

45. Ibid., p. 5.

46. HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 207.

47. "Telegraph to Bekhor Shitreet from Ma'abara Petah Tikvah," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951," Tel Aviv, Feb. 19, 1951, 13/30-L, ISA.

48. "Residents of Ma'abara Sakia and Ramat Hasharon Next to Jewish Agency," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951," Tel Aviv, Dec. 2, 1951, 13/30-L, ISA.

49. "Demonstration in Immigrant Housing—Pardes Hanna," in the INP folder "Investigations into New Immigrants, 1950–51," Pardes Hanna Gimmel, Apr. 4, 1951, 2/7-L, ISA.

50. "Riots in the Immigrant Camps of Ein Shemer and Beit-Lid; Demonstration in Netzeret," *Knesset Minutes*, Feb. 27, 1950, p. 859.

51. "Report on Gathering of Iraqi Immigrants," in the INP folder "Investigations into New Immigrants, 1950–51," Pardes Hanna Gimmel, Apr. 3, 1951, 2/7-L, ISA.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. "Demonstration in Immigrant Housing—Pardes Hanna."

55. "Disturbing the Peace in Your Villages," in the INP folder "Dangers to the Community, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Peace, 1955," Ramleh, Sept. 15, 1955, 37/7-L, ISA.

56. Ibid. In the margins of the letter is a brief note to remove this statement; however, it is not clear whether it was removed in the final draft sent to the Ramleh families.

57. This full expression of immigrant voices is demonstrated by the Arabic writings of Oriental Jewry within Mapam-distributed journals. For further details, consult Magal, "*Al-Mirsad*," 115.

58. "Quarrel in Sakia Bet (Sergeant's Report) Sakia Bet," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Petah Tikvah, Apr. 16, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

59. "Comrade Siyuma Mironiansky Was Murdered by Jewish Police Sergeants," *Kol Ha'Am*, Sept. 9, 1948.

60. "News Report from *Kol Ha'Am*," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Press and the Police, 1948," Tel Aviv, Sept. 11, 1948, 13/4-L, ISA.

61. Although news articles never mentioned Steinberg's first name, his rank, surname, and location in Rehovot indicates that this was the same Steinberg implicated in the Mironiansky murder. For a summary of his testimony, turn to "More Testimony from the Mysterious Investigations into Siyuma Mironiansky," *Davar*, Dec. 13, 1948.

62. "Communal Brawl in Hatikvah Neighborhood," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951," Tel Aviv, July 28, 1951, 13/30-L, ISA.

63. Ibid.

64. "Report on Disturbing the Peace," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1950," Tel Aviv, Jan. 28, 1950, 13/27-L, ISA.

65. "We Do Not Agree with the Suppression of Freedoms or with a Police State," *al-Mirsad*, Mar. 12, 1953; "Break-in into the Maki Club and Damage to Property," in the INP folder "Dangers to the Community, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Peace, 1955," Ramleh, Dec. 22, 1955, 37/7-L, ISA; "Gathering of Romanian Immigrants in Immigrants Camps in Ein Shemer," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Karkour, Oct. 8, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA; "Demonstration of Immigrants from Ma'abara or Yehuda (Sakia)," in the INP folder "Northern Branch: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1951–52," Tel Aviv, June 26, 1951, 11/18-L, ISA.

66. "Explosion Next to the Communist Youth Club," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Tel Aviv, Dec. 28, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

67. Quoted in "We Do Not Agree with the Suppression of Freedoms or with a Police State."

68. Leaflets and protest signs throughout the decade indicate these sentiments. Refer to "Riot Police among Mass Demonstrators! Stop the Wave of Terror!" in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1950," Tel Aviv, Feb. 2, 1950, 13/27-L, ISA, as well as to "Unlawful Demonstration," Petah Tikvah, Feb. 25, 1952, and "Free the Soldier Ezra [name omitted]!" Oct. 9, 1952, both in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," 14/4-L, ISA.

69. United Nations, *General Progress Report*.

70. Magal, "*Al-Mirsad*," 115.

71. Aryeh Magal also mentions the importance of this terminological stance in ibid., 120.

72. This statement was included in the editors' opening comments about the journal in *al-Jadid* 1 (1953), its first issue.

73. For example, *Kol Ha'Am* was forced to close for fifteen days following the publication of a controversial article on the Korean War. For a review of the effects of this landmark court case, turn to Kretzmer, "Notes: The New Basic Laws on Human Rights."

74. "Conversation between A. Vilanski and B. Sheetrit," *Knesset Minutes*, July 21, 1952, no page.

75. Refer to the folders "Personal Archives of Yosef Vashitz—Correspondence to *al-Mirsad* (Arabic and Hebrew), 1954–60," (6) 17.35–95, HHA/GH, and "Department of Oriental Jews 1956–60," (2) 133.90, HHA/GH.

76. "Letter between David Cohen and Eliyahu ben-Yitshak," in the folder "Mapam: Department of Oriental Jews, 1956–59," (2) 129.90, HHA/GH.

77. Magal, "*Al-Mirsad*."

78. N. Giladi, *Ben Gurion's Scandals*, 9. Giladi did not provide the year in which the demonstration occurred or say which of Ben-Gurion's racist policies he was referring to, so it is difficult to substantiate his claim that he organized such a massive demonstration.

79. Latif Dori, "To My Arab Brother," *al-Mirsad*, Sept. 16, 1954.

80. Ibid.

81. The term *sharqiyyin* would be the equivalent of the contemporary term *Mizrahim*.

82. Hashomer Hatza'ir Ma'abara David, "O Soldiers of Israel," *Sawt al-Ma'abir*, 1955 (no specific dates available for articles from *Sawt al-Ma'abir*).

83. Undated *Knesset Minutes*, reproduced in "Winter Is Coming, so Where Are the Houses?" *Sawt al-Ma'abir*, 1955.

84. Latif Dori, "*Ma'abara* Youth, Where Are They Headed?" and "Greetings from the *Ma'abara* Youth," *al-Mirsad*, Dec. 16, 1954.

85. These *ma'abarot* were the sites of the depopulated Palestinian villages of al-Hiriya and Saqia, respectively. In 1952, a large waste dump was constructed just south of the Hiriya *ma'abara*.

86. Latif Dori, "Brotherly Blessing to an Independent Algeria" (in Hebrew), in the folder "Latif Dori: Personal Archives, 1958–76," July 15, 1962, (2) 2.71–95, HHA/GH.

87. Dori, "Greetings from the *Ma'abara* Youth."

88. It appears that Dori is referring to the organizers of the al-Wathba Uprising in 1948. Following the establishment of Israel and the Soviet Union's official support, some Iraqi Communists were against Iraqi involvement in the Arab–Israeli War of 1948. See Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq*, 547–59.

89. The names "Glubb Pasha," "Nuri al-Sa'id," and "Gamel Abdel-Nasser" are given in reference to what Mapam considered the history of Egypt's colonial puppet rulers.

