

From Sharon to Sharon: Spatial planning and separation regime in Israel/Palestine

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ABSTRACT

Two personalities, more than any other, represent the history of Israeli spatial planning: Arie and Ariel Sharon. Both have had an enormous impact on the political, military and legal geographies of Israel/Palestine. Despite notable political differences, the two men led Israeli planning to promote a similar spatial strategy throughout the last sixty years, encapsulated by the acronym SEEC (Settlement/Security, Expansion, Ethnicization, Control/Commercialization). This strategy has provided a meta-planning framework for the contested Judaization of Israel/Palestine. The paper uses Gramscian, (post)colonial and Lefebvrian approaches to conceptualize planning as a mediator between hegemonic and oppressed forces in a ceaseless societal process of space production. It argues that the SEEC strategy was not merely a guide for spatial policies, or an important element in the project of Jewish liberation, but a critical *foundation of a new regime*, reshaping both space and society and determining key elements of citizenship, such as property, mobility, rights and power. Hence, the Sharonian planning strategy has constituted a central pillar in Israel's ethnocratic regime, by granting professional legitimacy to the planned geography of "separate and unequal." This has become part of the infrastructure of a process of "creeping apartheid" now evident in Israel/Palestine.

Introduction

I came here innocently to live in a communal, homogenous and, yes, Jewish settlement. I didn't seek to push anyone away, but rather to live my life with people like me. It is surely clear to you that if one Arab moves in, others will follow, and we will lose our community, our purpose in coming to this wonderful place.... I am sorry to say...we cannot at this stage accept Arabs in our settlement (Pnina, resident of Rakefet, in response to a petition against the exclusion of Arab applicants to join the locality in the settlement, 2010).¹

Where can I live? In my crumbling village (that the world calls a ghetto or slum) which lost most of its land and remains “unrecognized”? In a different crumbling Arab village? In small cities with no plots of land? With the Jews? In closed kibbutzim? In Arad, Beer Sheva or Dimona, where there are no Arab schools, nor even a mosque? I’m a third-class citizen, as if in jail [*zai ahli, zai weladi*—like my parents and my children (‘Atiyya, resident of an unrecognized Bedouin village, Goldberg Committee, 2008).²

These quotes encapsulate two facets of the spatial segregation that has become second nature to residential spaces in Israel/Palestine. The quotes refer, on one level, to very local issues, but on another level, they touch on a central foundation through which planning directly affects the nature of regime, community and ethnic relations. The quotes starkly contrast the situation of a Jewish resident in a flourishing “communal” settlement (that is, a middle-class ex-urban community), with that of a Bedouin Arab inhabitant from an impoverished, unrecognized village. Yet they also illustrate the structural connection between space and power, expressed by the ways in which geography creates different “packages” of citizenship. This paper examines this connection through analysis of the influences of spatial planning on the regime established in Israel/Palestine since 1948, concentrating on the planning activities of two of the most influential shapers of space during that period—Arieh and Ariel Sharon.

Planning is perceived here as a mediator between power and space, an arena in which regime principles are translated into plans, institutions, discourse and spatial change. However, the planning process is not unidirectional, and it becomes an arena of mutual translation, in which regime principles are translated into planning principles and spatial development patterns, and these, in turn, are translated “back” into institutional and regime settings. The thick web of planning documents, discourses, laws and practices therefore acts as a site in which systems of power are institutionalized, normalized and legitimized (Figure 1). Thus, planning provides a key arena in which to analyze its relationship with the regime established in Israel/Palestine.

Space and Regime

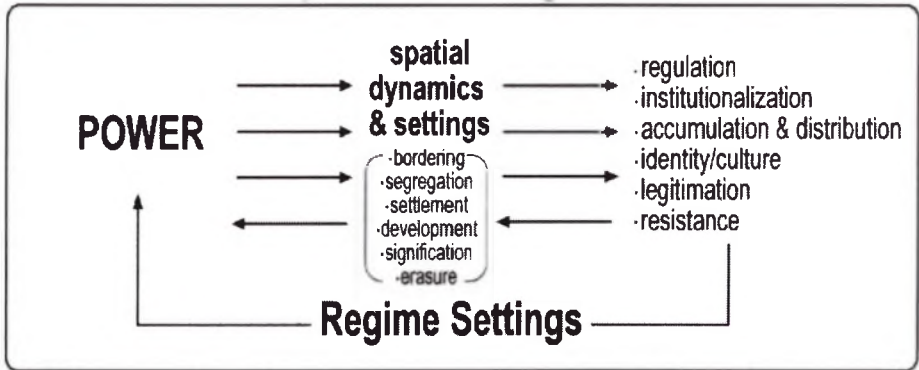


Figure 1: The dynamics of power, space and regime

The paper stresses the relationship between space and power, and illuminates the influence of spatial dynamics on the establishment of regime structure and the shaping of citizenship. “Spatial dynamics” include the ceaseless output of land, planning and housing policies, boundary creation, immigration, settlement, development, mobility, accessibility and the full spectrum of governmental spatial techniques. I argue that the spatial and planning settings created by Israeli policies under the leadership of the two Sharons have transformed into enduring regime principles. These dynamics have institutionalized a system of ongoing ethnic colonization that frames a contemporary process of “creeping apartheid,” where spatial-political settings are premised on the principle of “separate and unequal.” In such settings, spatial planning puts in motion processes of long-term political-structural discrimination between populations on the basis of their ethnic origin. The paper briefly outlines the threads that tie different periods together in the shaping of space in Israel/Palestine. It schematically refers to the era of the “first Sharon,” or Arie Sharon, who headed the project of preparing the first national master plan for Israel and created a planning doctrine of deep historical significance, as well as to the era of the “second Sharon,” Ariel Sharon, who, through his leadership, shaped much of Israeli planning from the 1970s into the early years of the current decade.

There were, of course, significant differences between the two Sharons: they ostensibly represented conflicting political viewpoints (the first was associated with the left-wing Mapam party, and the second, primarily with the rightist Likud party) and were active in different geopolitical and historical contexts. In addition, the “first Sharon” was a professional planner/architect, while the second was a general

and politician. However, despite these notable differences, there exist strong similarities between the spatial models put in place by the two men, and continuation of support for their perception of spatial planning in Israel as a powerful and stable element of the regime.

I present a mainly conceptual argument without entering into detailed historical, administrative and geographical analyses, which are presented elsewhere.³ This paper connects planning with other bodies of knowledge, such as political science, history and social theory, and serves as an invitation for a debate about the deep influences of Israeli planning.

In terms of theory, the analysis is informed by Gramscian, (post)colonial and Lefebvrian approaches, which deconstruct and challenge the hegemonic “truth” presented by regimes and powerful groups as part of a “natural order of things.” As Gramsci showed, this hegemonic “truth” consistently makes use of the rhetoric of a “need” for development “of the entire society,” but in fact facilitates the transfer of power and resources to narrow class and cultural groups. This frames what Gramsci calls the “stubborn reality” that refuses to submit to the whitewashing rhetoric of the dominant groups (Gramsci, 1971, 2004; see also Lustick, 1996). I also adopt a critical Lefebvrian approach as it relates to nationalism as a framework that integrates institutionalization, planning and implicit violence during the “production of space.” Lefebvre’s varied writings present planning as an activity that strategically conceals structural contradiction in the political-capitalist hegemony. By adopting a remedial and regulatory discourse, planning, according to Lefebvre, provides a pivotal link in the legitimation of capitalist and exploitive relations (2009:35–37). By adopting these angles, the current paper joins a small but growing wave of critical works that examine the use of spatial planning as a tool for control, regulation and the subjugation of minority groups, often termed “the dark side” of planning (Fenster, 2002; Flyvbjerg, 2000; Huxley, 1994; Marcuse, 1997; Thomas, 2008; Watson, 2006; Wilson, 1991; Yiftachel, 1998).

The paper is also inspired by a number of critical thinkers in fields such as urban studies, planning and legal geography, who focus on the dynamic process of expansion and appropriation. In such contexts, spatial planning becomes a tool for the establishment, institutionalization and normalization of ethnocentric and colonial relationship patterns, primarily between elite, or settling and expanding groups, and weak, minority and indigenous groups (Blomley, 2003; Kedar, 2003; King, 2002; Njoh, 2002, 2007; Perara, 1998, 2002). Still, the analysis presented here does not seek purely to present a critique, but rather to contribute to the process of transformation. I thus hope to lead the reader to an understanding that we must change the spatial models created by the two Sharons in order to progress to a postcolonial reconciliation, where Jews and Arabs can reap the benefits of efficient, just and democratic planning shaping future Israeli and Palestinian spaces.

