Politics of Recognition, Elimination and Settler-Colonialism

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Abstract

This article cross-examines the external and internal dimensions of settler-colonial politics of recognition. In settler-colonialism, recognition represents another medium for the elimination of the natives, whose existence is considered as a source of threat, uncertainty and curtailed settler sovereignty. Settler sovereign statehood is contingent on the reengineering of the land–population relationship in the conquered territory. The settler-colonial politics of recognition seeks to institutionalise particular patterns of values that ultimately embody the logic of elimination at the normative level in an attempt to disrupt the natives' relationship with their land. This article critically interrogates Israel's politics of recognition and demonstrates how this politics is applied to establish internal and external normative scaffolding to normalise and legitimise the settler desire for sovereignty and invulnerability. Israel's recognition politics dovetails with sources of sovereignty – territory and population – and evokes previous vulnerabilities and victimhood to elicit a sense of urgency and moral validation.

Keywords

politics of recognition, settler-colonialism, anti-Semitism, Zionism, Israel–Palestine, social control

Introduction

Politics of recognition shapes many facets of contemporary social and political struggle (Fraser and Honneth, 2003). The intensity of such struggles becomes acute under colonial conditions where (mis)recognition is used to sustain structures of dominations. The dynamic of the coloniser-colonised struggles for recognition generated broad scholarly interest in periods of extractive colonialism and then decolonisation that paved the way for the self-determination and independence of ex-colonies (Fabry, 2010; Fanon, 2001; Jackson, 1993; Memmi, 1965). The end of direct colonialism made related recognition struggles less relevant, and as a result, scholars began to consider

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questions of recognition in settler-colonial contexts (Badarin, 2021b). Unlike extractive and exploitation-based colonialism, setter-colonialism is continuously developing and is rooted in territorial conquest and the elimination of indigenous populations and their replacement by settlers (Veracini, 2015; Wolfe, 1999, 2006).

In the field of Settler Colonial Studies, recognition is usually treated as a domestic affair that mainly concerns reconciliation between settler and indigenous populations. Emphasis is placed on the natives' demands for recognition from accomplished settler sovereignties in terms of identity and culture, civil rights and narratives as a precondition for reconciliation (Barker et al., 2017; Maddison et al., 2016). Although this literature has provided important insights into the politics of recognition, settler-colonial politics of recognition are less considered. This article asks the following questions: What are the core values that the settler politics of recognition seeks to achieve, and how does it do this? And in what ways do settler-colonial eliminatory practices influence this politics? The answers to these questions help explain the political practices that shape the normative ecosystem of settler-colonialism. Settler-colonial theory is disposed to this oversight because it frames native–settler relations in ways that render the native 'superfluous' (Wolfe, 1999: 3), meaning that the Hegelian master–slave power relations are less relevant for settler societies. But this is not always the case, as this article demonstrates.

To better understand the functioning of politics of recognition in settler-colonial contexts, it is crucial to examine how the external dimensions of recognition interlock with its domestic dimensions. Historically, recognition struggles were less prevalent because identity politics was invisible (Taylor, 1994) and self-determination was a negative right (Fabry, 2010). External recognition manifested as a declarative confirmation of de facto sovereignties (states) that applied irrespective of normative and legal considerations. However, this practice was discontinued after World War II (WWII) and recognition became constitutive of states' legal subjectivity and sovereignty (Coggins, 2014; Fabry, 2010). The post-1945 practices of recognition account for both internal and external recognition. Internal recognition refers to the domestic legitimacy of the state, which is usually achieved through local institutions (e.g. bureaucracy, education, legal statutes, national narrative, violence) that bring the population into line with the central authority. Emergent states actively seek external recognition from existing states, a condition that enables the former to enjoy the benefits of statehood (e.g. acquiring a legal protection and sovereignty, state-to-state relations). Consequently, normative and legal aspects, and in particular the right of self-determination and prohibition of territorial conquests, have become essential parts of contemporary practices of recognition (Atzili, 2006; Griffiths, 2017). These changes made external recognition a primary good for national movements and states that emerged in the context of the post-1945 structural evolutions.

This article builds its analytical framework by bridging the divide between internal and external recognition with the aim of critically scrutinising the multiple dimensions of recognition in settler-colonial situations. With this in mind, it interrogates Israel's current demands for recognition and demonstrates how the politics of recognition has created an internal and external normative scaffolding that normalises and legitimises the settler desire for sovereignty and invulnerability. Although the natives are 'superfluous' from the settler's perspective, their recognition is coveted by the settler society and state. This generates two paradoxical outcomes. While the politics of recognition is a component of the settler-colonial eliminatory process, it inadvertently ascertains the native's subjectivity and moral superiority as the ultimate legitimiser of the colonial project. If recognition from the native is not forthcoming, settler self-mastery will continue to be frustrated and normatively contested.

In various ways, the arguments presented here draw on Patchen Markell's (2003) compelling and critical book, *Bound by Recognition*, which placed the problem of the politics of recognition

within the Self rather than the Other. This article makes the following arguments: First, it holds that settler-colonial politics of recognition is primarily driven by the colonial ontological condition that enables the deconstruction of the native relationship to the land (Tuck and Yang, 2012). This renders the native as an excess that has to be disposed of to make space for a settler sovereign presence. The struggle for recognition therefore establishes institutions of privilege that restrict sovereignty (and its manifestations and derivative concepts such as self-determination, and cultural language and land rights) to the settler subject alone. The point of this ongoing struggle for recognition is to continually provide up-to-date normative and legal warrants for Zionist sovereign gains.

Second, it argues that the settler politics of recognition helps stabilise the settler sovereignty and enables it to dominate the non-sovereign native. Settler demands for recognition accrue internal and external legitimacy as warrants for the replacement of the natives and their relationship to the land with settler-based territorial relationships. This new normative relationship between settler and land is invaluable because it normalises the settler's territorial achievements (Maddison et al., 2016). Israel's continued demand for recognition provides a relevant case to pursue these questions. This article focuses on regular Israeli demands for recognition, which seek to establish a chain of equivalence (one demand triggers and determines other demands) that confers normative legitimacy on territorial claims and narratives and provides immunity against external pressure, as we shall see in empirical analysis later. The article begins with a theoretical discussion that expands on the relevance of the politics of recognition to settler-colonialism. The second section focuses on the settler-colonial politics of recognition in the context of the Zionist movement and Israel. The following section then cross-examines three core demands that underlie Israel's ongoing politics of recognition. The final section synthesises the findings and illustrates how the politics of recognition complements empirical colonisation.