90. Dori, "Greetings from the *Ma'abara* Youth."

91. Dori, "To My Arab Brother."

92. For example, there was a fight between a few soldiers just released from the army and Arab Israeli youth in a mixed area in Jaffa, but both the Arab and the Jewish communities were under the impression that the fight would explode into a massive communal brawl. See "Brawl between Iraqis and Arabs," in the INP folder "Hashfelah/Ramleh: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1952," Ramleh, July 2, 1952, 6/22-L, ISA; "Disturbing the Peace

in Yaffo: 'Jews Attack Arabs' and 'Arabs Attack Jews,'" in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Yaffo, Oct. 4, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

93. Out of more than 600 police reports examined, only five incidents merited a state of alert. Two of these alerts were made for peaceful protests.

94. "People's Rally—Communist Party," in the INP folder "Strikes, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Order," Tel Aviv, Jan. 12, 1953, 42/16-L, ISA.

95. There were various other signs, but the slogans given here were the ones recorded by the police officer at the scene. Ibid.

96. Gideon Giladi, "Myths and Incitement," *al-Mirsad*, Mar. 12, 1953.

97. Giladi referred here to the Deir Yassin Massacre of April 1948, perpetuated by the Irgun and Lehi.

98. Giladi, "Myths and Incitement."

99. Ibid.

100. G. Ajluny, "Is Sawt Isra'il the Real [Voice of Israel]?" *al-Mirsad*, Dec. 17, 1953.

101. Farouk I, perceived as a British puppet, was deposed as king of Egypt during the Egyptian Revolution of 1952. Nuri al-Sa'id was the prime minister of Iraq.

102. Hebrew: the "Voice of the Ashkenazim."

103. "The Voice of Israel?" *IOP*, May 1965.

104. Hesqil A'aqari mentioned his delight in reading Za'arur's article and gave some identifying information about Za'arur in "Sawt al-Ma'abir Diary," *Sawt al-Ma'abir*, 1954, 12. For information on the pamphlet, consult Habiba, *The Israeli Press*.

105. Menashe Za'arur, "Iraqi Jews Caught between Two Colonialisms within the Diaspora and in Israel," *al-Mirsad*, Sept. 4, 1954.

106. Gideon Giladi, "Injustice and Starvation in the Negev," *al-Mirsad*, Apr. 9, 1954.

107. David Cohen was in fact Mapam's Oriental Department secretary. Cohen wrote under quite a number of pseudonyms, including "Farid," "Ibn Hiriya," "Kohen," "Daoud Yousef," and "Struggler for the Elimination of the *Ma'abara*." A list of his noms de guerre is found in the folder "David Cohen Letters for the Mapam Oriental Jewish Department 1956," Document 139, HHA/GH.

108. Farid [David Cohen], "Lingering of the Unemployed, Discriminatory *Ma'abarot*, and the Coalition Government," *Ila al-Amam*, 1955 (specific date unknown).

109. See Za'arur, "Iraqi Jews Caught between Two Colonialisms," and Cohen, "Lingering of the Unemployed."

110. Magal goes further in depth on the conflict between central Mapam leaders, on the one hand, and Palestinian and Mizrahi writers, on the other. Refer to Ya'ari to Flapan, Oct. 5, 1956, Mapam, (6) 14.7.95, HHA/GH, quoted in Magal, "*Al-Mirsad*," 143.

111. Cohen, "Lingering of the Unemployed."

112. Latif Dori, "We, the Residents of the *Ma'abara*, Will Not Forget," *Ila al-Amam* 1955, HHA/GH. See the English translation of this article in appendix D.

113. After the Prague Trials in the Soviet Union in 1952, Mapam (a formerly pro-Soviet party) took an anti-Soviet stance. As a consequence, Maki split from Mapam and was thereafter effectively the only Soviet-aligned party.

114. Dori, "We, the Residents of the *Ma'abara*, Will Not Forget."

115. Avraham Abbas, "Youth and Education," *al-Mirsad*, June 17, 1954, emphasis added.

116. Here the Mizrahi youth are referred to as "newcomers," but the widespread use of this term for Oriental immigrants in *al-Mirsad* leaves no ambiguity in its meaning.

117. David Cohen, "Discrimination and Mizug Hagaluyot," *Ila al-Amam*, June 24, 1958.

118. "Letter to Judge Etzioni from Kalman Levin," in "Statistics: Tables Concerning the Number of North African Immigrants, Ma'abarot Population, Etc.," Aug. 9, 1959, in the folder "Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib," 1959, GL-17252/9, ISA.

119. Quoted in Cohen, "Discrimination and Mizug Hagaluyot."

3. Resistance Tactics in the *Ma'abarot*, 1950–1953

1. HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 156.

2. "Iraqi Jewish Immigration during the *Ma'abara* Period," in the folder "David Cohen Letters for the Mapam Oriental Jewish Department," 1956, Document 139, HHA/GH.

3. Ibid.

4. Lissak, *Mass Immigration in the Fifties*, 4.

5. "Society of Tripolitarian and Benghazi Jews: For the Sake of Torah Education" (in Judeo-Arabic), in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Apr. 1, 1949, 3/21-L, ISA.

6. INP, "Classified—Confiscation of Poster by the Police," National Headquarters, Apr. 5, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

7. "Attack on Police by Immigrants in Ein Shemer," Ein Shemer, Feb. 14, 1950; "Gathering in Immigrant Housing in Ein Shemer," Ein Shemer, Mar. 13, 1950; and "Gathering in Ein Shemer Immigrant Camps," Ein Shemer, Mar. 3, 1950, all in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," 3/21-L, ISA.

8. "Attack on Police by Immigrants in Ein Shemer."

9. Ibid.

10. "The Collection of Testimonies Continues Concerning the Riots in the Camps," *Al Hamishmar*, Mar. 9, 1950.

11. "Gathering in Ein Shemer Immigrant Camps."

12. This version of the incident, including its strange developments, is based completely on the eyewitness account of the police officer present.

13. "Report on Gathering in Immigrant Housing in Ein Shemer," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Karkour, Mar. 13, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

14. "Ein Shemer Immigrant Camp Gets Agitated after Shooting," *Ma'ariv*, Apr. 8, 1950.

15. "Murder Incident—Ya'akov Jarafi," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Ein Shemer, Apr. 8, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

16. Refer to the accounts "Immigrant Shot to Death by Guard in the Immigrant Camp of Ein Shemer," *Herut*, Apr. 8, 1950, and "Immigrant Shot to Death by Guard in Ein Shemer Camp," *Al Hamishmar*, Apr. 8, 1950.

17. "Ein Shemer Immigrant Camp Gets Agitated after Shooting."

18. "Immigrants Will Be Transferred to Work Camps—the Sokhnut Discusses a Plan to Send Immigrants to Agricultural Regions and Development Areas," *Ma'ariv*, Apr. 10, 1950. For background on the establishment of development towns, refer to Zameret, *Development Towns* (in Hebrew).

19. "Immigrant Shot by Accident," *Al Hamishmar*, Apr. 26, 1950.

