

THE LOCATION OF PALESTINE IN GLOBAL COUNTERINSURGENCIES

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Source: International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 42, No. 3 (August 2010), pp. 413-

433

Published by: Cambridge University Press

Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/40784820

Accessed: 09-04-2017 15:44 UTC

REFERENCES

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THE LOCATION OF PALESTINE IN GLOBAL COUNTERINSURGENCIES

I begin with a pair of narratives:

[Jenin] itself showed signs of the Government's wrath. It was in a shocking state, having the appearance of a front-line town in a modern war. Huge gaps were visible between the blocks of buildings and houses, while piles of rubble lay across the streets.... Many men had been arrested and detained, while many buildings, including shops and offices, had been demolished as a punitive measure by the military.¹

On the fourth day, they managed to enter [the Jenin camp] because . . . this giant tank could simply run over booby traps, especially since they were very primitive booby traps. Once the army took over our street, they started shooting missiles from the air. On the fifth day they started shelling homes. A large number of people were killed or wounded. My neighbour's home was blown up by missiles . . . Close to us was a group of [detained] young men. They were handcuffed, naked, and lying on their stomachs . . . They would take each one of us and force us onto the ground, stomping on our backs and heads. One soldier would put his machine gun right on your head, and the other would tie you up.²

The first narrative dates from 1939, when the British finally suppressed the Arab Revolt; the second is from the Israeli counterinsurgency against Palestinians during the second intifada in 2002. What is striking about the two narratives is not only the similarity of "control" measures and the targeting of politically mobilized towns and villages across time but also the persistence of these techniques across different administrative/colonial systems. Further, these practices—house demolitions, detention of all men of a certain age, and the targeting of civilian spaces and populations—are familiar from other counterinsurgency contexts, whether British and French colonial wars in the 20th century or the 21st-century wars of the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This article concerns the *horizontal circuits* through which colonial policing or "security" practices have been transmitted across time or from one location to another, with Palestine as either a point of origin or an intermediary node of transmission. Over the last decade a great deal of scholarship has acknowledged the two-way traffic of colonial knowledge, overturning the received wisdom that inventions in techniques of rule traveled only from Europe to the colonies. This article argues that officials and foot soldiers, technologies of control, and resources travel not only between colonies and metropoles

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but also between different colonies of the same colonial power and between different colonial metropoles, whereby bureaucrats and military elites actively study and borrow each other's techniques and advise one another on effective ruling practices. Throughout the last century, Palestine has been a crucial node for such transmission, owing to its geostrategic significance, the ongoing struggle of Palestinians against colonization, and the position of Palestine's colonizers in global hierarchies of power. Palestine's centrality stems from the fact that with the Mandate, Palestinians were subjugated by perhaps the most powerful empire of its time, and today they are subjects of domination by Israel, the most important ally and client of the United States, the international hyperpower of our time.

Recent studies have shown that much of what has been analyzed as developing hermetically within nations in Europe and North America—notions of modernity, technocratic orderliness, national identity, democracy, motherhood, the language of class, urban planning, liberal education, and hygiene—cannot be extricated from the processes of imperial/colonial conquest and rule, which provided social laboratories in which new techniques of control could be tested and then deployed back to the metropole.⁴ In addition to techniques of governmentality and concepts that ordered and hierarchized the world, the colonial roots of many *domestic* practices of coercion in the metropole are now highlighted. Given that in a colonial setting, policing acted less as a protective social good afforded civilians and more as a disciplinary mechanism for circumscribing anticolonial intransigence, it was often heavily militarized, frequently targeted at political adversaries, and aimed at maintaining colonial order above all else. In these circumstances, a two-way traffic of security workers, resources, and ideas, between the British metropole and the colonies, as well as between different colonies, has been a conduit for transmitting policing techniques perfected in the colonies to the metropoles, where they have been incorporated into both routine and emergency metropolitan policing.⁵

One of the most striking of such practices is fingerprinting. The current world fingerprinting standard, where the physiological characteristics of individual persons are transformed into fragments of social datum used for policing, is the Henry classification method. The Henry method was devised in the late 19th century by two Indian forensic scientists in the earliest fingerprinting bureau in Calcutta, established under the auspices of the colonial Police of Bengal and its inspector general, Sir Edward Richard Henry.⁶ The forensic knowledge gained through practice on Indian colonial subjects was packaged for use in London, and later elsewhere in the world, while Henry would become the chief of London's Metropolitan Police. Similarly, what we know today as the hollow-point bullet is the technological descendant of bullets first manufactured by the British in their factory in Dum Dum near Calcutta. Daniel Headrick writes: "This particular invention was so vicious, for it tore great holes in the flesh, that the Europeans thought it too cruel to inflict upon one another, and used it only against Asians and Africans." Dum Dum bullets were banned for military use by the Hague Convention, but many police forces, including those in the United Kingdom, are today authorized to use its progeny, the hollow-point bullet, because of its targeting precision as well as its lethal ability.

Just as significant has been the global transmission of "best practices" of colonial control between different imperial powers. The interimperial conferences of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as those held in Berlin from 1884 to 1885, reinforced

imperial "horizontal circuits" in which ideas of domination circulated between different colonies, resulting in imperial isomorphism.⁸ The initiative of particular colonial administrators in seeking out models of rule was also important. For example, when the United States colonized the Philippines in the early 20th century, Americans drew on British colonial-administrative experiences in devising their own policies and techniques of rule.9 Although such transmissions were strongest between Anglo-Saxon countries, they also occurred between the Dutch, French, and Anglophone imperial centers. This sort of exchange became more institutionalized with the establishment of treaty organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) after World War II and during the era of decolonization and colonial counterinsurgencies. ¹⁰ Given the density and breadth of relations between imperial metropoles, between different colonies within empires, and between the colonies and the metropole, the complex, multilayered, and poly-directional exchange of ideas and practices challenge a conceptualization of empires as compartmentalized or operating autonomously.