Settler-Colonial Politics of Recognition

Struggles for recognition are recurring themes in contemporary national and international politics. In colonial situations, in particular, politics of recognition are an essential component of state internal and external interventions to ward off challenges to sovereignty and domination. Colonialism relied not only on brute force but also on discursive and material force and violence of normative recognition that is premised on the discursive boundaries created between an idealised (colonial) Self and demonised (native) Other (Said, 1978). This misrecognition sought to manipulate subalterns' identity and impress upon them grievous and harmful representations. The Other is 'bound by recognition' as an inferior, exotic and uncivilised subject incapable of self-government and, by implication, is liable to an array of foreign disciplinary interventions and domination (Fanon, 2001; Said, 1978). In this context, misrecognition becomes an effective medium that sustains unjust power relations in the pursuit of self-mastery. Nancy Fraser (2003: 89–90) defines misrecognition as 'institutionalised patterns of cultural value' that preclude and exclude certain actors from full participation in social life. According to Markell (2003), the politics of recognition therefore builds the institutional groundwork for 'patterning and arranging the world that allow some people and groups to enjoy a semblance of *sovereign* agency at others' expense' (p. 5; emphasis added).

And this patterning is no more apparent than in colonial conditions. Fraser's and Markell's critical insights are exceptionally relevant to explain the settlers' desire for sovereign agency and invulnerability in the 'discovered' land. In this context, recognition becomes a means of creating 'double binds' that ensure that sovereignty remains an exclusive settler property and privilege. A few examples help illustrate how patterns of value operate in recognition politics. For example, the institutionalisation of 'race' (i.e. White European) as the highest value of the Apartheid South Africa had

systematically defined the egregiously unequal possibilities of its White and Black population (Marx, 1998). Consider also the Israeli 'Nation-State Law' that institutionalises religion (Jewishness) as the highest value of the Israeli state and society, and in particular the way it is used to deny to citizens of other faiths the right to self-determination in their native homeland (this will be discussed later in more detail).

It is important to note that the settler-colonial politics of recognition is profoundly paradoxical. In one sense, the settlers base their pursuit of sovereignty on the notion of *terra nullius* and the denial of the Indigenous. In another, they actively engage in institutional and spatial modelling with the intention of eliminating the natives from the society. But this contradiction has practical consequences. It reifies the empty land mantra and seeks to replace existing populations with a settler population and sovereign agency. As a structure of elimination (Wolfe, 2006), settler-colonial patterning generates far more grievous practices that extend far beyond social exclusion and hindrance (as commonly held in the recognition literature) into the realm of elimination of indigenous subjects. Such structural arrangements and patterns aim to counterweigh challenges to the perceived settler sovereignty, and thus they are permanent features of settler-colonialism.

Sovereignty and invulnerability are at the core of recognition politics and must therefore be clarified here. In particular, becoming secure in the face of the risks involved in dealing and confronting the Other has a performative function for the achievement of sovereignty. Although human life is inherently vulnerable (Butler, 2012), vulnerability becomes a concrete experience in settler-colonial structures – in which both cultural and existential survival are set against processes of displacement, elimination and replacement. Indigenous life and sovereign agency, in this context, present a permanent source of 'uncertainty in [the] settler mentality' (Barker, 2009: 345), which in turn renders the Settler as a perpetual sovereignty-seeking subject. From this perspective, the settler-colonial world is organised on the assumption that the Native's existence is a risk and cause of the Settler vulnerability and incomplete sovereign Self. The elimination of the former becomes, by implication, a means to an end. Furthermore, the appropriation of vulnerability enables a sense of victimhood, whether imagined or real, as a basis for colonial practices that leave the natives to bear the disproportionate burden of the settlers' pursuit of sovereignty. Settlers' sense of victimhood is key to self-justification and to their 'move to innocence'; furthermore, it does not require them to relinquish their privileges (Tuck and Yang, 2012: 11). In this way, vulnerability and sovereignty become disguises for domination, exclusion and elimination of the Other.

Recognition literature generally approaches the recognition as forms of identity politics and distorted representations of the Other (Fraser and Honneth, 2003). Although these forms are common in the settler-colonial politics of recognition, they are not the primary concern. The Settler 'Self' is the centre of recognition, which comes already arranged on the denial of, and detachment from, the Native. As Eric Hobsbawm (1996) observes, detached and 'exclusive identity politics do not come naturally to people', but are instead imposed on them through careful institutional planning. Settler agency and identity unfold through actions and practices that concern the conquered land (including displacing its people) in their pursuit of independence. Hence, identity is neither a pre-assigned or an invariable property. On the contrary, settlers behave in different, including non-colonial ways. Consider, for example, the alliance between progressive (communist) non-Zionist settlers and the Palestinians against the Zionist movement during the Mandate period (Greenstein, 2014). In the settler-colonial context, the settler is both the subject and object of recognition in an exclusive way that constructs the Indigenous and their relationship with the land as an inherent threat and hindrance to settler's self-mastery.

As noted earlier, sovereignty is at the core of politics of recognition and settler-colonialism. It is inextricably interwoven with the nation-state spatial order, and it is widely accepted that a sovereign agency is the supreme governing authority in a specific territory. Here, sovereignty derives

from two sources: people and territory/land (Barkin and Cronin, 1994). In the post-1945 international order, states become sovereign when they are the subject of international law and when other sovereign states, especially the five permanent members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council, recognise them as members of the 'sovereignty club' (Coggins, 2014). The terms of recognition have historically oscillated between the liberal promotion of rights of people and the conservative (realist) camp that gives primacy to rights of states over the population (Griffiths, 2017; Jackson, 1993). Settler-colonialism, in searching for sovereignty, is always already situated in the 'land–population' problem in that territorial conquest is closely associated with human displacement and replacement. The elimination of the natives and replacing them with settlers are fundamental to recast the relationship between the two sources of sovereignty, land and population, on terms that favour the settler society. This is a central preoccupation for the settler-colonial politics of recognition.

State actors play the central role in framing the terms of reference of recognition. They are also the major sites where this politics occurs. As Markell (2003) argues, states often 'make politics into a matter of recognition in the first place, and whose own demands for recognition, tacit or explicit, create powerful incentives for others to frame claims about democracy, justice, inequality, and subordination as recognition claims' (p. 6). Yet despite the variety of these claims, they ultimately have the same aim of protecting state sovereignty.