20. "Disturbing the Peace Because of Death of Avraham Harosh," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Haifa, Aug. 21, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. "Doctors Rule That Avraham Harosh Died of Natural Causes," *Davar*, Aug. 24, 1950.

24. HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 150.

25. "'*Ma'abarot*' from Dan to Be'er Sheva," *Ma'ariv*, June 4, 1950.

26. Katchensky, "The *Ma'abarot*" (in Hebrew).

27. The phrase "Gatherer of the Exile" (in Hebrew, *mekabetz hagaluyot*) has strong religious connotations. This messianic title given to Ben-Gurion is wrapped up in the personality cult he developed over the years of his rule. The Mapai-affiliated newspaper *Davar* documents his visit in "The Prime Minister in the Pardes Hanna and Ein Shemer Camps," *Davar*, July 20, 1951.

28. The investigatory surveys are available in the INP file "Batei Olim," Hadera, Mar. 1951, 2/7-L, ISA.

29. This is the same Supervisor Steinberg from the Mironiansky trial in 1948.

30. In March 1951 alone, although 1,200 residents left the Pardes Hanna camp, 1,500 entered.

31. "Letter between David Cohen and Eliyahu ben-Yitzhak," in the folder "Mapam: Department of Oriental Jews, 1956–59," (2) 129.90, HHA/GH. Also consult Katchensky, "The *Ma'abarot*," 75. These figures exclude the Sha'ar Ha'aliya camp in Haifa, in which immigrants lived for only a short period of time.

32. The majority of European *ma'abarot* residents were from Romania (16 percent of total residents); Poland (4 percent); and various other European countries (2 percent). See the table provided in Katchensky, "The *Ma'abarot*," 75.

33. INP file "Batei Olim."

34. Ibid.

35. Consult Steinberg's camp evaluation in the INP file "Batei Olim."

36. INP file "Batei Olim."

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Refer to "Demonstration of Immigrants in Pardes Hanna," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Pardes Hanna, July 29, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

40. This case was mentioned in chapter 2. For details, consult "More Testimony from the Mysterious Investigations into Siyuma Mironiansky," *Davar*, Dec. 13, 1948.

41. "Attack on Ashkenazi *Ma'abara* Camp," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Netanya, Aug. 23, 1952, 3/21-L, ISA, emphasis added.

42. Ibid., emphasis added.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. INP, "Report on Crime and Incidents," Aug. 23, 1952, in *Annual Police Report*, 1952.

46. Ibid.

47. "Highly Classified—Tensions between Ethnic Groups," in the INP folder "Investigations into New Immigrants, 1950–51," Hadera, July 2, 1951, 2/7-L, ISA, emphasis added.

48. "Brawl in *Ma'abara* Kastina," in the INP folder "Hashfelah/Ramleh: Demonstrations and Political Gatherings, 1953," Kastina, Mar. 21, 1953, 6/17-L, ISA.

49. The fight was between Maki and Mapam members in the Sakia *ma'abara*, which had a high proportion of Iraqi Communists. Refer to the case "Quarrel in *Ma'abara* Sakia Bet," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Sakia Bet, Apr. 16, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

50. INP file "Immigrant Housing," Mar. 19, 1951, 2/7-L, ISA.

51. Ibid.

52. INP, "Report on Demonstration in Zikhron Ya'akov," Mar. 29, 1951, ISA.

53. The word used for "indecision" here, *hitlavtut*, may refer to either wavering on a decision or experiencing an inner struggle. In its historical context, this statement most likely refers to the government's indecisiveness on whether to permit further Iraqi immigration to Israel. However, it is possible that it refers to the Jewish Agency's indecisiveness on whether to build *shikkunim* (housing projects) for Iraqi immigrants. Consult "Head of Middle East Branch of Jewish Agency: We Must Bring in at Least 60,000 Iraqi Jews by the End of May," *Al Hamishmar*, Mar. 17, 1951. See also Yehoshua Rahamim's letter "Appeal to Iraqi Immigrants," *Al Hamishmar*, Jan. 20, 1951.

54. "Report on Demonstration in Zikhron Yaakov," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Mar. 29, 1951, 3/21-L, ISA.

55. "Demonstration of Unemployed," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Hadera, June 1, 1951, 3/21-L, ISA.

56. Shay Fogelman, "The Forgotten Ones," *Ha'aretz*, Jan. 21, 2010.

57. Zadok Malihi, eyewitness testimony given in an interview years later, 2010, recorded in ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Refer to summary of the court transcript on the incident: Natan Ronvitz, "39 Suspected of Attacking Police in the Emek Hefer *Ma'abara*—Brought to Court," *Ha'aretz*, Oct. 27, 1952.

60. This statement appears in Ben-Gurion's diary, as noted in Fogelman, "The Forgotten Ones."

61. "Immigrants Demonstrate," *Davar*, June 9, 1952.

62. "A Blockade Is Placed on Be'er Ya'akov," *Davar*, June 9, 1952.

63. "Demonstration in Be'er Ya'akov," in the INP folder "Hashfelah/Ramleh: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1952," Hashfelah, June 8, 1952, 6/22-L, ISA.

64. Ibid.

65. "Barricade of People," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951," Tel Aviv, Oct. 9, 1951, 13/30-L, ISA.

66. Ibid.

67. "Unemployed Demonstration in Labor Office in Binyamina," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Binyamina, June 30, 1952, 3/21-L, ISA.

68. Although the police did not report any similar incidents for months, it is likely that similar protests occurred during this six-month period. Owing to different filing systems used, the papers for these cases may have been placed in another police folder. Also, it should be noted that Netanya was then situated within the Northern Police District of Haifa.

69. "Demonstration of Unemployed in Netanya," in the INP folder "Demonstrations: Hadera," Netanya, Jan. 21, 1953, 3/18-L, ISA.

70. "Report on the Protest on January 21, 1953, in Hadera," in the INP folder "Demonstrations: Hadera," Hadera, Jan. 21, 1953, 3/18-L, ISA.

71. Ibid.

72. "Demonstration of Unemployed in Netanya," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–1954," Netanya, May 21, 1953, 3/21-L, ISA.

73. "Crime and Incident Report," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Hadera, Oct. 16, 1953, 3/21-L, ISA.

74. Ibid.

75. "Demonstration in Migdal Ashkelon Concerning Ethnic Discrimination," in the INP folder "Hashfelah/Ramleh: Demonstrations and Political Gatherings, 1953," Migdal Ashkelon, Mar. 8, 1953, 6/17-L, ISA.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

4. Mizrahi Protests in Urban Space, 1950–1958

1. Consult Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*; Hanchard and Dawson, "Ideology and Political Culture in Black."

2. The confiscation and reading of personal correspondence between immigrants and family members abroad were prevalent throughout the 1950s. However, archives of these letters have been found only in the Etzioni Committee documents (Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib, transcripts of testimony, 1959, ISA). Mapam representatives made claims regarding this practice and the placement of listening devices in the rooms of parliamentary members early on; see "We Do Not Agree with the Suppression of Freedoms or with a Police State," *al-Mirsad*, Mar. 12, 1953.