Small war, or counterinsurgency, used to suppress colonial revolt, has been one of the more significant instruments of colonial domination, and its specific techniques and justifications have, like so many other instruments of control, traveled across time and space. Counterinsurgency is often defined as the set of military activities deployed by a more powerful conventional military against unconventional combatants or guerrillas. What distinguishes counterinsurgency from conventional warfare is the extent of the former's focus on civilians, not only as collateral to the actual fighting but also as the principal focus of warfare. Counterinsurgency theorists often quote Mao's dictum about the closeness of the relationship between the people and the guerrillas: "The former may be likened to water, the latter to the fish who inhabit it."11 The counterinsurgency response has been to "drain the pond" by persuading or deterring the civilian who is seen to support the guerrillas—logistically, politically, or morally—into acquiescing with the counterinsurgents. 12 A broad range of population-control measures used in counterinsurgencies, then, travel from place to place and era to era.

The location of Palestine in global counterinsurgencies is a prime illustration of this multidimensional transmission of knowledge. In suppressing the Palestinian Revolt (1936–39), the British Mandate drew on its extensive imperial policing and small-war experience and its personnel, who had already proven themselves in Ireland, Bengal, and the North-West Frontier Province, among other places. Palestine was particularly significant for the consolidation of British "imperial policing" and counterinsurgency practice because the suppression of the revolt in the 1930s produced an entire generation of imperial policemen and soldiers who then went on to become midlevel or senior officers and officials in post World War II colonial counterinsurgencies. Palestine formed a significant temporal link in that regard between the pre World War I and post World War II counterinsurgencies. The experiences gained in the Boer War (such as the use of blockhouses and barriers to suppress guerrilla movement) and the North-West Frontier Province before World War I were resurrected, ¹³ put to use in the Palestinian Revolt and consolidated in the later years of the Mandate, and then exported to Malaya, Cyprus, Kenya, and other colonies in the midst of anticolonial revolt in the 1950s and 1960s. Palestine was also important as a node of transfer of counterinsurgency techniques between different regimes. The fighting forces of the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine), who fought alongside the British in the revolt and formed the

nucleus of the military of the state of Israel, actively and self-consciously adopted the technologies, tactics, and legal apparatuses constructed by the British during the revolt in order to defeat and control Palestinians, whether inside the Green Line before 1967 or in the occupied territories thereafter. The Israeli military, after absorbing British lessons in imperial policing, also learned from the French experience in Algeria, which was considered qualitatively relevant due to the Arab heritage of both Algerians and Palestinians. Having consolidated its technologies of domination through several decades of military occupation, the Israeli military has now become a significant exporter of the counterinsurgency knowledge it has accumulated in Palestine.

This article then argues that the violence of Israeli counterinsurgency against Palestinians cannot be understood without locating it in a broader global space, where imperial control through military intervention continues apace, and in a more historical context, where the violent technologies of domination travel across time and space, making Palestine an archetypal laboratory and a crucial node of global counterinsurgencies. Such nodes are places where certain practices are innovated—or consolidated and improved if imported—and then used as models for practice elsewhere. The Boer War, the Malayan Emergency, the Huk Rebellion in the Philippines, and the Algerian War of Independence have all been such archetypal nodes, where either major innovations in counterinsurgency tactics or the institutionalization of these innovations in doctrine and practice, combined with their temporal specificities, have made them central to the process of transmission of counterinsurgency knowledge. The rest of this article, which is based on archival research, memoirs, and a rich body of secondary historical sources, first examines the processes and circuits through which such counterinsurgency knowledge has been transmitted into and out of Palestine. These include both material transmissions through bodies and personnel and ideational transmissions through learning and doctrine. Once the article has established the channels of travel of counterinsurgency technique, it then illustrates the local application of these technologies of control in Palestine by the British Mandate and subsequently by the Yishuv and Israeli militaries, pointing especially to the isomorphism in methods of population control. In conclusion, the article reflects on how this study affects our understanding of not only the Israeli colonization of Palestine but also the emergence of global counterinsurgency discourse and practice.

THE TRANSMISSION OF COUNTERINSURGENCY PRACTICES

Although not all counterinsurgency technologies of control are used in all settings, many techniques do travel. This occurs despite the fact that counterinsurgents distinguish between enemy-centric (i.e., full fire power) and population-centric (i.e., the proverbial "winning [of] hearts and minds") techniques of counterinsurgency or that these techniques and tactics seem to militarily address a political problem that remains unresolved despite the application of force to it. It is the familiarity of the techniques across a broad range of different kinds of counterinsurgency that is of interest. Ultimately, a program of counterinsurgency enlists a series of extant modular techniques that have been learned and transmitted from one instance to another and that can be slotted into the broader plan of action. The modes of transmission have included the movement of personnel, the networking of learning, the traveling of doctrine, and transnational epistemic communities.