Let us begin with a number of definitions. A “regime” is an institutional legal system which translates the logic of power in a given territory into a system of governance and mechanisms creating long-term regulative frameworks and enduring

social relations. "Planning" is defined as the formation, content and application of spatial policy. A "colonial" process denotes the organized collective occupation of the territory and resources of another group or country while institutionalizing the submission of the weak to the strong. Colonialism can be "external," expanding beyond the boundaries of sovereignty, but also "internal," affecting internal frontier areas. "Internal colonialism" is particularly important for this paper, and it implies adoption of land development models that discriminate against, exploit and displace the minority population in frontier areas. The relationship between the settlers and developers and the area's native population is similar to a colonial relationship between nations. The internal colony produces resources and power for those close to the government, and it generally alienates the indigenous population who are different in their ethnic, religious or racial identity. An "ethnocracy" is a regime in which a dominant ethno-national group secures the political apparatus and exploits it to advance its political, material and identity interests, generally through partially democratic techniques. "Apartheid" is a regime based on forced separation and a formal inequality between groups on the basis of their collective identity.⁴

The analysis here considers the geo-ethnic dynamics of Israel/Palestine as a central force, and particularly the meta-framework that shapes this geography—the Judaization of space. This force is omitted from political or geographical analyses of Israel by most mainstream accounts, although it forms a strong infrastructure for the regime. In other words, Judaization shapes the way in which power relationships are translated into institutional, legal and spatial settings and thus into a deep and ongoing reality. Israeli planning, under the leadership of the two Sharons, has contributed significantly to this process. The process of Judaization is essentially colonial, as one group takes control of a space which another group previously possessed, controlled or populated, and transfers to itself most of its land and resources.

Yet, Zionist colonialism is somewhat different than most colonial movements, because it developed as a liberation movement with the establishment of a national home for a dispersed and oppressed set of Jewish communities. This occurred primarily in the shadow of the oppression and destruction of European Jewry and through focus on the mythical homeland of the Jewish people, the Land of Israel, as a destination for Jewish "return," immigration and settlement. The initial character of Zionism as creating a safe haven for Jews was amplified with the absorption of masses of Jews driven out of most Middle Eastern states. These characteristics transformed Zionism into a complex and multifaceted colonial phenomenon.

We can discern a number of major historical phases in Jewish colonialism, with varying historical, militant and ethical characteristics. It begins with the "colonialism of refugees" emigrating and escaping from Europe; in 1948 it becomes a military colonialism during which ethnic cleansing is conducted (the Palestinian *Nakba*) and Israeli independence is established; "internal colonialism" continues until 1967; and afterwards it becomes a political colonialism of an expanding and boundary-breaking nationalism, increasingly connected with religious-messianic

narratives. In the past decade and a half, colonialism has entered a fifth phase of “oppressive consolidation,” which integrates partial territorial concessions with new spatial relationships, based on a deep ghettoization of Palestinians (for details, see Yiftachel, 2006:Ch. 4; see also Khamaissi, 2003; Masalha, 2000).

The framework of the analysis in the present paper covers the entire space of Jewish-Israeli settlement, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. Any other analysis of the “spatial shaping” by the Israeli regime would be incomplete and not credible. This is not only because Israel has been ruling the space between the Jordan and the Mediterranean for more than 40 years, and because after the Oslo Accords it holds official (albeit temporary) sovereignty over the vast majority of the West Bank, but also because about half a million Israelis, who continue to be an inseparable part of Jewish-Israeli society, have settled in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, thus expanding the Israeli space. At the same time, Israel continues to control and restrict the Palestinian enclaves both directly and indirectly—in Gaza, the West Bank and, with more restraint, within Israel proper. Settlement planning has systematically determined the design of Palestinian space and has impacted ethnic relations on both sides of the Green Line.

Nevertheless, the political geography of control is not identical in all areas, despite the shared ethnocentric logic. The regime uses a range of spatial technologies shaped by the relevant spheres of power in conjunction with geopolitical circumstances. A number of examples will illustrate this. Gaza is considered an oppressed enclave that is besieged and distinct from occupied territories in the West Bank. Jewish Jerusalem receives special consideration that affects the extent and direction of Jewish expansion and the Palestinian enclaves and ghettos erected within it, while its Arab residents benefit from partial “resident” benefits. Hebron, the second city in the territories to be settled by Jews, was divided in two in an international agreement. Beer Sheva has become a metropolitan space in which a vast and partially excluded Arab population lives in “unrecognized villages” “hidden” from the eyes of planners and deprived of basic services. Beitar Illit, Matityahu and Emanuel are examples of Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) cities far from the core, and their settlement in the territories connects their residents to a peripheral and colonial identity. Finally, in the Galilee and eastern Sharon regions, suburban Jewish “community localities” are springing up, often overlooking large Arab towns and villages and sharply dividing the space between them.

The proposed analysis is particularly relevant now in the Negev, Galilee and West Bank, where wide-ranging and intensive internal colonization is ongoing and ethnic boundaries are reinforced daily. Additionally, many areas in the center of the country are experiencing similar (although less intensive) processes, by means of establishment of “communal neighborhoods” (which, like “communal localities” use selection committees to screen their residents), land privatization and establishment of selective housing projects, or an effective ghettoization of the Arab population, for example in Jaffa, Ramle and Lod. It is indeed possible that, in the future, a political agreement will divide Palestinian sovereign territories and “Israel proper,”

which will remove those areas from the analysis, but until then, these areas and their administration constitute an important aspect of the Israeli planning regime.

Since the early 1990s, a new direction has been developing for the Israeli geopolitical project, bringing it to a new, fifth phase, which I have termed “oppressive consolidation.” In this phase, Israeli expansionism grinds to a halt, and the state is even executing partial withdrawals while reorganizing the space. Nevertheless, the end of Israeli expansion does not signal ethno-national reconciliation, as it is still fueled by ethnocratic considerations of Jewish control from the Jordan to the Mediterranean. This dynamic transforms “horizontal” ethnocracy to “vertical” ethnocracy, where segregation and control intensify in the areas remaining under Jewish rule (Yiftachel, 2006:Ch.3).

Within this geopolitical context, a set of guiding principles can be identified as the core of the spatial strategy spearheaded by the two Sharons. These principles combine to draw the “spine” of the collective spatial future, around the acronym SEEC:

- **Settle**—maximize Jewish settlements and provide **Security** for Jewish space;
- **Expand**—constantly seek frontiers in which to seize new territory;
- **Ethnicize**—transfer space to Jewish hands while confining Palestinians to segregated **Enclaves**;
- **Control**—keep space in tight control of the political, military and economic elites; and later **Commercialize** it, through privatization and deregulation.

These principles are taken not from a specific document, but from an analysis of the entire corpus of Israeli political initiatives in the development of the space around ongoing settlement activities (Figure 2). The analysis shows that the SEEC dynamic has led over time to the process of “creeping apartheid”—in other words, the solidification and institutionalizing of a situation of “separate and unequal” on the basis of ethnicity. This form of spatial development has also created deep patterns of unrest and opposition among fringe groups, and at the same time allowed the liberalization and commercialization of “preferred” spaces. If that is so, spatial development under the Sharons has assisted in splitting and layering society and has dealt a significant blow to democratic principles. It is true that the roots of this spatial strategy existed decades before the Sharons appeared on the scene, since the beginning of the kibbutz movement. But the two Sharons are significant as they institutionalized SEEC through the all-powerful apparatus of the state and thus translated spatial planning principles into regime principles.