3. See "Photo of *Ma'abara* Youth Sleeping in a Corridor," *9-9-9*, Mar. 1953.

4. "Israeli Private, 19, Deserts to Egypt," *New York Times*, Aug. 15, 1954, emphasis in original.

5. "15 Year Old Who Lost Hope from the Difficulties in Livelihood Tried to Move to Gaza—and Was Returned," *Ma'ariv*, Oct. 17, 1965.

6. INP file, "Eliminating Tent Camps—Letter from Amos Ben-Gurion to Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Tiberias District Superintendents; Commissioner, and Head of Criminal Investigations," Tel Aviv, Aug. 21, 1952, 79/36-383, 14/4-L, ISA.

7. Legislative control over this phenomenon was not put into law until 1958. Consult Menirav, "Israel's Tenant Protection Law (Rent Control)."

8. "Eliminating Tent Camps—Letter from Amos Ben-Gurion."

9. "Appeal from the Agrovnak Residents," *al-Mirsad*, Dec. 16, 1954.

10. I use the name "Land of Israel" to highlight the fact that post-1948 Zionist settlement was neither ideologically nor physically restricted to the borders of the nascent State of Israel. On the contrary, the *ma'abarot* were used as an instrument of the state's continued expansionist policy.

11. Ra'anan Weiss to Minister of Interior, Oct. 30, 1951, Het, Tet 50:13 1900/Gimmel, ISA, quoted in HaCohen, *The Grain and the Millstone*, 194–95.

12. Kemp, "'Wandering Peoples' or 'The Great Burning'" (in Hebrew), 39.

13. Recounted in Giladi, *Discord in Zion*, appendix I, 338.

14. E. Tsur, "Mapam and the European and Oriental Immigrants," 551–52.

15. "Demonstration of Yemenite Immigrants from Ma'abara Eliashiv," in the INP folder "Northern Branch: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1951–52," Tel Aviv, June 12, 1951, 11/18-L, ISA.

16. Dov Rosen to Interior Minister, Apr. 2, 1952, 1900/c, ISA, cited in HaCohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil*, 210.

17. Rosen, *Ma'abarot and Immigrant Residences* (in Hebrew), 216–18. Rosen was the director of the Division for Immigrant Residences; he made this lament in September 1951.

18. Demonstrations involving Palestinian citizens of Israel merit further serious study. Many of their protests are located inside police folders documenting investigations of new immigrants. For example, in the folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54" (3/21-L, ISA), one can find "Demonstration in Umm al-Fahm," Dec. 7, 1952; "Disturbing the Peace in Umm al-Fahm; Children Trying to Influence Other Children Not to Go to School," Dec. 26, 1952; and "Disturbing the Peace in Umm al-Fahm," Oct. 16, 1953.

19. Quoted in "Some Indian Jews Ask to Quit Israel," *New York Times*, Nov. 22, 1951.

20. Both UK and US news outlets were aware of the plight of Indian Jews in Israel and reported on the hunger strike.

21. Quoted in "Some Indian Jews Ask to Quit Israel." This statement appears to be in reference to the difference between whole-wheat bread, or "black" bread, and white bread. The indigenous (i.e., non-"Baghdadi") Jewish community of India tends to be noticeably dark.

22. Quoted in ibid.

23. Quoted in Reuters, "Indian Jews Want to Go Home: Palestine 'Intolerable,'" *Manchester Guardian*, Nov. 22, 1951.

24. Ibid.

25. "Indians Who Spurn Israel Going Home; 125 Unhappy Jews Renew Their Sitdown, Convince Agency to Return Them to Asia," *New York Times*, Mar. 25, 1952.

26. Quoted in "Indian Immigrants Say They Want to Leave," *Jerusalem Post*, May 4, 1952.

27. "Sitdown in Israel Grows; More Indian Jews Who Want to Leave Join Protest," *New York Times*, Mar. 26, 1952.

28. "Tel Aviv Sitdown Holds; but Agency Says Indian Jews' Case Is 'Matter for Police,'" *New York Times*, Mar. 28, 1952.

29. A. I. Macmull, "Problem Must Be Re-examined: Indian Jews in Israel" (letter to the editor), *Jerusalem Post*, May 3, 1952.

30. "Protest by Indian Immigrants Next to the Jewish Agency," in the INP folder "Strikes, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Order 1955," Tel Aviv, Jan. 26, 1955, 42/16-L, ISA.

31. Ibid.

32. "Sharett: The Sokhnut Will Not Return the 'Bnei Israel' Protestors to India," *Davar*, Aug. 4, 1963.

33. "Who Will Speak to the Bnei Israel?" *Davar*, Aug. 7, 1964.

34. Hodes, "Samson J. Samson and the Struggle for Religious Equality," in *From India to Israel*, 123–56.

35. "Demonstration of Afghan Immigrants," in the INP folder "Northern Branch: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1951–52," June 25, 1952, 11/19-L, ISA.

36. "Report on Demonstration within Sokhnut Offices," in the INP folder "Gatherings, Marches, Demonstrations, Jerusalem Capital Precinct, 1952," Jerusalem, Mar. 17, 1952, 16/2-L, ISA.

37. "Today's Issue," *Davar*, Aug. 28, 1952.

38. Ibid.

39. "Solidarity March of Hadera *Ma'abara* Residents with Those on a Hunger Strike," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Tel Aviv, Aug. 29, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

40. "Demonstration of Immigrants from *Ma'abara* Or Yehuda (Sakia)," in the INP folder "Northern Branch: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1951–52," Tel Aviv, June 26, 1951, 11/18-L, ISA.

41. "Demonstration of Persian Immigrants," in the INP folder "Northern Branch: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1951–52," Tel Aviv, July 26, 1951, 11/18-L, ISA.

42. Assistant District Superintendent Kenner crowned Ben-Efraim with this illustrious title. However, he did not explain in what capacity Ben-Efraim was a communal leader. It is likely he was the director of the Persian immigrant branch of the Absorption Department.

43. "B. Shitreet with Persian Immigrants," *Davar*, July 27, 1951.

44. "Demonstration of Persian Immigrants."

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid. It is not entirely clear, but the latter comments appear to have been made by Assistant District Superintendent Kenner rather than by the protestors. Kenner was apparently unaware of the assassination of King Abdullah I of Jordan just a few days earlier, on July 20, 1951.

47. Ibid.

48. "Demonstration of Pardes Katz Residents," in the INP folder "Northern Branch: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1951–52," Pardes Katz, Aug. 27, 1951, 11/18-L, ISA.

49. Ibid.

50. The effects of this bombing and its perpetrators are subject to intense debate. It is interesting to note that on January 9, 1951, *Al Hamishmar* reports that the registration period for Iraqi Jews to immigrate to Israel was extended for another six months. Six days later the Masouda Shem-Tov Synagogue was bombed on January 14, 1951. See "Allowing the Emigration of Iraqi Jews," *Al Hamishmar*, Jan. 9, 1951, and Shohat, "Rupture and Return," 55 n. 6.