The Movement of Personnel

The transfer of personnel between different sites of counterinsurgency is perhaps the most evident mode of such transmission. This mechanism is of course most easily utilized within a given empire, where officials transfer from one imperial holding to another. The Palestine Police Service was a fertile source of colonial personnel for Britain. The force was composed primarily of service men decommissioned after World War I and the Royal Irish Constabulary auxiliaries (known in Ireland as "the black and tans"). In the 1930s and 1940s, the Palestine Police Service was internally investigated—and predictably acquitted—for its perpetuation of the "black and tan methods" (indiscriminate brutality against civilians) and its use of the "third degree" in interrogations. ¹⁵ The Palestine Police worked closely with the British army, many of whose officers were veterans of the North-West Frontier Province and other rebellious places and who went on to serve throughout the empire.¹⁶ Further, various high-ranking imperial policemen (in particular Charles Tegart, who had served in Calcutta; R. B. G. Spicer of Kenya; Herbert Dowbiggin from Ceylon; and A. F. Perrott from Peshawar) were brought in from all corners of the empire to advise the Palestine Police on its methods and make it more effective in suppressing revolt.¹⁷ Many of the personnel of the Palestine Police and British army veterans who had served there went on to other British colonies. A British official in Malaya wrote of the several hundred Palestine policemen who arrived on the eve of the Malayan insurgency in the late 1940s: "Many splendid young men were among them, but there were also some rough types and adventurers, who arrived in the country with fixed and rash ideas of how to treat the 'natives.'"18 Certain officers' biographies read like a chronology of successive British counterinsurgencies. In some cases, the experience gained in one place explicitly formed the basis of action in the next place. Orde Wingate took the core concept of the Special Night Squads—teams of British and Jewish Palestinian policemen patrolling the Galilee at night to attack and intimidate villagers thought to be complicit with the revolt—with him to create the Gideon Force in East Africa and the Chindits in Burma. 19 Imperial policemen thus brought with them their knowledge to Palestine, perfected the practices there, and took the lessons learned elsewhere.

However, it was not only the state's coercive institutions—the police or the military that acted as conduits of personnel transfer. Colonial counterinsurgencies have also produced vast surplus labor of "security" men, and these "retired" soldiers are often recruited into mercenary work. ²⁰ The mercenaries in turn diffuse their counterinsurgency knowledge wherever they go. Given that Israel's territorial reach is vastly different from that of the British Empire, its transfer of personnel has not occurred within the framework of lateral career moves, or promotion from one theater of war to another. Mercenaries in Israel, which along with South Africa is a leading source of "private" military personnel, have used knowledge gained during their military training and the manuals used within the nongovernmental Israeli security industry (which are based on Israeli military manuals) to transmit counterinsurgency knowledge to security forces in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Rhodesia and to both the cocaine-cartel militias and the paramilitaries of Colombia.²¹ In many instances and in particular in Latin America, Israel has provided the "cover" the United States has required for transmission of such knowledge, providing its patron with plausible deniability.²²

The movement of personnel can also happen in the context of military observation, cooperation, and advising. During the Algerian war, Israelis studied the French use of helicopters in counterinsurgency,²³ and "in January 1960, two Israeli generals, Yitzhak Rabin (later chief of staff and prime minister) and Haim Herzog (later United Nations ambassador and president of Israel) visited Algeria and witnessed the French paratroopers in action in the Kabil mountains." Similarly, in 2002, the United States "observed" the Israeli invasion of Jenin and "borrowed" its usage of bulldozers to wipe out entire quarters (a tactic also used in Gaza in the winter of 2008 and 2009) in its own fighting in Iraq. Observation does not always occur in the context of military cooperation: Moshe Dayan, a war reporter in Vietnam, wrote, "I want to see and learn about the war in Vietnam and study its possible applications to war in our area." After his visit to Vietnam, Dayan met with French, British, and U.S. military and political officials to give advice. Observer status granted to Israel in military-treaty organizations such as NATO further incorporates Israel into the European and North American warfare apparatuses.

Military Training

Institutionalized programs of on-the-job training for violence workers are an obvious transmission mechanism for counterinsurgency knowledge. In Mandate Palestine, the Arab Revolt necessitated a bolstering of the Palestine police academy on Mount Scopus, which allowed it to simultaneously train policemen for service in a number of different colonies.²⁹ However, the most significant legacy of British counterinsurgency in the Arab Revolt was the training of men who were to become the founding fathers and highest ranking officers of the Israeli military. The majority of the supernumerary policemen who joined the Palestine police during the revolt later became members of the Israeli military.³⁰ Moshe Dayan and Yigal Allon served in Wingate's Special Night Squads.³¹ Dayan writes that "in some sense, every leader of the Israeli Army even today is a disciple of Wingate. He gave us our technique, he was the inspiration of our tactic, he was our dynamic."32 The British trained members of the Shahar unit of the Palmach as "Arabists"; they were disguised as Arabs and sent to gather intelligence and assassinate adversaries among Arabs.³³ The relationship between the Yishuv intelligence services and the British Central Investigative Division in Palestine provided the former with much procedural knowledge.³⁴ The military training received by the Israelis was then transmitted elsewhere. For example, the Mossad operatives of Misgeret in French Algeria received training from both the French and Israeli militaries, as reserve members of the former, and gave commando/counterinsurgency training to Algerian Jews. 35 In more recent times, the Israeli security apparatus has invoked its unique cultural knowledge of the way Arabs fight³⁶ as justification for training U.S. military forces for Iraqi urban counterinsurgency in a mock Arab town (modeled after Ramallah) in the Ze'elim military base in the Negev in return for U.S. funding and construction of parts of the base.³⁷

Doctrinal Emulation

Militaries have also institutionalized counterinsurgency doctrine and institutional models.³⁸ After the Boer War, the use of fences and walls to deny guerrilla forces mobility across the landscape became part of British military doctrine.³⁹ The advent of World

War I transformed this doctrine to rely much more heavily on conventional tactics of warfare though using many of the techniques of control learned during the Boer War. 40 The Arab Revolt in the 1930s provided an impetus for resurrecting dormant tactics of warfare—in this instance, the use of a fence/blockhouse complex as an offensive measure—and to reinstitutionalize it as part of British doctrine. Palestine has played a crucial role in this transmission as, on the one hand, a temporal link between pre World War I counterinsurgency practice and post World War II asymmetric warfare and, on the other hand, a spatial laboratory of such practice under Israeli military control, especially since the building of the separation wall.