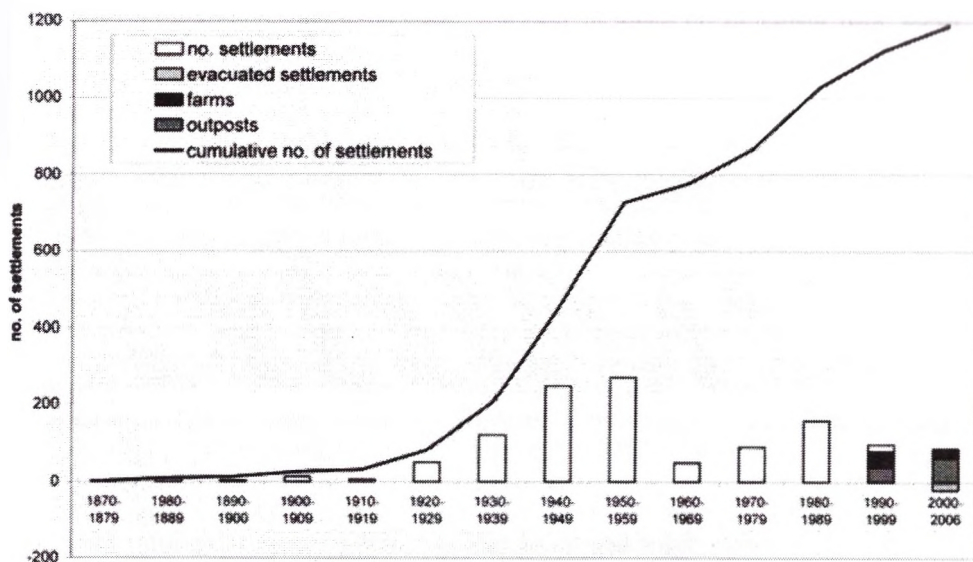


Figure 2: Number of Jewish settlements in Israel/Palestine by decade

Indeed, the centrality of the SEEC strategy to the Israeli regime is apparent to this day, as two recent examples show. First, the land system reform legislated in the summer of 2009, following stormy public debate, included for the first time a special section in the Israel Lands Law that explicitly allows selection committees in residential communities. Section 104 (sub-section 20) of the amended law states:

Granting of ownership by the authority, in property that is within a communal settlement...will be conditional on the agreement of the communal settlement, the Jewish Agency for Israel, or the World Zionist Organization, as appropriate.

Second, a guarantee of the Jewish identity of settlement space appears in one of the central sections of a draft of the Israeli constitution currently debated in the Knesset, and it allows the appropriation of land exclusively for settlements where there exist "distinct communities."⁵ In other words, as opposed to what is accepted in other democratic countries, where citizenship guarantees freedom of movement and residence in the entire sovereign space, Israel seeks to anchor in its constitution the ability to arrange space by the majority group and prevent minority groups from

residing in that space. This spatial racism has become taken for granted in today's Israel, also thanks to 60 years of planning that enshrined the legitimacy of this discriminatory norm.

It is important at this point to qualify these statements somewhat, and note that the production of space in Israel has made many important positive contributions, primarily in the strengthening of Jewish society and economy in Israel. The Zionist project always saw land control, and with it planning and development processes, as a central issue in strengthening Jewish sovereignty. Recall that Zionism was comprised primarily of immigrants and refugees who were forced to flee anti-Semitic Europe before and after the Holocaust, and later oppressive Middle Eastern countries and the crumbling Soviet Union. The Jews were thus actually driven into their mythical homeland and Israeli planning created this home. In Jewish-Israeli society, spatial planning also assisted weaker segments of the population and geographic and ethnic peripheries, and in recent years also created more democratic forms of decision-making processes, including active and influential civil society organizations (Alterman and Han, 2004). It is also important to note that Israeli spatial policy has been active within a political historical context that includes a sometimes belligerent Arab environment and waves of violence and terror. Nevertheless, these aspects of planning have been the subject of many standard analyses, both academic and within Israeli society, whereas not many have attempted the structural-critical analysis presented here.

The Sharons

As stated, the creation of the scattered and segregated space is represented most of all by two figures—Arieh and Ariel Sharon (not related)—who spearheaded the formulation of the planning-geographic-political vision and its translation into the language of development, settlement and space. Arieh Sharon was a well-respected architect and planner who immigrated to Israel in the 1920s and was one of the founders of Kibbutz Gan Shmuel. Sharon later returned to Europe to study at the prestigious Bauhaus in Germany, and after his return to Israel he became one of the pioneers of modern planning in the Jewish *Yishuv* (pre-state population). In the state's founding years, Sharon reached the peak of his career when he was hired by the Prime Minister's Office to head a large, experienced professional staff in creating a national plan for the young State of Israel in 1949–1952. The plan, publicized in 1951, is still widely known as the Sharon Plan. It laid the historic, institutional and professional groundwork for the hegemony of Israeli planning, and it constitutes a major part of the spatial infrastructure of the Zionist nation-building program. In 1952, Sharon resigned from the planning staff of the Prime Minister's Office in protest of the partial and, in his opinion, distorted implementation of his

plan and returned to the private sector, where he planned many architectural projects, mostly in Israel and Africa.

Ariel Sharon is, of course, known as a military and political leader who became Prime Minister of Israel in the early 2000s. Nevertheless, Ariel Sharon was also a highly influential spatial planner, since his time as a general, when he changed the face of refugee camps in Gaza to better conditions for Israeli control. Ariel Sharon's activities involved a series of planning endeavors that were never concentrated in one document, but caused a chain of highly significant spatial changes (Weizman, 2006). Sharon was in many ways the leading figure that pushed Jewish settlement in occupied Palestinian territory. He was behind the plan of establishing hilltop settlements (*mitzpim*) in the Galilee, as well as the Kochavim Plan along the Green Line in the center of the country. In the 1990s, Sharon began to advance the privatization of land in Israel and as Prime Minister was responsible for the disengagement in which 21 Jewish settlements, mainly in Gaza, were evacuated and destroyed. At the same time, Sharon headed the "security barrier" (fence, wall) project and the continuation of accelerated settlement in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, as well as being behind the plan to forcefully concentrate Bedouin towns in the Negev and the continuous establishment of private Jewish ranches in the south. Thus, the second Sharon was active in a different geopolitical context than was the first Sharon, as the Zionist nation was already established in a recognized country, with occupied Palestinian territories under its control, settled by hundreds of thousands of Jews.

The SEEC logic and the tools that arise from the strategy guided by the two Sharons guided crept into many other non-planning fields of social life, such as employment, educational systems, language, popular culture, the real estate market and communications. There they appear somewhat differently, but the principles of settlement, Judaization, restriction, segregation and recently also commercialization and privatization constantly arise as points of reference in public discourse as key to shaping society. These principles create daily ethnic and social boundaries that arise from the viewpoint radiated by the Sharonian spaces, as elaborated below.

The two Sharons represent the tip of the systemic iceberg of the powerful and multifaceted spatial hegemony, which includes the armed forces, the land establishment, planning mechanisms and an assortment of financial and entrepreneurial institutions and firms. However, the leadership of the two men as mobilizers of a planning vision should be noted. As already mentioned, there were fundamental differences between the two Sharons—mainly political differences, but also differences in their public positioning. Arie Sharon's activities were primarily professional, whereas Ariel Sharon went from being a general to a political leader. Arie Sharon, who was identified with the left, was only active within the boundaries of Israel's sovereignty, whereas Ariel Sharon led a breach of those boundaries and a series of activities deviating from international law. But despite the differences, both men guided the quite similar spatial-colonial strategy of Judaizing the space while forming a modern and well-planned development system, and in

parallel assisted in widespread de-Arabization of the space by erasing the Palestinian past and transferring resources and control from Arab to Jewish hands whenever possible.

The first Sharon

The first national master plan, headed by Arie Sharon, was published in 1951 under the title "Physical Plan for Israel." The plan became an important foundation for the establishment of the Israeli ethnocentric regime, as it detailed the Judaization of the country while institutionalizing and granting political legitimacy to the process of settlement and development in internal frontier areas. The plan was executed primarily in the 1950s and 1960s, and led to the establishment of more than 400 rural Jewish settlements and about 30 new or renewed cities. The doctrine that Sharon developed sought to achieve territorial, political and security aims through a spatial policy that set at the top of its agenda settling and working the land while modernizing the settlement system. In order to achieve these goals, it made use of the spatial approach of "scattering," which called for "the most settlements on the most space," giving priority to the establishment of new settlements over supporting existing ones and precedence to new building over restoration or preservation of building tradition. In a framework where the public takes precedence over private preferences (Shachar, 1998), the Sharon Plan designed Israel for a population of 2.65 million, a goal that was achieved as early as 1966.

The national plan published by Arie Sharon was prepared under the direct patronage of Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, who saw it as an integral part of the process of enforcing Jewish rule over disputed areas and as part of the project of building the Zionist nation. We will soon see that this perception can be found consistently in the activities of the second Sharon. In the state's early years, due to the strategic significance attached to the plan, Ben-Gurion situated the planning team in the Prime Minister's Office and granted extensive resources for preparation and execution of the plan. Ben-Gurion's spatial-defense approach can be clearly seen in a speech from 1948:

The security of the state will not rest exclusively on the armed forces. Our methods of settlement will determine the security of the state no less than establishing the army. Only dense agricultural settlement along the borders—a chain of farmsteads in the north, on the coast, along the Jordan, and in the Negev—will act as a reliable shield for the security of the country from external attacks. Not silent stone forts, but a living, working and productive human wall—the only wall that is neither deterred nor damaged by enemy firepower—can protect the borders of our country (cited in Tzfadia, 2009b:47).