Sovereignty is contingent and inherently contested, and this is particularly the case in contemporary international politics (Brown, 2010). This clarifies why settler-colonial politics and struggles of recognition take extreme eliminatory forms to ward off challenges to the settler sovereignty. Historically, the search for self-mastery to overcome human vulnerability gave rise to totalitarianism, as Hannah Arendt (1973) illustrated with great force. In the case of colonialism, it generated all-embracing structures of domination that separated Settler and Indigenous subjects and kept the latter constantly checked, scrutinised, dominated and gradually diminishing (Barker, 2009; Weizman, 2007). The Settler world is patterned in compartmentalised structures of privilege that are reflected in social and spatial impositions. Consider, for example, indigenous 'reservations' in the North American context, the Black-White spatial ordering of Apartheid South Africa or the strategically planned Israeli settlements that encircle Palestinian towns and dominate their spatial mobility (Badarin, 2015; Weizman, 2007).

The stakes and dangers of this structuring are high in settler-colonial conditions, as control and domination end up inflicting atrocious practices, including genocide, forced assimilation, segregation, confinement, displacement, misrecognition, and physical and psychological violence (Wolfe, 1999). Here, the politics of recognition is a critical medium not just because of its harmful and psychological effects as recognition scholars rightly pointed out (Fanon, 2001; Honneth, 1995; Taylor, 1994), but also because of its eliminatory impact on indigenous life. These structures of (mis)recognition force the colonised to live outside the society in a way that makes them disposable. That is how the politics of recognition contributes to the eliminatory logic of settler-colonialism and achieves a 'vanishing endpoint' that displaces the Indigenous and normalises their displacement and replacement by settlers (Strakosch and Macoun, 2012: 42).

Israel's Settler-Colonial Politics of Recognition

Taking cues from everyday language, Zionism has long been understood as a settler-colonial ideology and practice. For example, the early Zionist settlers referred to their space in Palestine as *Yishuv*, which means settlement in Hebrew. The Palestinians also have designated the Zionist presence as *istitan*, which means 'making a place as one's homeland' in Arabic. They also clearly distinguished it from the notion of *isti'mar*, which was applied to the British presence in Palestine

during the mandate period (1922–1948) in particular and to imperialism or colonialism more generally. In that sense, for both indigenous and settler populations, Zionism meant a settler-colonial structure of territorial conquest, the displacement and replacement (i.e. the de-Arabisation and Judaisation of the space in the Israeli discourse) of the indigenous population and the establishment of a Jewish-settler sovereignty. Recently, however, the field of Settler Colonial Studies gave this perspective persuasive theoretical foundations and analytical value (Busbridge, 2018).

To better understand the conceptual and empirical connections between international recognition and Zionism, it helps to briefly trace their conditions of emergence. Zionism, the ideology, political movement and project, was a reaction to anti-Semitism and the persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe. Zionist ideologues modelled their political movement on 19th-century European nationalism. They constructed Jewish subjects (irrespective of their varied national and geographical affiliations) as a collective national group pursuing emancipation and self-determination in a sovereign state. Even then, Palestine was originally considered alongside other locations, including Argentina and Uganda, as potential places for this project (Schneer, 2011). And indeed, this desire for sovereignty flourished in an era of growing European nationalism and colonialism.

Although Palestine was already inhabited, Zionism deliberately overlooked the Palestinian presence and constructed Palestine as *terra nullius*. This complete nonrecognition and 'excluded presence, that is, the functional absence of "native people" in Palestine' is central to Zionist practices as Edward Said (1992) has sharply argued. At this historical juncture, British colonial expansion into the remnants of the Ottoman Empire after World War I (WWI) gave a concrete dimension to the Zionist project. In the late 19th century, Zionist settlers started to arrive in Palestine in small numbers that rapidly increased under the British mandate (p. 82). The first (1881–1903) and second (1904–1914) waves of Jewish immigration (*aliyah*) established the core of the Zionist settlements (*yishuv*) in Palestine (Sternhell, 1998). Looking at the history of this group from the present perspective, Ilan Pappé (2012) demonstrates that the colonial essence of the Settler–Indigenous relationship has not changed despite the vicissitudes of conflict over time. In other words, the 'first impressions' of the early settlers still guide the exclusionary practices of Zionism and the Israeli state.

In these impressions, the natives figured as alien subjects who obstructed Zionists' pursuit of sovereignty and return to redeem their ancestral land. The notion of return, or redemption, inverted the native–land relationship by representing the settlers as the natives and rightful owners of the land (Sand, 2009). This patterning of Zionists' perception and relation-to-self is built on an exclusive association of theology and territory with emancipation and self-mastery, and it continues to shape contemporary Israeli institutional structures and struggles for recognition. More importantly, the association of a mythical past with concrete dimensions of land and population is consistent with modern criteria for state sovereignty. The Zionist pursuit of sovereignty coincided with the emergence of international standards and norms that would govern the emergence of new states. While WWI gave rise to the norm of self-determination, WWII led to the institutionalisation of territory and population into the post-1945 international system as main sources of sovereign statehood (Barkin and Cronin, 1994; Fabry, 2010). These normative standards shaped the Zionist politics of recognition to determine the people-to-land relationship in favour of the settler society.

Since its inception, the Zionist movement has been actively engaged in struggles for recognition. In the pre-state period, priority was given to the acceptance of the Zionist project and safeguarding the support of major powers. In 1917, the British government lent its direct and formal support to Zionism as stated in the so-called Balfour Declaration. Thereafter the focus turned into widening the circle of acceptance. In 1922, the League of Nations recognised 'the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine' as a basis 'for reconstituting their national home' there (League of Nations, 1922). Another important development was the 'collusion' between the

Zionism movement and the Hashemites of Transjordan, which conveyed the latter's implicit recognition of Zionism (Shlaim, 1988: 18).

The emergence of the UN as a central element of the post-1945 international normative and legal order is a vital arena for the politics of recognition. The Zionist movement therefore forcefully coveted international legitimacy from the UN (Eban, 1977; Rabinovich, 1997). In 1947, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution that acknowledged a territorially based recognition of the need to establish a Jewish state on 56% of Palestine and an Arab (Palestinian) state on the rest, with special arrangements for Jerusalem (United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), 1947). These four pre-state normative achievements gave Zionism the external recognition that was essential for the empirical depopulation of Palestine and the establishment of Israel in 1948.

From the outset, the ideological entrepreneurs of Zionism embraced the 'romantic passion for pure' (Hobsbawm, 1996) nationalism that swept through Europe as a basis for a collective Jewish nationalism, emancipation and sovereignty (Adiv, 2010). Religion and the allegorical past were invoked to establish a collective settler identity that could be moulded in accordance with the structures of modern territorial states and that would, to borrow Ernest Gellner's phrase, appear as 'a natural, God-given' order detached from its contingent historical and political conditions in Palestine. The influence of religion gave the politics of recognition a theological dimension that linked land and settlers. This value-laden patterning was inextricable from the quest to construct a new sense of nationhood congruent with modern manifestations of sovereignty. As a result, this sort of settler nationalism further embedded the peculiarities of native/settler dynamics in Palestine (Busbridge, 2018). But this is hardly unique to Zionism. As Tuck and Yang (2012) suggest, '[s]ettler nativism . . . is a settler move to innocence because it is an attempt to deflect a settler identity, while continuing to enjoy settler privilege and occupying stolen land' (p. 11).