The Palestine Police Mobile Force came to embody the British model of heavily militarized counterinsurgency policing, which was transported by the British to the Gold Coast, Northern Rhodesia, Eritrea, Malaya, and Cyprus. 41 Wingate's Special Night Squads have not only inspired Israeli military practice—specifically the Duvdovan "pseudo-gangs" of special-forces officers dressed as Arabs—but also counterguerrilla operations in other places. They are central to the counterinsurgency theories of Frank Kitson, a premier British expert in small wars who served in Kenya, Oman, Cyprus, and Northern Ireland.42

Similarly, the later postmodern military theory developed by Israeli military's now defunct Operational Theory Research Institute (OTRI) has been incorporated into U.S., British, and Australian operational doctrines.⁴³ The OTRI's reconceptualization of warfare as nomadic, fragmentary, and rhizomatic (self-consciously drawing from theories by Gilles Deleuze and other French thinkers) is now being used in U.S.-military planning, for example, with Shimon Naveh, the former head of OTRI closely involved with the U.S. Army's operational design projects. 44 Israel/Palestine is also used as the basis of military theorization in the United States and Europe. In The Sling and the Stone, prominent U.S. counterinsurgency theorist Colonel Thomas X. Hammes of the Marine Corps uses Israeli counterinsurgency as his primary case study, arguing that violence against civilians has to be presented to a presumed audience of "international actors" in specific ways, thus emphasizing "information operations" as central to counterinsurgency doctrine making. 45 Similarly, in the writing of the French general and strategic theorist Loup Francart, "l'intifada" figures as a distinct form of revolt to be subdued through counterinsurgency tactics geared toward control of land space, mass movement, and information and humanitarian operations. 46 In these instances, Israel's experience with guerrilla forces of Arab and/or Muslim origin gives it a certain caché and authority in the eyes of European and American militaries.

Transnational Epistemic Communities

Political special-interest groups, private firms, and transnational epistemic communities have become additional vehicles of such knowledge transmission. Independent think tanks such as the RAND Corporation, civilian universities, and military pedagogic institutions such as those at the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center in Fort Leavenworth have been conduits for the transfer of counterinsurgency knowledge across borders.⁴⁷ RAND has an entire library of writings on counterinsurgency, much of it by counterinsurgents.⁴⁸ Their comparative works draw freely from various cases, including Israel/Palestine.⁴⁹ Universities in Israel have been crucial in the scientific support of the military.⁵⁰ Israeli

counterinsurgent theorists and practitioners are also in demand outside Israel. The Royal United Services Institute in London regularly holds conferences that bring together military men, social scientists, government officials, and historians from a variety of countries.⁵¹ A recent conference on counterinsurgency, for example, had members of the aforementioned OTRI of Israel presenting their work to a British military and policy audience.⁵²

It is even more notable that counterinsurgency techniques are transformed into modular lessons for control of populations by epistemic and commercial communities that traverse the police/military boundary. Elbit Systems Ltd., the Israeli firm involved in the construction of the separation wall in Palestine, has also been contributing to the "security" of the U.S.-Mexico border wall. In response to the moral panic about terror, many domestic police programs adopt military counterinsurgency tactics—and especially those of Israel—in their control of suspect urban populations. The U.S. Law Enforcement Exchange Program, which teaches shoot-to-kill Israeli methods to U.S. police personnel, is financially sponsored by the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, which pays \$5,000 per person to train U.S. police in Israel.⁵³ Similarly, the shoot-to-kill policy of the London Metropolitan Police Service's Operation Kratos was inspired by Israeli counterterror techniques.⁵⁴ One result of the policy is that a "suspicious-looking" man, Brazilian bystander Jean-Charles de Menezes, was made the target of a rapid counterterror response and the victim of eight shots to the head with hollow-point bullets, a tactic that has been considered effective because it preempts the triggering of suicide belts.55

THE ISOMORPHISM OF TECHNOLOGIES OF CONTROL

The proliferation of transtemporal and transspatial channels of transmission means that technologies of control in different contexts can show a remarkable isomorphism, the specificities of which in the Palestinian case will be delineated. These technologies are modular, and their actual concatenation depends on the political and historic context of a specific counterinsurgency as well as on policy decisions regarding whether the counterinsurgency should emphasize killing of combatants and punitive measures against civilians ("enemy-centric" counterinsurgency) or focus on "persuading" the civilian population to support the counterinsurgency while violence is held in reserve ("population-centric" counterinsurgency). Israeli counterinsurgency in Palestine has been "kinetic [i.e., more focused on killing power] and enemy centric," aimed primarily at deterring Palestinian civilians from supporting the insurgent forces through making this support costly in property and lives. Copious archival documentation from the era of the Arab Revolt shows that the British also used extensive coercive measures against civilians as a punitive means for deterrence. As the British assistant district commissioner of Gaza wrote in 1939, the military and police

hope to terrorise the population by punitive searches and then taking of hostages so that they will help the Government by bringing information. They maintain that the population will help the rebel agents rather than the Government forces and think they can change this attitude by demonstrating their power to inconvenience the population.⁵⁷