The staff of planners, headed by Sharon, translated this strategic position into practical tools, adopting the zone development method. This drew direct and indirect influence from European perceptions, including the Central Place theory of the German geographer Walter Christaller and the concept of garden cities developed by the British thinker, Ebenezer Howard. The plan divided the country into 27 development zones, which were to develop economic independence. The plan was a symbol of centralizing planning “from above” in an almost Bolshevik manner (Efrat, 2005), as it defined sizes and exact locations for hundreds of settlements, including dozens of new cities (eventually called “development towns”), and the definition of Beer Sheva as capital of the Negev, as a center of intensified development. The plan developed national infrastructure systems, including broad water planning, which became the basis for the establishment of the National Water Carrier, development and employment centers, including the Ashdod Port, and most of Israel’s nature reserves and scenic and nature sites.

The two primary goals set by Sharon—directed planning and the dispersed settlement hierarchy—clearly appear at the beginning of the plan:

All physical planning that designates the intended use of areas in the country and shapes their spatial image must be based on economic, social and national security factors. The first condition for their success is the organization, coordination and integration of these factors into a framework of planning that development should follow (Sharon, 1951:5).

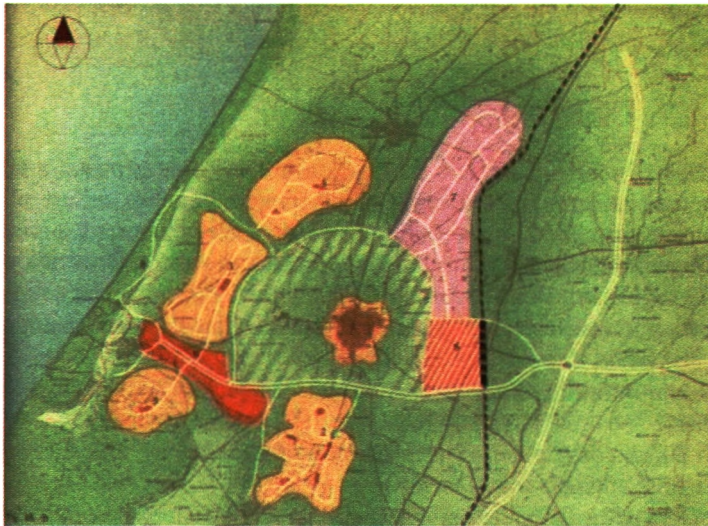
In the absence of such a policy, the natural economic force will guide the population on the path of least resistance to the larger, existing centers—leaving the breadth of the land vacant of inhabitants and enterprise (Sharon, 1951:8).

The plan determined principles for the expansion of the population, emphasizing the development of the frontier and the absorption of Jewish immigration. It sought to correct what it termed a “colonial distortion”—concentration of the population in three large cities, with 82% of the population at the time living along the coast. It should be noted, however, that this “distortion” and the “vacancy” of the periphery were caused, of course, by driving away hundreds of thousands of Palestinians during the War of Independence, the systematic destruction of more than 400 agricultural villages, and preventing the return of its inhabitants to within Israeli borders (the Palestinian *Nakba*). In other words, the geographic “distortion” was created by Israel, which now sought to “correct” it through the Sharon Plan. The plan and its many interpretations ignore these spatial and historical causes entirely. In this context, Figure 3 shows three representative maps from the Sharon Plan. Note, for example, that the Palestinian localities that did remain in Israel do not even appear on the map that describes Israel’s existing localities. Additionally, new Jewish cities were sometimes planned

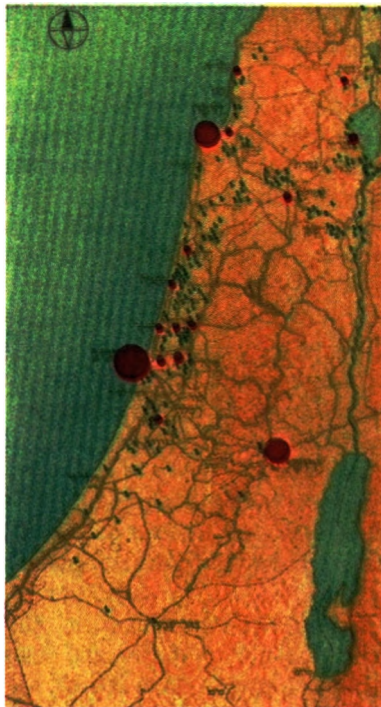
at the location of the destroyed Palestinian cities, with the new city inscribed over the old, in a clear act of erasure, destruction and replacement (Figure 3). These erasures, of course, are not incidental and testify to the ethnocentric nature of Israeli planning at the time. The plan sought to fix the "distortion" by accelerated Jewish settlement according to a zone system around central cities, primarily in the north, the Shfela, the Jerusalem corridor and the Negev.



Plan for Bet She'an (on the ruins of Belsan)



Plan for Migdal Gad, which is Ashkelon (on the ruins of al-Majdal)



1951 population density

Figure 3: Three maps from the Sharon Plan, 1951

The national master plan, and its location in the Prime Minister's Office, had huge repercussions for spatial planning. This created an entire culture of planning and settlement, expressed, for one thing, in the development of a professional-political language which can be seen in the following modern Hebrew idioms:

- *Hityashvut*—"settlement" means exclusively Jewish localities.
- *Hityashvut Ovedet*—"labor settlement" means Jewish settlements of particular kinds.
- *Hagshama*—"fulfillment/actualization" means Jewish settlement in the periphery.
- *Plisha l'Karkaot HaMedina*—"invasion into state lands" almost always means Arab attempts at settlement.
- *Pizur Ochlusiya*—"population dispersal" means Jewish dispersal.
- *Pituach HaGalil vohaNegev*—"development of the Galilee and the Negev" means establishing Jewish settlements and transferring resources to the Jewish periphery.
- *Ochlusiya Chazaka*—"strong population" generally means educated Jews.

Importantly, the first Sharon was identified, at least declaratively, with the socialist school of planning, adopting British, German and Russian theories and models, as well as rhetoric of historic and social justice. Sharon adopted models generated in the Western world, such as the Garden City strategy, regional balance, decentralization, development of peripheral areas and growth limitations imposed on large cities. The period of the 1940s and 1950s is considered the "golden age" of planning throughout the world, particularly as a result of large-scale postwar development and the adoption of the Keynesian approach, which sees the state as an enlightened agent for shaping society and the economy. As a result of his nominal adoption of Western socialist planning principles and his connections with the Zionist left, Arie Sharon received much praise from the pens of planners, critics and researchers (e.g., Carmon, 1998; E. Efrat, 1998; Z. Efrat, 2005; Hershkovitz, 2008; Mazor, 1997; Shachar, 1998).

But here a certain perplexity arises. It seems that the theories were imported to Israel as "shells" emptied of their socialist and democratic content. It appears as if the adoption of the models was not for genuine development of the area for its inhabitants, as originally intended, but to assist the process of Judaizing areas previously populated or cultivated by Palestinians. In other words, the Sharon Plan used planning and socialist rhetoric to spawn and legitimize forced population transformation in disputed areas—from Arab to Jewish.

In addition, and contrary to the imported European models, the Jews settling in the frontier areas were mostly disadvantaged immigrants or refugees from the Muslim world, and thus the settlement process became a form of planned marginalization, causing exclusion and isolation of large populations from Israeli social and geographic centers, and not liberation, development and modernization,

as claimed by the 1951 Sharon Plan (Shenhav, 2003; Yiftachel and Tzfadia, 2008). As noted, this spatial system was created by the initial segregation between types of Jewish settlements, especially between European (Ashkenazi) and Oriental (Mizrahi) settlers who were by and large assigned to different localities. The system was then maintained through a key institution in the Israeli planning system directly related to the nature of Sharonian SEEC space—the selection committee (*Va'adat Kabala*). Such a committee operates in hundreds of Jewish settlements to screen would-be residents and ensure that only “suitable” people inhabit the locality. Needless to say, this has caused not only profound separation between Arabs and Jews, but also distinct patterns of inter-generational segregation between Jewish ethno-classes (Blank, 2006; Ziv and Shamir, 2003). Against these “layers” of Israeli/Palestinian context and Israeli institutionalization, the importation of planning models from Europe functioned to legitimize as “modern” and “advanced” a plan which actually created a morphology of internal colonialism, granting legitimacy to the SEEC strategy along with everything that entailed.