51. See, for example, Shiblak, *The Lure of Zion*.

52. Refer to the conversation between Binyamin Sasson (Sephardi Party) and Reuven Sari (Mapai), *Knesset Minutes*, July 9, 1952, pp. 2593–96.

53. Binyamin Silas Sasson, "Demonstration of Iraqi Immigrants Next to the Jewish Agency Offices in Tel Aviv," *Knesset Minutes*, July 9, 1952, p. 2594; "Behavior of Police during the Dispersal of Iraqi Immigrant Demonstration Next to Jewish Agency," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Tel Aviv, July 25, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

54. "Demonstration Next to the Sokhnut," in the INP folder "Gatherings and Demonstrations, Tel Aviv, 1952," Tel Aviv, June 22, 1952, 14/4-L, ISA.

55. Sasson, "Demonstration of Iraqi Immigrants Next to the Jewish Agency Offices in Tel Aviv."

56. Ibid.

57. Refer to the case where a delegation of children and one adult male negotiated with the Ministry of Education: "Children's Demonstration," in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Strikes and Demonstrations, 1949," Nov. 17, 1949, 13/15-L, ISA.

58. "Women Demonstrate on Magen David Adom Square: 'Give Food to Our Children,'" in the INP folder "Tel Aviv: Political Demonstrations, 1951," Sept. 12, 1951, 13/30-L, ISA.

59. "Demonstration in Pardes Hanna Immigrant Camp," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Pardes Hanna, July 29, 1950, 3/21-L, ISA.

60. Ibid.

61. Me'ir Idit's financial restrictions related to the breaking of his eyeglasses are briefly discussed in chapter 1.

62. "Demonstration Next to the Sokhnut."

63. Sasson, "Demonstration of Iraqi Immigrants Next to the Jewish Agency Offices in Tel Aviv," 2594.

64. Ibid., 2593.

65. Refer to chapter 2 regarding Menashe Za'arur's article "Iraqi Jews Caught between Two Colonialisms within the Diaspora and in Israel," *al-Mirsad*, Sept. 4, 1954. Similarly, David Cohen (two years after Sasson made his statement in July 1952) mentioned the perceived victimhood of Iraqi Jews in his article "Lingering of the Unemployed, Discriminatory Ma'abarot and the Coalition Government," *al-Mirsad*, June 17, 1954.

66. Shohat, "Sephardim in Israel."

67. "Attempt to Demonstrate by the Harovit *Ma'abara* Camp Residents," in the INP folder "Ramleh-Gedera: Strikes and Disturbances," Mar. 9, 1955, 39/9-L, ISA.

68. "Rioters from Mansi *Ma'abara* Are Arrested," *Davar*, Feb. 15, 1956.

69. "Large Riots in Mansi Ma'abara, 19 *Shotrim* and Rioters Injured," *Davar*, Apr. 25, 1957.

70. Ibid.

71. *Davar* stated that more than 300 eligible workers were unemployed following a series of redundancies. See "Unemployment Worsens in Be'er Sheva," *Davar*, May 8, 1956.

72. "20 Arrested in Kiryat Shmona—in Court," *Ma'ariv*, May 7, 1956.

73. "Immigrants Refuse to Go to the Village," *Davar*, July 15, 1956.

74. "25 Lightly Injured during Clashes between Protestors and the Police," *Davar*, May 7, 1956.

75. Adi Ofir, "Zero Hour" (in Hebrew), in "50 to 1948: Critical Milestones in the History of the State of Israel," special edition of *Theory and Criticism* 12–13 (1999): 352, cited in Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict*, 61.

76. Ya'akov Aviel, "The Employment Office in Kiryat Shmona Encouraged a Demonstration against Itself," *Ma'ariv*, May 8, 1956.

77. Quoted in ibid.

78. Excerpt from a meeting between a Kiryat Shmona resident and MK Ya'akov Riptin. Riptin quoted the resident during a Knesset meeting on July 18, 1957, which is cited in *For the Struggle for Absorption*.

79. "Unemployed Protest and Riot in Beit She'an," *Davar*, Feb. 7, 1957.

80. "The Story of the Beit She'an Riots Is Taken to Public Trial," *Davar*, Feb. 13, 1957.

81. "Unemployed Demonstrate and Riot in Beit She'an—Two Policemen Injured, the Protest Was Organized by Inciters—14 Imprisoned," *Davar*, Feb. 7, 1957.

82. Ibid.

83. Quoted in ibid.

84. "The Case of the Beit She'an Riots Is Taken to the Public in Court," *Davar*, Feb. 13, 1957.

85. David Cohen, "Discrimination and Mixing the Communities," *Ila al-Amam*, June 24, 1958.

86. "The Trial of the Beit She'an Misbehavers Begins," *Ma'ariv*, Feb. 12, 1957.

87. Quoted in "The Case of Rioting in Beit She'an Goes Public," *Ma'ariv*, Feb. 12, 1957.

88. "The Case of the Beit She'an Riots Is Taken to the Public in Court."

89. "44 accused in Meggido Riots—in Court," *Davar*, Apr. 29, 1957.

90. "The Trial for the Mansi Accused Has Begun," *Davar*, May 2, 1957.

91. "Large Riots in Mansi *Ma'abara*—19 *Shotrim* and Rioters Injured—Instead of Obedience: Unruliness," *Davar*, Apr. 25, 1957.

92. "Large Riots in Mansi *Ma'abara*."

93. "44 Accused in Meggido Riots—in Court"; "The Trial for the Mansi Accused Has Begun."

94. "The Rioters from the Mansi Ma'abara Will be Imprisoned," *Davar*, May 3, 1957.

95. *Knesset Minutes*, July 30, 1957, p. 2561. *Davar*, in contrast, stated that some of the residents had lived there since 1953. Refer to "87 percent of *Ma'abara* Residents Transferred to Permanent Housing," *Davar*, July 3, 1957.

96. See the confiscated manifesto of 1953 entitled "Manifesto: Residents of Ramat Gan, Know What's Going on in Your City!" in the INP folder "Strikes, Demonstrations, and Disturbing the Order, 1955," Ramat Gan, June 26, 1953, 42/16-L, ISA. There is also a case involving two families going on a hunger strike against the discriminatory practices of the Ramat Gan mayor, who refused to allow them to open a cinema. Refer to "Two Immigrant Families Organize Hunger Strike against Mayor of Ramat Gan," *Davar*, June 30, 1955.

97. "On the Edge of Things—*Ma'abara* Residents Protest," *Davar*, June 25, 1957.

98. Ibid.

99. *Knesset Minutes*, July 3, 1957, pp. 2294–95.

100. "The Plan to End the *Ma'abarot*—Has Ended," *Ma'ariv*, Dec. 20, 1959.

101. Katchensky, "The *Ma'abarot*" (in Hebrew), 85; see also "16 Years of Absorption in Israel," cited in Katchensky, "The *Ma'abarot*," n. 23.

102. "The Permit to Protest Is Not Given," *Ma'ariv*, May 20, 1966.