Similarly, in his account of doctrinal development in the Israeli military decades later, Sergio Castignani writes that Israel

has argued that people living close to terrorist infrastructures and who back or tolerate terrorist operations must anticipate Israeli counterterror attacks. According to Israeli policymakers, the risk of collateral damage would possibly weaken the civilian population's desire to shelter, collaborate with terrorists, or even tolerate the presence of terrorist organizations within their communities.⁵⁸

The punitive focus on civilians in counterinsurgency translates into choosing punitive technologies of control on the ground. These control mechanisms combine biopolitical means (e.g., making populations legible via statistical and technological methods, calculating demographics, and measuring and mapping both inhabited and uninhabited spaces) with coercive measures.⁵⁹ Under both British and Israeli regimes of rule in Palestine, population control has operated through record keeping, restrictions on people's movements, using hostages or human shields, mass incarceration, collective punishments (including fines and property expropriation or destruction), exploitation of local proxies or collaborators, and the usage of legal instruments and creative circumnavigation of the law. These various categories of control are examined in greater detail.

British Counterinsurgency in Palestine

During the 1936-39 revolt, identity cards and an extensive and detailed process of mapping the countryside were used to keep track of the movements of civilians and guerrillas. Explicitly borrowed from the French Mandate in Syria, identity cards were first put into place and required on a "voluntary" basis, but because securing travel permits required them, voluntariness was more formal than actual.⁶⁰ Certainly, by the end of the revolt, identity cards were effectively compulsory. On 31 January 1939, the district commissioner for Ramallah wrote:

I have come to the conclusion that the best way to deal with these various obligations is to go from village to village with the necessary staff and a photographer. To stay in each village until a reasonable proportion of the taxes have been collected, until every male has been photographed and presented with his identity card and his name, photograph, and history, inscribed in detail in two village registers, one for the Assistant District Commissioner and one, when the situation returns to normal, for retention in the village. The Mukhtars should also be responsible for providing complete lists of absentees from the village and the reasons for their absence.⁶¹

Palestinian accounts of raids by British forces often include intrusive identity checks of villagers to determine the suspicious presence of "outsiders" in the village or the suspicious absence of male inhabitants who might have joined the rebels.⁶²

Topographic maps, often drawn in great detail, were used not only to fix property regimes onto official taxation records but also to track and subdue rebel gangs. When Orde Wingate, the British counterinsurgency expert, is invoked in memoirs of other officers, he is often reading or carrying his topographic maps like talismans.⁶³ As the British founder of Special Night Squads, Wingate personally trained many future Israeli military leaders and is heralded by the British and Israelis as a counterinsurgency innovator.⁶⁴ Wingate's knowledge of Palestinian topography thus locates spatial concerns at the center of counterinsurgency practices.

The taming of the landscape via geographical surveys and topographic maps was instrumental to another innovation of the British during the revolt: the use of security walls and watchtowers to arrest the movement of rebels across the landscape. Although walls have historically been used as *defensive* ramparts of cities, here they were employed as a technology of counterinsurgency. Charles Tegart, previously of the Calcutta Police, had borrowed the idea of fences and blockhouses from the British counterinsurgency against the Boers some thirty years before and hired Histadrut's construction firm to build a security fence with imported barbed wire from Mussolini's Italy.⁶⁵ Tegart's wall was considered an innovation, as *Time* magazine reported on 20 June 1938 that "Britain's most ingenious solution for handling terrorism in Palestine was revealed in Geneva last week to the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission." In Palestine, although the security fence impeded movement for ordinary civilians and limited access to farmlands, when it came to forestalling rebels, it "proved useless. The Arabs dragged it apart with camels."66 Nevertheless, despite the broader ineffectiveness of such barriers, their use in various counterinsurgency situations has been intended to deny the guerrilla forces access to an external sanctuary or to prevent them from engaging in guerrilla action from that sanctuary. It is not so much that subsequent walls have been an exact facsimile of Tegart's wall but rather that Tegart's wall further consolidated the use of barriers as a counterinsurgency instrument. Barriers were to be used again in French Algeria's barbed-wire entanglements in the Morice Line against the Front de Libération Nationale, in Morocco's massive sand berms against the Polisario, in the mixed-material "peace line" dividing Belfast in Northern Ireland, and in the massive concrete and barbed-wire wall built by Israelis in Palestine.⁶⁷ In Iraq under U.S. occupation, numerous towns and villages, as well as neighborhoods in Baghdad, have been completely encircled by barbed-wire fences, and identity checks have been used to monitor people's movements.⁶⁸

In addition to physical barriers to movement, curfews and "closures" (military occupation of individual villages) served to inhibit Palestinians' movement.⁶⁹ Sometimes the curfews lasted from dusk to dawn; Safad was under such a curfew for 140 days.⁷⁰ In other instances, twenty-two-hour curfews were put into place for days on end.⁷¹ In 1938, for the first time ever, the British banned Friday prayers in the al-Aqsa mosque in order to prevent mass protests.⁷²

Where "preventative" measures failed, *post hoc* punitive actions were taken. In 1939, General O'Connor, the military governor of Palestine, wrote to a subordinate,

[W]hat I must insist on is that when some misbehaviour has taken place, either in the form of sniping at billets or shooting up traffic on the main roads, then some definite form of action to mark our disapproval should be taken and I think that all villages should know that punishment will follow bad conduct, and I feel for this punishment to be effective it should be immediate.⁷³

The punishments included collective fines, death sentences for carrying arms, detention on a mass scale of men and boys between the ages of fifteen and fifty, nighttime raids on unsuspecting villages, and house demolitions.⁷⁴ On 23 January 1939, Brigadier Wetherall wrote to O'Connor.