The second Sharon

In his political planning activities, Ariel Sharon built upon Arie Sharon's spatial approach, deepening it over the years through intensive spatialization of military power and market forces. He strengthened the internal and external colonial processes that created the hotly disputed Israel/Palestine map (Figure 4). This map demonstrates the effectiveness of the Judaization of the space: Palestinians, who now number 46% of the population from the Jordan to the Mediterranean, have been restricted to detached enclaves that cover over only 14% of that area. Within the Green Line, this is even starker: the Palestinians constitute 18% of Israeli citizens, but the area under their control is less than 3% and they are actually prevented from settling in about 80% of the area in their country.⁶ Keep in mind that, prior to 1948, Jews held only 1.4 million dunams, or 7%, of the land in mandatory Palestine, while Palestinians owned five times this amount (Fischbach, 2003). In many ways, the Judaization process reversed the pre-1948 land control system, through massive dispossession of the Palestinians, much through the Sharonian SEEC strategy.

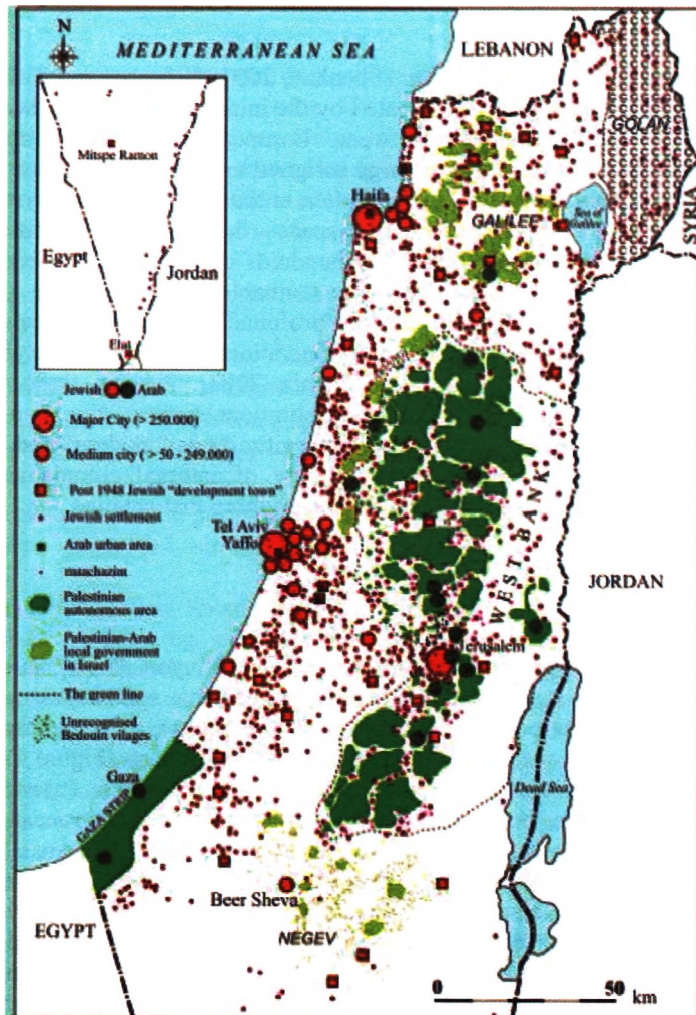


Figure 4: The ethnic geography of Israel/Palestine, 2009

The legacy of the second Sharon is more complex than that of the first, as it deepened and modified three elements of the SEEC strategy: settlement geography; security and militarization of space; and commercial privatization. The first Sharonian paradigm urged the creation of a "scattered settlement morphology" of Jewish space through expansive settlement and ethnic segregation. The second

Sharon intensified this process by settling not just vacant areas, but expanding settlement into the heart of populated Arab areas on both sides of the Green Line. Ariel Sharon also added a vertical dimension to the morphology—the goal of settling Jews “above” Arabs (Azoulay and Ophir, 2008; Efrat, 2002; Gordon, 2008; Weizman, 2007). In other words, by transforming the scattered morphology into a three-dimensional topography, such as the hilltop settlements in the Galilee and the settlements in the West Bank, an ethnic-spatial continuity was created that emphasizes the uniformity of the Jewish space on both sides of the Green Line.

These processes created enforced regional incursion of the expanding group into the shrinking space of the indigenous group while still upholding ethnic segregation. This occurred primarily in the 1970s and 1980s, when planning shifted its emphasis into the occupied territories with the establishment of about 140 “legal” settlements and, later, about 100 “outposts” (settlements without planning approval).⁷ The approach hastened wide-scale external colonization processes, as settlement planning sharpened the “racialization” of ethnic groups, establishing identity borders between them subject to unbridgeable historical-biological logic. The wide-ranging settlement that Ariel Sharon planned for the territories created a spatial-ethnic and legal foundation for apartheid, in which ethnic spaces are completely segregated and a clear hierarchy is established between them. In these years, the religious discourse supporting colonization grew stronger, as Jewish settlements were joined to the biblical sites spread throughout the West Bank, and the “Complete Land of Israel” was sanctified as a territory promised exclusively to the Jews. We should note that religious rhetoric became central also to the Palestinian discourse that opposed the Israeli colonialism. This discourse emphasizes the centrality of Palestine as an Islamic *waqf*, placing Jerusalem as a future Palestinian capital, as well as a holy center for the Muslim world, currently in the hands of Jewish “infidels.”

Under Ariel Sharon’s influence and encouragement, the settlement momentum that sharpened the ethnic boundaries found expression within the Green Line as well. This is what happened through the “Judaization of the Galilee” project of the late 1970s, in which 60 hilltop settlements were established. Concurrently, 20 small settlements were established at this time in the Negev, some on land claimed by local Arab residents, and more recently about 50 “private farms” were established there. Thus, hundreds of thousands of Jews were “scattered” throughout the heart of Arab areas, creating a clear “separate and unequal” existence in the Negev and Galilee. Here we can detect a classic act of colonialism that creates long-term settings of racial segregation and inequality, deliberately provoking friction.

The second element advanced by Ariel Sharon was the “securitization of planning.” Building on Carl von Clausewitz’s famous idiom, “War is a continuation of politics by other means,” in Sharonian space, “Planning is a continuation of war by other means.” The process of expansion and domination generally begins with military occupation, but it does not end there. It continues by institutionalizing the new territorial arrangement, placing planning as the central foundation for

regulation, standardization and control, often using security reasons to legitimize its unequal spatial setting. Under the second Sharon, security became a lynchpin of the Israeli planning project, providing profound logic for its spatial strategies, where civil fortification often followed the initial period of military control (Weizman, 2006).

Indeed, many planning considerations during both periods, but especially the second, were inspired by security-military thinking, as can be seen from the planning discourse that includes such repeated phrases as: “frontiers” “(demographic or spatial) threats,” “buffer zones,” “wedges,” “control over main arteries,” “strategic points,” “protection of national land,” “invasion,” “penetration” and “outposts” (for details, see Tzfadia, 2009a). In most of the plans for frontier areas, the use of such language is quite marked, as is the active cooperation of planning authorities with the military apparatus.⁸ Thus, planning has become part of the military system, both in obvious and latent forms. For example, more than 40% of land in Israel proper today is in direct use by the military (Oren and Regev, 2008). The military government (through its “civil administration”) oversees all planning activities in Area C of the West Bank, and the National Security Council has developed the current governmental planning strategy to deal with Bedouins in the Negev.

More subtly, the militarization of planning is being advanced through rich and varied networks of connections between security forces and planning authorities—for example, the participation of many military officers on planning boards; public discourse that consistently links space with security concerns; constant surveillance of public spaces (such as parks, shopping centers, office buildings, campuses and factories) primarily by security firms; and subordination of the planning outline to “security needs” which are determined by the defense establishment, itself without any significant system of checks and balances. The central institution that translates military considerations into spatial plans is the “security installation committees” placed in every Israeli district. Under Section 6 of the Israeli Planning and Building Law, these three-person committees are staffed by two representatives of the security apparatus and the district planner. They have the power of law to make major planning decisions about “military installations” in the broadest sense. They operate in total secrecy, with no public scrutiny and no requirement for coordination, let alone agreement, of the open civil planning process (Oren and Regev, 2008).