5. Wadi Salib and After: Mizrahi Rebellions, 1959–1966

1. Refer to Dahan-Calev, "Protest" and "Self-Organizing Systems" (both in Hebrew); Chetrit, "Chronicle of a Struggle: The Events of the Rebellion," in *Intra-Jewish Conflict*, 65–68; and Kahn-Nisser, "Nationalism, Identity, and Rebellion."

2. Giladi, *Discord in Zion*, 252.

3. "The Sephardi and the Motor Scooter," *IOP*, Oct. 1965.

4. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 220.

5. "Commissioner Yosef Nahmias Testimony," in the folder "Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib," transcripts of testimony, July 26 and Aug. 10, 1959, p. 5, 17253/3-GL, ISA.

6. "El-Karif, Injured in the Wadi Salib Riots, Agrees to a Compromise Concerning His Compensation," *Herut*, July 20, 1965.

7. Quoted in "Sentencing Lightened for Y. El-Karif," *Davar*, Apr. 11, 1967.

8. "El-Karif Released on Bail after Suicide Attempt," *Davar*, Feb. 8, 1969.

9. "10 Killed in Traffic Accidents over the Past Week," *Davar*, Nov. 9, 1970.

10. "Commissioner Yosef Nahmias Testimony," 3.

11. Ibid.

12. Refer to confiscated poster written by the Sephardi Party of Jerusalem, "Manifesto—National Sephardic and Edot Hamizrah Party in Israel," in the folder "Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib," Jerusalem, 1959, 17252/6-GL, ISA.

13. "Commissioner Yosef Nahmias Testimony," 5.

14. Quoted in "Officer Zvi Fine Testimony," in the folder "Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib," July 26, 1959, p. 3, 17253/3-GL, ISA.

15. "David Ben-Haroush Testimony," in the folder "Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib," July 26, 1959, p. 21, 17253/3-GL, ISA.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. "Shimon Peres: The Unruly Ones Have No Connection to Ethnic Groups," *Davar*, Aug. 3, 1959.

19. "Ezer Abutboul Testimony," in the folder "Investigative Committee—Wadi Salib," July 30, 1959, p. 1, 17253/3-GL, ISA.

20. P. Gilon, "The Youth Demand 'Riots'—North African Youth in Kiryat Gat Feel That Only Demonstrations Will Solve the 'Discrimination,'" *Ma'ariv*, July 28, 1959.

21. "Preventing Rioting in Kiryat Shmona and Hatzor," *Ma'ariv*, July 23, 1959.

22. Ibid.

23. "The Government Instructs the Police to Prevent Riots in the Future," *Davar*, July 22, 1959.

24. Quoted in "Life Stories of 20 Accused," *Ma'ariv*, Aug. 23, 1959.

25. "The Masses in Be'er Sheva Express Doubts over the Unruliness," *Davar*, July 22, 1959.

26. "Melting through Education," *IOP*, Mar. 1965, emphasis in original.

27. Interestingly, this view mirrors the findings of Susan Olzak and Suzanne Shanahan in their study of "race riots" in US cities. Consult Olzak and Shanahan, "Deprivation and Race Riots."

28. INP, "Report on Reconnaissance Visit to Wadi Salib (July 29 to Aug. 1, 1959)," Haifa, July 30, 1959, 17252/11-GL, ISA.

29. Ibid., Haifa, July 29, 1959.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Tsur, "Carnival Fears," 88, emphasis added.

34. Consult Patai, *Cultures in Conflict*.

35. INP, "Report on Reconnaissance Visit to Wadi Salib," Haifa, n.d.

36. Ibid., Haifa, n.d.

37. Quoted in "Be'er Sheva Riot Suspects Arrested by Judge's Orders—24 of Them Transferred to Jerusalem," *Davar*, July 22, 1959.

38. INP, "Report on Reconnaissance Visit to Wadi Salib," Haifa, July 30, 1959.

39. Ibid., Haifa, July 31, 1959.

40. Office of the Official Censor, Censorship Bureau of the Postal Service and Telegrams, "Documents Submitted to the Etzioni Commission," 1958–59, 17253/6-GL, ISA. All information about and excerpts from the letters were taken from this collection. The letters appear to have been written originally in French and then translated into Hebrew by the Censorship Bureau. I provide the first translation into English of select excerpts from some confiscated letters in appendix F, "Excerpts from the 'Etzioni Commission Report': 'The North African Letters.'"

41. "Report on Demonstration in Zikhron Yaakov," in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Mar. 29, 1951, 3/21-L, ISA. Refer to the discussion of the Zikhron Ya'akov demonstration in April 1951 in chapter 3.

42. Yusuf Hana, "The White Man and Israel," *al-Difa'a*, July 23, 1959.

43. Consult the following articles in *al-Hayat*: "Demonstrations in Northern Israel as Well as Demonstrators Demanding Bread and Work," July 12, 1959; "Israel Suffers from Division between Its Sephardi Population, Who Complain of Ashkenazi Domination," Feb. 1, 1967; "Israel's Explosive Problem—Racism and Discrimination between Eastern and Western Jews," Apr. 17, 1971. See also issues of *IOP* from 1965 to 1970.

44. Months after the government announced plans to dismantle all *ma'abarot* following the Wadi Salib Rebellion, the plan was called off. "The Plan to End the *Ma'abarot*—Has Ended," *Ma'ariv*, Dec. 20, 1959.

45. Abbas, *From Ingathering to Integration* (English translation), 7, emphasis in original.

46. Avraham Abbas, "Youth and Education," *al-Mirsad*, June 17, 1954. This article was discussed in chapter 2.

47. Abbas, *From Ingathering to Integration*, 22.

48. Ibid., 22–23.

49. Ibid., 4.

50. Dahan-Calev, "Protest."

51. The education section in Abbas's book *From Ingathering to Integration* (12–17) is more or less a cleaner version of the Arabic article "Youth and Education."

52. Abbas, *From Ingathering to Integration*, 18.

53. Ibid., 20. This is a biblical reference to the Gibeonite tribe, who, albeit embraced as part the Israelite nation, were accepted only as menial servants.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid., 21.

56. Ibid., 32.

57. CSCJ, *Danger, Jewish Racialism!* (in English).

58. "Letter to World Zionist Congress Members from the Council of the Sephardi Community in Jerusalem 1965," insert in ibid. The term *caid* refers to a system of governance prevalent in North Africa wherein the *caid* was a wealthy provincial ruler with the duty of keeping the population subdued.

59. CSCJ, *Danger, Jewish Racialism!* no page numbers given.

60. Ibid., emphasis in original. It is worth noting that the CSCJ commented that, for the purposes of the pamphlet, it considered the terms *Sephardi* and *Oriental Jew* as one in the same.

61. Refer to "Genocide and . . . Genocide," *IOP*, Aug.–Sept. 1965; no article title, *Al Hamishmar*, July 16, 1965; "Eshkol on the Communal Problem," *IOP*, July 1965; no article title, *Davar*, June 24, 1965; and no article title, *Jerusalem Post*, Jan. 3, 1965.