The problematisation of the relationship between land and population has been intrinsic to Zionism from the outset. Since the foundation of Israel, the Palestinians have been characterised as a demographic threat, and this is why an array of discriminatory laws have been passed (e.g. the 1950 Law of Return) to respond to the 'demographic problem' (Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel), n.d.; Pappé, 2011). Much of its politics of recognition focused on constructing a unifying territorial identity for the settler population as a means for building the domestic structures of recognition. Not only the colonised Palestinians but also Israeli settlers live within colonial power relations. As subjects of this system, settler subjects, too, are internally co-opted to enact and reproduce the colonial order and its institutionalised codes of value. For example, Ella Shohat (1998) vigorously demonstrates how colonial methods were used to transform the cultural identity of Arab ('Oriental' or Sephardi) Jewish settlers so that they would look less like the natives and more like Ashkenazi (European) settlers. Settler identity was also patterned as an exclusive relationship with the land, and this acquired constitutional force recently. In 2018, the Israeli Parliament passed the Nation-State Law that made self-determination in whole of Palestine an exclusive right for Jewish subjects (the next section further elucidates this point).

While the Zionist politics of recognition takes the settler society as a singular unit that is patterned according to the Jewish/non-Jewish binary, it is predisposed to fragment, disrupt and eliminate the Palestinians and their relationship with the land. As archival research shows, this elimination took the form of population transfer, ethnic cleansing and urbicide (Masalha, 1992; Pappé, 2007). The connection between natives and their land is a fundamental threat to settlers because it renders the colonial project incomplete (Strakosch and Macoun, 2012). But the physical elimination and exclusion of the Palestinians in itself seem insufficient because the settler's normative claims remain unhinged without the recognition of their colonial achievements on the ground. It is this new relationship with the land that settlers would like to see recognised, validated and legitimised.

A year after Israel declared independence in 1948, it was internationally recognised as sovereign over 78% of Palestine. In 1967, Israel conquered the rest of the land and initiated a slow-moving but persistent settler implantation in these territories. Although the legitimacy of the latter invasion has been universally denounced, the majority of states (including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)) have accepted the outcomes of the first invasion in 1948. Yet as Israel failed to eliminate the entire Palestinian presence in Palestine, the politics of recognition became a method to dispossess them of their sovereign connection to the land. It also adds institutionalised normative binds (that complement material 'facts on the ground'; Abu El-Haj, 2001) that foreclose the possibility of a native sovereign existence in any part of Palestine.

Israel's demands for recognition intensified when demographic changes and steadfastness (*sumud*) made the 'vanishing end point' of the settler project in Palestine being achieved less likely. As a result, the relationship between the two sources of sovereignty (population and territorial effective control) has increasingly been challenged and contested. Put differently, the native–settler population gap meant that Israel's territorial sovereignty over the whole of Palestine remained deficient. International recognition of Israel seemed insufficient to confront its deficient sources of sovereignty. Israel mobilised politics of recognition to obtain recognition not only from the external world but also from the Palestinians, and thereby acknowledged that 'there is no substitute for recognition by the victim himself [sic]' (Zreik, 2011: 35). This recognition consists of three interconnected demands that will now be examined in more detail.

Reinvigorated Israeli Demands for Recognition

Israel's Right to Exist in Peace and Security

In May 1949, Israel was admitted as a full member of the UN, which represents the ultimate international recognition of its legal subjectivity as a sovereign state. Nonetheless, the recognition of Israel's 'right to exist' remained a moot subject between Israel and surrounding Arab states for several decades (Heller, 1979). Israel was a product of a colonial conquest that went against the grain of the normative and legal standards of the post-1945 international order that paved the way for decolonisation and the prohibition of conquest and demographic engineering (Atzili, 2006). Set against this background, it is not surprising that this 'right' continues to be contested, a dilemma to which Israel responds by asserting and demanding that its right to exist is recognised. This policy does not just attempt to overcome the discursive contestation of Israel's sovereignty but also seeks to turn its de facto territorial control over the historical land of Palestine (from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea) into a stable and undisputed normative right.

This territorial control was not seriously challenged for several decades until 1987 when the First *Intifada* broke out, challenging Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.[1] Israel embraced the Middle East peace process to outmanoeuvre popular resistance and co-opt Palestinian representative institutions. The peace process provided Israel the opportunity to gradually upload its recognition demands into it. Initially, Israel required an *explicit* recognition of its right to exist from the PLO as a precondition for its participation in this process. The demand was later expanded into the 'right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security', which the PLO acknowledged in 1993 (Arafat, 1993). 'In response', Israel afforded the Palestinians recognition of a 'representative', whereby Israel recognised the PLO as the leader and representative of the Palestinians and agreed to engage in talks with it (Rabin, 1993). Although Israel conceded no equivalent recognition to the Palestinians, the international community misleadingly celebrated this achievement as 'mutual recognition' (Massad, 2006; Said, 2002). The Israeli recognition of the PLO is not a deviation from the Zionist politics of recognition, but rather is based on it. The acceptance of the PLO

as the official interlocutor of the native population was an indispensable criterion for bestowing a normative and legal force over the PLO's recognition of the settlers' conquest and sovereign statehood.

The structuring of the purported Israel-PLO 'mutual recognition' disrupted the relationship between the Palestinians and their land. The normative depletion of this relationship is inseparable from the settler-colonial 'profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence' that continues into the future, as Tuck and Yang (2012: 5) argued. Furthermore, this structuring is significant for another reason. Israel's settler-colonialism occurs in a world of legal and normative standards, and elimination of the natives is modulated against this background. After 1993, for example, Israel's recognition of the PLO meant that the colonising power no longer had a legal or normative responsibility to ensure the welfare of the occupied population. In other words, this recognition led to the restructuring of the colonial order that relieved Israel of its legal obligations without requiring it to end its colonial rule and domination.

The insistence that a territorially undefined statehood has an a priori 'right to exist in peace and security' creates institutional privileges that overcome the contingency of statehood. States' existence or disappearance is indeed the product of historical and geopolitical processes (Fazal, 2007) and does not come from the recognition or denial of their right to exist. Thus, it is not an omission that normative political theory and modern international law give consideration to the right of nations to exist rather than states. Israel's pursuit of 'the right to exist' is not necessarily concerned with the state's objective existence but rather with the permanency of the structures of privilege and domination. Israel was granted this a priori right even though most aspects of its statehood (including issues related to borders, identity and population) are still contested. This privilege has important empirical implications. Although the pursuit of recognition by indigenous subjects holds implicit reminders of their existence as the ultimate moral power, the type of recognition they are asked to provide (i.e. Israel's 'right to exist' within flexible frontiers) amounts to self-negation that interrupts the indigenous relationship with the land.