But other forces beyond the military operate on Israeli/Palestinian space. In the 1990s, Ariel Sharon’s planning approach reached a strategic bifurcation. Since then, it has continued on two parallel sub-paradigms (Figure 5). The first can be described as national “commercialization” of land resources and subjugation of planning to the considerations and profit of local investor groups from the suburban middle classes. The second refers to entrepreneurial capital—Israeli or international—for large-scale real estate development and investment. This strategy led to the adoption of an agenda of metropolitanization, privatization and urban densification, which the planning system has been advancing since those years. This agenda emphasizes the

class aspect of Ariel Sharon's planning influence. While achieving "national goals"—for example, scattering Jewish settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza; housing the massive wave of immigration from the Soviet Union and Ethiopia—Ariel Sharon was promoting suburbanization and land privatization in near-city rural areas. This process transfers substantial public resources primarily to more established groups within society: those who have controlled land resources since the 1950s, namely, Ashkenazi Jews (see also Kedar and Yiftachel, 2006).

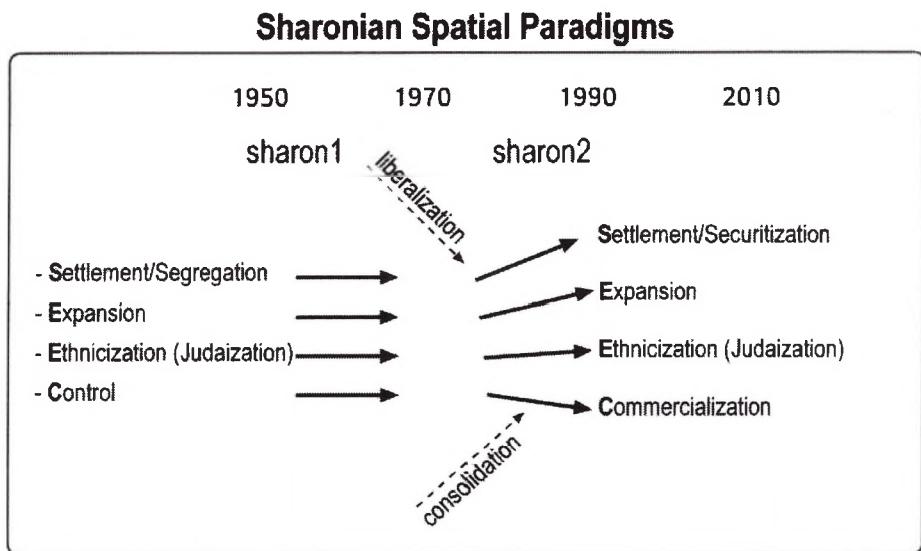


Figure 5: Sharonian spatial paradigms: Continuation and change in SEEC strategies

At the same time, the second Sharon spearheaded the construction of tens of thousands of housing units in the distant peripheries to house the wave of immigrants, granting generous government guarantees to developers. Thus, Sharon distanced immigrants from the former Soviet Union ("Russians") from the power and resource centers of Israeli society in a manner similar to the establishment of development towns in the 1950s. He therefore continued the agenda begun by the first Sharon, in which disadvantaged immigrants find themselves on the periphery, with little hope of escaping their marginalized situation. Elsewhere this dynamic was termed "the frontiphery process," whereby the state mobilizes resources and population for the periphery by constructing it as a glorified national frontier. Yet,

once Judaized, the state typically abandons the frontier in terms of investment and priority, thus creating conditions of geographical, social and economic peripherality (Yiftachel and Tzfadia, 2008; see also Hasson, 1991).

Through this process, Ariel Sharon also heavily privileged landowners and developers, by giving them the opportunity to develop small and cheap housing units quickly and with almost no financial risk. During 1991–1996, the state also initiated a fast-track planning process for peripheral development, through which the new housing developments bypassed many planning regulations and restrictions (Tzfadia and Yiftachel, 2004). These steps greatly advanced the place of capital in the planning process while creating unprecedented social class gaps in Israeli society (Adva Center for Social Equality, 2009).

The second branch of Ariel Sharon's spatial strategies moved in a different direction, albeit in an initial and partial manner. I refer to the Zionist spatial consolidation and partial withdrawal which Sharon led towards the end of his reign. The spatial moves were the disengagement from Gaza in 2005 and the construction of the security fence (wall, barrier) during 2003–2007. For the first time, Israel evacuated and destroyed Jewish settlements, as well as created a massive defensive land barrier, within the Land of Israel (that is, Israel/Palestine). Additionally, in the struggle with the Bedouins in the south, Israel recognized ten Arab localities from which it had attempted to expel Bedouins over the years. These moves emphasize the role of planning in the transition to the current "oppressive consolidation" phase of political geography. This process is potentially significant and indeed conflicts with the colonial momentum. Yet, it appears at this point that it does not herald a structural change, but rather a change of tactic, as it is accompanied by neither a transformation in ideology nor a sincerely reconciliatory agenda. As noted, and under this unwavering Jewish geopolitical domination, the partial contraction creates a "vertical ethnocracy" that reorganizes the Judaized areas of the country while continuing to besiege and weaken neighboring Palestinian enclaves.

Additionally, the process of partial withdrawal fits well with the strategy of "national commercialization" in that it relinquishes an excessive economic/defensive burden and focuses security and development resources in areas where the Judaization process can receive complete Israeli and even international legitimacy, and therefore also bear economic fruit. These steps by Ariel Sharon allow Israel to continue to be integrated into the global economy and to speed up development in Judaized areas while continuing to exclude the Palestinians through geographical, economic and judicial means.

It is important to emphasize that the Sharonian paradigms depicted in Figure 5 are not linear, but at times occur simultaneously, like parallel arrows advancing through disputed space. A simple approach would see history as a series of changing eras. Thus, for example, the public discourse saw the Oslo period as heralding a civilian era, and the Intifada, an era of renewed nationalism. On the other hand, the Gramscian approach taken here seeks to study history as an ongoing series of collective struggles being waged simultaneously to establish a national and

economic hegemony. The actions of Ariel Sharon are consistent with this Gramscian understanding, as they testify to the need for the hegemonic project to change and be flexible while safeguarding the heart of the planning effort—fortifying and entrenching Jewish rule of the land through ongoing economic development and maintenance of the elevated status of the Israeli elite.

Figure 5 summarizes the spatial strategies spearheaded by the two Sharons, signifying the continuity and differences between the two men. As is clear from the figure, a remarkable feat of the second Sharon is the successful coexistence of two processes that appear structurally incompatible: liberalization and nationalist territorialism. This is achieved by laying down geographic, economic and defensive blockades that prevent significant Palestinian entry into the lucrative process of privatization and globalization. Commercialization of the space therefore remains an almost exclusive Jewish process. Thus, Ariel Sharon neutralized the potential for freedom and equality inherent in the liberalization process beginning in the 1990s, and instead transformed it to serve the ethnocratic regime and the existing ethnic-social status quo (see also Hasson and Abu-Asbeh, 2004).

As noted, a major planning principle established by the two Sharons has been the forced and unequal segregation of segments of the population, primarily on an ethno-national and ethno-class basis. A key point in my overall argument is the influence of these spatial technologies on the regime created through this segregated space of the past six decades. A central argument here is that in the planning and institutionalization of segregated space, the Jewish ethocracy has generated a process of “creeping apartheid”: it is very deep in parts of the West Bank, but is “solidifying” in a more restrained manner in most other areas within Israel/Palestine, such as the Negev, the “Triangle” and the Galilee.

Why “apartheid”? Because there is no better term in the lexicon of the social sciences to describe a spatial-political space that stratifies its population, *de jure* and *de facto*, according to ethno-racial identity. When this segregation becomes legalized and institutionalized through laws and policies governing immigration, land allocation, movement restrictions, discrimination in the land and housing markets and exclusion from power centers, regime settings are created (Blank, 2006). Hence, the spatial mechanism, embedded in the doctrines led by the two Sharons, have become foundations of the regime of separation ruling Israel/Palestine.

Such being the case, why “creeping”? Firstly, because there has never been an official announcement of an apartheid regime, and the situation of inequality is still considered “temporary” from a judicial and official standpoint, particularly as regards Palestinian territories and Bedouin regions.