62. CSCJ, *Danger, Jewish Racialism!*

63. *Knesset Minutes*, 1962 (specific date not known), pp. 1109–14.

64. *Al Hamishmar*, Nov. 17, 1964, cited in "*IOP*—Press Cuttings in 1964," *IOP*, Feb. 1965.

65. "Council of the Sephardi Community's Letter to Readers," *IOP*, Feb. 1965.

66. "My Country Right or Wrong," *IOP*, Nov. 1965.

67. Selzer, *The Aryanization of the Jewish State* and *The Outcasts of Israel*; *IOP* issues from 1965 to 1970; Eisenstadt, *The Absorption of Immigrants*.

68. Abdou and Qasmiyeh, *Jews in Arab Lands* (in Arabic).

69. Sayigh, "Reactions of the Oriental Jews to Discrimination and Racism," in *Discrimination against Oriental Jews in Israel* (in Arabic), 151–52; see also Meeting of the Arab League, "Segregation between Oriental and Western Jews in the Occupied Lands," 2, cited in Sayigh, *Discrimination against Oriental Jews in Israel*, 125.

70. Sayigh, *Discrimination against Oriental Jews in Israel*, 136. The panicked statement came from George Mikes, *The Prophet Motive: Israel Today and Tomorrow*, quoted in ibid., 136.

71. "Letter to World Zionist Congress Members from the Council of the Sephardi Community in Jerusalem 1965," insert in CSCJ, *Danger, Jewish Racialism!*

72. Eliyahu Eliachar, "Representing the People," *IOP*, Apr. 1965.

73. "A Sephardi Reflects on Los Angeles," *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, Aug. 27, 1965, cited in "Los Angeles in Israel," *IOP*, Aug.–Sept. 1965, 3.

74. S. Dalet, "What Is the Nature of Communal Prejudice?" *Hatsofeh*, Mar. 6, 1964, reproduced in "*IOP*—Press Cuttings in 1964."

75. Paul Quinn, "The Negros Need Me More, so Does America" (in Hebrew), *Ma'ariv*, July 30, 1965; "Alabama by Way of Be'er Sheva?" *Ma'ariv*, Aug. 9, 1965.

76. "The 26th Zionist Congress," *IOP*, Feb. 1965, 4, emphasis added.

77. Shoshana Eshman, "The Blemish of Prejudice," *La'ishah*, Nov. 4, 1964, reproduced in "*IOP*—Press Cuttings in 1964."

78. Quoted in ibid.

79. "Discrimination or Imagination in Dimona?" *Ma'ariv*, Feb. 28, and "The Zrihan Affair," *Hatsofeh*, Mar. 6, 1964, reproduced in "*IOP*—Press Cuttings in 1964."

80. Eshman, "The Blemish of Prejudice."

81. Quoted in "Communal Incitement from a Rafi Member from Ashdod during Mapai Secretariat Meeting," *Davar*, Sept. 1, 1965. Here, Ibn-Haim referenced the Watts riots of 1965 and the Birmingham campaign in 1963.

82. Refer to Abbas, *From Ingathering to Integration*, 20.

83. "Meet the Oppressed Man from Ashdod," *Ma'ariv*, Sept. 2, 1965.

84. Quoted in Menahem Rahat, "Inflammatory Posters Scattered in the Streets of Tsfat," *Ma'ariv*, Aug. 27, 1964. Refer to the translation of this article in "*IOP*—Press Cuttings in 1964."

85. Quoted in "The Sephardi and the Motor Scooter."

86. Quoted in "Communal Incitement from a Rafi Member from Ashdod during Mapai Secretariat Meeting."

87. "Storm in Mapai Secretariat on the Assertion That 'Whites' Oppress 'Browns,'" *Ma'ariv*, Sept. 1, 1965; "Please Meet: The Oppressed from Ashdod," *Ma'ariv*, Sept. 3, 1965.

88. "The Time Bomb," *IOP*, Oct. 1965.

89. Only one resident, an adviser to the Ministry of Education, was informed of the planned change, and that notification came just a day before the change occurred. When he opposed the plan, government officials promised it would not go through.

90. Quoted in "Route 16 Returns to Its Previous Routes," *Ma'ariv*, May 31, 1965.

91. "The Slum Named 'Hope,'" *IOP*, Nov. 1965, emphasis in the original.

92. Dov Goldstein, untitled article, *Ma'ariv*, June 4, 1965.

93. Ibid. Refer to the comments of a group of Wadi Salib youth during the Etzioni Commission's reconnaissance mission in INP, "Report on Reconnaissance Visit to Wadi Salib," Haifa, July 29, 1959.

94. Quoted in Goldstein, untitled article.

95. Quoted in ibid.

96. Quoted in ibid.

97. Named after Levanda Street in Tel Aviv, which borders Hatikvah. It was also the street where the Dan Bus Company ended its services.

98. Quoted in Menahem Telmi, " . . . Inside Hatikvah Neighborhood," *Ma'ariv*, Oct. 15, 1965.

99. Ibid.

100. "Hatikvah Neighborhood Anthem," *Davar*, Oct. 19, 1965. The title was a play on words: "Hatikva" (The Hope) is the Israeli National Anthem.

101. For a critical review of the criminalization of the communal problem, turn to Ajzenstadt, "The Study of Crime and Social Control in Israel."

102. From the transcript of an interview with Eliyahu Eliachar reproduced in *Jerusalem Post Magazine*, Sept. 12, 1975.

103. Refer to similar positions asserted by CSCJ journals, including *Bama'arakha* and the prestate *Hed HaMizrah*. Also consult Eliyahu Eliachar, "White Man's Burden," *IOP*, May 1965.

104. Eliachar cites Spengler, Sorokin, and Kafka as examples of this belief.

105. Eliachar, "White Man's Burden."

106. Eliyahu Eliachar, "The Knesset Debate on Integration," *IOP*, Feb. 1965.

107. Eliachar, "White Man's Burden."

108. Eliyahu Eliachar, "Hegemony—or Participation?" *IOP*, Nov. 1965, emphasis added.

109. Eliyahu Eliachar, "The Millennium?" *IOP*, Apr. 1965, emphasis in original.

110. See the discussion of Dori and his work in chapter 2.

111. Sitton, "A Call for Deepening 'the Mizrahi Consciousness' among Us" (English translation), 215.

112. Eliyahu Eliachar, "The Voice of Israel?" *IOP*, May 1965.

113. Eliyahu Eliachar, "The Smoke . . . and the Fire," *IOP*, June 1965.

114. Eliyahu Eliachar, "The Israel Museum," *IOP*, May 1965.

115. See Eliachar, *Living with the Palestinians* (in Hebrew); *Living with Jews* (in Hebrew); *Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs* (in Hebrew, but an English translation published in *IOP*, May 1970). Also refer to interview excerpts in Eliachar, "I Know the Arabs."