The second element of this request ('in peace and security') sweeps from a typical settler-colonial imagination of the natives. It views the latter as a threat and obliges them to cease being a source of insecurity to the settler state by discontinuing their resistance. The fact is that indigenous desire for sovereign agency is rendered as an existential threat to the survival of the setter state; by implication, the Palestinian pursuit of and struggle for freedom and self-determination in Palestine is reconstructed as the ultimate source of insecurity and threat to Israel's 'right to exist in peace and security'. The insistence on the right of the *state* to exist over the natives' existence is another way to ascertain the settlers' *sovereignty* over the land. The point is therefore to stabilise the core aspects of settler-colonial sovereignty (land and population) by obtaining a normative warrant and validation from the natives.

Land, or territory, is coveted by both settler and indigenous subjects. In following the suggestion of Tuck and Yang (2012), indigenous peoples have demanded the recognition of their 'sovereignty' over *their* land rather than socio-political rights and equality within the settler polity. From this perspective, land is not replaceable, but is an essential part of the moral grammar of the native identity and struggles for self-determination. The Palestinian social, cultural and economic relations have historically been associated with the land (Badarin, 2021a; Kanaan, 1975; Khalidi, 1997). The spiritual significance that Jewish settlers attach to the land also distinguishes them from other settler-colonial movements. Nonetheless, sovereignty and especially the land-to-people relationship are the driving force behind the politics of recognition in settler-colonial contexts. The affective or distributive dimensions of recognition are merely a second-order consideration for those seeking to cope with colonial conditions.

Although the Palestinian recognition of Israel in 1993 'amounted to the final legitimation of the Jewish state', as Joseph Massad (2006) has argued, it remains unsatisfactory, as it does not capture the state's exclusive essence (p. 97). Therefore, the struggle for recognition has asserted new demands alongside the unfolding implementation of the Zionist project on the ground. After the Palestinian recognition of Israel's right to exist, the debate turned into demarcating the ideational and ideological characteristics of its sovereign existence, as the following section demonstrates.

Israel's Right to Exist as a Jewish State

Although the 'homogenous Jewish state' is Zionism's end goal (Avnery, 1969: 161), Israel has only recently began to forcefully stress its Jewish identity in the domestic and external politics of recognition. In 2009, for example, the legislative apparatus made it a criminal offence to publicly deny Israel's 'right to exist as a Jewish state' (Haaretz, 2009). And in 2018, the state's exclusive Jewish identity gained constitutional status when the Nation-State Law (2018) was encoded into the 'Basic Laws of Israel', the country's de facto constitution. As a result, colonised Palestinian citizens of Israel (also known as 'the 48 Palestinians') became the direct subjects of an enforced recognition of the Jewish identity of the state. The Nation-State Law also institutionalised their subordinated status within the society and denied the non-Jewish population of Palestine (citizens or not) the right to self-determination. This Law is a concrete manifestation of a recognition struggle that constitutes self-determination as an institution of privilege that aligns social life and power relations within the society with the Zionist desire for exclusive self-mastery. Recognition literature often construes misrecognition in terms of exclusions and hindrance (Fraser, 2003; Honneth, 1995; Taylor, 1994). However, the debate around the Jewish identity of Israel constitutes patterns of legal and cultural values that first and foremost eliminate (not only exclude or curb) the Palestinians' right to self-determination and self-mastery and then proceeds to de-value their culture, language and national symbols.

Israel's politics of recognition also had direct implications for the colonised/non-citizen Palestinian population in the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT). The Israeli–Palestinian peace process provided a framework to obtain a recognition of Israel as a Jewish state from the Palestinians. In particular, since the Annapolis Conference in 2007, which intended to 'revive' this process, the above demand has regularly appeared in the negotiation record and has increasingly been presented as a precondition for peace. Consider the following illustrative example. In 2007, the Palestinians were asked to recognise Israel as 'the state of the Jewish people –and I [Tzipi Livni, former Israeli foreign minister and negotiator] would like to emphasize the meaning of "its people" is the Jewish people –with Jerusalem the united and undivided capital of Israel and of the Jewish people for 3007 years . . . [sic]' (Doc.2003, 2007: 5; see also Doc.2055, 2007; Doc.4844, 2009). Two years later, in 2009, Israel's then prime minister demanded 'a public, binding and unequivocal Palestinian recognition of Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people' (Netanyahu, 2009). Aware of the detrimental empirical and moral implications of such a normative recognition, the Palestinians resist it with equal, if not greater, determination. Civic and non-theological recognition is the most that the Palestinian Authority (PA)/PLO has been willing to commit to. As put by Saeb Erekat, the former Palestinian Chief Negotiator, 'I cannot say "Israel for the Jews" or is a "Jewish state." At most we [the PLO/PA] can say Israel for Israelis [sic]' (Doc.5161, 2007).

Embedded within the demand to recognise Israel as a Jewish state is the distinctive call to recognise Jerusalem as its capital city. Although recognition of capital cities is a peculiar request in international relations, it is an inseparable part of the struggle over the identity of the historic city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem has ideological significance for the three monotheistic religions, which the non-exclusive identity of the city has developed organically for centuries. For Zionism, which is

named after one (biblical) of the designations of the city, Jerusalem is fundamental to its foundational narrative. Since the capture of the Eastern part of the city in 1967, Jerusalem became the touchstone for Zionist and Israeli ethnonational discourse in 'an absolutist way that everything called Jerusalem . . . is held sacred and, hence, non-negotiable' (Bishara, 2010). In this regard, the struggle to obtain an external recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is inseparable from the Jewish identity of the state and its underpinning narrative. The politics of recognition over Jerusalem manifests itself in two ways. The first is Israel's concrete and relentless spatial and demographic remapping of the city in an attempt to reflect a predominant Jewish character (Abu El-Haj, 2001; B'Tselem, 2017, 2019). The second is the pursuit of external recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. So far, the latter struggle has manifested in lobbying some countries to relocate their embassies to the city, which in 2017 culminated in the United States' decision to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and formally recognise the latter as Israel's capital (The White House, 2017). This politics of recognition runs counter to international law and the UN Security Council resolution 478, which determined Israel's annexation of Jerusalem in 1980 to be 'null and void' and requested that foreign diplomatic missions in the city leave (United Nations Security Council (UNSC), 1980).