Secondly, there are two parallel procedures that characterize the creeping nature of the plan as it crosses the Green Line. The ongoing Israelization of the Palestinian territories creates a uniform Jewish space that now includes Israel and close to half of the West Bank. This is due to the imposition of Israeli law in all Jewish settlements in the West Bank and their municipal areas, and the

transportation and security infrastructure that directly connects, for Jews only, the Jewish portions of the West Bank and Israel proper. At the same time, a parallel process “imports” policy tools used by the West Bank’s occupation administration for the control of Palestinians inside Israel, including planning and building restrictions, house demolitions, restrictions on movement, marriage and freedom of speech and persistent refusal to recognize dozens of villages, mainly in the Beer Sheva region.

Thirdly, policies demonstrating control over the Palestinians within Israel have recently come to resemble, albeit not duplicate, mechanisms used in the occupied territories. These include the use of emergency regulations, limitations on immigration and marriage, infiltration of secret agents, limitations on money transfers, General Security Services surveillance of democratic organizations and the continuation of spatial and planning restrictions. It is true that Arabs in Israel have more civil and political freedom than do their counterparts in the territories, but even within the Green Line discrimination has deepened and their alienation from the Israeli state has increased. This being the case, the segregated, tiered social situation is increasingly institutionalized on both sides of the Green Line, with Palestinians on both sides having little power to halt this structural process.

Let me reiterate: spatial policy is directly connected to the “creeping apartheid” process. Many of the planned spaces of domination over the Palestinians are linked to the spatial and planning strategies of uneven segregation discussed earlier (see also Hanafi, 2009; Handel, 2007; Qumsiyeh, 2008). In recent years, an ethnic-racial space, reminiscent of the pre-1994 South African regime, has emerged, albeit through different historical, geographical and political circumstances. As can be seen in Figure 6, the SEEC strategy created a geography of spaces segregated in almost every aspect of life on the basis of identity. Three primary spatial identity groups appear: Jews (in the entire Israel/Palestine space); Palestinians in Israel; and Palestinians in the occupied territories. Each of the groups is in turn divided into subgroups, which creates 11 separate and different “civil rights categories” under the Israeli regime (for details, see Yiftachel, 2006, 2009).

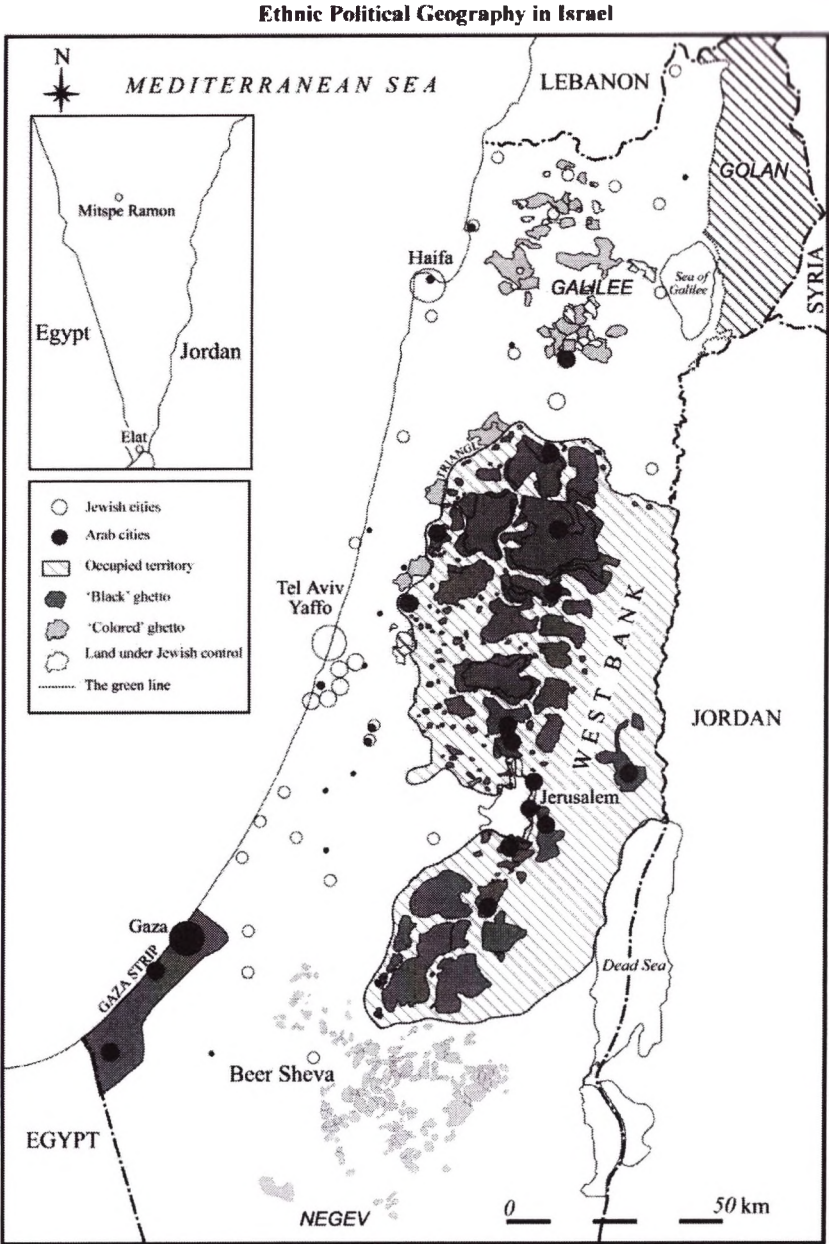


Figure 6: Jewish spaces and Palestinian ghettoized enclaves

By analogizing to the situation in South Africa, we can refer to three types of stratified “races,” among which the State of Israel for all practical purposes forbids mixing. The Jewish areas constitute the “white space,” which includes most of the area from the Jordan to the Mediterranean, including the Jewish half of the West Bank. This space is relatively “smooth” and allows free movement, investment and acquisition in all of its parts. The Jews do live in enclaves that are stratified according to class and ethnicity, but their borders are relatively penetrable to other Jews (except for the Haredi population, which is voluntarily segregated). On the other hand, Palestinian space is “rough,” made up of separate patches of enclaves and ghettos for two primary groups: “colored” and “black.” These enclaves are constrained forcibly. In Israel proper, the constraint is indirect, resulting from spatial tightening, developmental prevention and the inability of most Palestinian citizens to acquire, settle and integrate into the Jewish space. In the occupied territories, the “black” ghettos are directly controlled, their movement and passage blocked and planning and development kept to a tight minimum. The “colored” enclaves, where approximately 1.2 million Palestinians live, are spread over about 2% of the land controlled by Israel (about 3% of Israel proper), while the “black” enclaves, where approximately three million Palestinians live, are squeezed into about 12% of the area (Areas A and B). Palestinians live on about 14% of the space, but they constitute close to half the population of Israel/Palestine.

This is not the place to detail the differences created between the varying “categories” of rights and opportunities in the “white,” “colored” and “black” spaces. Suffice to point to the many indicators that clearly demonstrate the privilege of Jewish space in all aspects—income, education, quality of life, development, planning rights and protection from violence and destruction (Adva Center for Social Equality, 2009; Azoulay and Ophir, 2008; Bimkom, 2008; Roy, 2007). I will make do with examples in two key areas: economics and planning. The average per capita income among the Jewish population throughout Israel/Palestine in the last decade was twice that earned by a Palestinian citizen in Israel, and 12(!) times that of a Palestinian in the occupied territories. In regard to planning, between 2000 and 2008, the Israeli planning authorities destroyed 1,626 Palestinian homes in Area C (Bimkom, 2008) and about half this number in Palestinian localities within Israel, 604 of them in Arab localities in the Negev (Negev Coexistence Forum, 2009). During the same time period, the authorities destroyed about 70 Jewish structures. Further, in the Jewish sector, a “whitening” policy stands out. Of more than 16,000 unauthorized buildings in semi-rural Jewish localities, only three were destroyed between 2000 and 2004, and the rest are in the process of gaining approval. In parallel, approximately 60 hilltop localities established in the Galilee and about 50 “family farms” built in the Negev without planning approval were later recognized and connected to complete sets of development infrastructure. It is true that in Arab localities, too, hundreds of buildings built without permit were indeed “whitened,” but their inclusion in the plan is slower and more complicated than in Jewish

settlements and is always within the boundaries of an existing locality, never a new settlement as is so common in the Jewish sector (Gazit, 2000).