Conclusion

1. This incorrect portrayal can be seen in the works of critical and noncritical scholars alike, who speak of a Mizrahi immigrant population that lacks any sense of agency. See, for example, Shokeid, "On the Sin We Did Not Commit in the Research of Oriental Jews"; Chetrit, *Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel*; Shohat, "Sephardim in Israel"; Ein-Gil and Machover, "Zionism and Oriental Jews."

2. This notion has been most recently asserted by Eli Nahmias and Ron Spiegel in *Wadi Salib—the Broken Myth* (in Hebrew).

3. "Demonstration in Migdal Ashkelon Concerning Ethnic Discrimination," in the INP folder "Hashfelah/Ramleh: Demonstrations and Political Gatherings, 1953," Migdal

Ashkelon, Mar. 8, 1953, 6/17–L, ISA; Ya'akov Aviel, "The Employment Office in Kiryat Shmona Encouraged a Demonstration against Itself," *Ma'ariv*, May 8, 1956.

4. Chetrit, "Mizrahi Politics in Israel," 52.

5. From one of the interviews in Yonah, *Voices from the Katamonim Neighborhood* (in Hebrew), 178.

6. For discussions on the topic of "Arab Jews," consult Shenhav, *The Arab Jews*; Shohat, "Taboo Memories and Diasporic Visions"; and L. Levy, "Historicizing the Concept of Arab Jews in the *Mashriq*."

7. Shohat, "Rupture and Return."

8. Various scholars (including me) have acknowledged the parallels between the black and Mizrahi struggles, but these parallels have yet to be addressed in a systematic manner outside the context of the Israeli Black Panthers. For brief discussions, refer to Yanow, "From What Edah Are You?"; Behar, "Mizrahim, Abstracted"; Chetrit, "Mizrahi Politics in Israel"; Lubin, "The Black Panthers and the PLO"; and Frankel, "What's in a Name?" However, Snir critiques Chetrit for examining the Mizrahi and black struggles as analogous (see "White Jews Black Jews" in *Who Needs Arab–Jewish Identity?* 197–218).

Appendix D: Mizrahi Calls for Action, 1950–1955

1. General Committee of Immigrants of Pardes Hanna, "Pour une unit[é] solide, pour une lutte constant" (in Hebrew, French, and Arabic), in the INP folder "Demonstrations and Marches: New Immigrants, 1950–54," Jan. 26, 1950, 3/21–L, ISA, my translation into English.

2. Latif Dori, "We, the Residents of the Ma'abara, Will Not Forget" (in Arabic), Ila al-Amam, n.d., Ma'abarot Or Yehuda, Mapam, 1955, 90.123 (10), GH, my translation.

3. Excerpt from Eliyahu Eliachar, "White Man's Burden" (in English), *IOP*, May 1965, emphasis in original.

Appendix F: Excerpts from the "Etzioni Commission Report," "The North African Letters"

1. All letters are in Office of the Official Censor, Censorship Bureau of the Postal Service and Telegrams, "Documents Submitted to the Etzioni Commission," 1958–59, 17253/6-GL, ISA.

Glossary

aliya, (pl. *aliyot*): Immigration to Israel/Palestine.

***avodat-dehak*:** "Workfare"; jobs for the unemployed that involve working in public-work projects such as those carried out by the Solel-Boneh construction company.

***beit olim* (pl. *batei olim*):** Higher-quality immigrant housing.

***bourekas* films:** Comedic melodramas popular in the 1960s and 1970s. Named after *bourekas*, a filo-dough Turkish pastry, these films were considered low-brow and were very popular with Mizrahi audiences.

Edot Hamizrah/Mizrahim (adj., Mizrahi): Oriental Jewry.

***farhoud*:** Violent dispossession. The massacre of Baghdadi Jews under the government of Rashid Ali al-Keilani in Iraq on June 1 and 2, 1941.

***infajarat* (Arabic):** Short, explosive outbursts.

intifada (Arabic): Literally "shaking off," often used to refer to a widespread uprising.

***katzin* (pl. *k'tzinim*):** Senior-level police officer.

***kupat cholim*:** Health clinic.

***lehem ve'avodah*:** Bread and work.

lira (pl. lirot): Currency used in Israel until replaced by the shekel.

***ma'abara* (pl. *ma'abarot*):** Temporary camp for immigrants.

***mizug hagaluyot*:** Literally, "integration of the exiles"; Israeli equivalent to *melting pot*.

moshav (pl. *moshavim*): Cooperative farm settlement.

***noter* (pl. *notrim*):** British Mandate–era communal guard.

***sharqiyyin*:** Easterners.

***shikkun* (pl. *shikkunim*):** Housing project.

***shituf hagaluyot*:** Participation of the exiles; derived from the ideology of Eliyahu Eliachar.

***shoter* (pl. *shotrim*):** Police officer.

Bibliography

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Bryan K. Roby received his PhD in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Manchester. He has recently completed a postdoctoral research fellowship at New York University. His current research focuses on connections between the African American community and Mizrahi Jews in the fight for social equality and rights during the 1970s. He has lectured on Israeli and Middle Eastern history throughout Europe, England, and the United States.

"With modesty, care, and empirical rigor, Roby has re-conceptualized our understanding of the nascent formation of Israel's Mizrahi collectivity. His utilization of a wealth of hitherto unexplored documentation from the archives of the Israeli police—coupled with his critical scrutiny of additional primary source material in Hebrew, Arabic, English, French, and Judeo-Arabic—have produced a focused and highly enjoyable book."

—Moshe Behar, coeditor of *Modern Middle Eastern Jewish Thought*

DURING THE POSTWAR PERIOD of 1948–56, more than 400,000 Jews from the Middle East and Asia immigrated to the newly established state of Israel. By the end of the 1950s, Mizrahim, also known as Oriental Jewry, represented the ethnic majority of the Israeli Jewish population. Despite their large numbers, Mizrahim were considered outsiders because of their non-European origins. Viewed as foreigners who came from culturally backward and distant lands, they suffered decades of socioeconomic, political, and educational injustices.

In this pioneering work, Roby traces the Mizrahi population's struggle for equality and civil rights in Israel. Although the daily "bread and work" demonstrations are considered the first political expression of the Mizrahim, Roby demonstrates the myriad ways in which they agitated for change. Drawing upon a wealth of archival sources, many only recently declassified, Roby details the activities of the highly ideological and politicized young Israel. Police reports, court transcripts, and protestor accounts document a range of resistance tactics, including sit-ins, tent protests, and hunger strikes. Roby shows how the Mizrahi intellectuals and activists in the 1960s began to take note of the American civil rights movement, gaining inspiration from its development and drawing parallels between their experience and those of other marginalized ethnic groups. *The Mizrahi Era of Rebellion* shines a light on a largely forgotten part of Israeli social history, one that profoundly shaped the way Jews from African and Asian countries engaged with the newly founded state of Israel.

Front: "Where Is the Justice? The Police Killed an Innocent Man." Text on banner at the center of the photo. From "Investigational Committee into the Wadi Salib Events" (1959) folder at Israel State Archives. Reproduced with permission from Israel State Archives, Jerusalem.

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