As Nancy Fraser suggests, the politics of recognition often gravitates around singular identification and turns it into identity politics that denies internal heterogeny (Fraser, 2003). The demand that Israel be recognised as a Jewish sovereign state and Jerusalem as its 'united and undivided' capital pulls the settler society towards the state-driven identity politics, although questions that concern the state's identity and the role of religion and secularism are contested and unsettled subjects within the Israeli Jewish society (Greenstein, 2014). While the struggle to obtain internal and external recognition of the Jewish character of the state does not aim to resolve these debates, it remains part of the political processes to defend and sustain empirical colonisation. These processes embed the Zionist essence in legal and normative structures that deny the indigenous population sovereign rights over any part of the land. While the demand to recognise Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state establishes the legal and normative structure of its exclusive sovereignty, the relatively recent efforts to pattern resistance to Zionism and Israel as anti-Semitism provide a link between internal and external legitimacy, as will be demonstrated shortly.

Anti-Zionism as an equivalent to Anti-Semitism

The current struggle to determine Israel's theological identity is consistent with the Zionist movement's founding principles (Khalidi, 2020). The fact is that the emergence of Zionism is at least in part attributed to the persecution of Jews in Europe, and this why anti-Semitism provided the immediate rationality to incorporate the two phenomena into the politics of recognition of Zionism and Israel. This connection clarifies the general terms whereby Israel casts resistance to the Zionist desire for sovereignty in Palestine (i.e. anti-Zionism) as hostility towards Jewry (i.e. anti-Semitism). Thus, for those who wage the struggle to have anti-Zionism recognised as anti-Semitism, the former is defined as opposition to the Jewish self-determination in the 'land of Israel', including the contestation of Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state. From this perspective, the anti-Zionism–anti-Semitism equation is structured in a way that dovetails with sources of sovereignty – a specific territory, statehood and population – while evoking previous vulnerabilities, persecution and victimhood in Europe to elicit a sense of urgency and moral validation of this desire.

This struggle has implicitly manifested in the desire to redefine anti-Semitism, historically known as hostility and prejudice against Jews because of their Jewish identity and faith. In 2004, the Anti-Semitism Conference in Berlin therefore declared that anti-Semitism 'has assumed new forms and expressions' (Berlin Declaration, 2004: 1). Some key speakers suggested that

anti-Zionism (or 'calling into question Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state') should be regarded as a new expression of anti-Semitism.[2] In 2016, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) built on the Berlin Declaration and issued a legally non-binding re-definition (the 'Working Definition of Antisemitism') of anti-Semitism, which associated hostility historically directed towards Jews with contemporary opposition to Zionism and Israel. The discussion here is not an analysis of the IHRA or anti-Semitism, but instead assesses their relevance to and application within the Israeli politics of recognition. Although the IHRA's re-definition does not explicitly refer to anti-Zionism, it implicitly invokes Israel as 'Jewish State' and 'Jewish collectivity'. Anti-Semitism, the IHRA asserts, includes 'anti-Israel animus', the denial of the Jewish people's right to self-determination (in Israel/Palestine) and the claim that 'the existence of a state of Israel is a racist endeavor' (IHRA, 2016: 2, 6–7).

Although this does not specify the territorial character of the 'land of Israel' or 'Israel', Israel's Basic Laws (its de facto constitution) restrict self-determination in the whole of Palestine to Jewish subjects. And in one stroke, this a priori assumption attempts to, first, exclusively associate the land with one ethno-religious group and exclude all other groups. Second, it seeks to resolve the struggle over the state's identity and the people-to-land relationship in favour of the Zionist narrative. In other words, the IHRA engagement draws the contours of discourse around Palestine–Israel and is part of the recognition politics that seeks to institutionalise the Zionist narrative as the yardstick by which debates on Palestine–Israel must be judged.

Furthermore, the norm of self-determination is a relatively recent 20th-century development (Fabry, 2010) and is therefore factually, historically and legally disconnected from the notion of anti-Semitism. Recognition practices apply self-determination in restricted and conservative manner. For example, international law recognises the self-determination of *peoples*, which does not indicate 'any specific basis for delineating national boundaries' (Barkin and Cronin, 1994: 123). Modern recognition practices do not consider self-determination as an automatic right to statehood, let alone an exclusive ethno-religious state. By implication, objections to statehood claims cannot be construed as a form of racism and animosity for that group. Many nations have been denied statehood. Furthermore, the requirement that *all* citizens (rather than a specific ethno-religious group) should have equal access to the institutions of the state is a fundamental norm of international recognition. On this account, Israel's desire for external recognition of its constitutionally exclusive self-determination is inconsistent with modern international practices. The IHRA re-definition upends international normative standards, primarily because it imbues the concepts of 'people' and 'self-determination' with specific theological (Jewish) connotations.

International recognition bestows external legitimacy on domestic arrangements (Wight, 1972). Thus, the external recognition of the IHRA's confused inflictions and associations validates the settler/Zionist boundaries that separate those who do (settlers) and do not belong (the indigenous population) to the people who bear the right to self-determination and independence. The IHRA's re-definition, the Jewish character of the state, the recognition of Jerusalem and the Nation-State Law (2018) are all interlinked components of the Zionist desire for theology-based sovereignty that underpin its politics of recognitions. These components are applied on different horizons, as suggested earlier. Meanwhile, statutes such as the Nation-State Law and others[3] are applied internally to enforce domestic legitimacy, and the IHRA operates externally and targets international critiques of Israel, especially those that challenge its desire for exclusive sovereignty. And in doing so, it provides a link between domestic Zionist 'legitimacy' and external/international warrant. This renders the so-called two-state vision a futile distraction as the same actors and states that promote it tend to accept that anti-Zionism is a form of anti-Semitism.[4]

The attempts to redefine anti-Semitism have further implications for contemporary settler-colonial practices. This is why Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has prioritised promoting the IHRA's

conception of anti-Semitism (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IMFA), 2020). The intersection between the Israeli state and IHRA makes several connections. First, it binds historical anti-Semitism to specific territorial claims and struggles. The non-territorial concept of anti-Semitism is therefore given a territorial resonance within the Palestine–Israel question. Second, it helps close the gap between Israel's complete territorial sovereign control and the demographic dimensions of sovereignty. Third, an international recognition that equates anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism indirectly recognises the legitimacy of the Israeli practices within the OPT, too. Taking the Israeli demands for recognition together renders opposition to 'Jewish settlement development' in West Bank (which the Nation-State Law constitutes as a Zionist/Israeli 'national value') a form of anti-Semitism that violates the Zionist pursuit of self-determination. This fractures the so-called international consensus on the two-state solution, and it counterbalances international law, which considers Israeli settlements to be illegal and a war crime (Lynk, 2019).