Finally, one of the common government tactics to maintain hierarchy and Jewish privileges is to organize the Palestinian people into “gray spaces.” This refers to places, developments and populations that are located between legality, security and full inclusion on the one hand, and expulsion, destruction and death on the other. The vast majority of Palestinians are located between these poles, in a situation of “permanent temporariness,” which has not been “resolved” for six decades. The state therefore transforms the residents of those spaces into prisoners of an ongoing struggle to gain rights, protection and abilities that are a given in the Jewish “whitened” spaces. Spatial planning plays a central role in crystallizing this spatial-social order, as it provides the tools, definitions and institutions for classifying spaces and populations as “gray.” Examples of such are non-recognition of settlements, non-completion of plans, limitation and minimization of space, establishment of restrictive immigration permits and marriage laws, and exclusion from integration into equal citizenship due to ethnocentric concerns (such as “security”). This process of incorporation through segregation creates a gradational and generally violent establishment of a fissured, layered ethno-spatial existence (for more details, see Yiftachel, 2009).

Of course, other powerful forces beyond spatial policy also affect the Israeli/Palestinian space, such as security considerations, religious doctrine and financial crises, as well as state and Palestinian terrorism. It is also important to remember that the Palestinians are not passive, but are relentlessly active in remaking the disputed space by using a variety of tactics of violent and civil opposition, and by fueling the asymmetrical dialectic that leads to forced segregation. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Judaized, segregated, fragmented and layered space, created on the work desks and in the minds of the two Sharons, has played a major role in the ongoing national, ethnic and class conflicts in this country.

It is also important to qualify these statements. Not all segregation is negative, and at times it is not a sign of oppression, but a strategy that distinct groups use to preserve their identity. Additionally, a static picture of segregation does not always testify to its significance. In order to understand the socio-political ramifications of the segregated geography, we have to examine the power dynamics that create the segregation. For example, a stable segregated situation such as in Northern Ireland, or between poor immigrant neighborhoods and the middle class in Berlin, is not the same as segregation created by the expansion of “fortresses” against forcefully segregated ghettos, such as in the Israeli/Palestinian space (Marcuse, 1997). What makes the situation in Israel/Palestine particularly volatile is the high level of segregation between settlements and neighborhoods together with the unilateral direction of the process. This includes disproportionate Jewish control of land resources and the mechanisms that impede Arabs from developmental progress and opportunities in general, and from Judaized spaces in particular.

Therefore, the shaping of space as inspired by the Sharonian paradigms has created deep imprints of segregation, minority ghettoization, securitization and social inequality, and with it a complex system of boundaries intended to strengthen the SEEC morphology. Responsibility for this system, needless to say, goes beyond the role of planning professionals, because many social boundaries are created in other areas of society, such as markets, workplaces, tax laws and education. Yet, planning professionals play an important role in establishing a powerful physical reality that creates long-term and inescapable frameworks of existence.

A final word: revive professional ethics?

The formation of space is a process that will never be completed. The age of the Sharons has passed, but the spatial processes created by their SEEC strategies are deeply imprinted in Israel/Palestine and will continue to shape it for generations. The quiet acceptance of the SEEC strategy by the majority of spatial professionals in Israel, such as planners, geographers, lawyers, architects and engineers, has paved the way for an alarming separation between professional activity and social/moral ethics. The two Sharons, as representatives of the entire system, established their planning ideology by formation of policy “from above,” which represents an allegedly “objective” situation beyond values, ethics or politics. The first Sharon accomplished this by importing and applying international Western models to create a nationalist and socialist space, and the second Sharon did this by adopting “security” and globalizing development as the ultimate engines of spatial transformation. Thus the SEEC strategy has intensified, and it continues to function today through deliberate obfuscation of its destructive political and moral significance.

My argument is not just ethical, but professional and political. The space created by the two Sharons has significantly undermined the wellbeing and development potential of Israeli society. The SEEC strategy has created a segregated, colonial, unequal and non-viable space. Despite significant beginnings of progressive thinking and criticism in recent years, the generation of new planners, primarily in the public authorities and private firms, quietly continue to follow the path of the two Sharons and contribute to the process of segregation and inequality. Without a fundamental change of perception and complete planning reform promoting equality, openness and justice, it is reasonable to assume that future generations will face continuing conflicts around the very issue of space.

Nevertheless, planning also has a “bright side,” which includes a long history of progressive social and spatial transformation and improvement. Certainly planning can recover and bring about spatial improvement in the spirit of a profession born from the desire to create a just, accessible and organized space for every sector of society, with preference for the weak and marginalized. Such

planning will open up opportunities for all residents according to the democratic principles of needs, historical justice and fairness. These are not just ideological or moral concepts, but also political principles that guarantee the viability of society in transition from conflict to reconciliation and from colonial to postcolonial order. As much as segregative and unequal planning forms the foundation of an ethnocratic regime, it can also transform “from below” an oppressive system by opening up its spaces and moving towards greater equality and justice in housing, land and participation.

Improvements could come in different shapes and forms, as there are varied models that promote equality, recognition, decentralization, autonomy and just distribution. Israeli planning has much to learn from instances such as Spain, South Africa, Canada or Northern Ireland, where oppressive ethno-spatial relationships were transformed into systems of more equal and just planning, guided by recognition, equality, agreement and correction of past wrongs. But for that to happen, the SEEC strategy must end and be transformed into a spatial process free of ethnic expansion, colonial domination and spatial oppression.

As an ideal-type vision, let us suggest that SEEC should reappear as SEEP - that is, space that is Shared, Egalitarian, Equitable and Permeable.

The community of Israeli spatial professionals has a special role in this change of direction. Even a small organized group can open up discourse that will awaken the sleeping majority among planners and clarify the implications of the current policy. Initiatives in that direction are already apparent, primarily by civil society groups, such as Bimkom, *Adam Teva V'Din* (Israel Union for Environmental Legal Defense), the Arab Center for Alternative Planning, Adalah, the Association for Distributive Justice and the Mizrahi Democratic Rainbow. But there is still a long road ahead for these principles to penetrate the mainstream planning and land establishment.

It may be appropriate to close with the penetrating words of the Indian writer Arundhati Roy, who comments on the role of professional witnesses to the eviction of marginalized groups from their villages in the name of “planning”:

The trouble is that once you see it [the state’s war against marginal groups], you can’t unsee it. And once you’ve seen it, keeping quiet, saying nothing, becomes as political an act as speaking out. There’s no innocence. Either way, you’re accountable (Roy, 2001:7).

NOTES

¹ Personal interview, referring to a case known as “Fatna Abrik-Zubidat and others vs Israel Land Authority,” High Court 80361/07.

¹ 'Atiyya, was one of 124 witnesses to the special committee appointed by the Israeli government to "examine and recommend the future regulation of Bedouin settlement in the Negev" (Goldberg, 2008:1).

¹ See, for example, this series of extensive empirical studies of Israeli planning: Alfasi, 2006; Alterman, 2002; Carmon, 1998; E. Efrat, 1998; Z. Efrat, 2005; Gradus, 2003; Hasson, 1991, 2002; Hershkowitz, 2008; Kellerman, 1997; Tzfadia, 2009a; Shachar, 1998, 2000; Weizman, 2007; Yacobi, 2009; Yiftachel, 2006.

¹ For detailed definitions, see Abercrombie et al. (2000) and the *Dictionary of Human Geography* (2009).

¹ Paragraph 14 ("State Lands") of the proposed constitution states:

- (a) The state's land shall remain in its possession.
- (b) Appropriation of land by the state shall be conducted according to law.
- (c) Land shall only be expropriated according to law, and with appropriate compensation.
- (d) The state shall open its land resources for the good of all of its residents. The allocation of land will respect the way of life of distinct communities.

See <http://www.huka.gov.il/wiki/index.php>.

¹ This figure was reached by calculating the areas under Arab control on both sides of the Green Line: Areas A and B in the occupied territories, and the area of local Arab municipalities within Israel. The areas where Israeli Arabs are prevented from residence are the regional councils, where most of the settlements employ screening committees. Even the Qa'aden judgment, in which the Supreme Court ruled that his exclusion as an Arab from a "communal locality" was illegal, did not significantly change the situation, because of the increased power of screening committees, as noted earlier.

¹ Both types are, of course, illegal under international law.

¹ For example, *Nahal* is a military settlement that is later "civilized" and included in regional plans; the army appoints "civil defense" personnel in frontier areas from among the settlers; and the Ministry of Defense has permanent coordination bodies with settler leaders, border zone regional councils and new Jewish settlers in Negev farms.

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