I think that the inhabitants of Lydda have been faithfully dealt with—how long it will last remains to be seen... We let the riff-raff go yesterday with a parting speech after two nights spent in the

open... As detention room is short, I am spiriting them away to Gaza Cage, which is at No. 3 Post. I have told the H.L.I. [Highland Light Infantry] to get them there secretly, so I hope that their fate will remain a mystery for some time. I am sure that this has a very soothing effect on the others.

I will demolish [houses] if it appears a good thing to do (we did ten houses in October), but I believe a policy of searching and upsetting one quarter at a time keeps them more in suspense.

I think the donkey seizure a good idea and have told them that it will take place, together with suspected neighbouring villages.⁷⁵

Palestinians vividly recount cordon and searches that resulted in the destruction of food stored for their annual consumption and of the expropriation or destruction of harvests, livestock, and furniture, and especially the detention of women and children under blazing summer suns for days without food or water, which in a few instances led to deaths of detainees. ⁷⁶ Tegart ordered the importation of Dobermans from South Africa, ostensibly for seeking out rebels but more obviously for intimidating Arabs; the dogs often attacked the villagers.⁷⁷ Much of the old city of Jaffa was destroyed to punish Jaffan protests; this was done under the pretense of city planning and public hygiene and with twenty-four-hours' notice.⁷⁸

The number of prisoners in detention camps was so high that colonial officials frequently complained of having run out of space.⁷⁹ These detainees were kept in "the prisons, which were jammed with inhabitants, and ... also [in] the barbed-wire fences of shameful concentration camps where people suspected, but not convicted, of political offences rotted in confinement."80 Akram Zu'aytar recounts in his diaries that he was moved from the desert detention camp in Awja al-Hafir to Sarafand because the former could no longer accommodate the ever-increasing number of detainees, which doubled in size in a matter of weeks. 81 Many detainees were subjected to intensive "third degrees," a euphemism for violent interrogations; were used as corveé labor to build roads and trenches and clean military camps; and were sometimes shot without ceremony by British forces in charge of their transport.82

The use of hostages or human shields was suggested to the Palestine Police by A. F. Perrott of Peshawar:

It might be worthwhile forming a "hostage corps" composed of the sons of hostiles. A couple of these in the front car of a convoy would discourage the use of land mines. On the Frontiers we often push the relatives of an outlaw in front of a police party when entering a house where an outlaw is suspected of hiding.83

The hostages were also used as human "minesweepers," sent ahead of British forces to both clear the way and prevent rebel attacks on British convoys.⁸⁴

The British also characteristically used two kinds of local forces: proxies drawn from the colonizing community and Palestinian Arab collaborators. When the British could no longer trust the loyalty of Arab Palestine policemen in suppressing the rebels, they turned to the Jewish community of colonizers, killing two birds with one stone: reproducing local communal divisions and filling vacancies in the coercive apparatus of the state. The new personnel included the supernumerary police drawn from the Jewish settler community and the members of field companies established by Yitzhak Sadeh, who were to form the kernel of the Haganah (the Yishuv's military force). 85 The principle of divide

and rule was also used to sow division among Palestinians. Collaborators were used to anonymously identify fighters among village civilians, and the British encouraged the formation of "peace bands"—recruited from Palestinian families opposed to the revolt or seeking revenge against the rebels—that roamed the countryside, identified revolt leaders, and either arrested or assassinated them.⁸⁶

Finally, a body of laws was created to serve the counterinsurgency. The Collective Responsibility Ordinance of 1924 formed the basis of subsequent laws, such as the Emergency Regulations of 1936 and the Palestine (Defence) Order in Council of 1937, all of which effectively cemented martial control over the country, justified collective punishments, allowed unannounced and punitive searches, expanded death-penalty sentencing, and essentially gave the commanders of the security forces on the ground a carte blanche.87 The military courts convicted and punished people ostensibly involved with the revolt, often with dubious evidence and no legal presentation, and executed those convicted of owning a gun within forty-eight hours. 88 One of the punishments used against revolt leaders was their deportation to other British imperial holdings (e.g., the Seychelles or East Africa). At the same time that colonial officials in London were advising the colonial governments of the Seychelles and Kenya to draw up laws suspending habeas corpus, they were claiming in response to demands by Palestinian deportees for trials that because the latter were now held under Kenyan or Seychelles law, they were outside London's jurisdiction.⁸⁹ The jurisdictional shell game allowed maximum control over the deportees, ostensibly within the boundaries of the law, with an effective suspension of Palestinians' rights via a claim of extraterritoriality.

Israeli Counterinsurgency in Palestine

Although Israel became a site of innovation in counterinsurgency techniques, it borrowed and adapted techniques of control from its British predecessor. Many of Israel's Emergency Regulations and laws were originally British laws adopted wholesale in 1948, upon the birth of the state. 90 For example, the rules under which Palestinians are held in "administrative detention" without trial are only marginally modified versions of the punitive detention laws the British used in the 1930s. 91 These laws were first applied to Palestinians remaining within the border of the nascent state of Israel and later to the Palestinian populations of the occupied territories. 92 From 1948 to 1966, counterinsurgency methods were used as preemptive control measures against Palestinians under military administration within Israel:

The decision to enforce the restrictions on movement (Article 109), police supervision (Article 110), administrative detention (Article 111), curfew (Article 124), closed areas and travel permits (Article 125), and weapons licenses (Article 137) was left to the military governor, who could impose them, under Article 108, at any time he considered it necessary "for securing the public safety, the defense of Israel, the maintenance of public order, or the suppression of mutiny, rebellion, or riot."⁹³