More crucially, this demand misrecognises Indigenous resistance and existence, conflating it with not only 'terrorism' but also primordial anti-Semitism and opposition to Jewry's right to self-determination. The inherent ethno-religious associations involved in the anti-Zionism–anti-Semitism equation implicitly frame Palestinian resistance and their struggle for self-determination as a violation of the Jewish subjects' relation-to-self. This results in the indigenous struggle being misrecognised as a form of anti-Semitism rather than an anti-colonial struggle for decolonised power relations, freedom and self-determination. And in doing so, it forces the Palestinians to renounce themselves, including their identity, narrative and struggle, or face social death. This politics of recognition has immediate implications for the material dimensions of sovereignty (land and people) and is arranged in a way that overrides the sovereign rights of Indigenous people over any part of their land.

The Role of Elimination in Settler-Colonial Politics of Recognition

Struggles for recognition are a reoccurring theme in international, regional and domestic politics (Tully, 2000). Axel Honneth explains the persistence of these struggles by referring to the constant rediscovery of the Self, which involves peoples' search for confirmation of emergent aspects of their identity (Honneth, 1995: 17). Although this gives us an understanding of the eliminatory forces behind recognition struggles, it does not explain how the politics of recognition can also be used to advance the settler's desire for 'sovereign invulnerability to the open-endedness and contingency of the future we share with others' (Markell, 2003: 15). In settler-colonial conflicts, these struggles are primarily concerned with sovereignty, land and population, and often evolve as reaffirmations of the initial identity and self-perception rather than the emergent aspects of the identity. The fluidity of politics of recognition is exerted to incrementally establish normative associations between the pursuit of self-mastery, territorial sovereignty, and internal and external normative legitimacy. In particular, the Zionist recognition demands evolved as reassertions to validate the settlers' first impressions and self-perception in relation to the land and indigenous population, rather than being the outcome of the dialectical relationship between contingent aspects of the Self. Zionist settlers exhibit similar attitudes that can be found in other settler-colonial contexts. For example, Taiaiake Alfred (2005) shows how European settlers remained the same while the Indigenous subjects were required to change in Canada.

As a gradual structure of elimination, the settler politics of recognition unfolds as a series of moving goalposts whereby demands shift at different stages of the conquest. This is what Edward Said (1992: 95) calls the 'discipline of detail' so that an 'imaginary realm could be constructed on Palestine' or other colonised geographies, for that matter. This goalpost-shifting is discernible, for example, in the Palestine–Israel negotiation record: whenever Palestinians made concessions and

recognised an aspect of the Israeli assertions, further demands followed (Badarin, 2016). In this sense, the Middle East Peace Process provided a forum where the settler politics of recognition played out. Through this process, a wholesale Palestinian recognition of settler sovereignty of over 78% of the land was implicitly secured in 1988 and officially granted in 1993. It also forced the weaker party into piecemeal concessions on the remaining parts. The three recognition demands (right to exist, Jewish statehood and anti-Zionism as anti-Semitism) are interlaced features of the goalpost moving process that has been applied at different horizons: internally over Jewish settlers, over the Palestinians and internationally. On the surface, these shifts reflected the unfixed nature of the politics of recognition. A more critical examination, however, reveals that this chain of demands is animated by the settler desire for a sense of sovereign agency and invulnerability at the expense of the indigenous population.

When considered as both a state and society, Israel's sovereign subjectivity is less than incomplete. Although Israel continually pursues the vanishing end point of the colonial project, it has not 'fully replaced Indigenous societies on their land, and naturalized this replacement' (Strakosch and Macoun, 2012: 42). Accordingly, Israel is still entrapped in a struggle with the Palestinians, whose number has surpassed the settler population. The struggle over Palestine is as much about the land as about population – the two sources of sovereignty. In the first instance, Israel exerts de facto sovereign control over entire Palestine, and de jure international recognition has been granted to 78% of the land. In the second instance, the gap between the territorial and human dimensions of the settler–native relationship continues to widen. Furthermore, the depopulated indigenous population, or the refugees, who account for more than half of the Palestinian people, live only a few miles away from their former homes and land in the historical space of Palestine. This gap presents an obstinate challenge to Israel's sovereignty. It is in this context that the demands to recognise Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state and the conflation of anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism are brought to bear on the population deficit.

While Israel has long deliberated the Palestinian existence as a demographic threat to its existence as a Jewish and democratic state (Pappé, 2011; Perry and Labub, 2014). Perry and Labub (2014), the interrogation of Israel's politics of recognition highlights more profound anxiety that concerns Israel's deeply fractured and unjustified sources of sovereign control. Recognition is also important on a different level. Since 1945, states have been formed on the basis of a priori rights to self-governance and self-determination (Fabry, 2010). The achievements of other pre-1945 settler-colonial movements did not confront the same legal and normative thresholds that prevailed after WWII. The Zionist insistence on the 'right' for sovereign self-determination in a 'Jewish state' is therefore in keeping with the normative changes in the international order.

Although the elimination of the natives is the ultimate goal, the target of elimination shifts depending on situational conditions (Strakosch and Macoun, 2012). And therefore, settler demands for recognition are asserted at different junctures of the colonial process. As Israel failed to realise a complete physical elimination of the Palestinian presence on the land, it employed recognition in a colonial fashion to inflict upon the Palestinians moral and normative destruction (Khalidi, 2011). The natives are asked to renounce their relationship with the land and accept that their resistance and desire for self-determination are forms of anti-Semitism. This patterning inspires misrecognition that gives rise to political, psychological and sociological pathologies that further fragment and disempower indigenous people. For example, the purported PLO-Israeli 'mutual recognition' in 1993 and its fallouts laid the foundation for further fragmentation of the Palestinian society, discord and infighting. In 2006, the Middle East Quartet (composed of the European Union (EU), UN, the United States and Russia) officially adopted Israel's position and instituted its recognition as an international condition that all Palestinians must concede (Badarin, 2016; Middle East Quartet, 2006). Thus, the Quartet principles or 'conditions' (*shurut al-ruba'yya*), as the Palestinians

understand them, are another institutionalised framework that attempts to enforce Israel's politics of recognition on the Palestinians. It was against this backdrop that, in 2006, the economic, geographic and political division between the West Bank and Gaza combined with an Israeli blockade and full-scale military attacks on the latter to become a regular aspect of Palestinian everyday life.