Military administrators applied collective punishment to whole communities in order to neutralize even the mildest intransigence.⁹⁴ Curfews were used widely, and in one notorious instance in 1956, forty-one villagers of Kafr Qasim returning from their fields after a curfew that had only been announced hours before, and of which they were not

aware, were killed en masse. 95 Temporary residence cards were made compulsory to obtain work and travel permits and to secure one's home, allowing the Israeli military to keep track of Palestinian "trouble-makers." Employing divide and rule, the Israeli military recruited members of Druze, Circassian, and Bedouin communities to police other Palestinians.⁹⁷ Sweeps and detentions were used both to keep Palestinians in their place and as a means of gathering yet more Palestinians to be expelled. 98 Even after the military administration was rescinded, administrative detention of Palestinian citizens of Israel continued.⁹⁹ What is significant about the forms of control used inside the 1949 Armistice Demarcation Line is that they were not used to suppress any form of armed rebellion or in any asymmetric warfare. Rather, they were transformed into policing mechanisms for domestic populations. The intersection between the use of these techniques of control in counterinsurgency and in internal policing was the elision of the categories of combatant and civilian.

These policing mechanisms were then transferred to the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, all occupied in 1967. After the two Palestinian intifadas (1987–91 and 2000), these techniques, and in particular the use of collective punishment against civilians as deterrence, became far more kinetic in practice. 100 The Israeli state has used house demolitions in Jerusalem, ostensibly for city-planning purposes, and in the occupied territories to punish families of Palestinian combatants. 101 Mass detentions without trial have been used so extensively—in particular during the Palestinian intifadas—that nearly half of all Palestinian men in the occupied territories have been detained at one time or another. 102 Population registers of the Mandate times, central to keeping track of both civilians and combatants, have been automated, first with the advent of color-coded identity cards during the first intifada and now with biometric databases. 103 Lawsincluding nearly 2,500 military regulations for Palestinians in the occupied territories have served military power, and almost all detainees have been tried through military courts. 104 In other instances, detainees have simply been deported. 105 Curfews and closures have been recurrent, and for example in 1988, 1,600 curfews were imposed throughout the occupied territories and the "number of curfew days exceeded 'normal' ones."106 In 2002 and 2003, during the second intifada, "the most restrictive series of internal closures of the West Bank in the history of the Israeli occupation" facilitated Israeli military control over the movement of civilians, detention of tens of thousands of civilians, and continued expropriation of their land. 107 During its operations, the Israeli military has used hostages and human shields extensively, even after Israeli courts explicitly ruled against the practice. ¹⁰⁸ In gathering intelligence, Israel has used both "pseudo-gangs"—Israeli military-intelligence personnel dressed as Arabs—and local collaborators. 109 In addition, disruption of everyday life for ordinary Palestinians is routinized as part of military operations, where "the mission is to try to upset the equilibrium of the neighborhood, village, or particular location, to get information."110

One of Israel's most significant counterinsurgency techniques has been its populationcontrol measures, which often entail mass resettlement of civilians in enclosed spaces under watchtowers. The British called them "new villages" in Malaya and Kikuyu reservations in Kenya. 111 The French named them centres de regroupement and virtually depopulated the southern half of Algeria, transferring Algerian Arabs into these barrackslike camps.¹¹² The United States in Vietnam called them strategic hamlets and borrowed from the British in Malaya to create them. 113

The Israeli military first implemented this technique on Palestinians *inside* Israel. Between 1948 and 1966, under Article 124 of the Defense (Emergency) Regulations inherited from the British, all Palestinian villages in the nascent state of Israel were "divided into small pockets called 'closed areas,' . . . which no Arab could leave or enter for any reason without first obtaining a written permit from the military governor of that area."114 This same method was transported wholesale to the occupied territories after 1967 and further reinforced after the intifadas. In essence, the Israeli innovation took the population-resettlement concept and enacted it in situ in ever-smaller controlled spaces and around already existing population centers via walls, fences, checkpoints, roads, and closures (both temporal and spatial). 115 In addition to identity cards, biometric data is now increasingly used to track population movements. 116 Data on family genealogies, illnesses, business interests, and sexual mores are also gathered and used to blackmail Palestinians into collaboration. 117 Such identity-confirmation measures have also become part of everyday routines in Iraq under U.S. occupation; for example, Fallujans cannot go anywhere without their biometric data being recorded and tracked by the U.S. military, which closely follows the model established by Israelis in the occupied territories.¹¹⁸ Spaces are similarly made legible; the entire inhabited area of the occupied territories has been mapped, and each house has been given a unique four-digit designation. 119

Finally, although frontier settlements in Israel were intended to remedy a "lack of strategic depth" in conventional warfare, "prevent, as far as possible, fixed boundaries being imposed on the National Home, and expand the territory of the Jewish State," they also have served counterinsurgency functions. ¹²⁰ Settlements, often perched on hills above Palestinian homes or straddling a strategic route, allow for informal policing of Palestinians, act as spatial obstacles to movement, and ensure round the clock presence of a punitive force near Palestinian locations. ¹²¹ That the Mandate and Israeli counterinsurgency practices are so similar—notwithstanding improvements in technology over time—and that they so persistently evoke analogous tactics exercised most recently by the United States in its Iraqi and Afghan counterinsurgencies attest to the resilience and effectiveness of channels of transmission and to the counterinsurgent assumption that these practices *are* transportable regardless of context and history.