While viewed from the structural framework of settler-colonialism, as Patrick Wolfe (1999) cogently argued, the politics of recognition authorises structural, legal and normative patterns that simultaneously corroborate the settler's territorial sovereignty and withdraw it from the indigenous. Wolfe's framing has a forceful explanatory value to untangle settler practices; however, if Natives were to fully embrace it, defeatism and resignation would replace resistance. The Palestinians have not only conceived Zionism and its operative processes as a continuous structure of displacement, but have also viewed it as something temporary that must be resisted and brought down (Badarin, 2016).

While Palestinian resistance took different forms, the strategy of *sumud* (steadfastness on the land) is particularly noteworthy because of its decolonising epistemology in its response to colonial structures and practice of elimination. Indeed, to subvert these practices, *sumud*, or 'staying home', is all the natives need to do. *Sumud* is an anti-colonial practice that emerged from the 'dialectic of oppression-resistance' to assert the Palestinian presence on the land as a 'collective and third way' between violent resistance and submission and exile (Farsoun, 1989; Shehadeh, 1983: 76). It enmeshes the materiality of the land and native existence (or dwelling over it) and undermines the process and closure of the setter-colonial structures by fracturing the foundations that underpin the sovereignty of the settler state (Badarin, 2021a). This ability to interweave the two sources of sovereignty gives *sumud* particular importance in struggles against settler politics of recognition. In doing so, *sumud* demonstrated the paradox in and the loose-ends of the Israeli politics of recognition that simultaneously seeks recognition from Natives and their elimination. *Sumud* has therefore continually widened the gaps between de facto territorial control and the human dimension of sovereignty. This forces the settler to implicitly recognise the Native as the ultimate moral power without which the settler self-mastery will continue to be frustrated.

Conclusion

Recognition is usually discussed across the divide of the external (international) and internal (domestic) politics of recognition. This article bridges that gap and cross-examines the external and internal dimensions of the settler-colonial politics of recognition. The rich literature on this topic usually ascribes struggles for recognition struggles to identity politics and the social exclusion of the Other. In settler-colonialism, however, recognition represents another medium for the elimination of the natives, whose existence is considered as a source of uncertainty, threat and curtailed settler sovereignty. The central goal of settler-colonialism is the establishment of a sovereign statehood for the settler population, which requires a reengineering of the land–population relationship in a conquered territory. For this purpose, the settler-colonial politics of recognition seeks to institutionalise particular patterns of values that ultimately embody the logic of elimination at the normative level in an attempt to disrupt the natives' relationship with their land. This constitutes the internal and external normative scaffolding used to normalise and legitimise the settler-colonial order by authorising legal and normative patterns that simultaneously corroborate the settler's territorial sovereignty and withdraw it from the indigenous population. In this sense, recognition becomes an extension of the brute force and violence of colonisation.

Viewing the Israeli politics of recognition through the paradigm of settler-colonialism helps explain the connections between recognition and elimination and displacement. Since their inception, Zionism and later Israel have been engaging in the politics of recognition. In the pre-state

period, the Zionist movement focused on widening the circle of international acceptance of its project, which was used in 1948 to displace the Palestinians and establish the State of Israel. In the state period, however, recognition was used to produce domestic legitimacy by institutionalising and enforcing the Jewish–non-Jewish binary into the structure of the state, its institutions and power relations. While the demands and targets of this politics have evolved, the desire for exclusive sovereignty remained the same. Zionism viewed the manifestations of modern sovereignty (self-determination and statehood) as a framework for the emancipation of Jewry. And, therefore, it combined theological (redemption) and colonial (terra nullius) imaginaries to achieve this goal.

Since Israel failed to completely displace the entire Palestinian population – even after mass expulsions like the 1948 al-Nakba – demographic changes unbalanced the two sources on which modern sovereignty rests, presenting challenges to the Israeli structures of value that reserves self-determination to about half of the population, not counting the refugees in exile. By interweaving the two sources of sovereignty, the practice of *sumud* is the Palestinian counter-strategy to resist the eliminatory effects of the Israeli politics of recognition. Politics of recognition became a medium to address this challenge on multiple fronts. Domestically, Israel instated 'Jewishness' as the primary value and prerequisite for claims of sovereignty and self-determination. Through demands of recognition, Israel seeks to enforce on the Palestinians normative concession that imply their self-denial and the foreclosure of their possibility of achieving sovereign existence in any part of Palestine. This prospect becomes clear when considering the Israeli statute that regards the construction and development of Jewish settlements in the OPT (where the supposed Palestinian state would be built) as a 'national value'.

Israeli recognition politics has unfolded as a chain of demands that are applied across different horizons. While the recognition of Israel's right to exist sought to resolve the territorial dimension, the demand to recognise it as a 'Jewish state' intends to delineate the ideological core of Israel's sovereignty. The equation of anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism is a relatively recent addition and seeks to ward off criticism of and resistance to the exclusivity that is inherent to its sovereignty, by framing those invocations as a primordial form of anti-Semitism (rather than being anti-colonial resistance). This equation dovetails with sources of sovereignty – a specific territory, statehood and population – and evokes previous vulnerabilities and victimhood to elicit a sense of urgency and moral validation.

In seeking to reduce the settler's exposure to alternative, and perhaps non-exclusivist forms of self-mastery, Israel's politics of recognition targets the Palestinians as a whole: in exile, citizens of Israel or occupied. In this framework, the indigenous presence is de-normalised as temporal and contingent (residency within the Jewish sovereignty at best), while their exile is rendered permanent and normal. This politics is patterned in a way that simultaneously defies and fractures the colonised citizens' (Palestinians in Israel) struggle for equal citizenship and the struggle of colonised non-citizens for self-determination and decolonisation of the OPT. Zionist politics of recognition not only demoted the relative standing of the Palestinians, their culture, history and language, but more importantly, it has also reconstituted self-determination as an institution of privilege with a theological dimension so that indigenous subjects cannot even aspire to equality or self-determination in their homeland. This closure exemplifies the embedded eliminatory logic that undergirds it. As a result, the Palestinians become disposable and transferable. This displacement outside the society and its normative structures may serve as a precondition for physical displacement outside the coveted land.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1. The 1967 War was a war of conquest by Israel and the 1973 War was waged By Egypt and Syria mainly to recover the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula.
2. See statements made by Max Jakobson and Odd-Bjørn Fure in: OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism, Berlin, PC.DEL/696/04/Rev.1. Consolidated Summary', 2004: 53, 92, https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/f/35389.pdf (accessed 10 April 2021).
3. Since 1950, Israel has adopted several discriminatory laws that privileged Jewish subjects (see Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, n.d.). For example, in 1950, the Law of Return was adopted, allowing every Jewish person to immigrate to Israel and automatically become a citizen. The Palestinians, meanwhile, were denied their internationally recognised right of return.
4. The United States, Canada and most European states accept the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Definition of Antisemitism.

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