CONCLUSIONS

The flexibility and long history of British counterinsurgency have made it a model of emulation for other counterinsurgent armies, including that of the United States. ¹²² Similarly, legendary U.S. counterinsurgency specialist Edward Lansdale considered the Israelis "real experts at unconventional warfare" who could transmit "concepts of the military's role in nation building" to the United States. ¹²³ For the Israeli military, Palestine was the primary site of experiments in asymmetric warfare, while for the British it provided a temporally well-placed link between pre World War I and post World War II colonial counterinsurgencies, where a large cadre of imperial policemen was trained and significant tactics of asymmetric warfare were innovated or perfected. Although Palestine was never *the* point of origin for the strategy of counterinsurgency or imperial policing, it was *a* significant node of learning and lateral transmission within the British Empire and of centrifugal diffusion of doctrine, training, and practice under the Israelis.

Palestine is also significant because it is one of the very few loci—if not the only site of asymmetric warfare where one counterinsurgent force has explicitly inherited and adapted not only the practices and doctrines of its preceding counterinsurgent army but also its laws and regulations, resulting in the striking isomorphism of British techniques of suppression during the Arab Revolt and the Israeli methods of population control since 1948 and especially in the last two decades.

For the reasons stated previously, Palestine is an apt example of the overlapping webs of counterinsurgency interaction and learning that traverse space and time. Lessons have been persistently articulated and revised. Bodily habits and memories of combat have been transmitted through the soldiers' individual practices and organizational memories. Counterinsurgency knowledge has crossed military/civilian divides and become part of disciplinary governmentality or liberal interventionism.

The laboratories of population control become exemplary models of military learning where new managerial techniques are tested. In a fascinating coda to his Discipline and Punish, Foucault writes that the disciplinary techniques in modern penal systems failed at achieving the reformative function that was their programmatic aim, and yet their failure was used as a strategy of producing delinquency. Foucault further argues that the prescribed remedy for the failure of the disciplinary techniques was "the reactivation of the penitentiary techniques as the only means of overcoming their perpetual failure; the realization of the corrective project as the only method of overcoming the impossibility of implementing it."124

Much the same can be said of counterinsurgency practice more broadly. Although during the Arab Revolt the Palestinian nationalist movement was decapitated, the ultimate goal of smothering nationalist sentiment was not achieved. Similarly, Israel's "iron wall of bayonets" may have resulted in the geographic and political fragmentation of the Palestinian polity but has not achieved the kind of utter hopelessness that may lead to total acquiescence by all Palestinians. 125 Yet, the failure to destroy nationalist sentiment has been met both by the British and the Israelis with a more determined commitment to reproduce—more perfectly—the very techniques that failed. A constant refinement and "reactivation" of the processes, of ever-more technologically sophisticated identification methods, of increasingly expansive methods of mapping and controlling territories in three dimensions, of more elaborate recruitment of collaborators, or more baroque punishments of collectives, has been the response to their repeated failures. Indeed the ultimate result of these counterinsurgency techniques has been the production of the civilian not as collateral but as the central object of war making, coercive discipline, and, in the last instance, violence. In a sense, counterinsurgency has become a selfsustaining and self-justifying mechanism, whereby suspect civilians require ever-more sophisticated modes of control, and these modes of control produce ever-expanding populations of suspect civilians.

In addition to the convenient production of the category of "suspect civilian," the circulation of counterinsurgency techniques from one node to the other not only serves a nominal function of organizational "learning" for militaries but also reproduces certain kinds of military practice, philosophy, and community, all of which are deliberately distinguished from those related to conventional warfare and all of which veil within themselves their strategic instrumentality for colonial pacification and more contemporary liberal military interventions.

Thus, counterinsurgency provides the motivation, the engine, and the legitimation required to reproduce the counterinsurgent military's organizations, institutions, and ethos and the ostensible means and justification for surveillance of civilians, accounting for the endurance of population control in all those places where nationalists have organized guerrilla armies to struggle against external domination.

NOTES

Author's Note: I thank the British Academy, the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and the School of Oriental and African Studies' research funds for generously providing necessary financial support for the research undertaken here. I am also sincerely grateful for the perceptive and thoughtful critiques of the four anonymous *IJMES* reviewers; for the questions and commentary by Beth Baron and Sara Pursley of *IJMES*; and to Ruth Blakeley, John Chalcraft, Rob Dover, Lisa Hajjar, Dan Neep, Sayres Rudy, Ted Swedenburg, and Lynn Welchman for their very useful comments and critiques, which even if I did not incorporate here, I hope to do so in the larger book project, of which this is a small part.

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 - ⁷⁵"Response from Wetherall," O'Connor Files 3/4/21, LHCMA.
- ⁷⁶Hajj Abd al-Majid al-Ali, Kwikat: Ahad al-Sharayin Filastin (Beirut: n.p., 2000), 63–67; al-Bash, Tirat Haifa, 173-75; Muhammad Yahya al-Shahabi, Lubiya: Shawka fi Khasira al-Mashru al-Sahyuni (Damascus: Dar al-Shajara, 1994), 49; Isbir Munayyir, al-Lid fi 'Ahday al-Intidab wa-l-Ihtilal (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1997), 26-29; al-Hajj Badr-al-Din al-Jishshi, Qurya al-Kabri: Rawda min Riyad Filastin Mubaraka (Beirut: Maktabat Sha'rawi, 2002), 217. Also see accounts by Palestine policemen, Courtney, Palestine Policeman, 22-23; CPM Jack Binsley, Palestine Police Service (Montreaux, Switzerland: Minerva Press, 1996), 105; and Martin, Palestine Betrayed, 72-75; 89-91. On the Halhul case, where several Palestinian detainees died of sunstroke, see CO 733/413/3, UKNA. On other atrocities committed against civilians (including detainees) see the private papers of Major General H. E. N. Bredin, 81/33/1, IWM Documents Archive; CO 733/371/3; CO 733/371/4; CO 733/387/1; CO 733/413/1; CO 733/413/5; CO 733/434/7;

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